Bringing "The Beholder" Center Stage:

On the Propensity to Perceive Overall Fairness

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Abstract

Scholars have long acknowledged that perceptions of justice and fairness are "in the eye of the beholder." Unfortunately, few attempts have been made to identify the substantive constructs that reside within that subjectivity. As a result, it is difficult to know whether low employee-rated fairness reflects managers who are truly violating justice rules, or whether it instead points to employees who are unusually strict in their perceptions. Drawing on fairness heuristic theory and conceptualizations of personality, we introduce *fairness propensity*—a tendency to view events, people, and organizations as fair. We theorize that fairness propensity is predicted—in part—by life narrative themes and trait dispositions that are communal in nature, given the relevance of fairness to relationships. We further theorize that fairness propensity shapes perceptions of overall fairness by influencing both "fairness anchors"—the first impressions of how fair authorities are—and perceptions of adherence to justice rules. A field study using employees from multiple organizations supported these predictions, even when controlling for other personality variables in the justice domain. We discuss the implications of fairness propensity for future research in the justice literature.

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There are a number of questions that managers can ask themselves to gauge whether they are effectively leading their people. One of those questions is "Am I a fair boss—do I behave in a just manner?" After all, employees who perceive high levels of justice and fairness view authorities as trustworthy, signaling that cooperation is appropriate (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001). They also feel valued and respected, which can make them more engaged in their jobs (Tyler & Blader, 2003). Justice and fairness also nurture a number of positive emotions, including happiness and pride (Cropanzano, Stein, & Nadisic, 2011). For these and other reasons, justice and fairness have been linked to higher levels of task performance and citizenship behavior (Colquitt et al., 2013).

Studies of justice and fairness have tended to proceed from two different perspectives. The event perspective bounds justice and fairness to particular events, such as a performance evaluation, an organizational change, or a dispute resolution (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015; Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001). Here managers might view themselves as just or fair if they seemed to execute an event in a way that fostered such perceptions. The entity perspective aggregates across multiple events to bound justice and fairness to a manager or organization in general (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015; Cropanzano et al., 2001). Here managers might view themselves as just or fair if their overall history seems to have fostered that reputation.

Although the focus on the justice and fairness of events and entities has given rise to a substantial literature (Colquitt et al., 2013), it ignores a key piece of the puzzle: the perceiver. Justice and fairness are known to be subjective—as being "in the eye of the beholder." Thus, a

manager's execution of an event may be viewed as less fair simply because of some traits of the perceiver. Likewise, a manager's overall reputation may skew less fair simply because of the perceiver's personality. Note that there is nothing inherently "wrong" with such subjectivity—it is a simple reality with constructs as abstract and idiosyncratic as justice and fairness. Still, this state of affairs could be frustrating for managers who do ask themselves how just and fair they are. To what extent is any feedback they receive driven by specific decisions and overall histories —or by the traits and qualities of the feedback giver?

The purpose of the present study was to begin to unpack the subjectivity inherent in perceivers as they consider justice and fairness. To begin to do so, we develop theory about some of the antecedents and consequences of *fairness propensity*, defined here as a tendency to view events, people, and organizations as fair. Employees who score in the high range on fairness propensity have a tendency to perceive fairness; those who score on the low range have a tendency to perceive unfairness. All else equal, employees who are higher in fairness propensity should perceive higher levels of *justice rule adherence*, defined here as the adherence to the procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational rules that reflect appropriateness in decision contexts (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015). They should also perceive higher levels of *overall fairness*, defined here as a global perception of appropriateness that typically lays "downstream" from justice (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Ambrose, Wo, & Griffith, 2015; see also Colquitt & Rodell, 2015). We use the term fairness propensity to draw a rough analogy to trust propensity—a cross-situational tendency to accept vulnerability to others (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Employees who score in the high range on trust propensity have a tendency to engage in trusting actions; those who score on the low range have a tendency to act with suspicion. Just as

trust propensity can explain variations in trust that lay apart from trustworthiness (Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007; Mayer et al., 1995), so too can fairness propensity explain variations in overall fairness that lay apart from justice rule adherence.

Although a number of theoretical perspectives could shed light on fairness propensity (for reviews, see Colquitt & Zipay, 2015; Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler, & Schminke, 2001), our investigation uses fairness heuristic theory as an integrative lens (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001). This theory argues that employees use an overall sense of fairness to decide whether to cooperate with people in the context of work relationships. It also describes how information on justice rule adherence is used—somewhat quickly and imperfectly—to construct impressions of overall fairness. We chose fairness heuristic theory for this initial exploration of fairness propensity for three reasons. First, it draws an explicit distinction between justice rule adherence and overall fairness, paralleling the distinction drawn by trust scholars between trustworthiness and trust. Second, the theory focuses on the mechanics by which perceptions of justice rule adherence give rise to impressions of overall fairness. That focus informed our exploration of the mechanics of fairness propensity's potential influence. Third, fairness heuristic theory's relational bent offered one potential starting point for identifying some of the antecedents of fairness propensity. Proudfoot and Lind (2015) argue that the theory "takes the view that people think about fairness in terms of their relationships with other people." (p. 373). We drew on that focus to identify relational antecedents of fairness propensity, though other antecedents could certainly flow from other theoretical lenses (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015; Cropanzano et al., 2001).

Our theoretical model is shown in Figure 1. We begin by acknowledging that, as a personality trait, fairness propensity should be driven by both nurture and nature (McAdams &

Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 2008). Personality scholars tend to operationalize such forces using life narratives—the themes, plots, and images in people's life stories that lend identity—and broad trait dimensions—dispositions that have genetic underpinnings and explain basic cross-situational tendencies. Of course, life narratives and broad trait dispositions can be categorized in a myriad of ways. One higher-order structure for classifying both is the distinction between communion and agency, where communion emphasizes connection with others and participation in collectives whereas agency emphasizes the distinctiveness of the self and the desire to master one's environment (Bakan, 1966; Horowitz, Wilson, Turan, Zolotsev, Constantino, & Henderson, 2006; McAdams & Pals, 2006). Given that fairness heuristic theory views fairness as a phenomenon with a relational bent (Lind, 2001; Proudfoot & Lind, 2015), our model focuses on *communal life narratives* and *communal trait dispositions* as predictors. In terms of the consequences of fairness propensity, we draw from fairness heuristic theory to argue that propensity can shape a sense of overall fairness in three distinct ways. First, it can shape an employee's "first fairness-relevant impression" of a manager—termed here a *fairness anchor*. Second, it can serve as a filter that informs the data gathered on managers' justice rule adherence. Third, it can continue to bring a presumption of fairness that alters perceptions directly, even when considered alongside the fairness anchor and justice rule adherence.

By illustrating the role that fairness propensity plays in perceptions of justice and fairness, our study yields insights that would not be anticipated from extrapolations of existing work. Indeed, existing studies have tended to argue that justice rule adherence is the only driver of overall fairness—that the latter is a substitutable "experiential amalgam" of the former (see Ambrose et al., 2015, for a review). Our findings will show that something *other than* justice rule

adherence has a surprisingly strong effect on overall fairness. Moreover, the consensus in the literature integrating justice and personality has tended to argue that personality *moderates* the effects of justice or fairness on subsequent reactions (e.g., Colquitt, Scott, Judge, & Shaw, 2006; De Cremer & Sedikides, 2005; Kamdar, McAllister, & Turban, 2006; Skarlicki, Folger, & Tesluk, 1999; Witt, Kacmar, & Andrews, 2001; for an exception, see Bianchi & Brockner, 2012).

That consensus about moderation can be seen most explicitly in the literatures on equity sensitivity (Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1987), sensitivity to befallen injustice (Schmitt, Neumann, & Montada, 1995), justice orientation (Liao & Rupp, 2005), and—to a lesser extent—belief in a just world (Lerner & Miller, 1978). Our findings will show that the direct effect of personality on justice rule adherence and overall fairness may be more pivotal. Importantly, our study will also show that fairness propensity's ability to predict overall fairness exceeds that of equity sensitivity, sensitivity to befallen injustice, justice orientation, and belief in a just world. As can be seen in the descriptions in the Appendix, those constructs were not created to explain why employees might perceive higher or lower levels of fairness in their own working lives. Equity sensitivity, sensitivity to befallen injustice, and justice orientation were created to capture a general sensitivity to fairness issues. Fairness propensity should therefore have effects that lay apart from those other constructs.

Fairness propensity's effects should also lay apart from those of belief in a just world. That construct—defined as the sense that we live in a world where people get what they deserve and deserve what they get (Lerner, 1970; Lerner & Miller, 1978)—was created to understand responses to the suffering of others. Unlike our construct, belief in a just world is typically limited to issues of distributive justice and "deservingness" (Collins, 1974; Furnham & Procter,

1992; Lipkus, 1991; Rubin & Peplau, 1975). Contemporary viewpoints of justice and fairness have moved beyond outcomes, and include many concepts that are expected regardless of "deservingness." For example, justice scholars would categorize truthful, polite, consistent, and unbiased treatment as fair regardless of the actions, traits, and inputs of the recipient. Belief in a just world also focuses on a sort of "karmic" justice that goes beyond the sphere of the respondent by evoking concepts like fate and luck (Collins, 1974; Lipkus, 1991; Rubin & People, 1975). Contemporary viewpoints of justice and fairness lack such a focus.

We believe the introduction of fairness propensity offers important implications for managers and organizations. Given the effects of justice and fairness on work outcomes, managers' ability to foster such perceptions is likely to be an important part of their leadership development efforts. For example, one leading 360-degree feedback tool assesses managers on a number of procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational justice rules, including voice, consistency, representativeness, ethicality, equity, respect, and justification (Dalal, Lin, Smith, & Zickar, 2008). Such tools could feed into justice training initiatives, where managers who do not seem to be fostering perceptions of justice and fairness could be "coached up" to do so (see Skarlicki & Latham, 2005, for a review). Such efforts need to be able to separate managers who violate justice rules from managers who have several employees low on fairness propensity. Of course, that same understanding would allow scholars to more accurately test models with justice rule adherence and overall fairness, while improving both conceptual understanding and predictive power.

What is Fairness Propensity and How Does It Develop?

To understand what fairness propensity is in our theorizing, it is necessary to draw distinctions among the various types of constructs in the personality domain. McAdams and Pals (2006) define personality as "an individual's unique variation on the general evolutionary design for human nature, expressed as a developing pattern of dispositional traits, characteristic adaptations, and integrative life stories complexly and differentially situated in culture" (p. 212, see also McAdams & Olson, 2010). That definition conveys that personality is a function of both nurture and nature. Although experiences shape life stories and the sense that people make of them, around half the variance in dispositional traits can be tied to genes (McAdams & Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 2008).

We cast fairness propensity as a "characteristic adaptation." That term is used to refer to tendencies that are more specific than broad trait dispositions and are more contextualized in their situational relevance (McAdams & Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 2008). They are still "characteristic" insofar as they reflect something typical of the individual but are "adaptations" because they have developed within a specific domain of life. The applied psychology literature includes a number of characteristic adaptations, including regulatory focus, self-esteem, coping styles, interests, and values (McAdams & Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 2008). Fairness propensity fits into the characteristic adaptation category because it is definitionally situated in circumstances where the appropriateness of events, people, and organizations is an issue.

Life Narratives and Fairness Propensity

Much of the nurture aspect of personality can be captured by what scholars term integrative life narratives (McAdams & Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 2008). People view their lives as ongoing stories, with those stories giving them a sense of meaning and identity. For

example, a person who was raised in a poor neighborhood, was then surrounded by more heralded students in school, but then graduated at the top of her class might construct an "underdog" life narrative. The notion that she is an "underdog" might wind up having as big an impact on her typical thoughts, feelings, and behaviors as any genetic dispositions. Indeed, life narratives can become central enough to people that they reconstruct their pasts and approach their futures in a way that "keeps the story going."

The communion vs. agency distinction has become the dominant taxonomy for classifying life narratives (McAdams, Hoffman, Mansfield, & Day, 1996). Life narratives with a communion theme emphasize interpersonal connections, belonging, affiliation, and community. In contrast, life narratives with an agency theme emphasize strength, mastery, achievement, separation, and independence. As described above, the "underdog" story would be viewed as more agentic than communal. However, one could envision a variant of the story where a classmate, teacher, or mentor was instrumental in guiding her life onto its successful track. In that circumstance, the story would be described as highly communal as well, lending it additional meaning for the person's identity.

As noted above, fairness heuristic theory argues that fairness is relevant to relational dynamics (Lind, 2001; Proudfoot & Lind, 2015). One of the reasons for thinking about fairness, according to the theory, is to decide whether to cooperate with organizational representatives. This relational thread can be seen in precursors to fairness heuristic theory (Proudfoot & Lind, 2015). For example, Lind and Tyler's (1988) description of the group-value model argued that individuals are predisposed to belong to groups and that they are sensitive to signals about whether those groups value them. Fairness was highlighted as an especially salient signal.

Similarly, Tyler and Lind's (1992) description of the relational model argued that individuals want to know their standing within the groups to which they belong. Fairness provides information relative to that standing. As Smith, Tyler, Huo, Ortiz, and Lind (1998) summarized, "People care about treatment quality because fair and reasonable treatment by authorities communicates to them that they are respected and valued group members, not because it indicates how favorable or unfavorable their short-term outcomes are or will be." (p. 489).

Our theorizing argues that, because fairness is so tinged with relational meaning, one potential antecedent to fairness propensity should be communal life narratives. People whose life stories emphasize strong interpersonal connections, deep levels of belonging, and frequent instances of caring should amass a deep reservoir of fair experiences. They will also likely develop a confidence about cooperation with others, gaining a firm belief that cooperation is more likely to be rewarding than exploitative. Taken together, these tendencies should make them less likely to view events, people, and organizations as unfair, and more likely to give authorities the "benefit of the doubt." Some support for that assertion comes from McAdams et al. (1996), who linked communal life narratives to "intimacy striving"—a characteristic adaption that reflects a desire to build connections.

Hypothesis 1: The communal content in life narratives is positively related to fairness propensity.

Broad Trait Dispositions and Fairness Propensity

Much of the nature aspect of personality can be captured by broad trait dispositions (McAdams & Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 2008). These dispositions are often categorized taxonomically, as in the five-factor model of conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism,

openness to experience, and extraversion (e.g., Goldberg, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 1985). An alternative taxonomy—the HEXACO model—adds a sixth factor termed honesty-humility (Ashton et al., 2004; Ashton & Lee, 2007). Studies of identical and fraternal twins suggest that around half of the variance in people's standing on broad trait dispositions is genetic (Loehlin, McCrae, Costa, & John, 1998). As a result, longitudinal studies show that relative standing on such dispositions is rather stable across the life span (Roberts, Walton, & Viechtbauer, 2006).

If fairness propensity is shaped—in part—by communal life narratives, it follows that it may also be predicted by communal trait dispositions. The question therefore becomes which of the traits included in relevant taxonomies represent communal tendencies. Horowitz et al. (2006) presented a model of communion and agency that can offer some guidance on this question. Drawing on Wiggins (1979), the authors described how traits could be arrayed in a circumplex fashion with communion on the horizontal axis and agency on the vertical axis. Similar to models of mood (e.g., Watson & Tellegen, 1985), the combinations of the axes create eight octants. Three octants represent combinations with high communion, two represent combinations with average communion, and three represent combinations with low communion.

The high communion octants include warm-agreeable, marked by adjectives such as forgiving, cooperative, accommodating, gentle, kind, and sympathetic (Horowitz et al., 2006; Wiggins, 1979). They also include gregarious-extraverted, marked by adjectives like friendly, genial, neighborly, vivacious, enthusiastic, and cheerful (Horowitz et al., 2006; Wiggins, 1979). They also include unassuming-ingenuous, marked by adjectives such as nonegotistical, unvain, boastless, undeceptive, uncalculating, and unsly (Horowitz et al., 2006; Wiggins, 1979). Thus, these three octants include trait dispositions that would reside in the agreeableness and

extraversion portions of the five-factor model (e.g., Goldberg, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 1985) and the honesty-humility portion of the HEXACO model (Ashton et al., 2004; Ashton & Lee, 2007).

From an evolutionary perspective, traits like warm-agreeable, gregarious-extraverted, and unassuming-ingenuous are adaptive because they help human beings "get along" (Horowitz et al., 2006). After all, more close-knit groups are better able to weather the survival challenges presented by an uncertain world. That focus on "getting along" closely resembles one of the core aspects of fairness heuristic theory—where employees use fairness perceptions to decide whether to cooperate with others (Lind, 2001; Proudfoot & Lind, 2015). It therefore follows that a characteristic adaptation like fairness propensity could evolve—in part—out of traits that have a similar conceptual core. Put differently, because fairness is tinged with relational meaning, fairness propensity could be shaped by traits that are more communal in nature. Thus, employees who are forgiving, gentle, friendly, vivacious, nonegotistical, and undeceptive should be less likely to doubt that events, people, and organizations are fair.

Hypothesis 2: Communal trait dispositions (i.e., warm-agreeable, gregarious-extraverted, unassuming-ingenuous) are positively related to fairness propensity.

How Does Fairness Propensity Shape Overall Fairness?

Fairness heuristic theory is unique for its detailed focus on how employees form perceptions of overall fairness (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001). The theory argues that employees are motivated to form perceptions of overall fairness quickly, so that they can be used as a heuristic for guiding cooperation decisions. That need for expediency exists when employees are new to the organization, but surfaces again when some significant or unexpected event occurs at work. Importantly, the theory points out how much ambiguity exists when trying

to gauge fairness (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001). Employees may not be privy to pieces of information relevant to justice rules, with other information being multifaceted and complex. For example, attempts to gauge rules like equity, bias suppression, accuracy, and truthfulness likely require the consideration of numerous pieces of information that are vague, equivocal, or unclear.

What are the implications of such ambiguity for fairness propensity? Some guidance can be taken from the literature on trust propensity, which grew out of Rotter's (1967) interest in whether some people had a dispositional willingness to rely on the words and promises of others. One of the questions posed by Rotter (1980) was whether more trusting people were in fact more gullible—defined as believing another person when there was clear-cut evidence that they should not be believed. Rotter's (1980) research (see also Rotter, 1967, 1971) did not support any linkage between trust propensity and gullibility. Instead, he argued that trusting people were more trusting of strangers—people for whom no clear-cut evidence existed at all. Rotter (1980) reasoned that trusting people had a general positive expectancy—one whose influence ebbed when relevant data were present but flowed when such data were absent.

Put differently, trust propensity colored the ambiguity present when making judgments about trustworthiness. We expect a similar overarching effect for fairness propensity. Van den Bos (2003) noted that the ambiguity inherent in forming fairness perceptions can allow other things to infuse such judgments. Although his focus was on state affect, we expect a similar effect for fairness propensity. Our theorizing will describe three specific forms that this effect can take. One form is by influencing the first impression that employees form about their manager's fairness, during the time period where they are first coping with ambiguity about justice rules. Research on the confirmation bias shows that individuals seek and interpret evidence in a way

that is partial to existing expectations (Nickerson, 1998). In much the same way that trusting people think more positively of strangers, employees high in fairness propensity should react to ambiguity with more of a "positive offset."

We term this first impression of overall fairness a "fairness anchor" because it may continue to influence overall fairness long after those early interactions with the manager. Research on anchoring and adjustment suggests that starting points—even when not strictly relevant to a decision—can bias subsequent judgments because individuals do not sufficiently adjust away from them (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). One reason for that lack of adjusting is the anchor restricts subsequent data collection, making it less likely that individuals will notice data that conflict with the anchor (Chapman & Johnson, 1999). Such effects should be especially strong with the fairness anchor given that it is relevant to overall fairness and was not supplied by some outside party. Moreover, fairness heuristic theory itself argues that employees should be reluctant to adjust away from initial fairness impressions because doing so is cognitively effortful (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001).

Hypothesis 3: Fairness propensity has a positive indirect effect on overall fairness through the level of the fairness anchor.

Of course, organizational life will produce additional data after a fairness anchor is formed, as employees gain new experiences when cooperating with their manager. When might those new experiences alter employee perceptions of overall fairness? Fairness heuristic theory argues that employees will shift back into a "judgmental phase" where new data is examined when important events occur, or when events inconsistent with their fairness perceptions occur (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001). For example, key organizational changes or important human

resource decisions could trigger a renewed focus on justice rule adherence, as could some surprising decision event or managerial action.

In support of such assertions, laboratory and field research has shown more careful attention to justice rule adherence in times of organizational change or uncertainty (Jones & Martens, 2009; Rodell & Colquitt, 2009; Van den Bos, Wilke, & Lind, 1998). The operative question for our theorizing is what role fairness propensity might play as adherence to procedural, distributive, interpersonal, or informational justice rules is considered anew. We argue that a confirmation bias could again shape the interpretation of the new data, because those new data will still possess a number of ambiguities. Fairness propensity will lend a positive offset to those ambiguities, resulting in more favorable evaluations of justice rule adherence. To return to our trust propensity analogy, research has found that individuals high in trust propensity wind up viewing others as more trustworthy—as having higher levels of ability, benevolence, and integrity (Colquitt et al., 2007).

Hypothesis 4: Fairness propensity has a positive indirect effect on overall fairness through perceived justice rule adherence.

Finally, our model in Figure 1 suggests that fairness propensity can continue to influence overall fairness, even apart from its effects on the fairness anchor and justice rule adherence. This is, of course, the typical effect expected of trust propensity, which predicts trust levels even when controlling for trustworthiness (Colquitt et al., 2007; Mayer et al., 1995). Why might fairness propensity have such a direct effect? One reason is that overall fairness may be driven by idiosyncratic factors other than justice rule adherence or first impressions. Hollensbe, Khazanchi, and Masterson (2008) gathered qualitative data suggesting that overall fairness was

influenced by factors ranging from manager traits to organizational turnover. Even these idiosyncratic factors will have ambiguity attached to them, creating opportunities for fairness propensity to color their interpretation. For example, employees high in fairness propensity may be more likely to view the low turnover rate of a unit as indicative of high overall fairness, even when such data is only loosely diagnostic of fairness levels.

Hypothesis 5: Fairness propensity has a positive direct effect on overall fairness.

Measurement Validation

Before testing our hypotheses for fairness propensity, it was necessary to validate a measure for the new construct. Using Hinkin's procedures, we conducted three separate studies to develop and validate our measure (Hinkin, 1998; Hinkin & Tracey, 1999). These three studies tested the content validity of our new measure, along with its convergent and discriminant validity and factor structure.

The first measurement validation study used a sample of 220 undergraduates from a large southeastern university. The average age of the participants was 20.16 (SD = 2.13) and 51% were female. Eighty-four percent of the participants were Caucasian. After deductively generating 12 potential items consistent with the definition of fairness propensity, we asked these participants to rate the degree to which the items corresponded with that definition (Hinkin & Tracey, 1999). Specifically, the participants rated each item's definitional correspondence using the following scale: 1 = *Statement is an extremely bad match to the definition* to 7 = *Statement is an extremely good match to the definition*. Based on the item-level correspondence ratings, we then trimmed the item pool to develop a six-item scale, shown in Table 1. Ratings for the six items ranged from 5.36 to 5.51, which indicates adequate definitional correspondence based on other uses of this

method (Colquitt, Baer, Long, & Halvorsen-Ganepola, 2014; Gardner, 2005; Long, Baer, Colquitt, Outlaw, & Dhensa-Kalon, 2015; Rodell, 2013).

In addition to examining whether our fairness propensity items corresponded to our fairness propensity definition, this study also examined whether items from other justice-relevant personality variables *failed to correspond* to that definition. Those other personality variables included equity sensitivity (King & Miles, 1994), sensitivity to befallen injustice (Schmitt, Gollwitzer, Maes, & Arbach, 2005), justice orientation (Rupp, Byrne, & Wadlington, 2003), and belief in a just world (Furnham & Procter, 1992). The items for those scales are described in the Appendix. In cases where the scales included multiple subscales, we focused on the subscale *most overlapping* with fairness propensity. That choice provided a conservative test of the distinctiveness of fairness propensity relative to these other variables. We also included trust propensity in this role, given its functional similarity in some of our theorizing (Mayer & Davis, 1999). The mean definitional correspondence for the five scales with the fairness propensity definition ranged from 3.52 to 3.94, as shown in Table 2. Moreover, pairwise comparisons revealed that all five scales had statistically significantly lower levels of definitional correspondence than did the fairness propensity scale.

The second measurement validation study used a sample of 152 participants from Mechanical Turk. The average age of the participants was 38.82 (SD = 10.61) and 46% were female. Seventy-three percent of the participants were Caucasian and all were employed full-time. We asked these participants to complete our six-item measure of fairness propensity, along with the same measures of equity sensitivity, sensitivity to befallen injustice, justice orientation, belief in a just world, and trust propensity. The resulting correlations and descriptive statistics are

shown in Table 3, with our fairness propensity scale having a coefficient alpha of .93. The alphas for the other personality variables were all acceptable, save for belief in a just world. Studies employing scale measures of belief in a just world have often reported low reliabilities (Birt & Dion, 1987; Dalbert, Lipkus, Sallay, & Goch, 2001; Reich & Wang, 2015; Whatley, 1993).

We conducted a series of Confirmative Factor Analyses (CFA's) using LISREL 8.72 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1989). First, we conducted a CFA on just our six-item measure of fairness propensity, with the fit of the model proving sufficient: χ^2 (9) = 79.69, $p < .001$; CFI = .94; IFI = .94; SRMR = .049. The factor loadings ranged from .70 to .77 and are shown in Table 1, alongside the definitional correspondence levels from the prior validation study.

We then conducted a CFA which placed fairness propensity alongside the other five personality variables. Our focus here was not on the general fit of that model, given that it included five other scales that were not created by us and were not directly relevant to our hypothesis testing. Rather, our focus was on whether fit would be significantly harmed if we constrained the correlations between fairness propensity and those other variables to 1.0 (in the case of expected positive relationships) or -1.0 (in the case of expected negative relationships). To the degree that such constraints harmed model fit, fairness propensity would not be viewed as "the same as" the other five personality variables. The fit of the baseline CFA was as follows: χ^2 (930) = 1802.66, $p < .001$; CFI = .88; IFI = .88; and SRMR = .099. Importantly, all five equality constraints resulted in significant decrements in fit: χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with equity sensitivity = 165.47, $p < .001$; χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with sensitivity to befallen injustice = 527.70, $p < .001$; χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with justice orientation = 280.36, $p < .001$; χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with belief in a just world = 39.34, $p < .001$; and χ^2 (1) for equality

constraint with trust propensity = 151.82, $p < .001$. We also conducted a CFA will all items loading onto one factor. This model resulted in a significantly worse fit than our baseline model: χ^2 (15) = 1172.46, $p < .001$. Taken together, these results support the discriminant validity of our measure of fairness propensity. The correlations in Table 3 offer additional support for discriminant validity, as the correlations between fairness propensity and the other personality variables averaged an absolute value of .33.

To provide further support for discriminant validity, we also conducted an average variance extracted (AVE) analysis in order to assess the discriminant validity between fairness propensity and the other five personality variables. This analysis involves comparing the AVE for fairness propensity with the squared correlation between fairness propensity and each variable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In order to establish discriminant validity, the AVE should be greater than the squared correlation between fairness propensity and each of the other five personality variables. The AVE for fairness propensity was .55, which is greater than the squared correlation between fairness propensity and equity sensitivity (.00), sensitivity to befallen injustice (.05), justice orientation (.16), belief in a just world (.19), and trust propensity (.31), indicating adequate discriminant validity.

We conducted one additional measurement validation study, focused specifically on the discriminant validity between fairness propensity and belief in a just world. This study used a sample of 157 participants from Mechanical Turk. The average age of the participants was 34.96 (*SD* = 11.04) and 36% were female. Sixty-seven percent of the participants were Caucasian and all were employed full-time. We asked these participants to complete our six-item measure of fairness propensity along with five different belief in a just world scales. Rubin and Peplau's

(1975) 20-item scale includes the item, “Men who keep in shape have little chance of suffering a heart attack.” Lipkus’s (1991) seven-item scale includes the item, “I feel that people who meet with misfortune have brought in on themselves.” Collins’s (1974) 11-item scale includes the item, “Most misfortunes are the result of lack of ability, ignorance, laziness, or all three.” Furnham and Procter (1992) created a 10-item variant focused specifically on a person’s own life, with items including, “I am less likely to get hurt in traffic accidents if I drive with caution.” Finally, Fryxell and Gordon (1989) created a 14-item variant that bounded Rubin and Paplau’s (1975) items to a work context, with items including, “In almost any job, people who do the job well rise to the top.” Those sample items reiterate the distinction we drew in the opening between fairness propensity and belief in a just world. The latter has a particular focus on distributive justice and typically focuses more on “karmic justice” in the form of fate and luck.

The resulting correlations and descriptive statistics are shown in Table 4, with our fairness propensity scale having a coefficient alpha of .84. The alphas for the belief in a just world scales ranged from .57 to .91. As in the prior validation study, we compared the fit of a baseline CFA to models where correlations between fairness propensity and the belief in a just world scales were constrained to 1.0. To the degree that such constraints harmed model fit, fairness propensity would not be viewed as “the same as” those scales. The fit of the baseline CFA was as follows: χ^2 (2195) = 4694.72, $p < .001$; CFI = .86; IFI = .87; and SRMR = .12. Importantly, all five equality constraints resulted in significant decrements in fit: χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with Rubin and Peplau = 159.71, $p < .001$; χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with Lipkus = 230.67, $p < .001$; χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with Collins = 205.67, $p < .001$; χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with Furnham and Procter = 57.86, $p < .001$; and χ^2 (1) for equality

constraint with Fryxell and Gordon = 178.15, $p < .001$. We also conducted a CFA with all items from fairness propensity and the five belief in a just world scales loading onto one factor. This model resulted in significantly worse fit than our baseline model: χ^2 (15) = 501.12, $p < .001$. Taken together, those results support the distinction between fairness propensity and belief in a just world. The correlations in Table 4 offer additional support, as the correlations between fairness propensity and the belief in a just world scales averaged .37.

We also conducted an average variance extracted (AVE) analysis in order to assess the discriminant validity between fairness propensity and the five belief in a just world scales. In order to establish discriminant validity, the AVE should be greater than the squared correlation between fairness propensity and each of the five belief in a just world scales. The AVE for fairness propensity was .39, which is greater than the squared correlation between fairness propensity and Rubin and Peplau (.16), Lipkus (.16), Collins (.11), Furnham and Procter (.09), and Fryxell and Gordon (.17).

Method

Sample and Procedure

We recruited employees for our substantive study using online classified advertisements posted in 18 major metropolitan areas across the United States. To be eligible for the study, employees had to be 18 years or older, work at least 35 hours per week, and provide contact information for a coworker who could also participate in the study. This coworker was described as someone with whom the employee interacts with regularly at work, who knows the employee fairly well, and who reports to the same supervisor. The advertisement directed interested employees to a university-branded webpage to register for the study. That registration included

informed consent, demographic information, and contact information for their coworker. For their involvement, employees were paid $10 and coworkers were paid $5. A total of 631 participants completed the online registration. The average age of the 631 employees was 32.95 (*SD* = 9.83); 67% of the employees were female, and 55% were Caucasian. Employees' average tenure with the organization was 5.18 (*SD* = 4.26), their average tenure with their supervisor was 3.96 (*SD* = 5.53), and their average tenure with their coworker was 3.74 (*SD* = 2.95). Highest education achieved included high school (10%), some college (31%), college (34%), masters (21%), and post-masters (4%).

The sources and waves used for our study variables are summarized in Table 5. At Time 1, employees were sent links to a survey that asked them to write about their life narratives, supplying content for assessing a communal theme. Content relevant to that theme was then coded by the research team. Such coding is the standard approach for measuring life narrative themes and has the added advantage of creating both source and time separation in testing communal narrative→fairness propensity hypotheses. Source and time separation are important procedural remedies for common method bias (Doty & Glick, 1998; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). The survey also included a "short form" self-report measure of trait dispositions (Ashton & Lee, 2009) as a check on cross-source convergence with the coworker report discussed below. Fairness propensity was also included to be able to estimate its test-retest reliability with its assessment on subsequent surveys. All surveys contained careless respondent checks (Meade & Craig, 2012), with participants told to select one specific response option on check items interspersed throughout the surveys. We received 408 employee Time 1 surveys that passed the careless respondent checks, for a response rate of 65%.

Also at Time 1, coworkers were sent links to a survey that included a “long form” measure of trait dispositions (Lee & Ashton, 2004). Meta-analyses have revealed that other ratings of personality are more predictive than self ratings (Oh, Wang, & Mount, 2011). We therefore used coworker reports of trait dispositions when testing the communal traits→fairness propensity hypothesis. This design choice allowed us to create both source and time separation in those hypothesis tests. A measure of fairness propensity was also included to gauge cross-source convergence with the employee report. We verified that coworkers and employees were not the same person by sending coworkers the survey links personally—as opposed to asking employees to forward them—and by ensuring that email addresses and IP addresses were distinct. We also required distinct physical mailing addresses for sending payments. Finally, we communicated with coworkers directly over email when sending reminders and when scheduling the mailing of payments. We received 188 coworker Time 1 surveys that passed the careless respondent checks, for a response rate of 46%.

Time 2 was conducted four weeks after Time 1. The four week lag was chosen to be long enough that transient affect and implicit theory sources of common method bias would be minimized but not so long that sample attrition would be problematic. The lag also allowed us to build temporal precedence into many of our hypothesis tests. At Time 2, the employees with completed coworker surveys were sent links to a survey that included measures of fairness propensity and justice rule adherence. This administration of fairness propensity was used in testing the communal narrative→fairness propensity and communal traits→fairness propensity hypotheses. As noted below, the fairness anchor was coded by the research team using a description written by the employees, creating some source separation in testing the fairness

propensity→fairness anchor→overall fairness hypothesis. The survey also included measures of equity sensitivity, sensitivity to befallen injustice, justice orientation, belief in a just world, and trust propensity—included for use as control variables. We received 149 employee Time 2 surveys that passed the careless respondent checks, for a response rate of 79%.

Time 3 was conducted four weeks after Time 2. That lag was chosen to match the Time 1 to Time 2 lag and to balance the same design issues of common method bias, attrition, and temporal precedence. At Time 3, the employees with completed Time 2 surveys were sent links to a survey that included the measure of overall fairness. This design choice added some temporal separation in testing fairness propensity→fairness anchor→overall fairness, fairness propensity→justice rule adherence→overall fairness, and fairness propensity→overall fairness hypotheses. Fairness propensity was again included to estimate test-retest reliability. We received 127 Time 3 surveys that passed the careless respondent checks, for a response rate of 85%.

The average age of the 127 employees was 35.80 (*SD* = 11.74); 68% of the employees were female, and 68% were Caucasian. Employees' average tenure with the organization was 5.87 (*SD* = 5.72), their average tenure with their supervisor was 4.21 (*SD* = 4.76), and their average tenure with their coworker was 4.13 (*SD* = 4.08). Highest education achieved included high school (8%), some college (25%), college (43%), masters (17%), and post-masters (5%). The employees worked in a variety of industries: management and administration (16%), education (14%), professional services (13%), healthcare (13%), government (13%), retail/ dining (12%), and manufacturing (6%). That variation in industry, together with the fact that employees came from 18 different cities, gives our sample a certain level of external validity. Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2002) argued that "purposive sampling of heterogeneous settings"

is one method for improving the external validity of a study. The average age of the coworkers was 37.85 (*SD* = 14.68); 55% were female, and 63% were Caucasian. The coworkers' average tenure with the organization was 5.54 years (*SD* = 5.55). Highest education achieved included high school (11%), some college (33%), college (30%), masters (19%), and post-masters (2%).

Measures

Unless otherwise noted, all measures used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*.

Life narratives. We followed McAdams's guidelines for assessing a communal theme within life narratives (McAdams, 2001; McAdams, Anyidoho, Brown, Huang, Kaplan, & Machado, 2004). Specifically, we asked employees to describe moments in their lives that stood out as an especially positive event, an especially negative event, and a key turning point. These three events, when taken together, are believed to capture the major elements of one's life story. For each event, we asked employees to describe what happened in detail, including where and when it occurred, who was involved, and what they were thinking and feeling. We also asked them to describe what they thought this event said about their lives.

We coded the resulting life stories for their communion content. McAdams and McClean (2013: 234) defined communion as "The degree to which the protagonist demonstrates or experiences interpersonal connection through love, friendship, dialogue, or connection to a broad collective. The story emphasizes intimacy, caring, and belongingness." The communion content was coded on a scale ranging from -3 (clearly negative communion content) to 3 (clearly positive communion content). Excerpts of stories with positive and negative communion content are included in Table 6. All authors first coded 30 stories to understand the content, establish a

coding scheme, and identify exemplars. Then two of the authors independently coded the entire sample for communion content. The interrater reliability for that coding was strong, with an ICC(2) of .89.

Trait dispositions. Coworkers rated the employees on their trait dispositions using the peer version of the HEXACO-100 (Lee & Ashton, 2004). Warm-agreeable (α = .83) was assessed with two of the instrument's agreeableness subscales: forgiveness ("They rarely hold a grudge, even against people who have badly wronged them.") and gentleness ("They generally accept people's faults without complaining about them."). Gregarious-extraverted (α = .83) was assessed with two of the instrument's extraversion subscales: sociability ("They enjoy having lots of people around to talk with.") and liveliness ("On most days, they feel cheerful and optimistic."). Unassuming-ingenuous (α = .73) was assessed with two of the instrument's honesty-humility subscales: modesty ("They think that they are an ordinary person who is no better than others.") and sincerity ("They wouldn't pretend to like someone just to get that person to do favors for them."). We chose the HEXACO instrument for our paper given its inclusion of facet-level subscales, the availability of both a peer form and a short form, and its inclusion of honesty-humility in addition to the Big Five (Ashton & Lee, 2009; Lee & Ashton, 2004).

Fairness propensity. We measured employee fairness propensity with the six items shown in Table 1. The scale again exhibited strong reliability (α = .90).

Fairness anchor. To operationalize the first fairness-related impression that employees formed about their managers, we asked employees the following: "Identify one scene that stands out as the first meaningful memory of fairness related to your supervisor. This would be a memorable, vivid, or important scene involving your supervisor, positive or negative, that stands

out as being related to fairness at work. Please describe this scene in detail, including what happened, when and where it happened, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling." The overall fairness of the scene was coded on a scale ranging from -3 (an especially unfair experience) to 3 (an especially fair experience). Excerpts of accounts with especially fair and especially unfair content are included in Table 7. All authors first coded 30 accounts to understand the content, establish a coding scheme, and identify exemplars. Then two of the authors independently coded the entire sample. The interrater reliability for that coding was strong, with an ICC(2) of .97.

Justice rule adherence. We measured perceptions of procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational justice using Colquitt's (2001) measure, which uses a 1 = *To a Very Small Extent* to 5 = *To a Very Large Extent* scale. We asked employees to refer to "the procedures your supervisor uses to make decisions about pay, rewards, evaluations, promotions, assignments, etc." when responding to the procedural justice items, which included "Are those procedures applied consistently?" (7 items; $\alpha = .88$). We asked employees to refer to "the outcomes you receive from your supervisor, such as pay, rewards, evaluations, promotions, assignments, etc." when responding to the distributive justice items, which included "Do those outcomes reflect the effort you have put into your work?" (4 items; $\alpha = .94$). We asked employees to refer to "the interactions you have with your supervisor as decision-making procedures (about pay, rewards, evaluations, promotions, assignments, etc.) are implemented." when responding to the interpersonal justice items, which included "Do they treat you in a polite manner?" (4 items; $\alpha = .86$). We asked employees to refer to "the explanations your supervisor offers as decision-making procedures (about pay, rewards, evaluations, promotions, assignments,

etc.) are implemented." when responding to the informational justice items, which included "Do they explain decision-making procedures thoroughly?" (5 items; α = .87).

Overall fairness. We measured overall fairness with Choi's (2008) three-item measure. Sample items included "My supervisor is a fair person" and "Fairness is the word that best describes my supervisor" (α = .96). We chose Choi's (2008) measure because it avoids the word "treats"—a term used in some other measures that may conflate overall fairness with interpersonal fairness (Colquitt, 2012).

Control variables. We included equity sensitivity (King & Miles, 1994; α = .62), sensitivity to befallen injustice (Schmitt et al., 2005; α = .90), justice orientation (Rupp et al., 2005; α = .73), belief in a just world (Furnham & Procter, 1992; α = .37), and trust propensity (Mayer & Davis, 1999; α = .73) to verify that fairness propensity could predict overall fairness incremental to these existing variables (see the Appendix for their items). We also investigated a number of demographic controls, including employee age, gender, race, and tenure. In general, these demographic variables did not exhibit significant linkages with our independent, mediating, and dependent variables. As a result, their inclusion did not alter the results of any of our hypothesis testing. Following recommendations by Carlson and Wu (2012), we omitted the demographic variables from our model testing.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 8 presents the descriptive statistics and zero-correlations among our variables, along with coefficient alphas on the diagonal. Of central interest is the correlation between fairness propensity and overall fairness (r = .47). That effect size exceeds correlations between

the communal trait dispositions and overall fairness (*r*'s ranging from .08 to .29). It also exceeds correlations between equity sensitivity, sensitivity to befallen injustice, justice orientation, belief in a just world, trust propensity and overall fairness (*r*'s ranging from -.18 to .31). Thus, the six items shown in Table 1 do indeed predict employee perceptions of the overall fairness of their managers. Moreover, they appear to do so at a level that exceeds other personality variables. Table 8 again underscores the discriminant validity of fairness propensity relative to those other variables, with an average absolute correlation of .15 with equity sensitivity, sensitivity to befallen injustice, justice orientation, belief in a just world, and trust propensity.

The administrations of the fairness propensity scale that were not used in hypothesis testing allowed us to explore other properties of the variable. The test-retest reliability for the employee report was $r = .63$ for Time 1-Time 2, $r = .68$ for Time 2-Time 3, and $r = .71$ for Time 1-Time 3. That level of stability is similar to—but somewhat weaker than—levels shown for broad trait dispositions (Costa & McCrae, 1988, 1991; Judge, Simon, Hurst, & Kelley, 2014). Moreover, the employee report of fairness propensity at Time 1 was strongly correlated with the coworker report at Time 1, with $r = .51$. That level of convergence is what is typically seen with self and other reports of personality (Costa & McCrae, 1991; McCrae & Costa, 1987). That level also matches what is seen with our communal traits, where cross-source correlations were .43 for warm-agreeable, .60 for gregarious-extraverted, and .40 for unassuming ingenuous. Taken together, these results suggest that fairness propensity does exhibit the expected properties of a characteristic adaption, with both temporal stability and cross-source convergence.

Additional Tests of Discriminant Validity

As in the validation studies, we compared the fit of a baseline CFA to models where correlations between fairness propensity, equity sensitivity, sensitivity to befallen injustice, justice orientation, belief in a just world, and trust propensity were constrained to 1.0. The fit of the baseline CFA was as follows: χ^2 (930) = 1859.05, $p < .001$; CFI = .79; IFI = .79; and SRMR = .12. Importantly, all five equality constraints resulted in significant decrements in fit: χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with equity sensitivity = 66.96, $p < .001$; χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with sensitivity to befallen injustice = 371.26, $p < .001$; χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with justice orientation = 94.26, $p < .001$; χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with belief in a just world = 190.39, $p < .001$; and χ^2 (1) for equality constraint with trust propensity = 113.34, $p < .001$. We also conducted a CFA with all items loading onto one factor. This model resulted in significantly worse fit than our baseline model: χ^2 (15) = 879.21, $p < .001$. Taken together, those results further support the discriminant validity of our fairness propensity scale.

We also conducted an average variance extracted (AVE) analysis using the data from our field study. Consistent with procedures suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981), we compared the AVE for fairness propensity with the squared correlation between fairness propensity and each of the other five personality variables. The AVE for fairness propensity was .54, which is greater than the squared correlation between fairness propensity and equity sensitivity (.05), sensitivity to befallen injustice (.07), justice orientation (.00), belief in a just world (.01), and trust propensity (.19).

Model Fitting

We tested our hypotheses using structural equation modeling in LISREL 8.72 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1989). We modeled fairness propensity and overall fairness using item-level

indicators. We used the procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational justice scales as indicators of justice rule adherence, creating what Colquitt and Rodell (2015) termed a "latent justice" measurement approach. All other variables were modeled in a partially latent fashion by setting their error variances to (1 - reliability)*variance. That measurement model provided an acceptable fit to the data: χ^2 (152) = 229.56, $p < .001$; CFI = .98; IFI = .98; and SRMR = .045. All of the factor loadings in the measurement model were statistically significant, with an average of .80.

The structural model followed the look of Figure 1, except that paths were added from equity sensitivity, sensitivity to befallen injustice, justice orientation, and trust propensity to the fairness anchor, justice rule adherence, and overall fairness. In this way, those other personality variables were given the opportunity to manifest the same effects predicted for fairness propensity. Belief in a just world was omitted here given its inadequate reliability, though this judgment call had no effect on our hypothesis testing, with the path coefficient being near zero if modeled. Exogenous covariances (not pictured in the figures) were also modeled, as is the default in most structural equation modeling programs. Taken together, the resulting model provided an adequate fit to the data: χ^2 (168) = 264.38, $p < .001$; CFI = .97; IFI = .97; and SRMR = .069. The standardized path coefficients from the LISREL output are shown in Figure 2.

Tests of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 predicted that communal life narratives would be positively related to fairness propensity. This prediction was supported as such narratives were indeed positively related to fairness propensity ($\beta = .16$).

Hypothesis 2 predicted that communal trait dispositions would be positively related to fairness propensity. This prediction was partially supported as warm-agreeable was positively related to fairness propensity (β = .27). Neither gregarious-extraverted nor unassuming-ingenuous yielded significant linkages, however.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that fairness propensity would have a positive indirect effect on overall fairness through the level of the fairness anchor. We tested for indirect effects using the product of coefficients approach, with a significant indirect effect depending on the statistical significance of the fairness propensity→fairness anchor coefficient * the fairness anchor→overall fairness coefficient (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007). However, MacKinnon et al. (2007) note that the distribution of the product of two coefficients is rarely normally distributed, which biases typical product-based tests. They therefore recommend testing indirect effects using an application called RMediation (Tofighi & MacKinnon, 2011). The fairness propensity→fairness anchor→overall fairness indirect effect was indeed statistically significant (product = .077, *SE* = .044), supporting Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that fairness propensity would have a positive indirect effect on overall fairness through perceived justice rule adherence. This prediction was also supported, as the fairness propensity→justice rule adherence→overall fairness indirect effect was indeed statistically significant (product = .145, *SE* = .056).

Hypothesis 5 predicted that fairness propensity would have a positive direct effect on overall fairness. This prediction was supported, given the presence of a significant direct effect (β = .18) when considered alongside the indirect effects. In contrast, equity sensitivity, sensitivity to

to befallen injustice, justice orientation, and trust propensity failed to yield significant direct effects.

Examinations of Alternative Models

To explore our results further, we examined four alternative models. The first alternative model added direct effects of communal life narratives and trait dispositions onto overall fairness, to help gauge the degree to which the effects of those exogenous variables traveled through fairness propensity. This model is shown in Figure 3 and provided an adequate fit to the data: χ^2 (164) = 260.15, $p < .001$; CFI = .97; IFI = .97; and SRMR = .068. We performed model comparisons using the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC; Akaike, 1987) because some of our alternative models had the same degrees of freedom as our hypothesized model. The AIC is frequently used for model comparisons and adjusts for the parsimony of a model (Tanaka, 1993). A smaller AIC value indicates better fit. Based on this comparison, our hypothesized model (AIC = 439.44) fit the data better than this alternative model (AIC = 444.84). Although communal life narratives had no direct effect on overall fairness, warm-agreeable had a positive direct effect. That finding could be consistent with a broader literature linking agreeableness to a general leniency in ratings of others (Bernardin, Cooke, & Villanova, 2000).

The second alternative model examined the degree to which the fairness heuristic theory mechanisms—the fairness anchor and justice rule adherence—could be explained in the absence of fairness propensity. Specifically, this model constrained the downstream effects of fairness propensity to be zero. This model is shown in Figure 4 and provided an adequate fit to the data: χ^2 (155) = 254.10, $p < .001$; CFI = .97; IFI = .97; and SRMR = .09. Our hypothesized model (AIC = 439.44) fit the data better than this alternative model (AIC = 463.72). Importantly, the

results showed that neither communal life narratives nor the communal traits wound up being significant predictors of the fairness anchor or of justice rule adherence. The one exception was the negative path from unassuming-ingenuous to the fairness anchor (β = -.27), which was opposite in direction from the zero-order correlation between those two variables (and therefore potentially an artifact of multicollinearity).

The third alternative model examined the possibility that fairness propensity could shape the way information on life narratives is stored and accessed. This model uses our Time 1 assessment of fairness propensity as an antecedent of communal life narratives, with those narratives going on to shape justice and fairness perceptions. The model is shown in Figure 5. Exogenous covariances (not pictured in the figures) were also modeled, as is the default in most structural equation modeling programs. The model provided an adequate fit to the data: χ^2 (168) = 266.68, $p < .001$; CFI = .97; IFI = .97; and SRMR = .09. Our hypothesized model (AIC = 439.44) fit the data better than this alternative model (AIC = 457.10). Although the Time 1 fairness propensity→communal narratives path was similar in magnitude to the communal narratives→Time 2 fairness propensity path in our hypothesized model, communal narratives lacked significant relationships with the fairness anchor, justice rule adherence, or overall fairness.

The fourth alternative model reversed the causal flow of justice rule adherence and overall fairness, with the latter now acting as an antecedent of the former. This potential structure is also discussed in fairness heuristic theory, and reflects the idea that—for veteran employees—perceptions of overall fairness can stop depending on specific events, instead becoming a heuristic that colors the perceptions of those events (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001). This model

is shown in Figure 6. Given its similarities to our hypothesized model, the fit statistics wind up being identical: χ^2 (168) = 264.38, $p < .001$; CFI = .97; IFI = .97; SRMR = .97; and AIC = 439.44. Thus, for some employees, it may be that fairness propensity colors perceptions of justice rule adherence by shaping impressions of overall fairness.

Supplementary Study

We conducted one additional study on fairness propensity to examine two questions. First, are our effects driven by the fact that we chose to word fairness propensity in a positively-worded fashion, along with justice rule adherence and overall fairness? As Colquitt et al. (2015) observed, the inclusion of items that tap "injustice" and "unfairness" can alter the strength of relationships in some cases. Second, do employees who score in the low range on fairness propensity have a tendency to perceive unfairness—as opposed to simply lacking any propensity whatsoever? We conceptualized low scores as perceiving unfairness because that is the assumption with trust propensity. Our measure lacked the reverse-wording that trust propensity measures possess, however, preventing us from empirically supporting that assumption.

We therefore conducted a supplementary study using a sample of 213 participants from Mechanical Turk. The average age of the participants was 36.93 (*SD* = 9.03) and 44% were female. Seventy-four percent of the participants were Caucasian and all were employed full-time. We asked these participants to complete an expanded version of our fairness propensity scale where the original six items were supplemented by six negatively-worded variants. Those variants included "I tend to see unfairness in decision events," "I am inclined to view organizations as unfair organizations," and "I typically judge individuals to be unfair." We also asked participants to complete Colquitt et al.'s (2015) "full range" measure of rule justice

adherence which includes both justice (e.g., “Are those procedures applied consistently?”) and injustice items (e.g., “Are those procedures applied unevenly?”). Participants also completed their “full-range” measure of overall fairness, which includes both fairness (“Does your supervisor act fairly?”) and unfairness (“Does your supervisor act unfairly?”).

The resulting correlations and descriptive statistics are shown in Table 9. To our first question, the results in Table 9 show that our pattern of correlations is not driven by wording effects. For example, the fairness propensity→overall fairness relationship is of similar magnitude when it is tested with two scales that are both positively-worded (r = .50), both negatively-worded (r = .46), and both “full-range” (r = .49). Indeed, the relationship remains of similar magnitude when fairness propensity is positively-worded and overall fairness is negatively-worded (r = -.45), and when fairness propensity is negatively-worded and overall fairness is positively-worded (r = -.47). The same general pattern occurs for the fairness propensity→justice rule adherence relationship. To our second question, the correlation between our original fairness propensity scale and our negatively-worded variant is -.88. Thus, when approaching our sort of scale-based measure, disagreeing that one tends to perceive fairness is indeed equivalent to agreeing that one tends to perceive unfairness.

Discussion

From its inception, the justice literature in management and applied psychology has differed from its counterparts in philosophy and ethics. Whereas those literatures view justice and fairness as concepts that can be normatively divined, management and applied psychology view justice and fairness as socially constructed—as “in the eye of the beholder.” If employees perceive events, managers, and employers to be consistent, equitable, respectful, and honest—or

simply fair in general—then those perceptions "are what they are." On the one hand, that approach makes sense when the objective is to predict employees' sense of trust, esteem, happiness, or pride, or when the goal is to better understand their job behaviors. On the other hand, that subjectivity represents a significant black box that justice scholars have made few attempts to better understand. It may also be a source of frustration for managers who are attempting to foster perceptions of justice and fairness, whether for intrinsic or extrinsic reasons.

What stands out most from our results is that employees do possess a fairness propensity —a tendency to view events, people, and organizations as fair. Although not quite as stable as broad trait dispositions (Costa & McCrae, 1998, 1991; Judge et al., 2014), fairness propensity did exhibit high test-retest reliability throughout our study. Moreover, it was reliably perceived not just by employees but also by their coworkers—exhibiting a level of convergence similar to trait dispositions (Costa & McCrae, 1991; McCrae & Costa, 1987). Such properties support our contention that fairness propensity is a characteristic adaption—an aspect of personality that is more contextualized in its situational relevance but still typical of an individual (McAdams & Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 2008).

Fairness propensity wound up being a strong predictor of employee perceptions of the overall fairness of their managers. We posited that employees high in fairness propensity would react to the ambiguity that surrounds fairness with something of a "positivity offset"—essentially giving supervisors the benefit of the doubt when fairness-related data were unclear. Importantly, the positive relationship between fairness propensity and overall fairness emerged when controlling for other personality variables that have been introduced in the justice literature: equity sensitivity (Huseman et al., 1987), sensitivity to befallen injustice (Schmitt et al., 1995),

justice orientation (Liao & Rupp, 2005), and belief in a just world (Lerner & Miller, 1978). The relationship also emerged when controlling for trust propensity, which is important given that fairness and trust concepts are interwoven in a number of theoretical perspectives (Lind, 2001; Mayer et al., 1995; Tyler & Lind, 1992; Van den Bos, 2001).

To put the effects of fairness propensity in context, consider what our results would look like in multiple regression rather than structural equation modeling. Justice rule adherence would have explained 40% of the variance in perceptions of overall fairness. As described in Ambrose et al.'s (2015) review of the overall fairness literature, that level of explanatory power is fairly typical in studies linking justice rule adherence to overall fairness. What happens if fairness propensity is controlled for in that regression? It explains 20% of the variance in perceptions of overall fairness, with the incremental effects of justice rule adherence dropping to 25%. Thus, 15% of that 40% for justice rule adherence was merely propensity—it was an employee's general tendency to view things fairly; not a manager's particular adherence to procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational justice rules. We obtain similar results when using relative importance analysis, which better accounts for multicollinearity when comparing the importance of multiple predictors (Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2011, 2015). Using this approach, fairness propensity explains 13% of the variance in overall fairness, with justice rule adherence explaining 31%. Again, a significant portion of the covariance that was presumably due to justice rule adherence was actually due an employee's general tendency to view things fairly.

Those findings may seem concerning for contexts where it is especially important to gauge overall fairness in an "accurate" and "objective" way—if such terms can be used for a subjective phenomenon. For example, managers who are presiding over dispute resolutions

should presumably assume the same mindset as Supreme Court Justices—taking the evidence as it comes and forming an impartial and intellectual viewpoint. We would respond to any such concerns with three observations. First, the effect size for justice rule adherence did outweigh the effect size for fairness propensity when predicting overall fairness. Such judgments were still rooted in relevant data, shaped as that data may have been by dispositions. Second, our findings join a wide range of literatures—from trust to job satisfaction to stress—illustrating how personality shapes attitudes and cognitions. It is important to understand how employees *do* form fairness perceptions, not how they *should* form them. Third, it may be that interventions or decision aids could be used in some contexts to reduce the effects of fairness propensity while amplifying the effects of justice rule adherence.

We grounded our examination of the fairness propensity→overall fairness relationship in fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001). More specifically, we argued that fairness propensity could—through confirmation bias processes (Nickerson, 1998)—shape the first fairness-relevant impression that employees form of their managers. After all, some data relevant to those impressions are ambiguous, providing an opportunity for fairness propensity to create a positive offset. Our results supported that notion while showing that the fairness anchor had its own unique effect on overall fairness. We further argued that fairness propensity could shape and filter perceptions of justice rule adherence—again via confirmation bias processes in the presence of ambiguity about justice rules. Our results were supportive of this proposition as well, with fairness propensity having a significant indirect effect on overall fairness through justice rule adherence.

Those results offer a number of important implications for fairness heuristic theory. For example, our findings cast the initial formation of fairness perceptions in a new light. The theory argues that employees will seek to form fairness perceptions early, using whatever initial justice-relevant information is available and interpretable (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001). As it turns out, the seeds for those perceptions may have been sown years earlier given the role played by fairness propensity. Indeed, it may be that fairness propensity is actually more impactful to initial fairness perceptions than justice-relevant data. As another example, the theory argues that, once formed, fairness perceptions will continue to be utilized until important or unexpected events occur that supply new justice-relevant data (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001). Our results show that even those new data could be interpreted through the filter of fairness propensity. Moreover, those initial impressions may still "matter"—as suggested by our fairness anchor results—even after those new data are encountered.

Our fairness heuristic theory lens also helped ground some initial predictions about how fairness propensity develops. As a characteristic adaption, fairness propensity should be dependent on both integrative life stories and broad trait dispositions—thereby having elements of both nurture and nature. Given that fairness heuristic theory argues that fairness is valued as a signal that cooperation is beneficial (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001), we reasoned that fairness propensity could be sensitive to traits and stories that are inherently relational. Our results provided some support for that assertion, given that communal life narratives and warm-agreeable—a communal trait (Horowitz et al., 2006; Wiggins, 1979)—both predicted fairness propensity. Thus, employees who have life stories marked by interpersonal connections and who

possess traits like forgiving, cooperative, gentle, and kind were more likely to perceive events, people, and organizations as fair.

Suggestions for Future Research

As a new construct, fairness propensity opens up several avenues for future research. First and foremost, justice scholars could explore whether other theoretical perspectives can explain why fairness propensity predicts overall fairness. This is important given the global natures of fairness propensity and overall fairness, and the fact that the justice domain includes several different theoretical perspectives (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015; Cropanzano, Rupp et al., 2001). For example, it may be that fairness propensity alters the counterfactual thinking mechanics described by fairness theory (Folger & Cropanzano, 2001). Employees high in fairness propensity may react to violations of justice rules by believing that managers could not have acted differently, or that well-being would not have been much better if events had played out differently.

Relatedly, fairness propensity may shape the reactions described by the deontic model (Folger, 2012)—an offshoot of fairness theory. That model views justice rule adherence as an end-in-itself because it signals, typically to third parties, that authorities have acted the way they ought to act. It may be that fairness propensity shapes the "ought standards" that people rely upon to judge right and wrong. Alternatively, it could influence the moral emotions—the moral indignation or righteous anger—felt in response to violations of such standards. Indeed, it may be fruitful to examine the fairness propensities of the authorities whose actions are observed by third parties. It may be that supervisors high in fairness propensity feel a stronger "ought force" that compels them to adhere more closely to justice rules.

It would be interesting to explore how fairness propensity shapes the dynamics within social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). For example, it may be that employees high in fairness propensity are more prone to develop social exchange relationships—relationships that are more invested and that have more long-term and far-reaching versions of "quid pro quo." If employees high in fairness propensity are more likely to see their "quid pro quo's" as fair, they may be more likely to develop the mutual obligation, trust, and commitment that underlie social exchange sentiments (Colquitt et al., 2014). If so, fairness propensity could emerge as an especially strong personality predictor of citizenship behavior—a prime behavioral currency of social exchange relationships. To date, personality predictors of citizenship behavior have yielded surprisingly low effect sizes (Chiaburu, Oh, Berry, Li, & Gardner, 2011). A characteristic adaption like fairness propensity could prove more predictive.

Limitations

Our design offered a number of important strengths. The use of a nation-wide, multi-industry sample provides some external validity advantages through the use of purposive sampling of heterogeneous settings (Shadish et al., 2002). Moreover, the use of a two-source, three-time period design where some variables were coded by the research team from open-ended data means that few relationships should have problematic levels of common method bias (Doty & Glick, 1998; Podsakoff et al., 2003). All that said, testing the causal mechanics that underlie mediation requires either experimental or panel data (Shadish et al., 2002; Stone-Romero & Rosopa, 2010). Without such data, it remains possible that the relationships depicted in Figure 2 could possess ambiguity in causal direction. This may especially be the case with justice rule adherence and overall fairness, as fairness heuristic theory notes that both causal

orders may be at play, depending on how much "data" an employee has gathered on his/her supervisor (Lind, 2001; Van den Bos, 2001).

Another limitation of our study is that the fairness propensity→justice rule adherence linkage is a same-time, same-source linkage. That relationship could therefore be inflated to some degree. In addition, attrition across sources and times resulted in a final sample size of 127. Although many of our predictions were supported, the confidence intervals around many of our effect sizes are wider than is ideal. We also failed to include a measure of outcome favorability, leaving open the possibility that some of the fairness propensity→overall fairness linkage is mediated by that construct. A meta-analysis by Skitka, Winquist, and Hutchinson (2003) showed that outcome favorability and distributive justice were strongly related, but did possess some unique effects.

Moreover, our fairness anchor measure asked employees to write about their first meaningful memory of fairness related to their manager. Although all employees wrote about such memories—often in vivid detail—such scenes may differ from the "real" version of those events in certain ways. Such differences would detract from the construct validity of the fairness anchor measure, though our results showed that it did have significant predictive validity. Finally, the measure of belief in a just world exhibited poor reliability in our substantive study—something that has proven not uncommon in that literature (Birt & Dion, 1987; Dalbert et al., 2001; Reich & Wang, 2015; Whatley, 1993).

Another limitation is that our antecedents of fairness propensity were limited in number, leaving a number of potential influences unexplored. Our focus on communal narratives and traits was in keeping with the relational focus of our fairness heuristic theory lens. However,

there are other theoretical perspectives that could shape the development of fairness propensity. For example, the deontic model stresses that fairness is valued as an end in itself—that individuals view it as an obligation and a duty (Folger, 2012). From this perspective, fairness helps to fulfill one's search for meaning and purpose—concepts that are often wrapped up in virtue and morality (Cropanzano et al., 2001). Importantly, there are narratives and traits that possess those same threads of meaning and morality. For example, the trait of generative concern represents a conscious caring for the next generation (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992). Similarly, the generativity narrative is a life story about providing for the next generation. Given that generativity—like fairness—includes aspects of meaning and morality, traits and narratives that contain such content could also be antecedents of fairness propensity.

Finally, we should note that—as a new scale—our measure of fairness propensity requires more extensive validation efforts to continue to establish its construct validity. Future research is needed to replicate the reliability and factor structure results reported here, and to continue to test its discriminant validity from other related constructs. As Cronbach and Meehl (1955) noted in their seminal treatment, just as theories are never fully "proven," so too are measures never fully "validated." Future research could, for example, examine whether our scale measure of fairness propensity exhibited adequate convergent validity with interview or content analysis-based measures. Subjecting such data to a multitrait-multimethod matrix analysis could provide helpful information for continuing to test and refine the scale (Kenny & Kashy, 1992).

Conclusion

Consider this excerpt from one of our participants' open-ended responses: "There aren't many examples of my supervisor making fair decisions. Most of them come down to trivial ones;

for example, selecting who received raises and who doesn't. In his eyes, the last group of people who received raises were based on their performance and how long they had been there. Even though many of them had less seniority than me and I did the same amount of work, I did not receive a raise and three others did. This made me think negatively of my workplace in that it was based on a biased 'fairness.' I can't remember a time when genuine fairness was involved." It may well be that this employee's manager is violating the equity, consistency, bias suppression, and justification rules—a possibility that manager or coworker-reports of justice rule adherence could help triangulate (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015; Zapata, Olsen, & Martins, 2013). Our study offers a second possibility, however, given the knowledge that this employee scores low on fairness propensity. Might he be "beholding" unfairness because he has a general tendency to view events, people, and organizations as unfair? The management in that employee's organization needs to tease apart that distinction, as do scholars interested in better understanding fairness issues.

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Table 1

Fairness Propensity Items

	Definitional Correspondence	Factor Loading
1. I tend to see fairness in decision events.	5.51	.75
2. I believe that most people are fair people.	5.40	.70
3. I am inclined to view organizations as fair organizations.	5.51	.77
4. I think that most decisions play out fairly.	5.39	.76
5. I typically judge individuals to be fair.	5.38	.70
6. I usually find that companies do things fairly.	5.36	.75

Note. Definitional correspondence levels are based on a scale of 1 = *Question is an extremely bad match to the definition* to 7 = *Question is an extremely good match to the definition* in the first measurement validation study. The given definition was "A tendency to view events, people, and organizations as fair." Factor loadings were obtained from the CFA conducted on the six items in the second measurement validation study.

Table 2

Relative Correspondence with Fairness Propensity Definition

Construct	Mean Correspondence with Fairness Propensity Definition
Fairness propensity	5.43 (5.27, 5.58)
Equity sensitivity	3.65 (3.52, 3.78)
Sensitivity to befallen injustice	3.52 (3.34, 3.70)
Justice orientation	3.91 (3.75, 4.07)
Belief in a just world	3.62 (3.51, 3.73)
Trust propensity	3.94 (3.80, 4.07)

Note. Definitional correspondence levels are based on a scale of 1 = *Question is an extremely bad match to the definition* to 7 = *Question is an extremely good match to the definition* in the first measurement validation study. The given definition was "A tendency to view events, people, and organizations as fair." 95% confidence intervals are in parentheses.

Table 3

Correlations Between Fairness Propensity and Other Relevant Personality Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Fairness propensity	3.48	.77	.93					
2. Equity sensitivity	2.96	.74	-.05	.77				
3. Sensitivity to befallen injustice	3.22	.80	-.23*	.30*	.89			
4. Justice orientation	3.37	.76	-.40*	-.12	.23*	.85		
5. Belief in a just world	3.42	.43	.43*	.00	-.34*	-.19*	.56	
6. Trust propensity	3.07	.61	.56*	-.28*	-.40*	-.32*	.35*	.82

Note. $n = 152$; $p < .05$, two-tailed. Coefficient alphas reported on the diagonal.

Table 4

Correlations Between Fairness Propensity and Belief in a Just World Scales

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Fairness propensity	3.42	.67	.84					
2. Rubin and Peplau (1975)	3.73	.52	.40*	.77				
3. Lipkus (1991)	3.82	.93	.40*	.62*	.91			
4. Collins (1974)	3.32	.60	.33*	.62*	.70*	.82		
5. Furnham and Procter (1992)	4.55	.67	.30*	.66*	.32*	.42*	.57	
6. Fryxell and Gordon (1989)	3.28	.56	.41*	.73*	.52*	.55*	.55*	.83

Note. $n = 157$; $p < .05$, two-tailed. Coefficient alphas reported on the diagonal. Furnham and Procter's (1992) items were measured using a 7-point scale. Rubin and Peplau's (1975) and Lipkus's (1991) items were measured using a 6-point scale. All other variables were measured using a 5-point scale.

Table 5

Sources and Waves for Study Variables

Study Wave	Self-Reported by Employee	Other-Reported by Coworker	Content-Analyzed from Employee Writing
Time 1	Warm-Agreeable Gregarious-Extraverted Unassuming-Ingenuous Fairness propensity	**Warm-Agreeable** **Gregarious-Extraverted** **Unassuming-Ingenuous** Fairness propensity	**Communal narratives**
Time 2	**Fairness propensity** **Justice rule adherence** Equity sensitivity Sensitivity to injustice Justice orientation Belief in a just world Trust propensity		**Fairness anchor**
Time 3	**Overall fairness** Fairness propensity		

Note. Bolded variables were used in hypothesis testing. Other variables were used to assess cross-source convergence or test-retest reliability, or to serve as control variables.

Table 6

Examples of Communion Content in Life Narratives

Communion Quotes
Positive
"Supporting my best friend while she gave birth to her firstborn child was definitely a key moment in my life. Seeing this beautiful baby boy come into the world was so amazing and really cemented our friendship. I'll never forget that day. I don't have much family but my best friend and her kids are definitely family. It made me really how important family is and it may not always be determined by blood." "After 6 years of not being in school, I was able to get financial aid to go back to school online. The admissions officer helped me the entire way. I was growing impatient but I was hopeful about the outcome. This has showed me that my patience level has increased. Also that my positivism on life has improved."
Negative
"When my parents told us kids they were divorcing. I was 8 and remember being very confused and so sad that we all wouldn't live together anymore." "A negative experience was when my girlfriend and I broke up. We had lived together in Washington DC for 6 months, but found that we were incompatible when living together. All of our affection was replaced by petty squabbles. She broke the news to me over a dinner at a Thai place during the week between Valentine's Day and my birthday. I had always pictured a future with her, but would now be starting over from scratch."

Table 7

Examples of Content in Fairness Anchors

Fairness Anchor Quotes
Positive
"My first meaningful memory of fairness with my supervisor is when my first employee performance review was done. She did a thorough review of all work done by employees. She based the rating on all aspects of the job and in comparison to the average performance of all employees. She scheduled a meeting with each employee at her office and gave detailed descriptions of her decisions. She also allowed each employee to respond."
"I believe the first memory of fairness is when my supervisor gave me a bonus. The bonus was for recognizing the extra effort I had put toward my career and company. This happened over a company dinner with just the two of us. I felt very rewarded and appreciated. This gave me motivation and desire to continue to improve myself and work for the company."
"I had a problem with an employee in our sales group who tried to falsify travel receipts. He even tried to get me to make up receipts for him. I was worried I was going to get into trouble and told my supervisor. My supervisor thanked me for telling her and approached the employee. The employee tried to blame me and my supervisor wouldn't take it. She fired him on the spot and I know she is fair!!"
Negative
"Not long after I started working with my supervisor, they accused me of being late. I had actually arrived early, by about 5 minutes. My supervisor had not noticed me and would not hear that I had not been late. I tried to explain but they would not listen. I am still angry about this exchange."
"One early memory that stands out is being told at a review session that I wasn't meeting specific expectations of my job role. I was surprised by this because I was not aware of these specific expectations and felt it was unfair to be held to something I knew nothing about. I didn't understand where these other hidden expectations were coming from and why I wasn't told earlier. I felt shocked and betrayed, I had put in a lot of energy and long hours to achieve the success I had achieved and felt like that had all been for nothing."
"The thing that is sticking out most is that my significant other is having surgery and I was told that I could not take off the entire day for the surgery. Yet, she allows my coworker to take off to take his son to football camp, he is late to work every single day and this is not a problem."

Table 8

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1. Warm-Agreeable	3.29	.71	.83																		
2. Gregarious-Extraverted	3.67	.70	.48*	.83																	
3. Unassuming-Ingenuous	3.53	.64	.29*	.20*	.73																
4. Communal life narratives	.36	1.59	.13	.17	.08	.89															
5. Fairness propensity	3.56	.78	.32*	.29*	.12	.21*	.90														
6. Fairness anchor	.64	1.83	.13	.09	-.09	-.05	.40*	.97													
7. Justice rule adherence	3.23	.88	.26*	.16	.03	-.02	.52*	.58*	.92												
8. Overall fairness	3.59	1.10	.29*	.13	.08	.03	.47*	.52*	.64*	.96											
9. Equity sensitivity	2.69	.60	-.33*	-.14	-.26*	-.13	-.23*	-.06	-.16	-.12	.62										
10. Sensitivity to befallen injustice	3.25	.77	-.37*	-.19*	-.31*	-.08	-.26*	-.10	-.17	-.13	.26*	.90									
11. Justice orientation	3.51	.61	-.07	.03	-.04	-.08	.01	-.13	-.08	-.18*	.09	.02	.72								
12. Belief in a just world	3.38	.38	.25*	.12	.07	.09	.10	.10	.11	.04	-.09	-.15	.08	.37							
13. Trust propensity	2.90	.54	.28*	.21*	.13	.21*	.44*	.17	.31*	.31*	-.16	-.24*	-.22*	.00	.74						
14. Warm-Agreeable (self)	3.15	.76	.43*	.12	.35*	.17	.33*	.12	.15	.29*	-.25*	-.30*	-.20*	.06	.31*	.70					
15. Gregarious-Extraverted (self)	3.49	.80	.34*	.60*	.14	.19*	.47*	.17	.30*	.23*	-.23*	-.22*	.04	.14	.22*	.24*	.75				
16. Unassuming-Ingenuous (self)	3.39	.75	.20*	.12	.40*	.08	.08	-.05	-.07	-.10	-.33*	-.37*	.01	.00	.03	.26*	.10	.70			
17. Fairness propensity (time 1)	3.36	.74	.37*	.26*	.18*	.22*	.63*	.16	.27*	.38*	-.28*	-.22*	.00	.03	.38*	.32*	.50*	.05	.88		
18. Fairness propensity (time 3)	3.56	.74	.40*	.31*	.14	.26*	.68*	.23*	.41*	.53*	-.21*	-.23*	-.11	.20*	.50*	.38*	.45*	.04	.71*	.93	
19. Fairness propensity (coworker)	3.66	.71	.50*	.41*	.04	.14	.58*	.37*	.47*	.39*	-.24*	-.22*	.04	.05	.34*	.24*	.39*	.00	.51*	.53*	.92

Note. $n = 127$. * $p < .05$, two-tailed.

Table 9

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics for Supplementary Study

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Fairness propensity (positively-worded)	3.48	.86	.92								
2. Fairness propensity (negatively-worded)	2.53	.89	-.88*	.92							
3. Fairness propensity (full range)	3.75	.60	.89*	-.86*	.85						
4. Justice rule adherence (positively-worded)	3.69	.80	.52*	-.50*	.50*	.96					
5. Justice rule adherence (negatively-worded)	1.93	.75	-.38*	.43*	-.36*	-.74*	.95				
6. Justice rule adherence (full range)	3.91	.69	.48*	-.49*	.47*	.94*	-.92*	.95			
7. Overall fairness (positively-worded)	3.98	.94	.50*	-.47*	.49*	.86*	-.75*	.86*	.96		
8. Overall fairness (negatively-worded)	1.67	.89	-.45*	.46*	-.44*	-.70*	.82*	-.81*	-.82*	.95	
9. Overall fairness (full range)	4.16	.87	.50*	-.49*	.49*	.82*	-.82*	.87*	.96*	-.95*	.96

Note. $n = 213$. * $p < .05$, two-tailed.

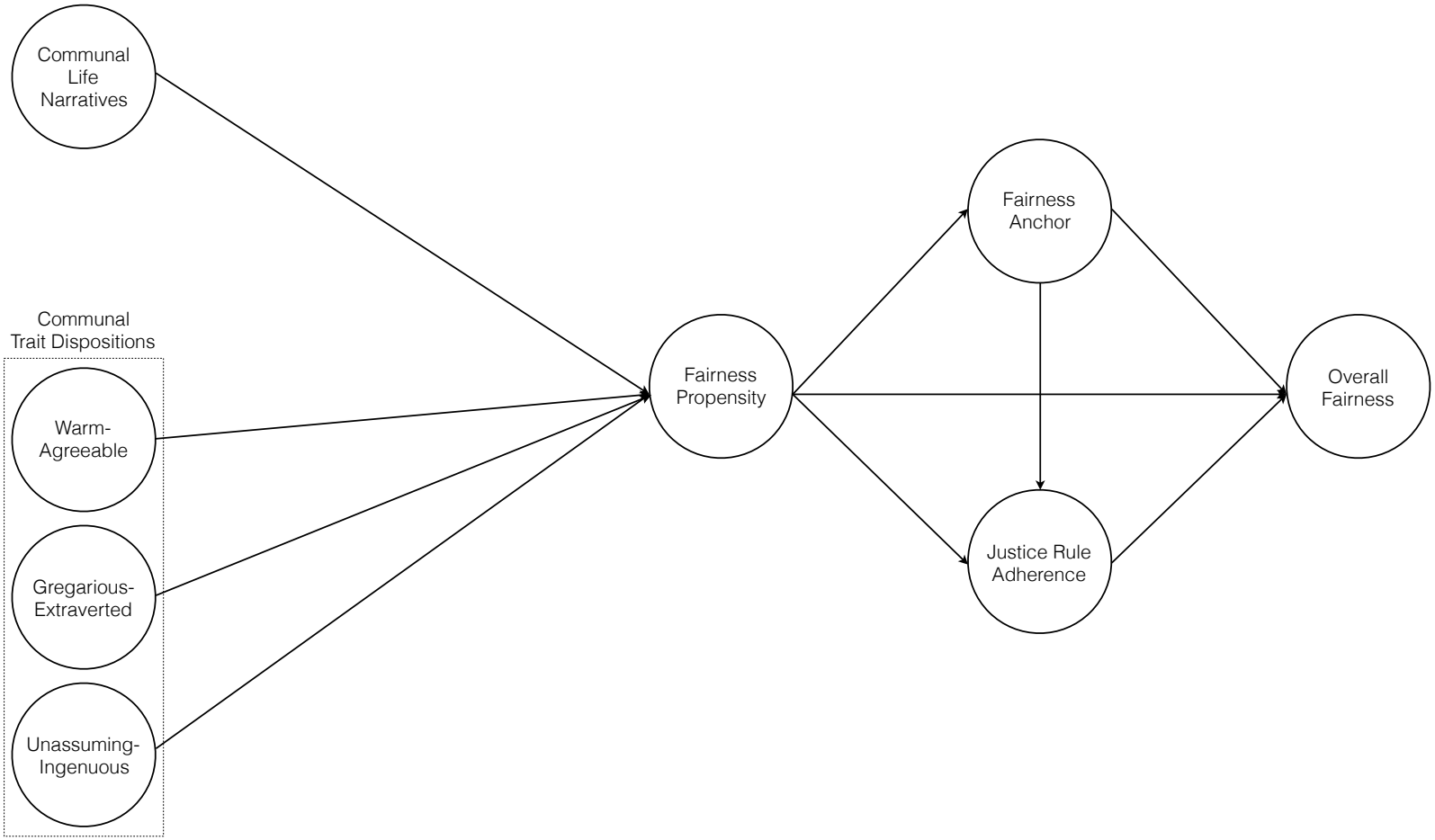

Figure 1. Antecedents and consequences of fairness propensity.

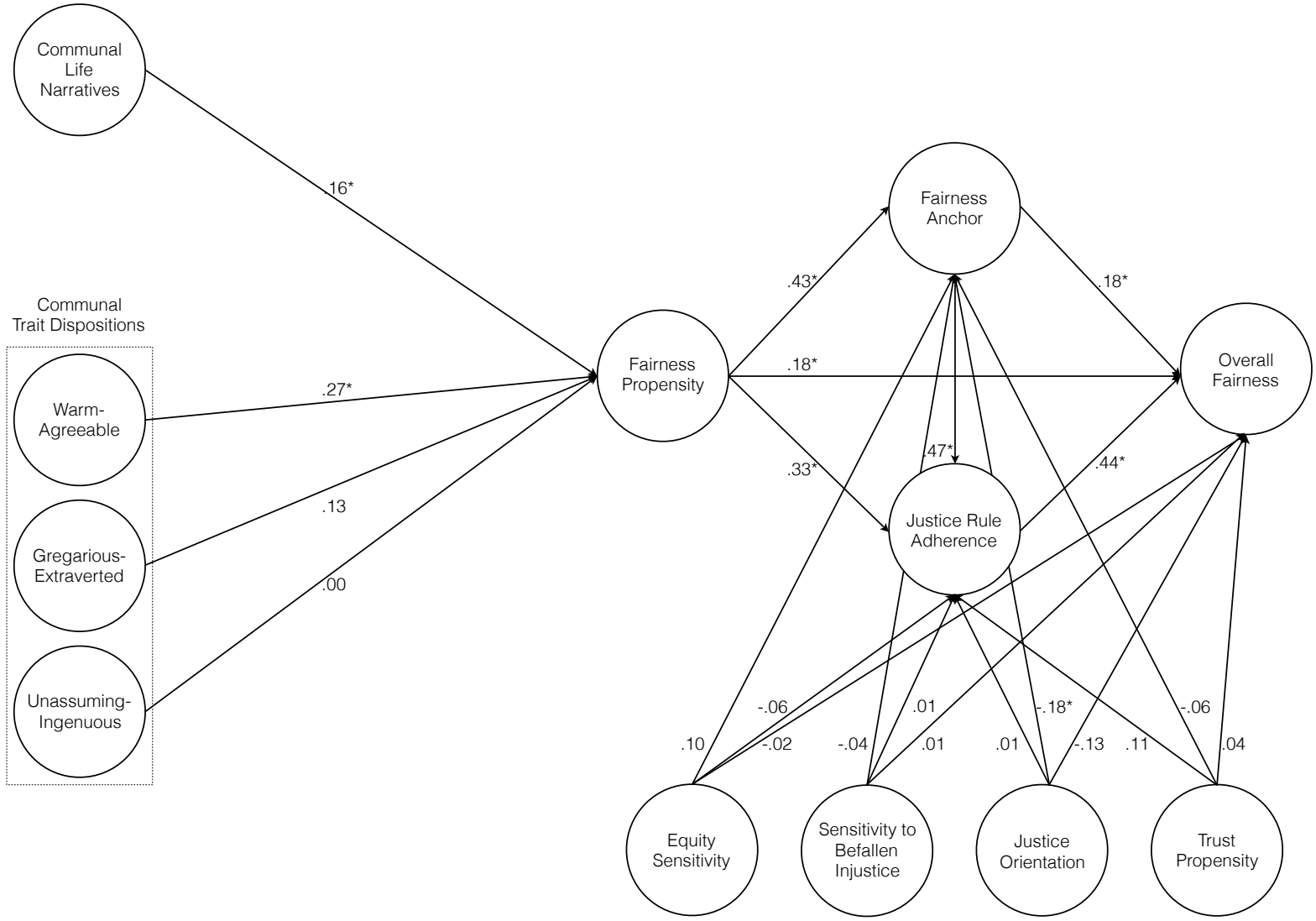

Figure 2. Structural equation modeling results. Path coefficients are standardized. *$p < .05$, one-tailed. Variance explained values for endogenous variables are as follows: fairness propensity = .18, fairness anchor = .21, justice rule adherence = .50, and overall fairness = .52.

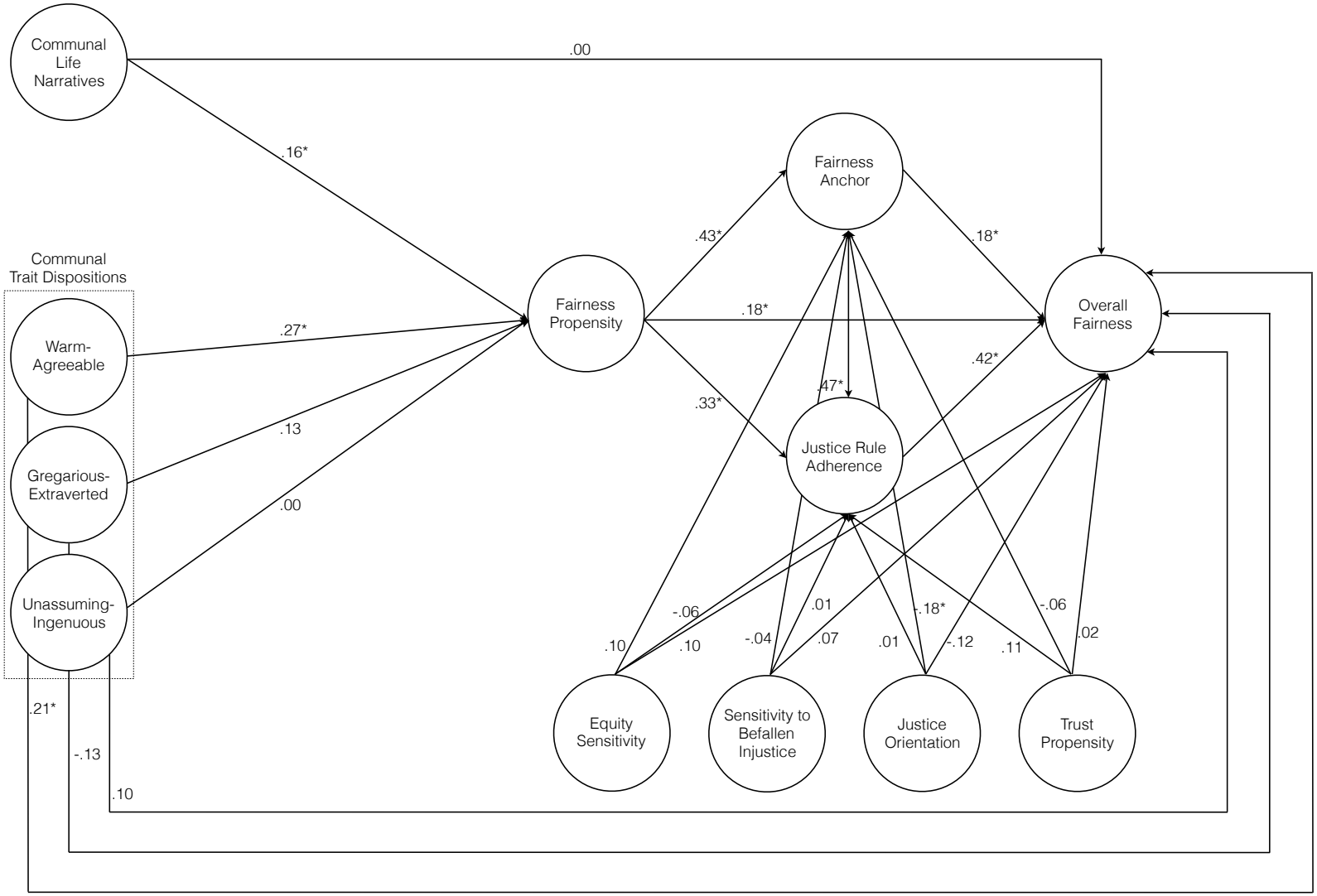

Figure 3. Alternative model with direct effects of communal life narratives and traits. Path coefficients are standardized. *$p < .05$, one-tailed. Variance explained values for endogenous variables are as follows: fairness propensity = .18, fairness anchor = .20, justice rule adherence = .50, and overall fairness = .55.

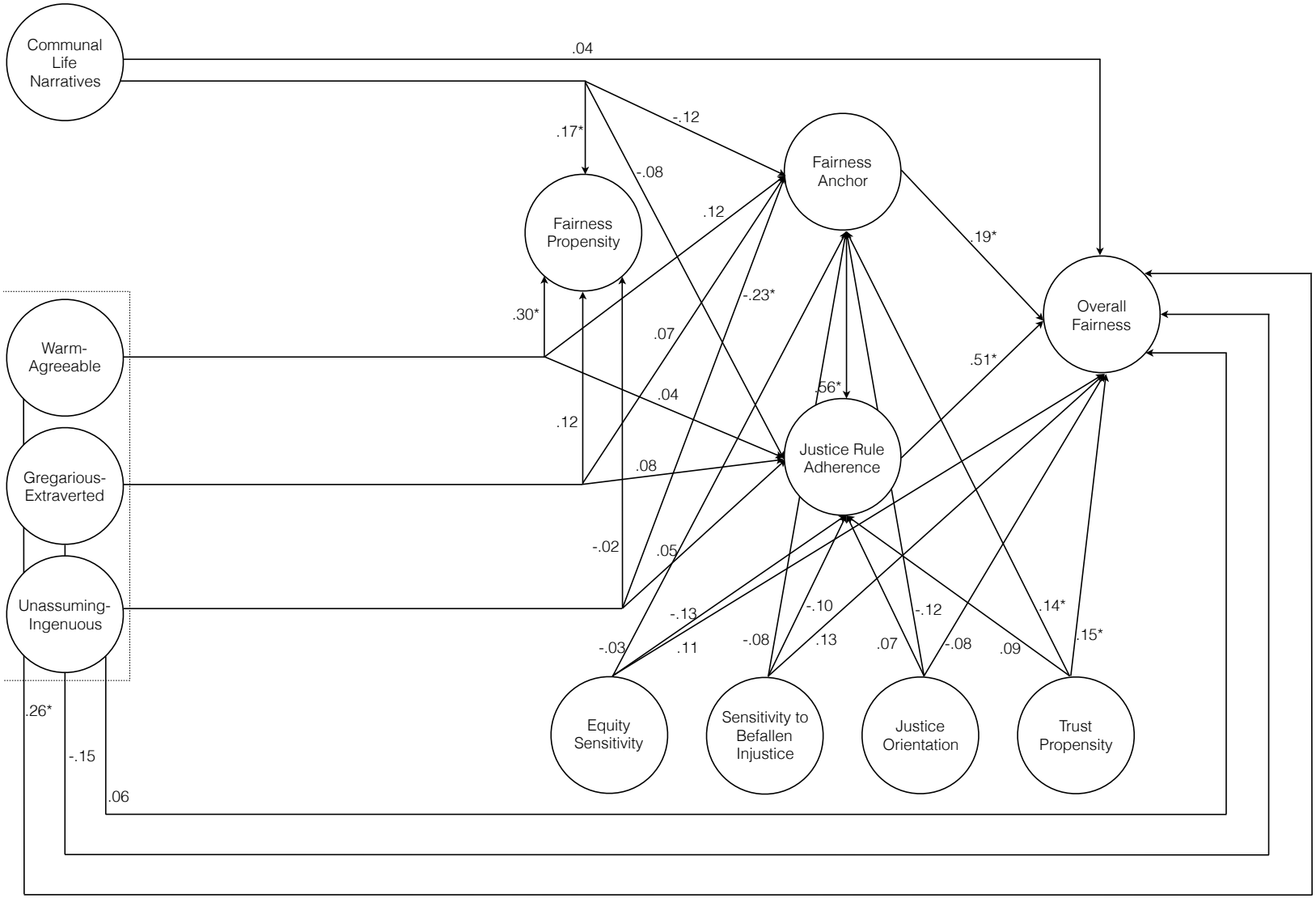

Figure 4. Alternative model with fairness propensity effects omitted. Path coefficients are standardized. *$p < .05$, one-tailed. Variance explained values for endogenous variables are as follows: fairness propensity = .19, fairness anchor = .12, justice rule adherence = .47, and overall fairness = .55.

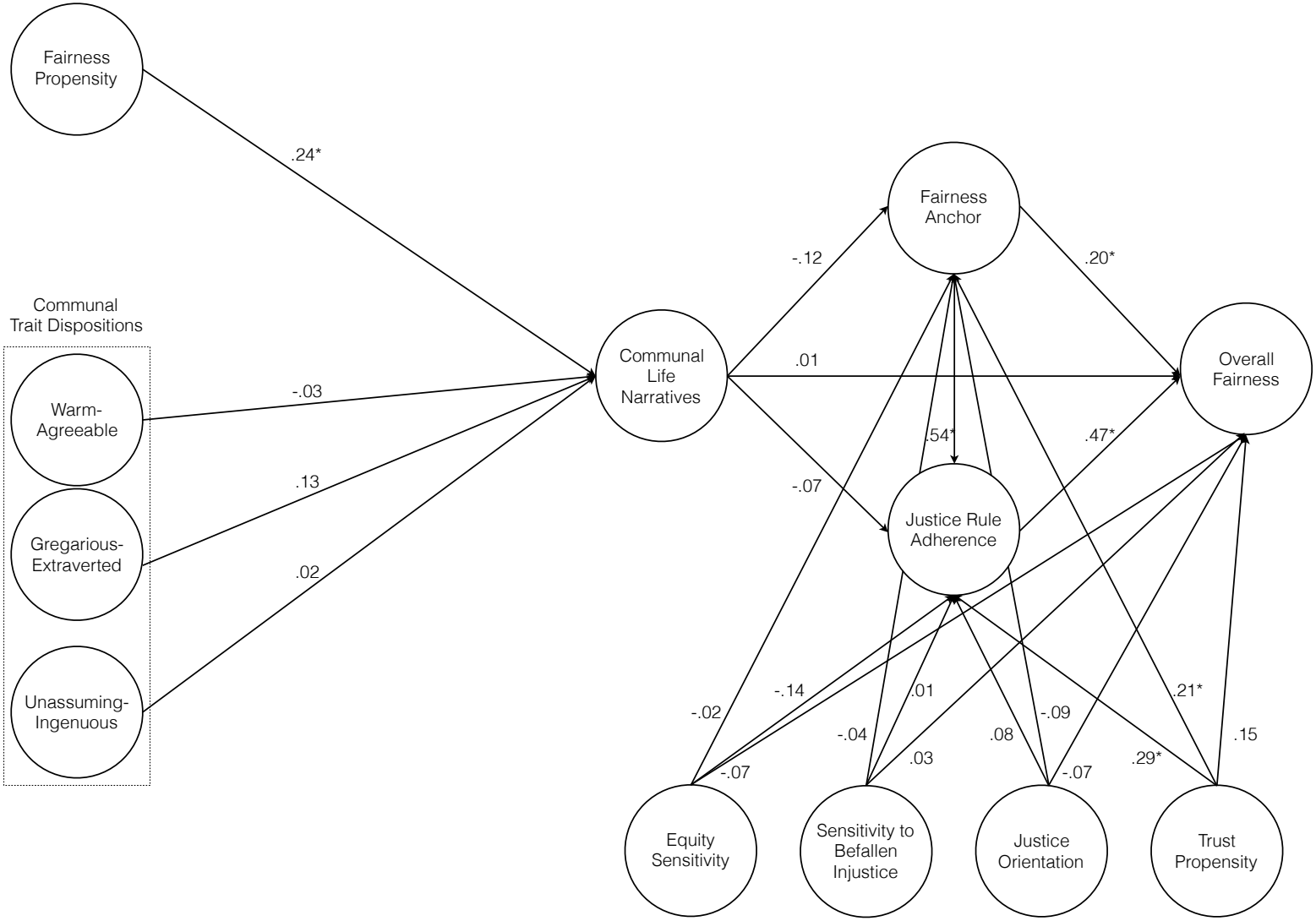

Figure 5. Alternative model with fairness propensity as an antecedent to life narratives. Path coefficients are standardized. *$p < .05$, one-tailed. Variance explained values for endogenous variables are as follows: communal life narratives = .09, fairness anchor = .08, justice rule adherence = .48, and overall fairness = .52.

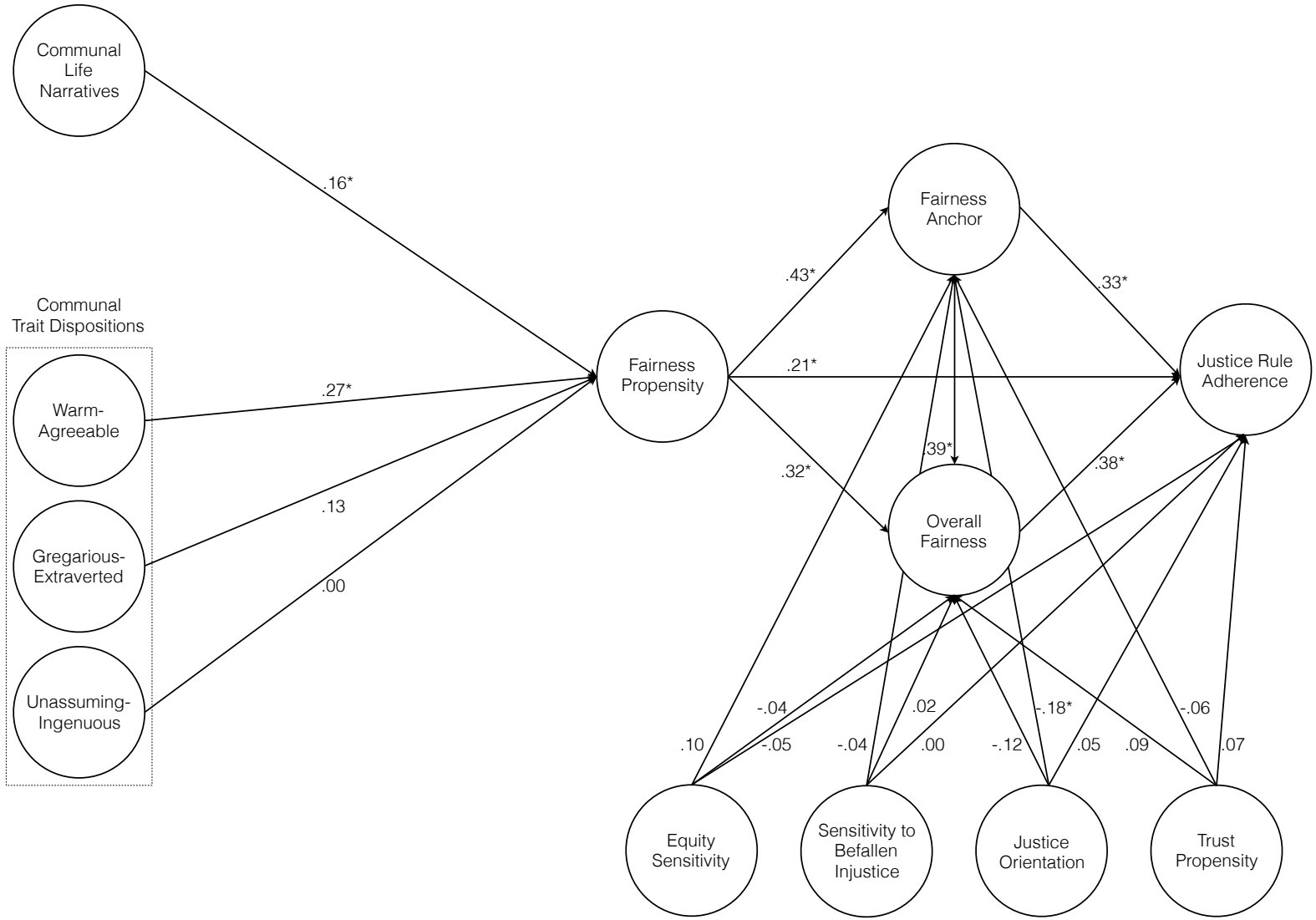

Figure 6. Alternative model with overall fairness as an antecedent to justice rule adherence. Path coefficients are standardized. *$p < .05$, one-tailed. Variance explained values for endogenous variables are as follows: fairness propensity = .18, fairness anchor = .21, justice rule adherence = .58, and overall fairness = .42.

Appendix

Scale Items for Other Relevant Personality Variables

Equity Sensitivity
It is more important for me to get from the organizations I work for than to give to the organization I work for.
It is more important for me to help others than watch out for my own good. (R)
I am more concerned about what I receive from organizations I work for than what I contribute to organizations I work for.
The hard work I do should benefit the organizations I work for (rather than benefitting me). (R)
My personal philosophy in dealing with the organizations I work for is "it's better for me to give than to receive." (R)
Sensitivity to Befallen Injustice
It bothers me when others receive something that ought to be mine.
It makes me angry when others receive an award which I have earned.
I can't easily bear it when others profit unilaterally from me.
I can't forget for a long time when I have to fix others' carelessness.
It gets me down when I get fewer opportunities than others to develop my skills.
It makes me angry when others are undeservingly better off than me.
It worries me when I have to work hard for things that come easily to others.
I ruminate for a long time when other people are being treated better than me.
It burdens me to be criticized for things that are being overlooked with others.
It makes me angry when I am treated worse than others.
Justice Orientation
I rarely notice people being treated unfairly. (R)
I have been in public situations where I have noticed strangers being treated unfairly.
I am prone to notice people being treated unfairly in public.
I see people treating each other unfairly all of the time.
I am conscious of issues of justice around me.
I tend to notice even the smallest injustice.

Note. Equity sensitivity is defined by Huseman et al. (1987) as a differential preference for—and sensitivity to—the outcome/input ratios that constitute equity. Items shown are a Likert-style adaptation of King and Miles's (1994) point allocation instrument. Sensitivity to befallen injustice is defined by Schmitt (1996) as a differential sensitivity to unjust distributions or unfair treatments. Items shown are the victim subscale of Schmitt et al.'s (1995) instrument. That instrument also has perpetrator and observer subscales that capture a sensitivity to being unjust or seeing others treated unjustly. Justice orientation is defined by Liao and Rupp (2005) as the extent to which individuals are attentive to issues of fairness around them. Items shown are from the attentiveness subscale of Rupp et al.'s (2003) instrument. That instrument also has an internalization subscale that reflects whether fairness is internalized as a moral virtue.

Appendix, continued

Scale Items for Other Relevant Personality Variables

Belief in a Just World
I think that I deserve the reputation I have among the people who know me.
When I get "lucky breaks" it is usually because I have earned them.
When I take examinations I rarely seem to get the grade I deserve. (R)
As a child I was often punished for things that I had not done. (R)
I am less likely to get hurt in traffic accidents if I drive with caution.
I have found that people who work the hardest at their job are not always the ones to get promoted. (R)
If I watch what I eat, I will live longer.
If I suffer a misfortune, I have usually brought it on myself in some way.
Being nice to people will not necessarily bring me lots of friends. (R)
If I get mugged or assaulted, I am just plain unfortunate. (R)
Trust Propensity
Most people can be counted on to do what they say they will do.
Most experts tell the truth about the limits of their knowledge.
Most adults are competent at their jobs.
Most sales people are honest in describing their products.
Most repair people are honest in describing their products.
Most people answer public opinion polls honestly.
These days, you must be alert or someone is likely to take advantage of you. (R)
One should be very cautious with strangers. (R)

Note. Belief in a just world is defined by Lerner and Miller (1978) as a belief that the world is a place where people get what they deserve. The items shown are from the personal subscale of the Furnham and Procter (1992) instrument. That instrument also has interpersonal and sociopolitical subscales that whether other people tend to get what they deserve, and whether societal dynamics give citizens what they deserve. Trust propensity is defined by Mayer et al. (1995) as a general willingness to trust others. Items shown are from Mayer and Davis's (1999) instrument.