The Social Mind

Cognitive and Motivational Aspects of Interpersonal Behavior

Edited by

Joseph P. Forgas
University of New South Wales

Kipling D. Williams
University of New South Wales

Ladd Wheeler
University of New South Wales

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1. The Social Mind: Introduction and Overview

JOSEPH P. FORGAS, KIPLING D. WILLIAMS, AND
LADD WHEELER

Introduction

Human beings are an intrinsically gregarious species. Much of our remarkable evolutionary success is probably due to our highly developed ability to cooperate and interact with each other (Buss, 1999). It is thus not surprising that the study of interpersonal behavior has long been one of the core concerns of social psychology. Understanding how people relate to each other and how their mental representations about other individuals and groups guide their interpersonal strategies has never been of greater importance than it is today. Throughout most of our evolutionary history, human beings lived in close, face-to-face groups where almost all interaction involved intimately known others. In contrast, with the development of large-scale industrialized societies since the 18th century, our interactions have become increasingly complex and impersonal. Most of our encounters now involve people we know superficially at best (Durkheim, 1956; Goffman, 1972). Effective social interaction thus requires ever more sophisticated and elaborate cognitive and motivational strategies. The scientific study of how people understand and represent the social world around them and how they plan and execute their interactions with others is thus of critical importance.

Of course, the study of interpersonal processes has a long and proud tradition in our discipline. However, during the past several decades social psychology has been increasingly dominated by an individual-istic social cognitive paradigm that has focused predominantly on the study of individual thoughts and motivations (Forgas, 1981). Perhaps inevitably, the study of "real" interpersonal processes has declined in relative importance (Wegner & Gilbert, 2000). Although we have made major advances in understanding how people process information about the social world, relatively few attempts have been made to explore how processes of social cognition and motivation may influ-ence interpersonal behaviors. One of our objectives in this volume is to draw on the best of the achievements of recent cognitive and motiva-tional research in social psychology and to show how this knowledge can be applied to understanding interpersonal phenomena.

We argue in this book that a juxtaposition of the "social" and the "individual" in our discipline is neither helpful nor necessary. Any meaningful explanation of interpersonal behavior must be based on a careful analysis of the thoughts and motivations of individual social actors. In turn, social factors such as our personal relationships, group memberships, and culture play a critical role in shaping our mental rep-resentations and motivations. One of the oldest debates in the history of psychology is about whether our discipline should be concerned with the study of "mind" or "behavior" (Hilgard, 1980). It seems to us that any meaningful approach to social psychology necessarily involves paying as much attention to the thoughts, motivations, and feelings of social actors as to their interpersonal behaviors. In other words, the interaction between the mental and the behavioral aspects of social life should be the proper focus of our research. The term *social mind* featured in our title is intended to signify this close interdepen-dence between the mental and the behavioral, the social and the indi-vidual spheres in our discipline. The contributions to this volume all report theories and research that illustrate the benefits of adopting such an integrative approach to the analysis of social cognition and motiva-tion on the one hand and interpersonal behavior on the other.

The substantive task of this book is thus to explore the role of mental representations about the social world in how people under-stand themselves and others, and how cognitive and motivational processes influence their interpersonal behaviors. Of course, the idea that there is a close interdependence between interpersonal behavior on the one hand and cognitive and motivational processes on the

other has an interesting history in our discipline, as the next section will argue.

The Background

The close links between symbolic mental processes and interpersonal behavior have long been recognized in social science theorizing. Several influential theories sought to deal with this question. The theories of Max Weber (1947), although rarely invoked in social psychology nowadays, provide one outstanding example of such an approach. Weber assumed a direct relationship between the individual's cognitions, beliefs and motivations – the social mind – and larger social systems and structures. Weber's well-known analysis of large-scale sociohistorical processes, such as his theory linking the advent of capitalism with the spread of the Protestant ethic and values, is fundamentally social psychological in orientation. In this work, as well as most of his other writings, Weber assumes that individual beliefs and motivations – such as the spreading acceptance of the Protestant ethic – are the fundamental force shaping large-scale social and economic processes, such as the advent of capitalist social organization (Weber, 1947). Max Weber's concern with mental representations as the key to understanding interpersonal and societal processes is particularly noticeable in his work on bureaucracies. Here he argues that understanding the mind set of the bureaucrat is essential to understanding how bureaucracies function; on the other hand, the explicit rule systems that define bureaucracies play a critical role in shaping and maintaining the social mind of the bureaucrat that, in turn, governs his or her behaviors.

Weber was also among the pioneers who argued that any understanding of social and interpersonal behavior must involve a study of the externally observable causes of that behavior, as well as the subjectively perceived meanings that are attached to an action by the actor. Weber's methodologies involved an ingenious attempt to combine empirical, quantitative data about social processes with the simultaneous analysis of subjective beliefs and motivations of individuals. Several of the chapters here report important progress in research on the interface of individual minds and social behavior that has a distinctly Weberian flavor (e.g., those of McGuire and McGuire, Nezlek, Baumeister and Catanese, Hogg, and Kerr). Indeed, one could make a plausible case that Max Weber was one of the precursors of the

social cognitive approach, and it is rather unfortunate that his work and theories remain largely unrecognized and unappreciated by social psychologists today.

Another important theoretical framework that is highly relevant to the concerns of the present book is symbolic interactionism, and the work of George Herbert Mead in particular. Mead's *social behaviorism*, later to be renamed *symbolic interactionism*, was perhaps the most comprehensive attempt to create a theory of social interaction that would synthesize the behaviorist and the phenomenologist, the environmentalist and the mentalistic approaches to human behavior. Mead argued that interpersonal behavior is best understood as both the product and the source of the symbolic representations and expectations of social actors – their social mind. These mental representations, in turn, are partly "given," determined by prior experiences and symbolic representations of social encounters, and partly "creative," constructed by social actors in the course of their encounters with others. Mead's theory is in a sense an attempt to combine phenomenological concerns with symbolic meanings and intentions with the dominant behaviorist orientation of experimental psychology at that time. According to Mead, by internalizing and symbolically representing the social interactions people participate in, the individual acquires social expertise, which lies at the core of the socialized "me." However, social interactions are not acted out in a repetitive, determinate, stereotypical fashion in everyday life. It is the role of the unique, creative "I" to continuously reassess, monitor, and redefine social interactions as they progress, injecting a sense of indeterminacy and openness into our interactions.

Symbolic interactionism has failed to become a dominant theory within social psychology, probably because the methodologies available at the time did not provide a suitable empirical means for studying individual mental representations. The social cognitive paradigm that has been in ascendancy for at least two decades now has changed much of this. Social cognitive research essentially deals with the same kinds of questions that were also of interest to Mead: How do individual thoughts, beliefs, representations, and motives influence interpersonal behavior, and how are such mental representations constructed and maintained? Social cognitive research has now developed a range of ingenious techniques and empirical procedures that for the first time allow a rigorous empirical analysis of Mead's ideas. Many of the chapters in this book address issues that are directly

relevant to symbolic interactionist concerns (e.g., those of Andersen and Berenson, Fletcher and Simpson, Nezlek, Rhodewalt, Sedikides and Gaertner). Like these authors, symbolic interactionists were also interested in these questions: How do people's ideas and beliefs about relationships, the self, or other people influence their interpersonal behaviors? and How are such beliefs created and maintained in the course of social interactions? Symbolic interactionist ideas continue to provide a huge and largely untapped reservoir of theories and hypotheses about the links between social mind and social behavior, and one of the key antecedents to the issues explored in this book.

It is interesting to note that even though the theoretical systems developed by Max Weber and George Herbert Mead had only a weak direct influence on social psychology, within sociology they gave rise to a strong and thriving micro-sociological tradition (Coser, 1971). In fact Weber's and Mead's influence on social psychology has been largely indirect, transmitted to us through the work of writers such as Erving Goffman (1972). Goffman provided some of the most stimulating conceptual accounts of the intricate relationship between an individual's thoughts and motivations, planned self-presentational strategies, and observable public social behavior. Goffman's dramaturgical account of social interaction is essentially based on his extended analysis of the cognitive and motivational strategies that shape the social minds of actors. Consistent with the micro-sociological tradition, Goffman's method of explaining the puzzles of interpersonal behavior was largely based on analytical, interpretive methods. Social psychologists cover much the same ground, relying on the whole armory of empirical methods. The work presented here by Andersen and Berenson, Baumeister and Catanese, Rhodewalt, Schütz, Sorrentino et al., Tice and Faber, and Williams et al. all touches on issues that are directly relevant to our understanding of strategic self-presentation in interpersonal situations, as also analyzed by Goffman.

A further historical tradition that is directly relevant to the theme of our book can be found in the various phenomenological theories in social psychology. Although the introspective method for studying phenomenological mental experiences pioneered by Wundt and Titchener was largely rejected in later psychological research, phenomenological theories continue to exert a great influence on our discipline (Bless & Forgas, 2000). In fact, the phenomenological perspective produced some of our most stimulating and enduring ideas and research paradigms in experimental social psychology. A classic example is Fritz

Heider's pioneering work (Heider, 1958) exploring the kinds of knowledge and motives that social actors need to possess in order to plan and execute strategic interpersonal behaviors successfully.

Heider's work is fundamentally a theoretical analysis of the nature of the social mind: What are the characteristics of social knowledge, how is it acquired and organized, and how does it guide interpersonal behaviors? Heider's phenomenological speculations about the nature and functions of the minds of social actors had a major impact on our discipline and gave rise to some of our most productive empirical research paradigms. Phenomenological ideas provided the initial impetus and defined the scope of such key areas of research as the study of person perception and attribution, balance and dissonance theories, and research on attitude organization and attitude change. Without Heider's commitment to taking seriously and trying to understand the social mind of social actors, social psychology would have developed as an entirely different discipline. Several chapters here report research concerned with the social understanding of actors that show considerable affinity with Heider's theoretical ideas (e.g., those of Cooper, Forgas, McGuire and McGuire, Nezlek, Schütz, Sorrentino et al., and Tice and Faber).

Heider is just one of the key representatives of the phenomenological tradition. Kurt Lewin is another defining figure who also believed that the study of how interpersonal behavior is directed by the mental representations and motivations of individuals should be within the focus of social psychological inquiry. Lewin's field theory in particular represents an explicit affirmation of the principle that the way people mentally represent and experience social situations must be the core research question guiding our discipline. Lewin's ideas have, of course, left an indelible mark on our field. His emphasis on the need to understand the subjective representations of social actors – their social mind – eventually gave us some of our most successful research paradigms, including much research on group dynamics, social influence processes, and cognitive dissonance. One can easily discern a conceptual link between the Lewinian approach to the analysis of social influence and group processes in the work reported here by Crano, Kerr, Huguet et al., and Kaplan and Wilke, as well as that of Williams et al.

This necessarily brief survey of the various historical antecedents of an interest in the social mind is, of course, far from complete. Our purpose in touching on these earlier theories is simply to illustrate

that social psychology has a rich tradition of fruitful theorizing that addresses exactly the same questions that contributors to this volume are also concerned with: What are the features and characteristics of thought systems? How are mental representations about the social world, other people, intimate relationships, and the like formed, and how do they, in turn, influence our interpersonal strategies? To what extent can we understand group behavior in terms of the implicit representations people have about the role of their own group and its relative position compared to the positions of other groups? In order to answer questions such as these, we need to be mindful of earlier theories of the social mind that could inform our enterprise today.

However, we are now also in a much better position than earlier researchers to find answers to questions such as these. The past several decades in social psychology have been characterized by the rapid ascendancy of the social cognitive paradigm. For all its failings, this is a framework that clearly accepts that the mental representations, feelings, and intentions of social actors are the key determinants of interpersonal behavior. Social cognitive research has produced an impressive corpus of findings and empirical methods that are directly relevant to studying the social mind. Many of the contributions included here offer excellent illustrations of how social cognitive methods can be applied to study the links between social cognition and motivation and strategic interpersonal behaviors (e.g., the chapters by Andersen and Berenson, Forgas, Huguet et al., Sedikides and Gaertner, Sorrentino et al., and Tice and Faber).

What are the fundamental dimensions that define people's social experiences? Can we identify basic characteristics that play a key role in influencing a wide range of interpersonal plans and behaviors? Several chapters here suggest that the answer to questions such as these may be a cautious "yes." A number of contributors to this volume find that thoughts and concern about being accepted and *liked*, and concern about being *competent*, in control, and respected, appear to be distinct and orthogonal features of the social minds of actors. Interestingly, this dichotomy appears to be important in other areas of social psychology as well. For example, there is considerable evidence from person perception research suggesting that liking (social evaluation) and competence (task and intellectual evaluation) are also fundamental dimensions in the way people are perceived (Rosenberg & Sedlak, 1972). Indeed, it is rather pleasing to find that the same dimensions that define our perceptions of and reactions to others also emerge as critical when

it comes to understanding how the thoughts and motivations of social actors influence their social behaviors. The fundamental importance of dimensions such as liking/social acceptance and respect/social control in strategic social behavior is illustrated in a number of chapters here, including those by Andersen and Berenson, Crano, Kerr, Nezlek, Rhodewalt, Schütz, and Williams et al.

Our concern with the social mind as a crucial factor in interpersonal behavior is not an isolated phenomenon. As foreshadowed in the theories of Weber, Mead, Goffmann, Heider, and Lewin, there is a growing recognition in the field that understanding the mechanisms that link people's thoughts, ideas, representations, and motivations with their actual social behaviors is one of the core objectives of social psychology. In a recent volume concerned with the social psychology of subjective experience, Wegner and Gilbert (2000) argued that even though "those of us who constitute the field 'know' that the social interaction of individuals is its intellectual core, in reality the center around which modern social psychology actually turns is the understanding of subjective experience" (p. 4). Even though the study of interpersonal behavior is supposed to be the central territory of social psychology, in fact the most exciting recent developments have taken place in other areas, such as research on social cognition and social motivation that focuses on isolated individuals rather than actual social behavior. As Wegner and Gilbert (2000) note, "a curious by-product of social psychology's expansion has been a kind of urban blight at its official core. Topics such as social interaction, relationships, and groups – which are clearly 'downtown' social psychology in the official story of the field – have suffered massive decay over the last few decades" (p. 7). One of the objectives of this book is to argue that the study of social cognition and motivation on the one hand and interpersonal behavior on the other hand need not be competing endeavors. Rather, interpersonal behavior is best understood through a careful analysis of the thoughts and motivations of social actors – their social minds.

We hope to achieve this objective by discussing four interrelated issues in this book. The chapters included in Part I are concerned with the question of "What is the fundamental nature of social thinking and social motivation, and how do these processes influence interpersonal behavior?" Part II contains contributions that discuss the nature of the socially constructed self and highlight some important individual difference variables involved in strategic interpersonal behavior. Part III deals with the role of social cognition and social

motivation in personal relationships, and Part IV looks at the role of these factors in group phenomena.

Part I. The Social Mind: Basic Issues and Processes

The first part of the book considers some *basic conceptual issues* about the interplay of mental representations and interpersonal behavior and contains four chapters. In the first chapter, William and Claire McGuire summarize their integrative theory and empirical research on one of the fundamental questions of the study of social mind: the issue of how *phenomenal thought systems* develop around foci of meaning like oneself and others. Their ingenious experiments analyze how thinkers carry out various directed-thinking tasks, such as listing designated types of characteristics of a target person. The aim of these studies is to discover the content and structure of people's thought systems and how they are affected by cognitive and affective variables. McGuire and McGuire report that the affective qualities of the object of thinking (e.g., likability) are often far more important than cognitive qualities in making judgments. Male and female thinkers also differ on a number of dimensions of thought systems about people. The conceptual framework and methods developed by McGuire and McGuire represents one of the most ambitious and integrative attempts to come to terms with the social minds of social actors, and should have important theoretical and practical implications for how we understand and study interpersonal behaviors.

As McGuire and McGuire demonstrate, affective features are critical in determining how people see and represent the social world around them. This theme is picked up in the next chapter in this part, by Forgas, who analyzes the *role of affective states or moods in strategic interpersonal behaviors*. Although recent research in social cognition has told us much about the role of rational information processing strategies in guiding interpersonal behaviors, the influence of affective states on strategic interaction has been relatively neglected. This chapter argues that even mild and temporary mood states are likely to have a significant and predictable influence on the way people perceive, plan, and execute interpersonal behaviors. Further, extrapolating from the author's Affect Infusion Model (AIM; Forgas, 1995), the chapter develops a theoretical framework that predicts that affect infusion into social interaction should be most likely to occur in social situations that require more elaborate, substantive processing for a behavioral

response to be produced. Numerous recent experiments are discussed indicating that positive and negative affective states have a marked influence on the interpretation of social behaviors, responses to approaches from others, the planning and execution of negotiation encounters, and the production and interpretation of strategic interpersonal messages such as requests. The chapter concludes by emphasizing the critical role of affect in how people represent and respond to the social world. These findings also have important implications for applied areas such as organizational, clinical, and health psychology.

Cognitive dissonance research represents one of the most important attempts to come to terms with the dynamic, motivated character of the social mind in social psychology. Surprisingly, the precise motivational basis for the dissonance effects has remained elusive. The chapter by Joel Cooper presents a major review of research on dissonance motivation and develops an integrative explanation of this phenomenon. Since the time of Festinger's original assumption that inconsistency leads to dissonance arousal, influential alternative views have been advanced as to just how or why this occurs. For example, theorists such as Aronson suggested that the self is necessarily involved in dissonance. In contrast, Cooper and Fazio proposed that feeling responsible for aversive or unwanted consequences is the key factor that produces dissonance. Others, such as Steele, echoed Aronson's emphasis on the self and suggested that the need to affirm the self rather than to reestablish consistency is the critical factor driving the effect. This theoretical controversy concerning the fundamental nature of dissonance processes has provided some fascinating insights into the "social mind" and opened up new areas of research such as investigations into hypocritical behavior by Aronson. Nonetheless, there remains little consensus about the primary motivational basis of cognitive dissonance.

The model proposed here by Cooper assumes the existence of a mutual influence between cognition and motivation, as also implied in Festinger's original model. The chapter shows that the degree to which the self is involved in dissonance, versus the degree to which dissonance supersedes the self, is a function of the cognitive accessibility of particular standards. Cooper presents data that show that when people's personal standards for behavior are chronically or situationally accessible, dissonance follows a path predicted by self-consistency theorists. When normative standards are accessible, on the other hand, people's experience of dissonance follows the "New Look" model of

Cooper and Fazio. Cooper's model thus helps to integrate the competing views about the underlying motivational properties of dissonance and represents an important advance in our understanding of how motivational mechanisms influence the social mind and, ultimately, interpersonal behavior.

The question of social motives and their role in the *cognitive dynamics of everyday behavior* is also discussed by John Nezlek. He presents a model describing the relationships between the cognitive and motivational dynamics of day-to-day social life and their relationships to psychological well-being. Nezlek's work focuses on exploring two related areas of social life: (1) day-to-day social interaction and (2) daily plans and their fulfillment. The primary assumption of Nezlek's model is that people's daily lives reflect an integration of two basic needs: the need to belong and the need for control. This dichotomous view of interpersonal motives reappears in several of the other chapters as well. Nezlek's model assumes that people need to *feel* close to others (a motivational task), and they need to *think* they have control (a cognitive task). The model suggests that *what* people do socially each day is best understood as a cognitive phenomenon subject to cognitive processes and constructs; *how* people feel about what they do each day is best understood from a motivational perspective.

Part II. The Social Mind of Individuals: The Role of the Self and Individual Differences

What are the fundamental building blocks of the self and social identity? How do human beings prefer to define themselves in social situations? Is the self primarily an individual, a group, or a collective creation? This is one of the key questions we need to address in trying to understand the social minds of actors, and this is the task undertaken in the chapter by Constantine Sedikides and Lowell Gaertner here. According to these authors, persons seek to achieve *self-definition and self-interpretation* (i.e., identity) in at least three fundamental ways. People may define themselves (1) in terms of their personal traits or those aspects of the self-concept that make them unique in a given social environment (the individual self); (2) in terms of group membership or those aspects of the self-concept that differentiate the group member from members of relevant outgroups (the collective self); and (3) in terms of contextual characteristics, that is, those aspects of the situation that make one self more accessible than the other.

Do these three bases of self-definition carry equal weight? Is one more primary than the others? To address these questions, Sedikides and Gaertner formulated and tested three hypotheses. According to the individual-self primacy hypothesis, the individual self is the most fundamental basis of self-definition. According to the collective-self primacy hypothesis, the collective self provides the most fundamental basis for self-definition. Finally, according to the contextual-primacy hypothesis, neither the individual nor the collective self is primary; instead, self-definition depends upon contextual factors. The chapter reports the results of a series of ingenious experiments addressing this question. Sedikides and Gaertner state that all experiments supported the individual-self primacy hypothesis. These results fundamentally challenge the view that group or collective identities take precedence in defining people's social identity, as suggested, for example, by much research based on social identity theory or self-categorization theory (see also the chapters by Hogg and by Crano in this volume).

Self-presentation is the paramount interpersonal aspect of the self. Ultimately, as Goffman also argued, shaping a particular and desirable image of the self to present to others is one of the crucial tasks of interpersonal life, and the presented self is a powerful tool for relating to other people. The chapter by Dianne Tice and Jon Faber presents an up-to-date review and discussion of *self-presentation* research based on the authors' empirical work. They report that the favorability of self-presentation changes, depending on whether one is presenting oneself to friends or to strangers. Modesty prevails among friends, but self-enhancement seems to be the norm among strangers. Research looking at cognitive load and memory impairment data show that these styles of self-presentation are automatic processes, whereas modest presentation to strangers requires controlled processes.

Tice and Faber also found that when people depart from their familiar style of self-presentation, this may impair their capacity to process new information about the interaction partner. Hence engaging in controlled self-presentation results in less accurate memory for the other person. Of course, people must often choose whether to take risks to enhance their public image or avoid risk so as to protect their image of themselves. Trait self-esteem and self-handicapping contingencies were found to predict how people respond to a risky interpersonal situation. Tice and Faber's evidence also indicates that self-concept

change follows from internalizing self-presentations to others – but similar information processing without public self-presentation fails to produce parallel changes. Consistent with the theme of the book, the chapter concludes by highlighting the critical role of cognitive, motivational, and affective processes associated with the self in managing strategic interpersonal behaviors.

What is the role of *self-esteem* in interpersonal behaviors and self-presentational strategies? The chapter by Astrid Schütz reviews new research suggesting that it is often high rather than low self-esteem that is linked to more negative and asocial behaviors. This may be because self-enhancement is less important to low self-esteem people compared to the goal of being perceived as pleasant and likable, a theme that is also reflected in the chapter by McGuire and McGuire. Schütz describes several experiments showing that low self-esteem people are often less critical, are more likely to admit mistakes and seek to be excused, and present themselves as more socially minded and altruistic. In contrast, high self-esteem people may emphasize ways in which they are better than their partners, whereas low self-esteem people describe themselves modestly and their partners positively. As the interactional style of high self-esteem persons focuses on individual achievements and abilities, it can be competitive to the point of criticizing or devaluing others. Low self-esteem, in contrast, leads to more cautious strategies designed to gain liking. Schütz discusses theoretical explanations of the interpersonal consequences of low and high self-esteem, and she concludes that high self-esteem, especially when it is extremely positive or unstable, may be related to socially disruptive behaviors. Overall, the work presented here throws doubt on the widely shared assumption that high self-esteem is always a socially desirable and highly adaptive individual trait.

Recent social psychological research on the self has moved from a focus on the content and structure of one's self-conceptions to a broader focus on how these self-conceptions are related to affect, motivation, and interpersonal behavior. The *social/cognitive model of narcissism* presented by Frederick Rhodewalt is illustrative of this approach. Rhodewalt discusses an overall theory of narcissism incorporating clinical ideas and observations, as well as social psychological research on social/cognitive and interpersonal processes. The model assumes that narcissists are highly invested in maintaining and enhancing a positive view of the self. However, the narcissistic view of the self is not based on reliable past knowledge of real achievements and

accomplishments. Rather, for the narcissist, the essential requirement for maintaining a favorable self-representation is to continuously obtain self-affirming, positive on-line feedback from others. According to Rhodewalt's analysis, a significant proportion of the narcissist's interpersonal strategies is aimed at eliciting positive feedback from others. Even if these interpersonal strategies are successful, they rarely produce enduring positive representations in the narcissist, as the value of the positive self-information obtained is compromised by the manipulative way it is elicited. The analysis of the narcissistic self by Rhodewalt provides an excellent illustration of how studying the socially constructed selves – the social mind of the narcissist – can offer new and illuminating insights into the dynamics of inter-personal behavior. Rhodedwalt's work, consistent with some of Schütz's arguments, suggests that the incessant search for self-esteem in our relations with others may produce a number of dysfunctional consequences.

Uncertainty is one of the most universal individual difference characteristics that can influence the social mind. The way people deal with *uncertainty in the interpersonal context* is also an important psychological issue that has a major influence on many kinds of strategic behaviors. The chapter by Richard Sorrentino and colleagues challenges the currently dominant prototype of "humans as rational beings," which implies that people need to know and understand their environment and will engage in cognitive activity or overt behavior in order to resolve uncertainty. Sorrentino et al. argue that certainty-oriented persons are more likely to maintain clarity about their environment rather than engage in or attend to situations that contain uncertainty. Given the tremendous importance of uncer-tainty in the interpersonal domain, this research program also has important implications for research on interpersonal relations and group dynamics. The evidence presented by Sorrentino et al. suggests that uncertainty orientation is an important moderator of behavior in many areas of strategic social behavior, such as close relation-ships, attitudes and judgments, group decisions, social identity and self-categorization, minority versus majority influence, social compar-ison, stereotyping, prejudice, and intergroup conflict. The work pre-sented here suggests that uncertainty orientation is one of the most promising individual difference variables that characterizes the social mind and is an important predictor of how people deal with the social world.

Part III. The Social Mind in Personal Relationships and Interpersonal Behaviors

Symbolic interactionist theories have long assumed that mental representations based on prior experiences of interacting with others should play a key role in influencing our subsequent social behaviors and relationships. This theme is recaptured in the chapter by Susan Andersen and Kathy Berenson, who discuss the way mental representations of significant others, stored in memory, can be activated and applied in new social encounters, with important consequences for thoughts, feelings, and motivations. This process of *transference* can lead social actors to remember things in ways that are distorted toward the significant other in accord with the model of schema-triggered affect. For example, physical resemblance to a significant other may trigger a motivation to be close to such a person. The expectancy of being accepted or rejected by a new person can be triggered by such transference based on past relationship experiences. Similarly, facial affect can be cued by resemblance to a significant other. In sum, Andersen and Berenson's chapter argues that significant other representations and transference are affectively and motivationally laden, and guide our interpersonal strategies in subtle and often counterintuitive ways. The authors' work offers an excellent example of how contemporary social cognitive methods and concepts can help us to better understand interpersonal relationships.

The theme of how mental representations and motivations influence personal relationships is continued in Garth Fletcher's and Jeffry Simpson's chapter, exploring the *structure and function of ideals in close relationships*. What are ideal standards in a relationship? What are the ideal dimensions individuals use to evaluate their partners and relationships? How do such ideal standards develop? And most important, how do ideals influence and guide relationships? Fletcher and Simpson present a comprehensive model analyzing the features and functions of social ideals in close relationships and describe empirical research based on the model. They suggest that ideals have three main functions: They help us to (1) evaluate relationship quality, (2) regulate emotions and behaviors, and (3) explain and predict relationship events. Fletcher and Simpson report a series of studies that explore the content of ideals in romantic relationships, and demonstrate that evaluations of partners are often guided by these ideal standards. Longitudinal research showed how relationship ideals develop and change, and

Fletcher and Simpson also found a close link between relationship ideals and changes in relationship perceptions and satisfaction. These results provide a provocative illustration of how mental representations and ideals can have a tangible influence on our relationships and intimate partners. Fletcher and Simpson interpret these effects in terms of social cognitive mechanisms, and place special emphasis on the role of automatic social comparisons between accessible ideals and actual perceptions. This work offers a particularly nice illustration of the critical role that mental representations play in the maintenance and development of personal relationships.

A special kind of interpersonal relationship is the one created between victims and perpetrators of transgressions. Roy Baumeister and Kathleen Catanese, in their illuminating chapter, analyze the different *accounts of the transgression provided by victims and perpetrators* and the psychological mechanisms responsible for such differences. In a series of studies, Baumeister and his colleagues found that victims produce consistently biased accounts in which (1) the victims were wholly innocent, (2) the perpetrators had no valid reason or justification for their actions, and (3) severe and lasting negative consequences were caused. Further, in victims' accounts, (4) mitigating or extenuating circumstances surrounding the perpetrator's actions were missing, (5) multiple offenses were involved, (6) the victims' reactions were either appropriate or highly restrained, and (7) the transgression is still seen as highly relevant. Despite the widespread assumption that perpetrators lie to protect themselves whereas victims tell the unvarnished truth, Baumeister et al.'s studies show that victims and perpetrators distort information to an equal degree. Both victims and perpetrators distort their accounts significantly more than a control group with no motivational goals to influence their judgments.

Thus, both victim and perpetrator roles contain cognitive and motivational biases that can distort interpretations and memories. Other research by Baumeister also found that perpetrators also alter their speech patterns, use shorter sentences, and avoid grammatical constructions that imply responsibility (e.g., "I decided . . ." vs. "before I knew it . . ."). Perpetrators' accounts also feature their own emotions, rather than those of the victim, and present more antecedent (background) material rather than information about the consequences of their actions. Because victims and perpetrators think about, understand, and remember similar events in very different ways, this makes it far more difficult to resolve certain conflicts after

the event. Baumeister and Catanese's work has broad implications for our understanding of the cognitive and motivational distortions that characterize accounts of war crimes, racial oppression, and gender differences in perceptions of rape. This work has important implications for professional practice in forensic, clinical, and counseling psychology, and represents an ingenious illustration of how the study of cognitive and motivational processes can help to illuminate even very intractable social and relationship conflicts.

Interpersonal relationships, especially those involving conflict, often require the exercise of influence tactics, such as the use of ostracism. In their chapter, Williams, Wheeler, and Harvey outline a comprehensive theory of the nature, antecedents, and consequences of social ostracism as an interpersonal strategy. According to the chapter, ostracism occurs when individuals (or sources) ignore and exclude other individuals (or targets). Earlier research in this domain focused primarily on the effects of social ostracism on the target. Specifically, studies explored how targets feel, think, and behave as a consequence of being ignored and excluded by those who are physically present. In contrast, this chapter focuses on individuals who *use* ostracism on others. The needs to belong and to feel control emerge as important motivational themes in understanding the social mind of the ostracizer. According to these studies, ostracizers recognize that by ignoring and excluding others they threaten their target's sense of belonging. Simultaneously, ostracizers perceive a heightened sense of control over their interpersonal environment. The present research employs an event-contingent self-recording method in a micro-longitudinal study to test predictions that social ostracism will be empowering, yet effortful, for sources. In general, the results suggest that some of the very needs that ostracism threatens in targets are the ones that are fortified in the sources of ostracism. The chapter shows that even highly provocative interpersonal tactics, such as ignoring and excluding others, can be adequately analyzed in terms of the cognitive and motivational strategies in the social mind of the ostracizer.

Part IV. The Social Mind of Groups: Group Representations and Group Behavior

The last part of the book contains five chapters that discuss the role that cognitive and motivational processes play in group behavior. Attempts to understand the social minds of group members have a

long history in our discipline. Lewin's work on group dynamics established a thriving tradition of research concerned with cognitive and motivational aspects of group behavior. Later, classic work by Festinger, Tajfel, and others gave us new insights into how group membership can shape individuals' mental representations and motivations, and how these processes, in turn, impact on strategic group interactions.

The first chapter in this part, by Michael Hogg, reaches back to Henri Tajfel's seminal work on the role of social identity processes in group behavior. Hogg suggests that one of the main cognitive and motivational functions of group membership may be the reduction of subjective uncertainty through self-categorization processes rather than self-enhancement, as is often assumed. As Hogg points out, ever since Bartlett's presentation of the notion of a human search after meaning, contemporary social psychology has developed an array of constructs that describe a basic human need to reduce subjective uncertainty and render social experience meaningful. Although much of this work focuses on individual differences in the need for certainty or closure (see, for example, the chapter here by Sorrentino et al.), Hogg argues that the experience of subjective uncertainty can also be influenced by the social context. The chapter suggests that *social identification as a group member* is one very effective method of resolving subjective uncertainty and that the cognitive process of self-categorization underlying group identification is well suited to explaining uncertainty reduction. Indeed, uncertainty reduction may be one of the very basic motives for the formation of social groups, an idea that resonates with some of Festinger's earlier notions developed in his social comparison theory. Hogg describes a series of six minimal group experiments that show that identification and intergroup discrimination are stronger among participants who are explicitly categorized under conditions of subjective uncertainty. A series of field studies complements the results of the laboratory experiments. Hogg's work clearly indicates that group membership and group identity can play a critical role in shaping the social minds of individuals, and such representations, in turn, can play a key role in influencing intergroup relations.

The next chapter, by Norbert Kerr, focuses on one of social psychology's most important (but still not satisfactorily resolved) applied questions: How does working in a group affect the task motivation of group members? Specifically, Kerr examines the role of cognitive and

motivational processes in producing *motivation gains*. Previous work has shown reliable and predictable motivation losses (i.e., social loafing, free riding) when working in groups, but finding reliable motivation gains has remained elusive. Kerr draws upon his previous work in the search for motivation gains and examines the so-called Köhler effect as a source of motivation gain (an effect produced by how one perceives oneself in relation to group members). Kerr's work shows that it is necessary to understand the workers' social minds to fully understand the links between motivation and performance in work groups. Kerr's approach emphasizes the critical role of conceptions of the self and conceptions of others as they are related to task demands as the key to understanding motivation and performance in groups.

The effects of working among others on an individual's (cognitive) performance is also the topic of the chapter by Pascal Huguet and colleagues. In this discussion, they focus on how mental representations of social situations such as the presence of an audience and their expectations can sometimes dominate even cognitive processes that were previously assumed to be uncontrollable. Huguet et al. present research showing that the automatic cognitive processes that produce Stroop interference are in fact open to social influence and social facilitation in certain social situations. The chapter presents intriguing experimental results from the authors' laboratory showing that performance on the Stroop task can be significantly influenced by social manipulations, such as the presence of an attentive audience or when respondents are engaged in forced upward social comparisons. The authors' findings demonstrate the power of social situations over what has been thought to be invariant automatic cognitive processing. As such, these results appear to challenge the accepted view, reiterated in more than 500 papers on Stroop interference over the past 60 years, that the cognitive mechanisms producing this effect are uncontrollable. The work reported here indicates that even fundamental cognitive processes previously thought to be impervious to control are sensitive to social and environmental influences. In other words, thinking is done by social minds that are always attuned to subtle interpersonal influences.

William Crano's chapter examines another intriguing aspect of the social minds of group members: What is the role of social identity in mediating strategic persuasion processes in groups? In particular, the goals of this chapter are to identify some of the cognitive processes

underlying majority and minority influences and to delineate the factors that affect the persistence of attitude change brought about by these different sources of pressure. Crano seeks to provide a plausible theoretical account not only of direct majority influence, but also of delayed and indirect minority-induced change. He reports some fascinating results showing that even when attempts to change a focal attitude through persuasive communication remain overtly unsuccessful, other attitudes associated with the focal attitude may show a spontaneous and delayed change even though not targeted by persuasive messages. The leniency model is developed to explain how the cognitive and motivational mechanisms that allow majority and minority influences to occur may function within groups and mediate these effects. The leniency model builds on earlier research based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model and also considers the role of such factors in persuasion as message strength, outcome relevance, and social identity. The chapter argues that it is only through the integrated analysis of cognitive, affective, and motivational variables that dynamic interpersonal processes such as minority and majority influences on groups can be properly understood.

Decision making by groups involves both cognitive mechanisms, as well as affective and normative variables. The chapter by Martin Kaplan and Henk Wilke explores the conditions that promote task versus relationship motives and analyzes the consequences of such motives for group decision outcomes. All group tasks may be described on a dimension running from purely intellective tasks, which have a demonstrably correct solution, to judgmental tasks, for which solutions are based mainly on opinions and social consensus. Although behaviors guided by task (cognitive) and relationship (social) motives often collide in group decision making and may enhance or inhibit productivity, Kaplan and Wilke also suggest that their effects are frequently interactive. Social motives can affect the approach to a task in terms of the sorts of social decision schemes adopted and the depth of cognitive processing. Kaplan and Wilke present an integrative model of task and social motivational processes in group decision making. This model draws on and synthesizes the dual-process theory of social influence (normative and informational influence) and the dual-process theory of cognitive response (heuristic and systematic reasoning), as well as theories of social decision schemes (SDS) and the social identity theory of intragroup disagreement.

Conclusions

Understanding the way people think, feel, and behave in social situations has always been the core task of social psychology. However, the history of our discipline has been characterized by quite radical swings in interest within this broad domain. For several decades, up to and including the 1960s, the focus of attention was on the study of dynamic interpersonal processes often involving experimentally manipulated strategic social encounters between two or more people. This focus on interactive behaviors produced some of our most dramatic theories and research findings. This highly productive enterprise came to a rather sudden halt with the "crisis" in social psychology in the 1970s. This crisis brought with it a wholesale questioning of the appropriateness of manipulated experiments and ethical doubts about the permissibility of exposing human participants to staged social situations that they might find stressful or demanding. The resolution of the crisis did not involve a rejection of the experimental method and the adoption of qualitative methods. Rather, it produced a shift toward studying the thoughts, ideas, and motivations of isolated social actors, often without exposing them to dynamic interpersonal situations. For the last two decades or so, the social cognitive paradigm has been in ascendancy in our discipline. Critics of this approach often point out that it fails to study real interpersonal behaviors, that it is not truly social, and that it neglects the dynamic, strategic aspects of social life (Forgas, 1981).

Our main purpose in this volume is to suggest that such a stark juxtaposition of social and individualistic paradigms in our discipline is neither necessary nor useful. The chapters included here, in their various ways, all make the point that strategic interpersonal and group behaviors can be explained only if we have a good understanding of the cognitive and motivational processes that guide individuals. In other words, the social minds of individuals should be the key to understanding their strategic social behaviors. The impressive developments during the last two decades in our knowledge of social cognition and motivation offer a sound foundation for reintegrating the social and the indvidual in our discipline. The contributions within each of the four parts of this book were selected to highlight the integrative principles that might help us to accomplish this task.

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