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Otten, Sabine

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Early Life and Educational Background

Sabine Otten was born on May 22, 1960, in Dortmund, Germany. She earned her diploma in psychology at the University of Münster in 1984. At the same university, she finished her PhD in psychology (with distinction, “summa cum laude”) in 1991 with a dissertation on “Determinants of aggressive interactions: The impact of social context, perspectives, and subjective certainty.” In 2001, she finished her “habilitation” at the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena based, among others on her thesis “When “I” turns into “we”: How representations of the individual self affect ingroup favoritism.”

Professional Career

Sabine Otten worked and taught at the University of Münster, Germany, between 1984 and 1997. From 1997 to 2002, she was employed at the University of Jena, Germany. Within this period, she also stayed more than a year in the United States as a visiting researcher: first, at the

University of Princeton and then at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Since 2002, Sabine Otten holds a position (since 2011 as full professor) at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. In her professional career so far, she has authored more than 150 publications, which mostly appeared in highly respected outlets in her field, such as *European Review of Social Psychology*, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, and *Personality and Social Psychology Review*. She has been associate editor of the *European Journal of Social Psychology* and is or has been serving many major journals – including *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *European Review of Social Psychology*, and *Personality and Social Psychology Review* – as member of their Editorial Boards. Between 2008 and 2014, she was member of the Executive Board of the *European Association of Social Psychology*.

Research Interests

Sabine Otten’s main research interests are all linked to issues of self and – social – identity and the interplay between intrapersonal, intra-, and intergroup processes. Already early in her career, she got interested in the comparison of *interpersonal and intergroup aggression*. Her research in this field focuses on how reactions to deviant behavior may systematically differ depending especially on the social categorization

of the perpetrator (was it one of us?), but also depending on the type and severity of the norm-deviant conduct and the context in which it is embedded (Otten et al. 1995; Otten and Gordijn 2014).

Combining insights and methods from social cognition research with research on *social identity and (inter-)group processes*, another prominent research interest has been the interplay between representations of the individual and the social self and its impact on core group processes. Specifically, Sabine Otten and her collaborators have shown that projecting characteristics of the personal self to the group (i.e., self-anchoring) can significantly contribute to identification with own groups (Van Veelen et al. 2011) and in-group favoritism (Otten 2002; Otten and Wentura 2001). Moreover, looking at the development of group identification over time, evidence was obtained that the relevance of intrapersonal or intergroup processes as predictors of group identification systematically varies at different stages of group membership (van Veelen et al. 2016a). Altogether, this field of research documents the joint relevance of individual- and group-level processes for understanding intra- and intergroup phenomena (van Veelen et al. 2016b).

A third main field of research by Sabine Otten and her collaborators focuses on *diversity and inclusion* at the workplace, but also more generally in society. A relevant starting point in this domain has been the proper definition of the psychological experience of inclusion and its distinction from in-group identification and the broader concept of social integration (Jansen et al. 2014). Based on this analysis, major determinants and consequences of inclusion in contexts characterized by diversity (e.g., cultural diversity, gender diversity) have been identified. Importantly, not only minority members but also majority members in diverse groups will profit from safe feelings of inclusion (i.e., high belonging, high authenticity) both in terms of well-being and in terms of functioning at work (Jansen et al. 2016). However, different factors facilitate inclusion for majority and minority members; specifically, a diversity ideology that tries to ignore intergroup differences (i.e., color blindness) is profitable for

majority members' feelings of inclusion, while ideologies that raise awareness of intergroup differences and their potential value for the organization (i.e., multiculturalism) support minority members best (Jansen et al. 2016; Meeussen et al. 2014). Together, this research underlines the relevance of diversity management and the necessity to take both minority and majority members into account when trying to optimize this management (Otten and Jansen 2015; Otten et al. 2015).

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