

ADVANCES IN GROUP PROCESSES

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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PREFACE

Advances in Group Processes is a peer-reviewed annual volume that publishes theoretical analyses, reviews, and theory-based empirical chapters on group phenomena. This series adopts a broad conception of “group processes.” This includes work on groups ranging from the very small to the very large, and on classic and contemporary topics such as status, power, trust, justice, conflict, social influence, heuristics, identity, decision-making, intergroup relations, and social networks. Previous contributors have included scholars from diverse fields including sociology, psychology, political science, economics, business, philosophy, computer science, mathematics, and organizational behavior.

Several years ago, we added an editorial board to this series to broaden the review process and draw upon the collective expertise of some of the top scholars in the discipline. That board consists of Jessica Collett, Joseph Dippong, Ashley Harrell, Karen Hegtvedt, Will Kalkhoff, Jeff Lucas, Jennifer McLeer and Jane Sell. This group of scholars has made this series better and we are grateful for their service, guidance, and advice.

The first two chapters in this volume use affect control theory (ACT) to address important contemporary social problems. Collett and Pierce fill a gap in the literature on public perceptions of the police by using ACT to link these perceptions to political identity. Their use of ACT allows Collett and Pierce to capture perceptions indirectly, which mitigates response bias problems endemic to research on the police. A sample of 517 MTurk respondents read seven (bogus) headlines concerning different events, and the headlines varied in ambiguity. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses reveal the mechanisms by which readers interpret ambiguous headlines about the police and “fill in the gaps” to align their interpretations with preexisting political beliefs. The study sheds needed light on how political identity influences police perceptions, and it highlights how media coverage may worsen the related political divide and impede social change. Rogers, Boyle, and Scaptura use the affect control theory of self (ACT-Self) to examine another pressing social problem: mass shootings. Results from a qualitative autobiographical analysis as well as a survey study expose strained masculinity as a source of male self-inauthenticity that can lead to violent fantasies and actions. Importantly, the study highlights men’s perceptions of women’s feelings about them, accurate or not, as a “possible intervention point” for reducing mass violence.

The second section of this volume focuses on topics related to social exchange and influence. Joshua Doyle advances and tests a theory of “third order inference” and examines the relative power of group (second order) and cultural (third order) information about social trust on the decision to cooperate in a multi-actor

public goods experiment. Unexpectedly, and contrary to findings from Correll et al.'s (2017) theory of status advantage in meritocratic settings, results reveal that manipulated knowledge of group members' supposed views about social trust in the immediate context (i.e., second order trust) "carried the day" and overwhelmed the influence of manipulated information about the social trust of "most other people" (i.e., third order cultural trust). Doyle raises several pressing questions to be sorted out in future research and discusses important practical implications for addressing the challenges of resolving uncertainty and inducing cooperation in modern, complex societies. Next, Friis and Zuckerman Sivan offer a theoretical analysis of reciprocity that builds on Leifer's theory of local action and improves upon it by offering a more general yet nuanced account of how givers employ "reverse bargaining" to construct a sense of debt in a receiver while simultaneously mitigating suspicion that they furtively desire a positive return on investment. The theory clarifies the role of reverse bargaining in social exchange and usefully synthesizes competing views of reciprocity in the literature. Turning to influence processes, Schneider, Buskens, and van de Rijt offer the first theoretical and empirical analysis of whether the type of decision being made (i.e., binary vs. continuous) affects the likelihood of optimal investment behavior in small, networked groups. Drawing on binary diffusion models and (continuous) models of opinion updating, they create an elegant model that compares binary and continuous decision-making. Contrary to predictions derived from simulations, results from a laboratory experiment lead the authors to conclude that whether a decision process is binary or continuous does not seem "critical." Interestingly, though, they were able to improve the fit of their model by adjusting their simulations to reflect the noisier decision process of "real" human participants. By extending the model to apply to larger and more varied network types and lengthier time spans, this line of work could have important practical implications for addressing contemporary social problems, including people's reluctance to invest in pro-environmental behaviors.

The last three chapters in Volume 40 address questions related to status processes and status-based inequality. Using vignette methods, Hawks, Hegtvedt, and Johnson examine the gendered nature of subordinates' emotional responses to the behaviors of authorities in workplace settings. In general, and as expected, the enactment of "fair" behaviors by a manager, regardless of their gender, elicited reports of more positive (and less negative) emotional responses among workers. Hawks and her colleagues also find that impressions of "competence" and "warmth" link male versus female manager behaviors to positive emotional responses among employees in ways that reflect gender stereotypes, though the findings for negative emotions are more nuanced than expected. The study advances our understanding of how gender stereotypes contextualize subordinate responses to superordinate behaviors in ways that operate to sustain gender inequality at work. Next, Bianchi, Lyu, and Popovaita take a fresh look at the role of sentiments in status processes. To advance the debate about whether sentiments function as status characteristics or whether they alter/moderate status processes, Bianchi and her colleagues offer a "deep dive" into the most relevant theoretical, empirical, and methodological issues at stake, and they offer new,

interdisciplinary insights that should serve to steer future research priorities. Finally, Cayce Jamil revisits Pugh and Wahrman's classic 1983 analysis of "Neutralizing Sexism in Mixed-Sex Groups." He specifically explores the heretofore unanswered question of whether status interventions designed to reduce inequalities in task groups could have unintended negative consequences for group solidarity. Jamil's replication of Pugh and Wahrman's study did not produce a baseline difference in influence along gender lines; this time there was no difference to be neutralized. Furthermore, contrary to speculation by earlier researchers, the standardized status intervention employed by Jamil did not have negative consequences for solidarity. While further work remains to be done on the relationship between status and solidarity, Jamil's findings give us some confidence that status interventions do not solve one problem while creating another.

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