**Positive Organizational Psychology:
Conflict, Dishonesty, Diversity, and Deviance**

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My speech today is titled "Positive Organizational Psychology: Conflict, Dishonesty, Diversity, and Deviance." This title may sound a bit strange, but I hope to explain to you how I arrived at it. First, however, I would like to take some time to tell you how I decided what to include in this talk. I approached this task as a researcher, as I would when researching a new topic. And the oratie speech is a very new task for me. Of course, as with others giving an oratie speech, it is my first time. But also, being from America, where we don't have any such formal ceremony on being appointed a full professor, I had never attended one until I arrived at Leiden last year. I think it is a very nice idea, and I am very honored to be able to have this time to speak to you.

So, what was my methodology for investigating what should be in an oratie? I used multiple methods, which is what I usually do and I will talk more about this in a bit. The four methodologies that I used to decide what to talk about in my oratie were thematic text analysis of past oraties (this is a form of content analysis); email interviews, informal conversations, and categorical analysis of my past research.

To conduct the thematic text analysis, I collected all of the hard-copy oratie-type booklets that I have received through the campus mail for the past year. I developed a coding scheme for my research assistants to use to determine which booklets to look at more closely (e.g., is it an oratie or goodbye speech?; is the topic related to social science or not?; what language? – as I wanted to see if others did their oratie in English with a bit of Dutch). At this point I certainly must thank my student assistants who were involved in this sorting and coding process: Annette van Duijne-de Graaf, Sylvain Rottier, and Stephanie Leone. After selecting 22 relevant oraties based on this initial analysis, we looked more thoroughly at the contents of the oraties – what did they talk about? A few gave formal research presentations of an empirical study, or collections of empirical studies as if they were at an academic conference; a few discussed their views on teaching and university policy, but most were basically stories of how their main research ideas developed, with interesting examples from their own and the work of others.

The second methodology was used to identify what the main ideas of my research are. For this, I again thank my student assistants, as well as Lindy Greer, my past research assistant from the University of Pennsylvania. We did a categorical linguistic analysis of my C.V. to determine the main themes of my research based on publications, working papers, and conference presentations. This would give me an objective view (actually, a numerical count) of where I was spending my research time and energies based on these end products. I will report these results a bit later.

The third methodology (and of course I am not claiming that this was a rigorously designed empirical study!) was informal conversations. I was asking all my Dutch professor friends what they had done, how they went about it, and how long it took to write an oratie!! The most common response was: it is your time, do what you want with it – you can say whatever you want!! Well, that did not help relieve my angst – I wanted concrete instructions (I also wanted concrete instructions on Dutch grammar and how to raise my new son, but did not get clear instructions on those, either).

So, I also used a fourth methodology that followed my basic approach when writing a paper or giving a presentation: consider your audience. Who is listening and what do they want to know and why? So, I prepared a short email survey with open-ended questions that I sent to people a bit familiar with me and my research – so more of an email interview asking potential audience members (you know who you are, I thank you greatly but won't mention your names to keep the sample anonymous). I asked them what they would like to hear me talk about and what three things they would especially like me to cover. The results in general revealed that they would like to hear a bit about my past research and why I decided to research those areas and how I selected the samples. They especially considered interesting my research using not typical, or atypical, samples for psychologists, such as punk rock bands and political activist groups. So you will hear more on that later in the talk. In addition, they were curious to hear about my future research ideas, and also wanted me to talk about my methodological approach to research, which as you can maybe already tell, is very eclectic; I use many different methodologies.

I will say a bit about this now. In my PhD training at Northwestern University, the main method used to do research was the experimental, laboratory method. A few of the faculty also did field research, mainly surveys. I was interested in both of these methods, but I also, since my undergraduate degree at the University of Wisconsin in Industrial/Organizational psychology, was interested in ethnography, or qualitative methods, from a fascinating course I took there on cultural anthropology – I wanted to live and work with the people I studied, to really understand what was going on. In my PhD program this was not the normal approach; it was basically considered an unacceptable methodology – so I snuck over to the Anthropology Department without telling my advisors (who in the end, however, were very supportive of my use of ethnographic methods in combination with traditional survey and field experimental methods). I enrolled in classes on linguistic text analysis and the ethnography of organizational meetings in the Anthropology Department – I really found these classes valuable and incorporated these techniques into my dissertation. After this work was accepted in a top journal, I didn't have to sneak around anymore.

Or so I thought. When I got to The Wharton School of Business, at the University of Pennsylvania (this was my first academic job and the one I held until coming to

Leiden) – a senior colleague took me aside and told me I had to decide what methodology I would use, that I could not use more than one – I needed to specialize. I did not like this advice, and decided that instead of being a "lab researcher" or a "survey researcher" (the two types there often did not communicate well with each other – so of course I did not want to have to choose) - I would be a "*construct* researcher" – that is, I would study a construct of interest, like conflict in groups, using multiple methodologies. That way I could use the advantages of multiple methods to investigate my area of interest. It was only, however, when I was able to publish in a top "lab" journal AND in a top "field research" journal, did my colleagues leave me alone, in a good way. And now there are many more people who study organizational issues from a psychological viewpoint that call themselves construct researchers.

The truth really is that I get bored and frustrated with one type of research. When I am in the lab, I get bored with the routine – the same type of people (students) doing the same controlled experiments over and over again. So I go to the field. But when I am in the field, I get very frustrated. First of all, it is very difficult to get a company to let you come study them (especially when you are studying things like deviance, conflict, diversity, and lying). And, once you are inside the organization, then everything is chaos. They say you can do a survey, but then they decide not to let you do it, or it can only be one page (that is, basically useless). Or you can only use data that they have already collected, which is not really measuring the constructs that you want. So I get frustrated, and go back to the lab, where I have control; or I go and study anarchist groups from an ethnographic standpoint and get arrested, wrongfully arrested, I should add – but that is another story (however, it was in Philadelphia for protesting the death penalty – it was data collection – what I won't do for data!!).

Here is another experience that framed my view of research methodology. When I was unpacking my boxes when I arrived at the University of Pennsylvania, a colleague came in and asked me what those things where – he was pointing to stacks of surveys and piles of video tapes. I said "That's my data." He said "Oh, you are creating a data set!" I, a bit confused, said "Well, yes, I do that for every study I do!" He said "How ambitious, but inefficient of you!" This is when I realized that I was surrounded by pen-and-paper economists and sociologists who mostly used archival data sets collected by someone else or a government agency. They did not collect data. This was a business school, where many organizational psychologists in the United States are located. It was very lonely, but thankfully I had good, friendly co-authors in other departments and at other universities. And now I am here, and cheerfully tell my friends in the United States that there are more social and organizational psychologists in my section, in this one hallway where I work, who do good empirical research than you can basically find at any one conference in the U.S. They are so jealous and all want to come visit – I hope we have enough hallways here with offices for them!

The main point, I should say, about my methodological approach, is that I believe that there are many advantages to using multiple methods. 1) It allows you the flexibility to match an appropriate methodology to your research question. 2) It provides a more thorough examination of your construct of interest. 3) It helps overcome the limitations of any one type of methodology. And 4) it is never boring!

I would now like to tell you how I have managed my research career. There isn't much to tell. Looking back, I had no great plan and it probably wasn't the most efficient, but I was always very motivated to do research and write – and I think this is an important thing to learn. The projects that I wasn't very interested in, or with people I wasn't especially connected with, are still sitting in boxes. I had to be motivated by the topic or by wanting to work, and having fun working, with a person. That sounds simple, but it took me a while to learn it (I have a lot of unfinished projects sitting in boxes).

When I was teaching a course on leadership to MBA / business students at The Wharton School for a few years, I realized that I'd been asking them to do something that I myself hadn't done and I felt like quite a hypocrite. In the course on leadership, they were required to develop a personal mission - what were their goals in this course, in their project team, when they graduated, for instance. I had never done this myself. I had never developed my own personal mission. At this point, I didn't yet have tenure and the mission statement I created for myself was: "To create and disseminate knowledge" – well, this is grand, I thought. But it fit for me – I was doing research to create knowledge, and I could teach, write articles, consult with companies, give talks at conferences, etc. to disseminate the knowledge – that is what I would do!

Well, after I got tenure, I felt this a bit boring – not doing the research, but the statement. So I decided I needed a new personal mission, in part, to help me be more efficient. See, when you get tenure, then all of a sudden your section head, department chair, dean of your school, and even the university president all start asking you to serve on committees. I've always had trouble saying no to authority (yes, I know, I did change and ended up in jail for it) so I needed some decision rules. This is where my mission came in handy – it was: "To make the University of Pennsylvania a better place for women and social psychologists." Yes, I know, it sounds grand again, but that is the way a vision is supposed to be, I guess. And the reason for it was that there weren't very many women faculty at the University of Pennsylvania (I was the first and only tenured woman in the history of my department) nor were there many social psychologists (one in the psychology department, and me with a joint appointment in management and psychology). And I think this mission worked, not in that I did make it a better place (although I have been told I had an influence – more women were hired, AND tenured, as were faculty with social psychology back-

grounds). It also helped me to say "no" and only agree to be on committees that fit with this mission – I was more focused, less overwhelmed.

At this time, I was also getting tired of studying Fortune 500 companies and teaching MBAs; I was also doing research at NASA with astronauts, flight crews, and rocket scientists (Waller & Jehn, 2000) – I was getting very tired of studying the elite; the sense of entitlement that these people felt was overwhelming and shocking – I couldn't believe how much they felt they deserved everything, without doing anything, but just because of who they were. In fact, one day at a talk in the psychology department, a candidate for a faculty position was explaining a limitation of her sample in that she couldn't find subjects with a high sense of entitlement (she was studying Midwestern, university psychology students). I laughed and told her that we should collaborate – in my data collection in the business school I couldn't find students with a low sense of entitlement. It was time to think about new theories, new samples, and new teaching. I was feeling the need to do things that would help more people than just Fortune 500 CEOs and Wall Street executives.

So, it was time to get away, time for a sabbatical, which I chose to do in The Netherlands. I spent the time at Groningen University due to connections I had from international conferences (thank you, Aukje!) and fortunately, was able to stay here more permanently given the position here at Leiden.

When I first arrived at Leiden, last spring, I was asked to give a talk to the students and faculty of Social and Organizational Psychology. I decided to prepare this talk as an introduction to me and my research. In preparation for this, I reviewed the analysis of my research streams that I mentioned earlier – the categorical analysis. The results indicated 5 areas, broadly defined, that my research had focused on: Group Conflict and Performance; Group Composition and Diversity; Ethical Issues (Lying and Deceit; Constructive Deviance); Intercultural Relations; and, Career Patterns. Also at this time, I was asked to be the keynote speaker at WAOP, the Dutch "Association of Researchers in the Field of Work and Organizational Psychology." I was very honored to do this. I gave a similar talk there, introducing myself to the Dutch scholars of work and organizational psychology. I introduced myself, my research streams, methodological approach, and then focused on a recent study of group composition and performance in organizations that I had conducted.

One thing I noticed about the research streams in preparing that talk is that the streams seemed to be so diverse – how could I explain how they fit together? Who am I and what is my main focus? – which is something our content analysis of past oraties told us I should make clear to you, the audience. In addition, the research areas just sounded so negative: lying, conflict, diversity, deception – all things people typically like to avoid in organizations, and life.   Whenever I would explain a bit about my research

to people, I realized it sounded so depressing – lies, fighting, prejudice, dishonesty, betrayal!

So, at this same time that I was thinking about how my topics of research seem so negative, I was, ironically, asked to join the Positive Organizational Scholarship network that grew out of the Positive Psychology movement in the U.S. and elsewhere. See! I wasn't the only one who thought what I did could be described as uplifting and "focusing on the dynamics that lead to developing human strength, producing resilience and restoration, fostering vitality, and cultivating extraordinary individuals, units, and organizations!" (a quote from the Positive Organizational Scholarship website – www.bus.umich.edu/Postive/WhatisPOS). Well, that sounds much better than how I had been framing my research to friends, family, and new colleagues! Researchers involved in the new positive psychology direction (an initiative headed by Martin Seligman and others when he was the president of APA, the American Psychological Association) complained that psychology historically had been focused on the negatives of human nature; the deficits and things that need repair (thus, a required course in Undergraduate psychology programs in the States is abnormal psychology – we never had classes on "normal" psychology).

I now see my research fitting with a positive psychology framework, rather than a negative framework in two general ways: I investigate the positive aspect of things that are usually perceived as negative (e.g., productive conflict, constructive deviance) or I look at things that have been shown consistently to be negative influences in groups and organizations, but that are ubiquitous, are everywhere, when people interact (like relationship conflicts, miscommunication, prejudice, and stereotyping) and examine how you can make these things tolerable; or how leaders or managers can make them less negative for employees and group members.

I have three main research themes that fit with this view of positive organizational studies: constructive conflict, diversity and group composition, and lying and deviance. First, a bit about the work I've done on conflict. I've always been interested in group processes, especially conflict. I grew up in a household where conflict, anger, shouting were forbidden – I never saw my parents fight, and rarely heard them have any disagreements. But I had friends whose families would debate and fight constantly (it was hard for me to visit them as I had a physical reaction to this anger, given I wasn't used to it, and couldn't eat the meals there). They would fight the entire meal and then hug and tell each other how much they loved one another – I was confused. But this seemed a much more interesting environment than the somewhat false quiet and calm of my own home. I found the same thing in the workplace when I was older – some work teams would constantly fight and their performance suffered; while other teams would fight like cats and dogs and just excel – they were the stars of the company. This is what motivated my dissertation topic and much of my early work on conflict.

Constructive Conflict

When I began working on my dissertation, some of the past literature suggested that conflict may have constructive aspects but the research mainly focused on the negative aspects of conflict and how to avoid or resolve it. I remembered my past experiences with my friends' families and my work experience, and knew that conflict did sometimes seem to have positive effects, or at least wasn't as destructive in some instances. So I set out to find out what these aspects were that made conflict useful, or in what situations conflict was more effective than destructive. My first approach was to find out if there were different types of conflict that may have different effects. The literature said so (for recent reviews, see Jehn & Bendersky, 2003; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), but there wasn't yet empirical work distinguishing between the types of conflict and their consequences for individuals and teams in organizations.

I conducted a qualitative study to develop grounded theory about the various types of conflicts that employees perceive and experience, and the effects of these conflicts on performance and satisfaction (as well as absenteeism, turnover, and creativity, in other instances). I found that employees distinguished between three different types of conflict: relationship conflicts, task-related conflicts, and process conflicts (Jehn, 1997). Relationship conflicts exist when there are interpersonal incompatibilities or problems among group members that are not necessarily related to work. This type of conflict often includes, for example, arguments about religion, politics, or fashion. I found that organizational members called these types of conflicts "people problems," "personal conflicts," and "interpersonal problems." Typically, with this type of conflict, people just don't like each other; they don't get along.

Task conflict, on the other hand, is focused on the work, not a specific person or their attributes. Task conflicts are conflicts about ideas and disagreement about the content and issues of the task, including differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions. Employees often describe these conflicts as "work conflict," "work disagreements," and "task problems." Let's take an example many of us are familiar with – say you are working on a paper with co-authors and you have a fight about what theories are relevant for the front end of your paper or to develop the hypotheses – this is a task conflict. If you are arguing about the worth or entertainment value of a film you saw last night insulting someone's personal preferences, then you are having a relationship conflict. This may seem a trivial example, but you can imagine things getting more heated if the relationship conflict is related to religion or politics.

I also found that employees and group members talked about a third type of conflict - process conflict – which is defined as conflicts about how task accomplishment should proceed in the work unit. Examples of such are disagreements about who should do what, debates about resources, and fights about how to schedule tasks effi-

ciently – administrative issues. Continuing with the above example of the research team, when four researchers disagree about data interpretation and the meaning of the results, they are experiencing task conflict. If they argue about who is responsible for writing up the final report and who will make the presentation and get travel funds, they are having a process conflict.

By distinguishing among these three types of conflict (we also found similar distinctions and conflict types in other countries – for example, Russia, China, Korea, The Netherlands), my co-authors and I were able to study the consequences of conflict more thoroughly (e.g., Doucet & Jehn, 1997; Jehn, 1995; Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999). As you can imagine, relationship conflicts were basically always negative – they caused members to be dissatisfied, perform less effectively, have lower levels of trust and respect, and more miscommunication. Task conflict, however, was found to be beneficial under certain circumstances – for example, task conflicts increased performance in groups working on creative, non-routine, thinking tasks.

But, it is interesting to note, that even if the groups performed better because of their constructive conflicts, they were not necessarily happy with this experience. This is not surprising, given the natural reaction human beings have to conflict; but it is quite a dilemma for managers and group leaders: how do you help a group have constructive task conflicts, yet still keep the group members satisfied employees who want to remain in this productive group? This is what much of my recent research has focused on, specifically using field experiments to "train" workgroups to have a constructive conflict profile – that is, to focus on task debates, to realize that they are not personal attacks, and to value the task arguments as productive and respectful. We are getting nice results with basically a 20 minute training where we introduce the types of conflict and how they influence group productivity – in fact, we find results in both student work teams *and* organizational groups. And we still find positive influences of the training six months later.

This leads to some of the future directions with which I'm taking my ideas on conflict. In some earlier work with Jenny Chatman (Jehn & Chatman, 2000), we realized that most group conflict research assumes that all people within the same group perceive the same amount and types of conflict. This, we found, is not so. If we are working together in a group, I may think there is a huge amount of friction in the group, but other members may not perceive this at all. This meta-view of conflict perceptions better predicted group outcomes than using measures that assume agreement among members on the level and type of conflict. Some recent work I'm doing with Aukje Nauta of TNO is examining these asymmetric views of conflict in cases where people choose whether or not to mediate in organizational settings, and how this affects their absenteeism from work. In addition, Manuela Barreto and I are

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planning some experimental studies and fieldwork to examine more closely how the asymmetries of perceptions can influence conflict and other group processes.

With Gwenny Ruël of Groningen and Sonja Rispens, I am studying student teams to examine the level of asymmetry of participation, so the level of free riding (or social loafing) in the group, and the effects on group processes and performance. Sonja, my PhD student now finishing her thesis, is looking at different forms of interdependence in groups and organizations. Her work has been said to be very important for organization science and organization management theory that has typically focused on task-related interdependence but ignored more informal and social types of interdependence, which Sonja brings into her work very creatively, and which we are linking to conflict and cooperation in groups.

In addition, as I mentioned earlier, I also wanted to change the focus of my research to studying the effects of conflict in other places than student teams and business firms. To do this, I am continuing research that I began at the University of Pennsylvania with the Solomon Asch Center for the Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict. Here I am looking at conflict that is violent and the consequences it has. For instance, in one study with Lakshmi Ramarajan, Katerina Bezrukova, and Dutch colleague Martin Euwema, we examine a sample of Dutch military peacekeepers on missions between 1995 and 1999 in places like Bosnia. We investigate the role of training and conflict management styles in international peacekeeping (Ramarajan, Bezrukova, Jehn, & Euwema, 2004).

Diversity and Group Composition

My second stream of research related to positive psychology is research on diversity, group composition, and intercultural relations. I will also talk about my work on career management related to these topics. As I've mentioned, I have always been interested in conflict and the consequences of it, but not necessarily what caused it. Then I had some very good PhD students and post docs (Sherry Thatcher, Lorna Doucet, Andy Spicer, and Kate Bezurkova) who wanted to know more – they wanted to know what caused the conflicts. And this is how I became interested in cultural differences and diversity.

Past research has had mixed results regarding diversity - some studies show positive effects of demographic diversity but others show that diversity can have negative effects on group processes and performance (c.f., Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). One of the problems with past research is that researchers looked at all different types of individual characteristics, one at a time (diversity on age, OR race, OR gender, OR work experience) and tried to combine the findings. So, similar to my work on conflict, to determine the positive and negative effects of diversity, I distinguished

between 3 types of diversity: value diversity, social category diversity, and informational diversity (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999).

Value diversity refers to the differences that group members have regarding the group's goals, mission, or target regarding the task. *Social category characteristics* are typically observable, or visible, attributes of an individual such as race/ethnic background, nationality, sex, and age. While social category heterogeneity may not always seem relevant to a given task, it does shape peoples' perceptions and behaviors through mechanisms of categorization and prejudice, which can lead to stereotyping and misinformation. In general, the research has found that social category diversity has negative effects on group processes and outcomes.

Informational diversity refers to the differences in knowledge bases and perspectives that members of a group possess, such as differences in educational background and work experience. A cognitive resource perspective suggests that this type of diversity will have positive implications for workgroup outcomes, since the group will have access to a wider array of views, skills, and information. And, in general the research has found that this type of diversity is positively related to constructive group processes and performance.

However, as the research has continued in this area, again, the findings are mixed and much more complex than I've stated here briefly. So, still being unsatisfied with the state of theorizing and research in the diversity realm, I did something that I've also discovered is quite common in my programs of research. I criticized my past work, pointed out all the faults, and moved forward to develop a theory that would more adequately explain the effects of group composition on group processes and outcomes. Some people find it strange that in my more recent publications I criticize my past work. But I was trained to forward theory by critically examining the past research (and in my field that often meant harsh words and nasty articles) – I wasn't comfortable with this approach, but compromised, and criticized myself, which was easier.

So, a major criticism of this past work on group diversity research is that it often, theoretically and empirically, focuses on only one diversity characteristic at a time (for example, ethnicity) to examine the effect on group processes or group outcomes. This past research ignores that individuals possess multiple demographic characteristics (for instance, sex, ethnicity, age, and nationality) and that the combination of these characteristics, as well as their alignment across group members, is critical to understanding the effects of group composition on group processes and outcomes. This is common with the dispersion theories of group composition, which focus on the general variation in the group on individual characteristics. We (my coauthors Katerina Bezrukova and Sherry Thatcher) focus instead on a group composition theory of alignment which is different because it takes into account members' multiple

demographic attributes simultaneously and how members will align along various attributes (Bezrukova, Jehn, & Thatcher, 2003; Thatcher, Jehn, & Zannutto, 2003). One such theory, group faultline theory, defines group faultlines as hypothetical dividing lines that split a group into relatively homogeneous subgroups based on the group members' demographic alignment along one or more attributes (adapted from Lau and Murnighan, 1998).

Let's take as an example a group situation that we are all probably familiar with – families. For instance, let's take my family as an example – me, my husband, and my 16 month-old son. There isn't (yet) a strong faultline in this group – my husband and I could align on age against our son, but my son and husband could align against me on gender. None of us have similar occupations, so we don't align on that informational characteristic. Nor do we align on nationality (I'm American, my husband is Dutch, my son is, well, both).

Let's contrast this with a different sort of family. And it is easier to see a faultline in a group of 4, so… Let's say a lesbian couple, both academics aged 65 have two 25 year-old heterosexual sons who are gardeners. Ok, I know this is quite a different example with many other variables – but this is to show you how complex group composition is PLUS as it is difficult to demonstrate this without pictures and graphs, I thought I would use a vivid example! So, in this family there is a strong faultline between parents and children – there are two homogenous subgroups – the children are aligned on age, gender, sexual orientation, and occupation; as are the parents, but in very different ways than the children.

Now, take a third family group: a married man and woman with a son and daughter, the father and daughter are academics, the mother and son are gardeners. In this group there are similar gender, age, and occupational diversity to the lesbian family group, but there is not the clear faultline, or alignment into homogenous subgroups. In other words, the dispersion theory of diversity would look at the lesbian family and the heterosexual family as having the same level of diversity (especially because this research often ignores sexual orientation), but I hope you can tell from my example that these groups are very different with very different possible group processes. This is what we are trying to capture with this new theory of alignment, based on past research on faultlines, coalition formation, and cross-cutting categories.

I'd like to talk a bit about some of the controversies and challenges I've found in this work on diversity and group composition that are leading to some of the new research directions I want to take this work while here at Leiden.

As I mentioned above, not much research looks at diversity around characteristics such as sexual orientation, family status, and other lifestyle differences. One reason

for this, at least with the American-based research, is that it is basically illegal to ask a person about these things in job interviews, so there is not much information available. And companies are very scared to have even the characteristics they are required to collect data on by law (e.g., gender, race, age, disabilities) examined by a researcher. They are afraid to have it revealed that they do not have a representative set of employees. So, as you can imagine, the research and theories are thus limited. My colleague Don Conlon and I, being frustrated by the lack of organizational willingness to be involved, and the lack of company data available, went to a different sort of organization: punk rock bands. Here we were able to get data on family and marital status, sexual orientation, religion, drug use abuse, as well as the traditional diversity variables. What we found is that group diversity on some of these lifestyle variables explained more about group processes and performance than the traditional variables typically examined. Therefore, we hope more research will be able to be conducted that takes into account a wider range of individual characteristics by using more non-traditional samples to inform theories of organizational and social psychology.

I have also some experience examining the careers of employees and choices they make during their careers, and want to expand this into the realm of diversity. I have a project which I hope to start shortly in Dutch companies. My interest focuses on minorities in workgroups; for example, how career development and the work experience of minorities and non-minorities (that is, Dutch nationals) differ and why this may be, and how these employees work together in groups for effective individual performance, career advancement, and group effectiveness.

Lying and Deviance

My research stream on lying and deviance is quite controversial. For instance, one question my coauthor, Elizabeth Scott, and I investigate focuses on whether organizations should consistently encourage honesty or train their employees to be effective liars. Now wait! Before you jump to conclusions about my personal views of lying, please listen.

Employers are becoming increasingly interested in promoting employee honesty and integrity given the many recent scandals they have experienced and the negative effects these events have had. Past theory suggests that systematic dishonesty manipulates customer perceptions, thus assuming honesty is key (e.g. Baier 1993, Cialdini 1996, Raelin 1984), but empirical verification of this assumption is scarce.

In addition, there are two lines of research that are in direct opposition to the honesty assumption: research finding that organizations encourage their employees to lie (e.g., Kaun 1994) and research finding that employees do lie for the good of the

organization (e.g., Cialdini, 1989). Some organizations directly or indirectly encourage their employees to deceive customers to improve customer satisfaction and performance. For example, flight attendants have been taught to smile and reassure passengers even when they are not happy, and bill collectors have been taught to appear angry even when they are not. In addition, employees often engage in "reputation management" on behalf of the organization – they tell untruths for the "good" of the organization. I place the term "good" in quotes because that is our main research question – whether organizational employees should lie or not and how does this benefit or harm the organization. We propose that the answer to the question – to lie or not to lie - depends on attributions and how sense is made of the lie. Therefore, we believe the critical question, ignored by past research on lying and deceit in organizations, is how people make sense of employee deceit.

We examine an individual's way of interpreting how and why something is a lie, and how they respond to this. Thus, in our study, we are not focusing on whether or not the employee is telling the truth or lying; we propose that it is whether or not the customer *perceives* deceit that is critical, and how they respond to this perceived deception. We claim that this focus, on the perception of deception, is necessary to accurately inform the actions of employees and to determine the appropriate emphasis (on honesty or dishonesty) of organizations. This study is a qualitative study in the airline industry, including interviews of passengers who assume they have been lied to and how this affects their view of the employees and organizations. In fact, some passengers preferred being lied to in certain situations. In other research, we also look at the perspective of the employee, and how they feel about deceiving customers, or if they even perceive it as such – for instance, flight attendants who are trained to lie in managing crisis situations and dealing with fearful fliers.

I am also interested in constructive deviance, or people who break the rules for the good of society, for instance, when organizational rules are in contrast to societal norms (for example, companies who pollute). I am conducting some experimental research on this topic with Danielle Warren.

In this line of research I also have another nontraditional sample – political organizing groups. I have been conducting a large, multimethod study in the United States and the Netherlands on activist groups – from anarchist groups to extreme religious right groups – using email data collection, ethnographic methods, surveys and interviews. This research is in the early stages, but one thing that is interesting is that the anarchist activist groups are much better organized and trained in group processes than many of the top management teams that I have studied from Fortune 500 companies. Like the research on punk rock bands, I think this study of organizational groups that are not traditionally studied by organizational scientists will enlighten some of the outdated and limited organizational theories that exist. Well, that is my hope.

Closing

By studying the positive aspects of often-labeled negative behaviors – such as productive conflict, constructive deviance – I hope to make organizations better places for human beings, despite many of the negative aspects that seem to often co-exist in organizations (such as lying, stereotyping, and destructive conflict). This seems a big task, which reminds me that I started today telling you about my academic mission statements, but as I began writing this speech, I realized I hadn't updated my mission since I've arrived at Leiden. So I will close with this vision for my future at Leiden: To encourage a research environment that respects and utilizes multiple methods in multiple settings (laboratories, organizations, and nontraditional organizations) to study important societal issues.

And, of course, to be able to even begin to carry out this mission I have many people to thank.

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