COMMUNAL FUNCTIONS OF SOCIAL COMPARISON

The extent to which we see ourselves as similar or different from others in our lives plays a key role in getting along and participating in social life. This volume identifies research relevant to such communal functions of social comparisons and summarizes and organizes this research within a single, coherent conceptual framework. The volume provides an important addition to current thinking about social comparison, which has often neglected communal and affiliative functions. Whereas human desire to compare with others has traditionally been viewed as motivated by self-centered needs such as self-evaluation, self-enhancement, and self-improvement, this book presents an eclectic cross section of research that illuminates connective, cooperative, and participatory functions of social comparisons. In this vein, the book aims both to expose research on currently neglected functions of social comparisons and to motivate a broader theoretical integration of social comparison processes.

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Communal Functions of Social Comparison

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