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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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It's only discrimination when *they* do it to *us*: When White men use ingroup-serving double standards in definitional boundaries of discrimination

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Abstract

There is a widespread agreement that discrimination is bad, but disagreement about how discrimination is defined and identified. Discrimination is sometimes defined narrowly (including only a restricted range of behaviours), and sometimes broadly (encompassing a wide range of behaviours). Three experiments (the latter two preregistered) found that White men define sexist discrimination (Study 1, $N = 88$) and racist discrimination (Study 2, $N = 130$; Study 3, $N = 128$) more narrowly when it was committed by their group against others and more broadly when it was directed against their group by others. Collective narcissism moderated (i.e. exacerbated) this effect in all three studies. However, when social dominance orientation (SDO) was considered simultaneously, it emerged as the more reliable moderator (Study 3). These results highlight that definitions of discrimination are not static but employed flexibly depending on context and hierarchy-supporting motivations.

KEYWORDS
definitional boundaries, discrimination, gender discrimination, racial discrimination

1 | INTRODUCTION

> 'People say that physics is sexist, physics is racist. I made some simple checks and discovered that it wasn't, that it was becoming sexist against men.'
>
> – (Alessandro Strumia as quoted in Ghosh, 2018, p. 4)
>
> 'To call me a white privileged male is to be racist. You're being racist.'
>
> – (Laurence Fox as quoted in Kelly, 2020, p. 2)

In September 2018, Professor Alessandro Strumia was suspended from the scientific institution CERN (BBC, 2018). The suspension was in response to a presentation he made at CERN. This presentation included statements that 'physics was built by men' and 'men prefer working with things and women prefer working with people' (Ghosh, 2018, p. 2) as well as 'cartoons deriding women campaigning for equality in science' (Ghosh, 2019, p. 3), and numerous accusations that men working in physics are being sidelined in order to offer preferential treatment to less qualified and lower-performing women (Giuffrida & Busby, 2018). Interestingly, despite the backlash in response to his presentation, Strumia maintained that his remarks were not sexist or discriminatory against women, but 'only presenting the facts' (Ghosh, 2018). Indeed, Strumia argued that discrimination against women in physics did not exist and that the pervasive sexism that did exist was directed against men (Giuffrida & Busby, 2018).

In January 2020, the actor Laurence Fox appeared on the primetime show *Question Time* on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) to discuss media responses to Megan Markle – the Duchess of Sussex and

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first ethnic minority to join the British Royal Family (Kelly, 2020). Fox dismissed claims that the media's negative responses to the Duchess were influenced by racism, insisting that it is only appropriate to 'call out racism when it's seen and obvious' (p. 4) and that we should not play the 'race card' (p. 1) when racism is not obvious (Kelly, 2020). Interestingly, Fox shortly after accused an ethnic minority audience member of racism for merely saying that he was a privileged white male: 'to call me a white privileged male is to be racist, you're being racist' (p. 2).

These examples seem to show interesting double-standards in perceptions of discrimination. Concerning discrimination against *women*, Strumia seemed to apply very *narrow definitional boundaries*, dismissing a wide range of behaviours as 'not sexist', and acknowledging no sexism in contemporary physics departments (in contrast with empirical psychological research; Eaton et al., 2020; Moss-Racusin et al., 2012). However, concerning discrimination against *men* Strumia appeared to apply *broader definitional boundaries*, interpreting a wider variety of behaviours to be indicative of sexism. Laurence Fox's case appears even more stark: on one hand explicitly stating that racism against ethnic minorities should only be recognised when it is 'obvious' (Kelly, 2020, p. 2), but simultaneously stating that merely acknowledging his ethnicity and associated privileges are an example of racism against White people. Fox applied very *narrow definitional boundaries* when he was the potential perpetrator of racism, but very *broad definitional boundaries* when he was the potential victim of racism.

1.1 | Definitional boundaries of discrimination

Most people agree that discrimination is wrong (Greenland et al., 2018, 2019) and are motivated to avoid being (or appearing to be) prejudiced or discriminatory (Greenland et al., 2012; Johns et al., 2008; Plant & Devine, 1998). Even people who are relatively high in racism and sexism prefer to think of themselves as relatively egalitarian (West & Eaton, 2019) and are dismayed or upset if data suggest that they have discriminatory beliefs or behaviours (Schlachter & Rolf, 2017).

Where people disagree, however, is about what constitutes discrimination in practice. This disagreement occurs for a variety of reasons, including justifications for discriminatory behaviour (Salih, 2007), cultural shifts away from blatant discrimination toward more subtle, ambiguous forms of discrimination (Sue et al., 2007; West, 2019b, 2022; Williams, 2019) and discriminatory behaviour that occurs outside conscious awareness (Devine et al., 2002; Nosek et al., 2007). Consequently, if acts of discrimination were placed along a hypothetical continuum from the most blatant acts (e.g. using racial slurs with the explicit declaration of discriminatory intent) to the most ambiguous acts (e.g. asking ethnic minorities 'where are you really from') there would be much disagreement about where to draw the metaphorical line between behaviours that should be labelled 'discrimination' and behaviours that should be labelled 'not discrimination' (Andreouli et al., 2016; Greenland et al., 2018).

Where people draw this metaphorical line between 'discrimination' and 'not discrimination' can be referred to as their definitional boundaries of discrimination (DBDs) (see Greenland et al., under review). These definitional boundaries can be very *narrow* (i.e. excluding everything but the most overt acts), or very *broad* (i.e. including a range of different acts up to the most subtle). Both extremely narrow and extremely broad definitional boundaries are used contemporarily. For example, much social psychological research uses very broad definitional boundaries, defining discrimination as simply 'differences in responses' to individuals or groups based on demographic factors such as race or gender (Dovidio et al., 2002, p. 63; West, 2019b, p. 1928) without any additional limitations (see e.g. Auspurg et al., 2017; Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Booth et al., 2012; Eaton et al. 2020; Green et al., 2007; Milkman et al., 2015; Neumark & Van Nort, 1996; Pager et al., 2006; Ryan et al., 2016; Schreer et al., 2009; West, 2019a; West & Lloyd, 2017). However, lay people often use much narrower definitional boundaries, requiring several conditions to be met before the label of discrimination is applied (e.g. explicit malicious intention, irrationality and an inability to justify behaviour by appeals to any other explanation; Greenland et al., 2018). Indeed, as some researchers have pointed out, lay people's narrow definitional boundaries make it very difficult to identify *any* acts of discrimination except the most egregious and blatantly telegraphed; this protection from accusations of discrimination may be a key motivation behind such narrow definitional boundaries (Greenland et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the use of narrow or broad definitional boundaries is not merely a matter of cognition or expertise but also of group-based motivation and political goals. Very narrow definitional boundaries make it easier for dominant group members to present themselves as non-discriminatory, regardless of their behaviour. For example, one can dismiss even the careless use of racial slurs (e.g. 'n*****r') as non-discriminatory by restricting the definition of discrimination to include only deliberate acts of meanness (Greenland et al., 2018, p. 549). As Durrheim et al. (2016) have put it, 'the struggle for the nature of prejudice determines who can be badly treated and by whom' (p. 17). In contrast, very broad definitional boundaries can increase estimates of the prevalence of discrimination and be used to argue for policies to address discrimination. For example, one could make the claim that 'all White people are racists' (Marley, 2020, p. 1) by expanding the definition of discrimination to include even passively accepting the benefits of one's Whiteness in a racially unequal society. Unsurprisingly, DBDs have been shown to meaningfully predict intergroup responses, such as support for 'All Lives Matter' instead of 'Black Lives Matter' (West et al., 2021).

This current research, however, focuses on a specific form of alleged inconsistency in the application of DBDs: the hypothesis that some people use an ingroup-serving double standard, defining discrimination *narrowly* when committed by their ingroup against outgroups, but *broadly* when committed by other groups against their ingroup. Research has found similar effects in other domains. For example, research on the ultimate attribution error shows that individuals are more likely to attribute negative outgroup behaviour to disposition, but negative ingroup behaviour to context and circumstance (Hunter et al., 1991; Pettigrew, 1979; Yamamoto & Maeder, 2017). Individuals are also likely to express more approval of violence or terrorism when in line with their political goals than when opposed to their political goals

(Shamir & Shikaki, 2002). Double standards are therefore not unusual in intergroup perceptions. However, no research to date has investigated whether similar double standards apply to DBDs. Evidence of such double standards would highlight the flexible and constructed nature of definitions of discrimination, in contrast with the presentation of these definitions as static or objective (Brake, 2008; Greenland & Taulke-Johnson, 2017).

In this current research, we focused on White men's DBDs. We chose White men for a number of reasons. First, research on intersectionality suggests that having *any* stigmatised identity can affect one's perceptions of discrimination and the nuances with which one thinks about discrimination, even concerning other identities that one does not hold (Harnois et al., 2020; Remedios & Snyder, 2018). Otherwise put, a Black man's experiences of racism may affect his conceptualisation of other forms of discrimination he does not experience, like sexism. Similarly, a White woman's experiences of sexism may affect her conceptualisation of racism. While we acknowledge that White men may still have some stigmatised identities (e.g. religion, sexual orientation, immigrant status), there was no practical way to eliminate all of these identities, and focusing on White male participants seemed to be one of the simplest and most straightforward ways to reduce the potential stigmatised identities of the participants in these initial tests of the hypotheses.

Second, White men hold a disproportionate amount of power in Western societies, particularly political power (Johnson, 2017; McIntosh, 1988; Tatum, 1999), and are often in a position to decide the boundaries of discrimination for other groups (e.g. in policy, legislation and as the managers of others). Third, though we acknowledge that this is anecdotal, high-profile examples of such double standards in DBDs often come from White men, like Strumia (Giuffrida & Busby, 2018) and Fox (Kelly, 2020), as well as complaints that heterosexual White men as a group are being silenced, excluded or otherwise marginalised (Kelly, 2021; Scott & Pianegonda, 2017). For these reasons, we focused on White men in majority-White Western societies (i.e. the UK in Study 1 and the US in Studies 2 and 3). That said (and as explored further in the General Discussion), we are not suggesting that this is a phenomenon that is only observable in White men.

1.2 | What motivates the double standard?

As well as testing the occurrence of this double standard in applying DBDs, this research also considered conditions under which the double standard would be least and most pronounced. The first potential moderator we investigated (i.e. in Studies 1 and 2) was collective narcissism. Golec de Zavala et al. (2009) proposed the concept of collective narcissism as a type of ingroup identity characterized by a grandiose image of one's social group, a strong desire to protect and bolster the image of that group, and a reliance on external validation (Cichocka, 2016). Collective narcissism resembles individual narcissism in that it presents an inflated self-love and intense defensiveness when this self-love is not validated by external recognition (Cichocka, 2016; Golec de Zavala & Cichocka, 2012; Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). Prior research has shown that individuals high in collective narcissism are more likely to interpret ambiguous actions by the outgroup as intergroup discrimination (Golec de Zavala & Cichocka, 2012; Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). This is partially due to their tendency to manifest a siege mentality when the image of their group is under threat (Golec de Zavala & Cichocka, 2012), which may encourage interpreting a wide range of behaviours against themselves as discrimination (i.e. using broad DBDs against the ingroup).

To date, research has not directly addressed the reverse – whether collective narcissism also drives a tendency to interpret the actions of one's own group in a more benign way (i.e. to use more narrow DBDs). Nonetheless, past research has found that individuals high in collective narcissism are more sensitive to any factor that could threaten their elevated ingroup image (Golec de Zavala et al., 2013), such as accusing their group of discriminatory tendencies. This high threat sensitivity could motivate the use of narrow definitional boundaries for discrimination against the outgroup, limiting the opportunities to blame the ingroup for discrimination. For these reasons it seemed likely that participants' levels of collective narcissism would be an important factor in determining whether they deployed this hypothesised double standard in DBDs.

Collective narcissism was thus the focus of the first two studies. However, after establishing the effects in the first two experiments, the last experiment expanded the list of potential moderators by including ingroup identification (Leach et al., 2008), right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) (Zakrisson, 2005) and social dominance orientation (SDO) (Ho et al., 2015). Prior research has found that collective narcissism is positively correlated with all three of these other proposed moderators (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). Furthermore, there are good reasons to consider each of these variables as potential moderators of the double standard in DBDs.

For example, while collective narcissism is characterized by a *grandiose* image of one's social group, it is possible that a *positive* image of one's social group, even devoid of the negative implications of collective narcissism, may also lead to a tendency to shift the DBDs in a way that favours the group. Identification with a group has been shown to be an important consideration in social interactions. For example, high identifiers are less likely to acknowledge negative aspects of their group's history (Doosje et al., 2006), and more likely to respond with prejudice to intergroup threats (Bizman & Yinon, 2001). Thus, the ingroup-serving double standard in definitional boundaries may be a consequence of ingroup identification, and not necessarily of collective narcissism.

RWA can be understood as submission to authority, preference for tradition and hostility towards those who disrupt social norms (Ekehammar et al., 2004). As well as a reliable predictor of prejudice (Duckitt & Sibley, 2010; Hotchin & West, 2018), it has also been shown to moderate the relationship between biased attitudes and expressions of that prejudice, such as aggression (Goodnight et al., 2014). RWA is therefore another plausible moderator of the tendency to shift one's DBDs to favour one's group.

Finally, SDO captures a preference for group-based hierarchies and inequalities; SDO has been extensively investigated in previous

research, which has found that individuals higher in SDO tend to endorse beliefs and policy-related actions that enhance hierarchical differentiation between groups (Pratto et al., 1994; Sidanius et al., 2000 , 2004). Prior research has also shown that SDO affects other definitional boundaries. For example, Ho et al. (2013) investigated how SDO affected racial definitional boundaries. Specifically, they found that participants high in SDO were more likely to identify a biracial individual as 'Black' (i.e. as a member of the subordinate group in society) than as 'White' (i.e. as a member of the privileged group in society). This sensitivity to and preference for hierarchy might also drive individuals to shift the DBDs in ways that benefit the privileged groups in society. In Study 3, we tested the effects of all four potential moderators to determine whether collective narcissism moderated the effect of target on DBDs better than the other proposed moderating variables (group identification, RWA or SDO).

2 | CURRENT RESEARCH

In three experiments, the latter two of which were preregistered (https://aspredicted.org/bs23r.pdf and https://aspredicted.org/tz5kj.pdf), we tested a specific hypothesised double-standard in White men's definitions of discrimination: using narrow definitional boundaries when their ingroup potentially discriminates against women (Study 1) or ethnic minorities (Studies 2 and 3), but broad definitional boundaries when women (Study 1) or ethnic minorities (Studies 2 and 3) potentially discriminate against White men. We also investigated whether a range of variables (measured before any manipulations) moderated this effect. These included collective narcissism (Studies 1–3), ingroup identification, RWA and SDO (Study 3). In these studies, we report all measures, manipulations and exclusions. This manuscript adheres to ethical guidelines specified in the APA Code of Conduct as well as authors' national ethics guidelines. This includes requirements that research is conducted ethically, results are reported honestly, the submitted work is original and not (self-)plagiarized and authorship reflects individuals' contributions. All data from this research are available upon request to the corresponding author.

3 | STUDY 1

3.1 | Method

3.1.1 | Participants and procedure

To determine the sample size necessary for all studies, a priori power analyses were conducted using G*Power 3 (Faul et al., 2009). There were no previous studies on which to base this assumed effect size as no other research has investigated shifting standards in DBDs or moderators of that effect. In the absence of prior information, Cohen (1998) recommends assuming a medium effect size, which was our approach for this research. Thus, assuming a medium effect size for the hypothesized moderation by collective narcissism of the effect of target identity on DBDs, and using the following parameters – effect size (f^2) = .15, number of predictors = 3 (to account for target, collective narcissism and the product of target and collective narcissism), α = .05, power = .80 – it was found that 77 participants would provide adequate power. Participants were recruited via word of mouth with the aid of a research assistant living in London. Once recruited, participants were directed to a link on the Qualtrics online platform where the experiment was conducted. Participants were assumed to be British nationals or British residents (though this was not explicitly verified). Initially, 104 men signed up to take part in the study. However, 16 of these men were excluded on the grounds that they did not identify as White (i.e. only White male participants' data were retained for this study). All participants received a small monetary reimbursement, equivalent to £7.50 per hour, for their time.

There were 88 participants in total (all White, all men, *mean age* = 28.15, *SD* = 10.19). A sensitivity analysis conducted in G-power (Faul et al., 2009) indicated that with α = .05 the minimum effect size that could be detected at 80% power for the predicted effects was f^2 = .11. After receiving basic instructions, but prior to any other measures or manipulations, all participants completed a measure of collective narcissism.

Participants were then randomly assigned to one of two conditions. In each condition, a preamble was included before the critical questions that unambiguously clarified who the potential targets and perpetrators of discrimination were, i.e. 'In contemporary society, there is still significant concern about gender inequality. However, it is not always clear how sexism is defined or understood, particularly when considering topics like *sexism by men against women/sexism by women against men.* Please help us understand how people think about sexism *(committed by men against women)/(committed by women against men)* by indicating your agreement with each of the statements below.'

In both conditions, they indicated their agreement with a set of 15 statements designed to measure their DBDs. However, in the 'men as perpetrators' condition, the statements described men as the potential perpetrators of sexist discrimination and women as the potential victims (e.g. 'The core of sexism is that it is malicious: if a man is not being malicious, then it can't be sexism'). In the 'men as targets' condition, items described women as the potential perpetrators of sexist discrimination and men as the potential victims (e.g. 'The core of sexism is that it is malicious: if a woman is not being malicious, then it can't be sexism'). After completing the study, participants were debriefed and provided with contact details for further enquiries.

3.1.2 | Measures

Collective narcissism was examined using the 9-item[1] scale from Golec de Zavala et al. (2009) adapted to specify men as the focal group: e.g.

[1] The 23-item collective narcissism scale (α = .91), was originally used in Study 1. However, on the advice of the reviewers, and to match the subsequent two studies, the more internally reliable 9-item version is reported instead. This was possible because the 23-item scale contains the 9-item scale. When the 23-item scale was used instead of the 9-item scale, the pattern of results was the same, and was unambiguously statistically significant: using PROCESS Macros (Hayes, 2012), Model 1 with 5000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples and 95% confidence

'It really makes me angry when others criticize men', 'The true worth of men is often misunderstood'. Participants responded on a 7-point scale ($\alpha = .87$), (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*). Higher values indicated higher levels of collective narcissism. For this sample, the mean collective narcissism score was 3.07 and the standard deviation was 1.19.

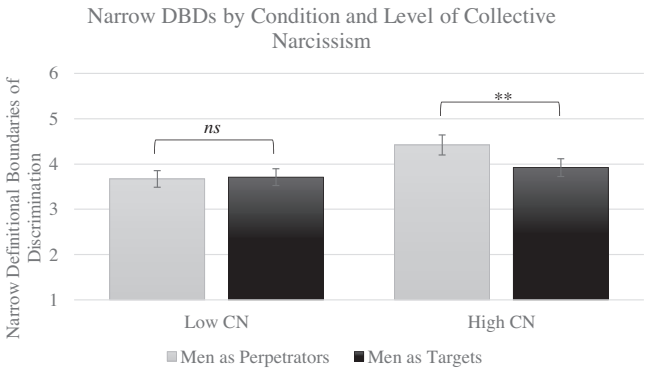
DBDs were measured using the 15-item scale from West et al. (2021). This measure has been shown to predict the extent to which participants describe ambiguous situations as discrimination, i.e. whether they use very narrow definitional boundaries that exclude all but the most egregious forms of hate, or use broader boundaries that include the more subtle forms. Depending on condition, participants saw slightly modified versions of the items, e.g.: 'If a man (/woman) says or does something that seems a bit sexist, even if they do it by accident, then it's sexist' (reversed). Participants made their judgment ratings on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*). The scale showed good internal reliability regardless of condition ($\alpha = .80$ and $\alpha = .80$). Higher values indicated narrower DBDs (and therefore a tendency to only recognize the most egregious forms of discrimination). For this sample, the mean DBDs score was 3.96 and the standard deviation was .67.

3.2 | Results

As expected, participants reported narrower DBDs when men were the perpetrators of gender discrimination than when men were the targets of gender discrimination ($M = 4.11$, $SD = .68$ vs. $M = 3.81$, $SD = .63$), t (86) = 2.13, $p = .04$, $d = .46$). Interestingly, we also found a significant correlation between collective narcissism and narrow DBDs when men were the perpetrators of gender discrimination ($r = .44$, $p = .003$), but not when men were the targets of gender discrimination ($r = .006$, $p = .97$).

Also as expected, participants' collective narcissism moderated this effect (though the moderation was only marginally significant). We tested for moderation with PROCESS Macros (Hayes, 2012), Model 1 with 5000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples and 95% confidence intervals [X = condition, W = collective narcissism, Y = DBDs]. This analysis found the moderation model to be overall significant, $R^2 = .18$, F (3, 84) = 6.02, $p = .001$. The residual, unmoderated effect of target on DBDs was not significant, $b = .39$, $S.E. = .37$, $t = 1.04$, $p = .30$, 95% C.I. = −.35, 1.12, though the direct relationship between collective narcissism and DBDs was significant, $b = .29$, $S.E. = .08$, $t = 3.44$, $p = .001$, 95% C.I. = .12, .45.

Most importantly, we also found the (marginal) expected moderating effect of collective narcissism on the effect of condition on DBDs, $b = -.21$, $S.E. = .11$, $t = -1.86$, $p = .06$, 95% C.I. = −.43, .01. PROCESS offers two options for calculating simple slopes: either at certain percentiles (the *16th*, *50th* and *84th percentiles*) or at the *mean and +/−1 standard deviation* from the mean. In all three studies, we reported the simple slopes at the percentile values. This is the more conservative method of reporting the simple slopes as the *mean +/−1 SD* method does not account for any potential skew or non-normality in the distribution of the data. In all three studies, the pattern of results remains the same if the *mean +/−1 SD* method is used instead.



Note: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

FIGURE 1 The effect of condition on definitional boundaries of (gender-based) discrimination at low and high levels of collective narcissism (Study 1); *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

For participants who reported low levels of collective narcissism (i.e. at the 16th percentile, or 1.67), the effect of condition of DBDs was non-significant, $b = .04$, $S.E. = .21$, $t = .18$, $p = .86$, 95% C.I. = −.37, .45. However, for participants who reported high levels of collective narcissism (i.e. at the 84th percentile, or 4.31), the effect of condition of DBDs was significant, $b = -.51$, $S.E. = .19$, $t = -2.69$, $p = .009$, 95% C.I. = −.89, −.13 (see Figure 1). The Johnson–Neyman output showed that the value of collective narcissism at which the effect of target on DBD's became significant was 3.10 (below the median value of 3.11).

In summary, White men who reported high or median levels of collective narcissism (but *not* those who reported low levels of collective narcissism) applied the hypothesised ingroup-serving double standards in definitional boundaries of sexist discrimination. That is, White men who reported median or high levels of collective narcissism defined discrimination in significantly more narrow terms when men were the perpetrators (rather than the targets) of gender-based discrimination.

4 | STUDY 2

Study 2 had a number of aims. First, we noted that the moderating effect of collective narcissism in Study 1 was only marginally significant. This may have been due to our data collection methods. Specifically, we did not screen participants to ensure they were of the same nationality, which may have introduced unwanted variance into the results. In Study 2, we recruited participants online, which allowed us

intervals [X = condition, W = collective narcissism, Y = DBDs], we found that the moderation model was overall significant $R^2 = .15$, F (3, 84) = 4.84, $p = .004$. We also found the expected moderating effect of collective narcissism on the effect of condition on DBDs, $b = .39$, $S.E. = .15$, $t = 2.24$, $p = .03$, 95% C.I. = .62, .04. When collective narcissism was low (i.e. at the 16th percentile, or 2.13), the effect of condition of DBDs was non-significant, $b = -.06$, $S.E. = .20$, $t = .30$, $p = .76$, 95% C.I. = .34, −.46. However, when collective narcissism was high (i.e. at the 84th percentile, or 4.13), the effect of condition of DBDs was significant, $b = .60$, $S.E. = .19$, $t = 3.06$, $p = .003$, 95% C.I. = .98, .21.

to select their gender, ethnicity and nationality in advance. We also slightly increased the number of participants (see the preregistration) to increase the power of the study. Beyond this, Study 2 sought to replicate the ingroup-serving double standards in DBDs, but on the dimension of ethnicity rather than gender. Thus, the design and methodology of this study were exactly the same as those of Study 1, except that the focus of the study was race-based discrimination rather than gender-based discrimination. This study was also preregistered to increase confidence in the replicability of the findings (https://aspredicted.org/bs23r.pdf).

4.1 | Method

4.1.1 | Participants and procedure

Participants were recruited via the Prolific online platform, which allowed us to screen participants according to demographic variables and allow only White American men to participate. Once recruited via Prolific, the participants completed the experiment on Qualtrics software, which allowed all the measures to be collected online without any direct interaction between participants and the investigators. As preregistered, we recruited 130 participants (all White, all men, *mean age* = 38.43, *SD* = 15.44). This was more than the minimum required with the expectation of some attrition (though, in this instance, all participants completed the study correctly and were retained). The participants received a small monetary reimbursement for their time, equivalent to £7.50 per hour. A sensitivity analysis conducted in G-power (Faul et al., 2009) indicated that with $\alpha = .05$, the minimum effect size that could be detected at 80% power for our predicted effects was $f^2 = .09$.

As in Study 1, all participants completed a measure of collective narcissism after receiving basic instructions, but prior to any other measures or manipulations. Participants were then randomly assigned to one of two conditions. In each condition, a preamble was included before the critical questions that unambiguously clarified who the potential targets and perpetrators of discrimination were, namely 'In contemporary society, there is still significant concern about racial discrimination. However, it is not always clear how racism is defined or understood, particularly when considering topics like *racism by White people against Black people/racism by Black people against White people.* Please help us understand how people about think racism *(committed by White people against Black people)/(committed by Black people against White people)* by indicating your agreement with each of the statements below'.

In both conditions, participants indicated their agreement with a set of 15 statements designed to measure their DBDs. However, in one condition, the statements described White people as the potential perpetrators of racial discrimination and Black people as the potential victims (e.g. 'The core of racism is that it is malicious: if a White person is not being malicious, then it can't be racism'), while items in the other condition described Black people as the potential perpetrators of racial discrimination and White people as the potential victims (e.g. 'The core of reverse racism is that it is malicious: if a Black person is not being malicious, then it can't be reverse racism'). The participants then provided basic demographic information (e.g. their age), before being debriefed and provided with contact details for further enquiries.

4.1.2 | Measures

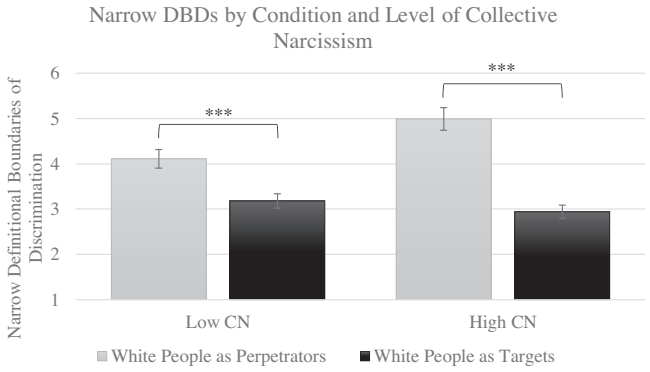
As in Study 1, and as preregistered, collective narcissism was measured with the 9-item scale derived from Golec de Zavala et al. (2009) adapted to specify White people as the focal group. Participants responded on a 7-point scale ($\alpha = .91$), (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*). Higher values indicated higher levels of collective narcissism. For this sample, the mean collective narcissism score was 3.28 and the standard deviation was 1.47. Also as in Study 1, DBDs were measured using a 15-item scale from West et al. (2021). Depending on condition, participants saw slightly modified versions of the items, e.g.: 'If a White (/Black) person says or does something that seems a bit racist, even if they do it by accident, then it's racist' (reversed). Participants made their judgment ratings on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*). The scale showed good internal reliability regardless of condition ($\alpha = .85$ and $\alpha = .83$). Higher values indicated narrower DBDs. For this sample, the mean DBDs score was 3.79 and the standard deviation was 1.17.

4.2 | Results

Planned analyses can be seen in the preregistration (https://aspredicted.org/bs23r.pdf). As expected, participants reported narrower DBDs when White people were the potential perpetrators of racial discrimination, than when White people were the potential targets of racial discrimination ($M = 4.50$, $SD = .96$ vs. $M = 3.05$, $SD = .89$), $t\ (128) = 8.92$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.57$. Interestingly, we also found a significant correlation between collective narcissism and narrow DBDs when White people were the perpetrators of racial discrimination ($r = .49$, $p < .001$), but not when White people were the targets of racial discrimination ($r = -.14$, $p = .28$).

Also as hypothesized, participants' collective narcissism moderated this effect. Using PROCESS Macros (Hayes, 2012), Model 1 with 5000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples and 95% confidence intervals [X = condition, W = collective narcissism, Y = DBDs], we found that the moderation model was overall significant, $R^2 = .47$, $F\ (3, 126) = 36.94$, $p < .001$. The residual, unmoderated effect of target on DBDs was not significant, $b = -.18$, *S.E.* = .38, $t = -.49$, $p = .62$, 95% C.I. = −.93, .56, though the direct relationship between collective narcissism and DBDs was significant, $b = .31$, *S.E.* = .07, $t = 4.34$, $p < .001$, 95% C.I. = .17, .45.

Most importantly, we also found the expected moderating effect of collective narcissism on the effect of condition on DBDs, $b = -.39$, *S.E.* = .10, $t = -3.77$, $p < .001$, 95% C.I. = −.60, −.19. Condition always affected DBDs (i.e. there were no statistical significance transition points within the observed range of the moderator found using the Johnson–Neyman method). However, for participants who reported low levels of collective narcissism (i.e. at the 16th percentile, or 1.88), the effect of condition on DBDs was smaller; $b = -.92$, *S.E.* = .21,



Note: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

FIGURE 2 The effect of target on definitional boundaries of (ethnicity-based) discrimination at low and high levels of collective narcissism (Study 2); *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

$t = -4.38$, $p < .001$, 95% C.I. = −.51, −1.34. For participants who reported high levels of collective narcissism (i.e. at the 84th percentile, or 4.78), the effect of condition on DBDs was larger: $b = -2.06$, *S.E.* = .22, $t = -9.49$, $p < .001$, 95% C.I. = −2.49, −1.63 (see Figure 2).

In summary, White men applied the hypothesised ingroup-serving double standard in definitional boundaries of racial discrimination and applied this double standard more strongly if they reported high levels of collective narcissism.

5 | STUDY 3

Study 2 replicated the findings of Study 1 while focusing on race instead of gender. Study 3 had two further aims. First, we wished to once again replicate the findings of Studies 1 and 2. Second, we also wanted to investigate whether collective narcissism moderated the effect of target on DBDs better than other proposed moderating variables. As explained earlier, prior research has found that collective narcissism is positively correlated with other variables, such as ingroup identification, RWA and SDO (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). Furthermore, prior research offers plausible reasons why these variables may also be good potential moderators of the effect of target on DBDs (Doosje et al., 2006; Goodnight et al., 2014; Ho et al., 2013). Thus, Study 3 investigated whether collective narcissism moderated the effect of target on DBDs better than ingroup identification, RWA and SDO (or, conversely, whether one of these other variables was a superior moderator).

The three above-mentioned variables were thus included in this study as potential moderators of the effect of target on DBDs. The design and methodology of this study were exactly the same as those of Study 2, except that measures of ingroup identification, RWA and SDO were also collected (as well as measures of collective narcissism) before participants were randomly assigned to their conditions. As was the case in Study 2, this study was also preregistered to increase confidence in the replicability of the findings (https://aspredicted.org/tz5kj.pdf).

5.1 | Method

5.1.1 | Participants and procedure

Participants were recruited via the Prolific online platform, which allowed us to screen participants according to demographic variables and allow only White, American men to participate. Once recruited via Prolific, the participants completed the experiment on Qualtrics software, which allowed all the measures to be collected online without any direct interaction between participants and the investigators. As preregistered, we recruited 130 participants initially, two of whom quit before completing any of the measures, leaving us with 128 (all White, all men, *mean age* = 36.92, *SD* = 11.72). The participants received a small monetary reimbursement for their time, equivalent to £7.50 per hour. A sensitivity analysis conducted in G-power (Faul et al., 2009) indicated that with $\alpha = .05$ the minimum effect size that could be detected at 80% power for our predicted effects was $f^2 = .09$.

Similar to Study 2, all participants completed measures of collective narcissism, ingroup identification, RWA and SDO after receiving the basic instructions, but prior to any other measures or manipulations. The four potential moderators were presented in a randomised order for each participant. Participants were then randomly assigned to the same conditions used in Study 2, after which they provided basic demographic information (e.g. their age), before being debriefed and provided with contact details for further enquiries.

5.1.2 | Measures

Unless otherwise indicated, Participants responded to items using a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*). Collective narcissism was examined as in Study 2, with the 9-item scale derived from Golec de Zavala et al. (2009) adapted to specify White people as the focal group ($\alpha = .91$). Ingroup identification was measured using the 14-item ingroup identification scale ($\alpha = .94$) by Leach et al. (2008). This measure conceptualised ingroup identification in five ways: *solidarity*, *satisfaction*, *centrality*, *individual self-stereotyping* and *ingroup homogeneity*. Example items include 'I feel a bond with White people', and 'Being a White person gives me a good feeling'. Higher values indicated higher levels of ingroup identification.

RWA was measured using the 15-item scale ($\alpha = .77$) by Zakrisson (2005). Example items include 'Our country needs a powerful leader, in order to destroy the radical and immoral currents prevailing in society today', and 'Our country needs free thinkers, who will have the courage to stand up against traditional ways, even if this upsets many people' (reversed). Higher values indicated higher levels of RWA. SDO was measured using the 8-item SDO_7 scale ($\alpha = .80$); (Ho et al., 2015). Example items include 'An ideal society requires some groups to be on top and others to be on the bottom', and 'No one group should dominate in society' (reversed). Higher values indicated higher levels of SDO. DBDs were measured as they were in Study 2. The scale showed good internal reliability regardless of condition ($\alpha = .83$ and $\alpha = .83$). Higher values indicated narrower DBDs.

TABLE 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations between variables in Study 3

	CN	ID	RWA	SDO	DBDs
Collective narcissism (CN)		.65***	.30*	.36**	.39***
Ingroup identification (ID)	.68***		.28*	−.04	.04
Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA)	.27*	.28*		.13	.06
Social dominance orientation (SDO)	.37**	.01	.08		.48***
Narrow DBDs	.01	.24	.08	−.17	
	M (*SD*)				
White people as perpetrators	3.49 (1.58)	5.19 (1.29)	4.32 (.85)	3.28 (1.22)	4.21 (.95)
White people as targets	3.77 (1.47)	5.15 (1.22)	4.46 (.72)	3.46 (1.18)	3.54 (.92)

Note: Scores on all measures range from 1 to 7. Correlations for the *White people as perpetrators* condition are shown in the top right, and correlations for the *White people as targets* condition are shown in the bottom left.
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

5.2 | Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations between variables are shown in Table 1. As seen in Table 1 (and similar to Studies 1 and 2), collective narcissism and SDO were significantly correlated with narrow DBDs when White people were the *perpetrators* of discrimination, but not when White people were the *targets* of discrimination. We completed the planned analyses as can be seen in the preregistration (https://aspredicted.org/tz5kj.pdf). As expected, participants reported narrower DBDs when White people were the potential perpetrators of racial discrimination than when White people were the potential targets of racial discrimination: $M = 4.21$, $SD = .96$ vs. $M = 3.54$, $SD = .92$, $t(126) = 4.03$, $p < .001$, $d = .71$.

Also as expected, and as in Studies 1 and 2, participants' collective narcissism moderated this effect. Using PROCESS Macros (Hayes, 2012), Model 1 with 5000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples and 95% confidence intervals [X = condition, W = collective narcissism, Y = DBDs], we found that the moderation model was overall significant, $R^2 = .18$, $F(3, 124) = 9.32$, $p < .001$. The residual, unmoderated effect of target on DBDs was not significant, $b = .13$, *S.E.* = .42, $t = .31$, $p = .76$, 95% C.I. = −.70, .96, though the direct relationship between collective narcissism and DBDs was significant, $b = .24$, *S.E.* = .07, $t = 3.26$, $p = .001$, 95% C.I. = .09, .38.

Most importantly, as before, we also found the expected moderating effect of collective narcissism on the effect of condition on DBDs, $b = -.23$, *S.E.* = .11, $t = -2.15$, $p = .03$, 95% C.I. = −.44, −.02. For participants who reported low levels of collective narcissism (i.e. at the 16th percentile, or 1.89), the effect of condition on DBDs was not significant, $b = -.30$, *S.E.* = .25, $t = -1.24$, $p = .22$, 95% C.I. = −.79, .18. For participants who reported high levels of collective narcissism (i.e. at the 84th percentile, or 5.44), the effect of condition on DBDs was significant, $b = -1.12$, *S.E.* = .25, $t = -4.46$, $p < .001$, 95% C.I. = −1.61, −.62. The Johnson–Neyman output showed that the value of collective narcissism at which the effect of target on DBD's became significant was 2.37 (below the median value of 3.61).

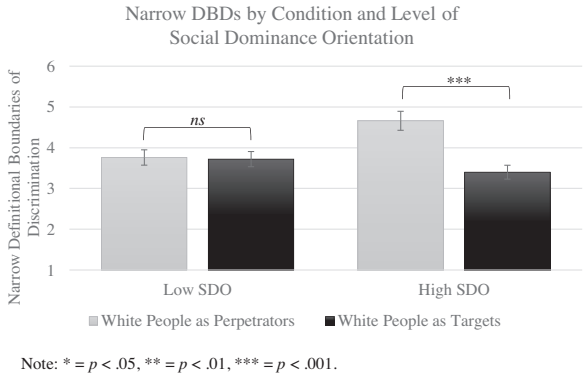
Using the same analyses, we found that ingroup identity did not moderate the effect of target on DBDs ($b = .15$, *S.E.* = .13, $t = 1.16$, $p = .25$, 95% C.I. = −.11, .42). In this model, the residual, unmoderated effect of target on DBDs was significant ($b = -1.46$, *S.E.* = .71, $t = -2.06$, $p = .04$, 95% C.I. = −2.86, −.06), though the direct relationship between ingroup identity and DBDs was not ($b = .03$, *S.E.* = .09, $t = .30$, $p = .77$, 95% C.I. = −.15, .21).

Similarly, using the same analyses, we found that RWA also did not moderate the effect of target on DBDs ($b = .03$, *S.E.* = .22, $t = .12$, $p = .90$, 95% C.I. = −.40, .45). In this model, neither the residual, unmoderated effect of target on DBDs ($b = -.79$, *S.E.* = .96, $t = -.82$, $p = .41$, 95% C.I. = −2.70, 1.11) nor the direct relationship between RWA and DBDs was significant ($b = .07$, *S.E.* = .14, $t = .49$, $p = .62$, 95% C.I. = −.21, .34).

However, we *did* find that SDO moderated the effect of target on DBDs. The moderation model was overall significant, $R^2 = .23$, $F(3, 124) = 12.15$, $p < .001$. In this model, the residual, unmoderated effect of target on DBDs was significant, $b = .99$, *S.E.* = .47, $t = 2.12$, $p = .04$, 95% C.I. = .07, 1.92, as was the direct relationship between SDO and DBDs, $b = .37$, *S.E.* = .09, $t = 4.03$, $p < .001$, 95% C.I. = .18, .55.

Most importantly, there was a moderating effect of SDO on the effect of condition on DBDs, $b = -.50$, *S.E.* = .13, $t = -3.81$, $p < .001$, 95% C.I. = −.76, −.24. For participants who reported low levels of SDO (i.e. at the 16th percentile, or 2.08), the effect of condition on DBDs was not significant, $b = -.04$, *S.E.* = .23, $t = -.19$, $p = .85$, 95% C.I. = −.50, .41. For participants who reported high levels of SDO (i.e. at the 84th percentile, or 4.50), the effect of condition on DBDs was significant and larger; $b = -1.25$, *S.E.* = .21, $t = -5.82$, $p < .001$, 95% C.I. = −1.68, −.83 (see Figure 3). The Johnson–Neyman output showed that the value of SDO at which the effect of target on DBD's became significant was 2.70 (below the median value of 3.50).

As we had identified two potential moderators of the effect of target on DBDs (CN and SDO), and in line with our preregistration (https://aspredicted.org/tz5kj.pdf), we compared the two by entering both as moderators in PROCESS Macros (Hayes, 2012), Model 2 with



Note: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

FIGURE 3 The effect of target on definitional boundaries of (ethnicity-based) discrimination at low and high levels of social dominance orientation (Study 3); *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

5000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples and 95% confidence intervals [X = condition, Y = DBDs, W = CN, Z = SDO]. For the sake of completeness, we also included both ingroup identity and RWA as covariates. We did not expect, nor did we find, significant associations between DBDs and either ingroup identity ($b = .04$, p = .64) or RWA ($b = -.004$, $p = .97$), nor did the pattern of results change when these variables were not included as covariates.

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .26$, F (7, 120) = 5.95, $p < .001$. SDO directly predicted DBDs, $b = .31$, $S.E. = .10$, $t = 3.06$, $p = .003$, 95% C.I. = .11, .51, though collective narcissism did not, $b = .13$, $S.E. = .10$, $t = 1.36$, $p = .18$, 95% C.I. = −.06, .32.

Most importantly, when both CN and SDO were entered in the same model, we did not find that collective narcissism moderated the effect of target on DBDs, $b = -.10$, $S.E. = .11$, $t = -.93$, $p = .36$, 95% C.I. = −.32, .12. However, we did find that SDO moderated the effect of target on DBDs, $b = -.45$, $S.E. = .14$, $t = -3.24$, $p = .002$, 95% C.I. = −.73, −.18. Thus, it was established that SDO was the superior moderator. It is worth noting here that this does not represent an inconsistency between the findings of Study 3 and those of Studies 1 and 2. Rather, though collective narcissism was a significant moderator when considered by itself, the non-significant moderating effect of collective narcissism in these final analyses is merely an expected outcome of a regression analysis in which SDO was a *better* moderator than collective narcissism.

In sum, Study 3 found results similar to those of Studies 1 and 2. As before, White men applied an ingroup-serving double standard in DBDs. As in the previous studies, the application of this double standard was more pronounced for participants who were higher in collective narcissism. However, when SDO was also considered alongside collective narcissism, it emerged as the better moderator. Ingroup identity and RWA did not moderate the effect of target on definitional boundaries.

6 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

In three experiments (the latter two preregistered), we found evidence of a double-standard in White men's use of DBDs. White male participants applied narrow definitional boundaries when identifying discrimination committed by men against women (Study 1) and when identifying discrimination committed by White people against Black people (Studies 2 and 3). That is, they used rules of thumb that narrowed or restricted what could be defined as 'discrimination'. However, they applied broad definitional boundaries when identifying discrimination committed by women against men (Study1) or Black people against White people (Studies 2 and 3). That is, they used rules of thumb that allowed the inclusion of a much wider range of behaviours under the label of 'discrimination'. In all three studies, the double standard in applying definitional boundaries was more extreme for White men who reported median or higher levels of collective narcissism and was either lower (Study 2) or absent (Studies 1 and 3) for men who reported low levels of collective narcissism. However, when SDO was also included in the analyses (Study 3), it was evident that SDO was the better moderator of the effect. The double standard in applying definitional boundaries was more extreme for White men high in SDO and was absent for men low in SDO. Below, we discuss these findings with reference to implications, study design and limitations and suggestions for future research.

6.1 | Implications

The negative effects of bias (even in its most subtle forms) are real, similar across groups and potentially quite severe (Sue et al., 2007; West, 2019b; Williams, 2019). In Western societies, these biases act in reliable patterns that privilege men and White people (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Di Stasio & Heath, 2019; Eaton et al., 2020; Rudman & Glick, 1999; West, 2019a; West & Lloyd, 2017).

Nonetheless, the debate over the DBDs is still very much alive. Earlier this year, in a meeting with the Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and the European Council President Charles Michel (both men), European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen was literally denied a seat at the table next to her two male colleagues, and instead relegated to a nearby sofa (Birnbaum, 2021). In the responses to the incident (dubbed 'sofagate'), the men involved avoided any acknowledgement of sexism, though President von der Leyen treated it as a clear-cut case. In the UK, newspapers argue over whether the comments of the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, were 'racist' or 'not racist' when he referred to Black people as 'piccaninnies' with 'watermelon smiles' (Khorsandi, 2020). In the United States, newspapers debate whether Donald Trump's comments were 'racist' when he referred to the recent coronavirus pandemic as the 'Chinese virus' or 'kung flu' (Geanous, 2020).

Rather than accepting this debate at face value, this current research shows that there are no stable, universally applied DBDs, potentially even for a single individual. Instead, some individuals (e.g. White men, and especially White men with high levels of SDO) shift the DBDs depending on the targets and perpetrators of that discrimination. SDO was found to be the strongest and most reliable moderator of this effect, surpassing collective narcissism, ingroup identification and RWA (the latter two of which were not significant moderators at all). This pattern of moderation suggests that the shifting in definitional

boundaries serves a hierarchy-maintaining purpose, rather than one of maintaining positive ingroup perceptions, or more general adherence to the status quo. That is, the shifting of definitional boundaries is done in a way that benefits groups at the top of the social hierarchy (e.g. men and White people), by making it more difficult to acknowledge discrimination perpetrated by these groups, and easier to acknowledge discrimination perpetrated against these groups. With this in mind, it may not be wise or even possible to engage in honest debate with men like Fox (Kelly, 2020) or Strumia (Ghosh, 2019) about whether any particular incident is an example of discrimination. Rather, this research suggests that the rules they use to make such a determination may be slippery – likely to move about in ways that impede consistent, honest discussion.

To be clear, the goal of this research is not to identify definitive or objectively correct DBDs, or even to suggest that such universally applicable definitional boundaries could be found or agreed on between individuals. Quite the opposite: this research demonstrates that DBDs are not static but *flexible* and *inconsistent*, and that their application is dependent on group-based motivations (in this case, a hierarchy-bolstering motivation).

6.2 | Limitations and future research

This research benefits from participants who were not restricted to student samples, a priori power analyses, preregistration (for the latter two studies), experimental designs and replication across three studies using two different target groups. These strengths add to the confidence in and generalizability of the findings (Faul et al., 2009; Henrich et al., 2010). However, this research also has limitations.

Perhaps the most noteworthy is the possible confound in the independent variables. Participants were always asked to consider discrimination by their group against an outgroup or discrimination by an outgroup against their group. Further research could be conducted to specifically disentangle the effects of perpetrator and target groups on application of DBDs. For example, research could investigate the extent to which White participants would apply definitional boundaries differently when comparing discrimination by White people against Black people versus discrimination by East Asian people against Black people; or comparing discrimination by Black people against White people to discrimination by Black people against East Asian people.

While this is a limitation, we do not think it undermines the central premise of the studies (i.e. the double standard), and we furthermore think the research reflects the way in which the double standard is frequently applied in the real world (Giuffrida & Busby, 2018; Kelly, 2020). Furthermore, though this research was not designed to make these distinctions, it is noteworthy that, in all three studies, the correlation between narrow DBDs and the relevant moderator only occurred in the condition in which the White men were *perpetrators*, not *targets* of discrimination (see, e.g. Table 1). This suggests that the focus of the shift in definitional boundaries serves to protect the ingroup from accusations of discrimination rather than to increase the accusations against the outgroup. Still, this is at best a preliminary observation and future research could investigate these distinctions more deliberately. We consider this article to be a first step in describing and understanding this ingroup-serving double-standard, rather than a definitive statement on its nature, moderators or limits.

Another notable consideration is that our participants were always White men living in WEIRD (i.e., Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) societies in which White men are particularly privileged, such as the UK and the United States (Henrich et al., 2010). Relatedly – though we do not have data to confirm this – we might reasonably assume that most participants were also cisgender, heterosexual, White men. To be absolutely clear, we do not claim that all White men use such a double standard: not even all cisgender, heterosexual, White men. Nonetheless, it seems reasonable to suppose that White men with at least one stigmatised identity (e.g. White men who also identify as gay; White men who have a disability) are likely to demonstrate a softened, or even possibly eroded, double standard, even when that intersectional identity is not immediately relevant to the situation at hand (Harnois et al., 2020; Remedios & Snyder, 2018).

This limitation does not undermine the current findings. Indeed, a more rigorous screening of participants to ensure even fewer potentially stigmatized identities would probably *strengthen* the effects. This does highlight another limitation of this current research: we did not ask participants for any other detailed demographic information that might have shed light on these processes (e.g. sexual orientation, level of education, income, immigrant status). A more transparent and detailed description of participant samples would be beneficial for this research and in psychological research more generally. Nonetheless, a remaining theoretically interesting question is whether the moderation by SDO would also be affected by these other demographic variables (e.g. does SDO moderate the effect of sexual orientation on White men's tendency to employ the double standard?). These too are questions that could be addressed by future research.

Importantly, we do not claim that this effect is limited to White men, or even to privileged groups. This sample was merely the most straightforward test of the hypothesis. Individuals with stigmatised or minoritized identities may also demonstrate this double standard. For example, women may apply narrower definitional boundaries concerning discrimination against men, and Black people may apply narrower definitional boundaries concerning discrimination against White people. Certainly, it is not difficult to find instances of women saying that 'It is impossible for women to be sexist towards men' (O'Neill, 2017) or Black people saying that 'Black people can't be racist' (BBC Radio London, 2012).

However, this does not appear to be an example of generalised ingroup biases in the applications of definitional boundaries. A more nuanced consideration shows that people who make such claims are usually (and, in line with the academic consensus) drawing on the understanding that systems like 'sexism' and 'racism' require *power* as well as discriminatory behaviour (Becker & Swim, 2011; McIntosh, 1988; Salter et al., 2018; Tatum, 1999). It is unclear whether members of stigmatised groups would apply this double standard once considerations of power and privilege are removed. Again, future research may be useful here, such as research comparing Black people's definitional

boundaries for anti-Black discrimination versus anti-Asian discrimination.

Finally, it should be noted that race and gender are widely perceived (however incorrectly) as being based on simple biological differences (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009; Smedley & Smedley, 2005). It is possible that results may differ with groups that are perceived (again however correctly or incorrectly) as based on choice (e.g. religious, political or sexual minority groups; Helzer & Pizarro, 2011; Quinn et al., 2017; Tam et al., 2009). This current research found evidence of the double standard, but much more work could be done to understand the extent of the double standard and to clarify when, and for whom, it applies.

7 | CONCLUSIONS

This research found that White men applied narrow definitional boundaries to discrimination committed by men against women, and by White people against Black people, but applied broad definitional boundaries to discrimination committed by women against men, and by Black people against White people. This self-serving double standard in applying definitional boundaries was stronger among participants with higher levels of SDO. While arguments abound concerning how discrimination should be defined and whether any specific action should be interpreted as discrimination, this research offers compelling reasons not to invest in arguments for the 'correct' DBDs. Rather, understanding that drawing these boundaries is a subjective, inconsistent and motivated activity may allow us to take a step back and better understand the processes behind it.

OPEN PRACTICES

We preregistered the second and third experiments on the As Predicted website (https://aspredicted.org). No data collection was done before the preregistrations occurred. Preregistration and all materials used in both experiments are available either in the manuscript or on the preregistration website (https://aspredicted.org/bs23r.pdf; https://aspredicted.org/tz5kj.pdf). Power analyses and sensitivity analyses are all available in the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The authors confirm that the manuscript adheres to ethical guidelines specified in the BPS guidelines for research with human participants as well as authors' national ethics guidelines.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data from all studies are available upon request to the corresponding author.

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