

Smith, J. R., & Hogg, M. A. (2008). Social identity and attitudes. In W. Crano & R. Prislin (Eds.), *Attitudes and attitude change* (pp. 337-360). New York: Psychology Press.

Social Identity and Attitudes

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Word count:

Text: 7974; References: 3,875

New word count:

Text: 7623; Refs: 3904

New, new word count:

Text: 7588; Refs: 3799

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September 25, 2006

In short, man's socialization is revealed mainly in his attitudes formed in relation to the values or norms of his reference group or groups.

(Sherif, 1936, p. 203)

The investigation of attitudes brings us to the center of the person's social relations and to the heart of the dynamics of social processes.

(Asch, 1952, p. 577)

As these quotes attest, early influential social psychologists viewed attitudes and the social contexts in which attitudes are formed, changed, and expressed as inextricably linked. Despite this, surprisingly little attention has been directed toward the interplay of attitudes with social context. The social psychological study of attitudes almost universally adopts a conceptualization of attitudes as intra-individual cognitive structures –as individual cognitive representations that are acquired and possessed by individuals and which, to a great extent, are a part of human individuality (see Bohner & Wanke, 2002; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Fazio & Olson, 2003; Maio & Haddock, in press). What is missing or underemphasized in all this is that our attitudes are rarely idiosyncratic –more often than not they are grounded in the groups we belong to and they serve to define and proclaim who we are in terms of our relationships to others who are members of the same or different groups.

Attitudes are powerful bases for making group stereotypical or normative inferences about other attitudes and about behaviors and customs – they let us construct a norm-based persona that reduces uncertainty and regulates social interaction. Attitudes are grounded in social consensus defined by group membership. Many, if not most, of our attitudes reflect and even define groups with which we identify. We are autobiographically idiosyncratic, but our attitudes are actually attached to group memberships that we internalize to define ourselves.

In this chapter we promote a group-centric orientation to attitudes and describe what the social identity approach contributes to our understanding of attitudes and attitudinal phenomena. The main point we make is that attitudes are grounded in group memberships; thus, attitude research must consider more completely the way in which attitudes are socially formed, configured, and enacted. This is not to say that attitudes are not cognitively represented by individual people - they are. Rather, we emphasize the way that attitudes are normative and embedded in wider representational and ideological systems attached to social groups and categories. Attitudes map the contours of social groups and shared identities. Attitude phenomena are impacted significantly by social identity processes. They are socially structured and grounded in social consensus, group memberships, and social identities. Our analysis of attitudes comes from the social psychology of group processes and intergroup relations, rather than the social psychology of attitudes. More specifically, it comes from social identity theory (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) and the metatheory that frames social identity theory (Abrams & Hogg, 2004).

We present a social identity perspective on attitudes (also see Hogg & Smith, in press) that draws on, integrates, and extends basic principles of classic and contemporary social identity theory. After a brief review of the current state of research on attitudes and the social context, we introduce social identity theory and focus on what it has to say about attitudes – how attitudes are embedded in descriptive and prescriptive group *prototypes*, how attitudes become group normative, how social categorization of self assigns group attitudes to self via *depersonalization*, and how social identity processes underpin influence in groups and the development and communication of normative attitudes. We discuss research on the impact of social identity processes on attitude change and persuasion, focusing on persuasion,

dissonance, minority influence, and the third-person effect. Finally, we examine the impact of social identity processes on the relationship between people's attitudes and their behavior. In each section, we present theory and review research conducted primarily, but not exclusively, in our research group over the past 10 to 15 years to illustrate our central argument that attitude phenomena are affected significantly by social identity processes.

Attitudes and the Social Context

The historical treatment and neglect of the social context in attitudes research may reflect early individualistic definitions of attitudes, and a focus on individuals rather than groups as the unit of analysis (e.g., F. Allport, 1919; G. Allport, 1935). Attitudes are viewed primarily as cognitive representations in the mind of the individual: they are "mental and neural states of readiness to respond" (G. Allport, 1935, p. 810). This individualistic orientation has persisted in the study of attitudes, with attitude researchers focusing on the analysis of the psychological processes and structures of individuals at the expense of attention to the social environment (see Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Prislin & Wood, 2005). However, there have been increasing calls in recent years for researchers to consider and integrate social factors into investigations of attitude dynamics (see Prislin & Christensen, 2005; Prislin & Wood, 2005).

Some research has acknowledged the impact of the social context on attitudes and attitude phenomena. However, such research has distinguished attitudes (as an informational determinant of action; see Deutsch & Gerard, 1955) from the social context (as a normative determinant of action). That is, the distinction between informational influence (e.g., message or argument quality) and normative influence (e.g., source) is retained. In research on attitude-behavior relations, the social context is seen as a background factor, rather than as a fundamental component of attitudes. In the attitude change literature, source characteristics,

such as group membership, are often seen to operate through peripheral or heuristic routes, such that any change in attitudes attributed to these variables is less “true”, stable, and enduring (e.g., Chaiken, 1987; cf. Mackie & Queller, 2000).

Thus, even when research has examined issues related to the social environment or social context, it has narrowed in on issues related to social influence, rather than broadening the scope to include the wider social environment of group memberships and social identities (see Prislin & Wood, 2005, for a review). Research has focused on the individual and interpersonal aspects of the processes by which attitudes are changed (e.g., Brinol & Petty, 2005) and has treated the social context as a set of stimuli that act upon an individual, either in the form of social pressures and expectations (norms) or in the form of social motivations (impression management). There has been little attention given to conceptualizing the structure of the social environment in terms of the social norms, social identities, and socio-structural factors that affect the formation, stability, and expression of attitudes.

Within the attitude field, advances have been made, particularly in minority influence research (e.g., Crano, 2001; Prislin, Limbert, & Bauer, 2000). However, as noted by Eagly and Chaiken (2005), progress has not been rapid and many challenges remain in situating and studying attitudes within a complex and dynamic social landscape. What is needed is a re-conceptualization of attitudes as fundamentally entwined with the social environment and inherently social, rather than simply reducing the social context to the inclusion of norms (norms as the ‘social appendage’). After all, attitudes are socially learned, socially changed, and socially expressed. By highlighting the impact of the social environment on individual attitudes, we can gain a more complete insight into the motivational complexities that drive attitudinal phenomena.

One way to facilitate this change in emphasis is to approach the conceptualization of attitudes from the perspective of the social psychology of groups and intergroup relations rather than the social psychology of the individual and interpersonal interactions. In this way attitudes are treated as an aspect of group life, rather than an aspect of individuality. Social identity theory is a powerful group perspective in social psychology that allows just such an analysis.

Social Identity Theory and Attitudes

Since its origins in the early 1970s, social identity theory has developed into a comprehensive and integrated analysis of the dynamic relationship among the self-concept, group memberships, group processes, and intergroup behavior (e.g., Tajfel, 1972). The concept of social identity is the unifying principle at the heart of the social identity approach. For Tajfel (1972), social identity represents “the individual’s knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of his group membership” (p. 292). Social identity is not merely the knowledge that one is a member of a group and of the defining attributes of group membership, it also involves an emotional and motivational attachment to the group. Recent statements and overviews of social identity theory in its contemporary form can be found in Hogg (2003, 2006). Here we describe only those aspects that are relevant to a social identity analysis of attitudes and attitude phenomena.

Prototypes and Normative Attitudes

People cognitively represent a social group (e.g., a nation, a religion, an ethnic group) as a category *prototype* – a fuzzy set of category attributes that are related to one another in a meaningful way. These prototypes simultaneously capture similarities within the group and differences between the group and other groups or people who are not in the group (Hogg, 2005). Category attributes can include how people look, dress, speak, behave, feel, and of,

course, their attitudes towards objects, events, people, and so forth. Generally, these attributes are relatively organized so that they “appear” to be meaningfully related and consistent with one another. So, attitudinal components of a group prototype will generally appear consistent – an appearance of consistency that may be subsumed by a wider ideology or world view (Larrain, 1979; Thompson, 1990), or value system (Rohan, 2000) that the perceiver believes the group subscribes to.

Prototypes not only describe categories but also evaluate them and prescribe membership-related attributes. They specify how people ought to behave as category members, what attitudes they ought to hold, and so forth. Prototypes chart the contours of social groups, and tell us not only what characterizes a group, but how that group is different from other groups. In this sense prototypes are norms; that is, because a particular perception, behavior or attitude is shared within a group, it is normative of that particular group (Sherif, 1936; Turner, 1991). Thus, prototype-based attitudes are normative – they are shared within a group. Prototypes maximize entitativity or the property of a category that makes it appear a cohesive and clearly structured entity that is distinct from other entities (Campbell, 1958; Hamilton & Sherman, 1996). Also, prototypes obey the *metacontrast principle* – their configuration maximizes the ratio of perceived intergroup differences to intragroup differences, and thus accentuates perceived similarities within groups and differences between groups (Tajfel, 1959).

The prototype is the position that best defines what the group has in common compared to other relevant outgroups. Moreover, because social identity is defined comparatively and dynamically, ingroup prototypes are also defined comparatively and can vary with the social context. Intergroup and intragroup behavior are inextricable – what happens between groups affects what happens within groups, and vice versa. Attitudes and

attitudinal phenomena are related to self-definition in group prototypical terms to the extent that they are tied to group and intergroup dynamics.

Depersonalization and Referent Informational Influence

One of the key insights of social identity theory, elaborated by self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987), is that the process of categorization of self and others, *depersonalizes* one's perception of self and others and depersonalizes one's own behavior. When we categorize people (ingroup members, outgroup members, or ourselves), we view them not as idiosyncratic individuals, but through the lens of the group prototype. We assign prototypical attributes to them, and we interpret and expect behavior, including their attitudes, to conform to our prototype of the group. In this way, social categorization generates stereotype or norm consistent expectations regarding people's attitudes and conduct. Categorization of self, self-categorization, configures and changes self-conception to match the identity described by the category and transforms one's perceptions, attitudes, feelings and conduct to conform to the category prototype.

Self-categorization and depersonalization account for the social cognitive process that causes people to internalize group attributes and behave in line with group norms – it explains how people internalize ingroup normative attitudes as their own attitudes. When people categorize themselves as members of a group and perceive that the group is important to them, there is an assimilation of the self to the group prototype. The norms, stereotypes, attitudes, and other properties that are commonly ascribed to the social group become internalized; they become subjectively interchangeable with personal norms, stereotypes, and attitudes, influencing thought and guiding action.

The social influence process associated with identification-based conformity is *referent informational influence* (Hogg & Turner, 1987; Turner, 1982), in which conformity to the

group norm evolves through three stages. First, individuals must categorize and identify as a group member. Next, a context-specific prototype is constructed from available and usually shared social comparative information (e.g., the expressed attitudes of others). This newly formed prototype serves to describe and prescribe beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that maximize intergroup differences and minimize intragroup differences (the metacontrast principle). Finally, group members internalize the prototype through assimilation of the self to the prototype (depersonalization), and use it as a guide to their own behavior as a group member. Because the prototype is internalized as part of the individual's self-concept, it exerts influence over behavior even in the absence of surveillance by other group members. Once the norm has been identified, self-categorization produces normative behavior, including subscription to attitudes. It is through this process of referent informational influence that individuals come to learn about the group and appropriate ways of behavior.

Referent informational influence differs in a number of ways from other accounts of influence processes that distinguish normative influence to conform to the positive expectations of others from informational influence to accept information from another as evidence about reality (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Kelley, 1952). For example, for referent informational influence, people conform to a norm, not to the behavior of specific other individuals, and they conform because they are group members, not to validate physical reality or to avoid social disapproval. Because the norm is an internalized representation, people can conform to it in the absence of surveillance by group members. Conformity involves private acceptance of a norm that defines a group in which individuals include themselves and with which they identify (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Turner, 1991; Turner & Oakes, 1989).

Discovering the Normativeness of Attitudes

One of the key arguments of the social identity analysis of attitudes is that certain attitude effects flow from the perception or knowledge that an attitude is normative of a self-inclusive group with which one identifies. However, it is not always easy for a person to determine whether an attitude is normative – sometimes people miss what is normative, distort the norm, or get the norm entirely wrong (e.g., pluralistic ignorance – Prentice & Miller, 1996). We can learn the normativeness of attitudes and behaviors by observing or interacting with people. As we shall see, people can impart norms relatively passively by example, or through more active persuasion.

Behavioral Averaging, Group Polarization, and Normative Attitudes

Sherif's (1935, 1936) autokinetic studies are classic demonstrations of how people develop and learn group norms. Participants in small groups called out their estimates of the amount of movement of a light source – the source was not actually moving but appeared to move due to an illusion called the autokinetic effect. Sherif found that people quickly adjusted their judgments into a tight range around the average of the group's initial judgments. A norm had emerged. Furthermore, the norm persisted even when all original members of the group had left and the group had entirely new members (Jacobs & Campbell, 1961; MacNeil & Sherif, 1976). Social identity research has demonstrated that this norm formation is accelerated, and the group norm is more tightly convergent, when participants identify strongly with the group (Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg, & Turner, 1990).

Sherif's norm formation studies, along with most other studies of norms, assume that a group norm is the average ingroup position. However, from a social identity perspective norms do not have to be the average ingroup position. Prototypes, as individual representations of group norms, are formed from intra- and intergroup comparisons that obey the metacontrast principle; thus, prototypes polarize norms to differentiate between groups. As the intergroup

comparative context changes, the ingroup norm also changes to maintain intergroup differentiation.

This idea has been tested using variants of the group polarization paradigm (Isenberg, 1986; Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969) in which group discussion, or mere exposure to fellow group members' attitudes, produces a final group attitude that is more extreme than the average of the initial members' attitudes in a direction away from the outgroup. A number of social identity studies have found that attitudinal polarization is more extreme when members identify more strongly with the group (e.g., Abrams et al., 1990; Mackie, 1986; Mackie & Cooper, 1984; Turner, Wetherell, & Hogg, 1989) or in times of uncertainty (e.g., Sherman, Hogg, Maitner, & Moffitt, 2006). Hogg, Turner, and Davidson (1990), for example, demonstrated that group members' attitudes shifted towards a perceived normative attitude that best defined the group in contrast to other groups even in the absence of actual group discussion and interaction.

This research on norm formation and group polarization shows that attitudes are responsive to social context. People use others' attitudes, particularly when they share a social identity with those others, to construct a group norm that specifies what attitudes are normative. People use this normative information to configure their own attitudes. Group members deduce the content of a social identity from shared membership in a social category and the wider social context of intergroup relations (Postmes, Haslam, & Swaab, 2005).

Communication and Normative Attitudes

Although mere exposure to others' attitudes allows one to construct an attitudinal norm, many group contexts involve at least some degree of discussion that often is oriented toward making a group decision or arriving at a group position. However, such group interactions also are overwhelmingly about establishing, negotiating, or confirming group

attitudes, norms, and identity (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Group members infer or induce the content of a social identity (norms, attitudes, rules) from intragroup communication and the individual contributions of group members (Postmes et al., 2005). Communication serves to construct norms and identity – communication provides the means by which abstract characteristics of the group can be translated into a concrete situational norm or prototype that applies to actions within a specific context. In a study of electronic communication, Postmes, Spears, and Lea (2000) demonstrated that over time, groups converged in both the content and the stylistic form of their messages, producing attributes that were distinctive to the group and decreasing within-group heterogeneity. There also is evidence that overtime, majority views and norm-consistent attitudes tend to dominate, and that group discussion strains out norm-inconsistent attitudes, narrowing the group's scope to focus on norm-consistent attitudes (Kashima, 2000). Members who espouse non-normative attitudes often are discredited (Marques, Abrams, & Serôdio, 2001), and direct criticism of groups is tolerated more if the critic is viewed as an ingroup, not an outgroup, member (Hornsey, 2005; Hornsey & Imani, 2004).

Attitude Change

In this section, we apply the social identity perspective on attitudes to the area of attitude change and examine how social identity can, at the cognitive level, change our attitudes. We already have seen how self-categorization depersonalizes our attitudes so that they conform to the ingroup prototype, and that this represents genuine attitude change not superficial behavioral compliance. This is the most fundamental and basic way in which social identities and groups affect attitudes (see Abrams et al., 1990; Haslam, Oakes, McGarty, Turner, & Onorato, 1995; Hogg et al., 1990; McGarty, Turner, Hogg, David, & Wetherell, 1992; Turner et al., 1989).

Persuasion

Early research on attitude change viewed source or communicator characteristics as a key variable in determining the effectiveness of an attitude change attempt. Sources high in attractiveness, expertise, and so forth produced more attitude change and were more persuasive than other sources (e.g., DeBono & Telesca, 1990; Hovland & Weiss, 1951). However, less attention was given to the impact of shared group membership between the source and the audience on persuasion.

Research has shown that the social identity, shared or otherwise, of the individuals in the source and audience roles can have considerable impact on both the processing and eventual effectiveness of persuasive appeals. According to the social identity approach, when social identity is salient, the validity of persuasive information is (psychologically) established by ingroup norms (Turner, 1991). Thus, because ingroup messages are perceived as more subjectively valid than outgroup messages, people should be more influenced by ingroup than outgroup sources.

Research supports this contention: Persuasive messages lead to greater attitude change when they are presented by a source who shares the message recipients' group membership than when they are presented by a source who does not share this membership (Abrams et al., 1990; McGarty, Haslam, Hutchison, & Turner, 1994; Wilder, 1990). However, this effect is not due merely to heuristic processes or compliance – ingroup sources can persuade through a number of different mechanisms, depending on the circumstances. The mere presence of an ingroup source can act as a persuasive cue, leading to increased acceptance, especially when the group's position on the issue is clear (Mackie, Gastardo-Conaco, & Skelly, 1992) or under low elaboration conditions such as a novel attitude topic (Fleming & Petty, 2000). However, an ingroup message can motivate systematic and effortful processing, especially on group-

relevant or group-defining issues (Mackie, Worth, & Asuncion, 1990; van Knippenberg & Wilke, 1992) or when the message is delivered by a prototypical or representative group member (van Knippenberg, Lossie, & Wilke, 1994). Thus, the processes of attitude change are influenced by social identities and shared group memberships. The social context of groups determines what information is deemed to be persuasive and the processes by which attitudes are changed.

Dissonance

One of the best established accounts of attitude change is offered by cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957; for a recent review see Cooper, in press; Stone & Fernandez, this volume). Specifically, when people realize that their behavior is inconsistent with their attitude, they experience dissonance that must be resolved, and because behavior is hard to deny, it is usually the attitude that must change. Although one of the first studies of dissonance focused on how members of a group turned to one another to help reduce their dissonance when a prophecy failed (Festinger, Riecken, & Schachter, 1957), most research on attitude change through dissonance is focused on individual cognition (cf. Matz & Wood, 2005).

From a social identity perspective, we would expect that people who experience dissonance may be vigilant about the behavior and reactions of other people. In many contexts it would matter a great deal whether that other person shared the same group membership. McKimmie and colleagues (2003) found that participants who behaved counter-attitudinally experienced less dissonance and attitude change when they knew that another participant had also behaved counter-attitudinally, but only when they shared a salient common ingroup membership with that person.

Group norms may play a complicated role in producing this identity-contingent effect. On the one hand, ingroup normative support for one's underlying attitude may bolster the attitude, or it may actually make dissonance even more acute. On the other hand, normative support for one's attitude-inconsistent behavior may protect one from dissonance and attitude change. Invoking the notion of meta-consistency, McKimmie, Terry, and Hogg (2006) go further to suggest that what may be particularly important is whether or not the other ingroup member has engaged in counter-attitudinal behavior like oneself. Dissonance and attitude change is reduced if a fellow ingroup member also has behaved counter-attitudinally (McKimmie et al., 2003). In a similar vein, Robertson and Reicher (1997) have argued that people experience dissonance if their behavior is inconsistent and there is no normative support for their inconsistency. However, if there is support (i.e., others in the group also behave in ways that are inconsistent with attitudinal norms), dissonance is reduced.

Vicarious Dissonance

Another way that social identity processes may influence dissonance and attitude change is through vicarious dissonance. Cooper and Hogg (2002) argue that if you observe someone else experiencing dissonance because they have behaved counter-attitudinally, then you as an observer will vicariously experience dissonance and change your attitudes – but only if you share a salient social identity with the other person. This idea fits well with other research showing that shared identity facilitates perspective taking (Batson, Early, & Salvarini, 1997), increases empathy (Davis, 1994), and enhances vicarious emotions (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994).

Cooper and associates have published five studies using classic dissonance paradigms (Monin, Norton, Cooper, & Hogg, 2004; Norton, Monin, Cooper, & Hogg, 2003) that provide support for their vicarious dissonance theory. In these studies, participants experienced greater

dissonance and attitude change when they observed a fellow member of a salient ingroup behave in a way that would cause the actor to experience dissonance. For example, participants who heard a member of a group with which they strongly identified agree to deliver a counter-attitudinal speech experienced elevated discomfort. However, this discomfort was reduced by changing their own attitude in the direction of the position espoused by the speaker (Norton et al., 2004). Vicarious dissonance processes, and the processes outlined in McKimmie et al.'s (2006) meta-consistency effect, show that the experience of dissonance, which can affect attitudes, can be fundamentally influenced by group memberships and social identities.

Minority Influence

Despite the fact that group norms are generally grounded in wide majority consensus, and that groups are motivated to maintain agreement and avoid disagreement, minorities can be very effective in modifying or changing the attitudes and behaviors represented by the majority norm – indeed active minorities are an important vehicle for social change (Moscovici, 1976). Research on minority influence shows that minorities are very effective in changing majority attitudes if the minority's position is novel and the minority adopts a consistent yet flexible style of social influence and persuasion (e.g., Martin, Hewstone, & Gardikiotis, this volume, Mugny, 1982; Nemeth, 1986; Ziegler, Diehl, Zigon, & Fett, 2004).

Not all minorities are equally effective in producing attitude change. Perceptions of shared group membership between the majority and the minority are a critical determinant of the success of minority influence. That is, ingroup minorities, but not outgroup minorities, produce change. David and Turner (1996, 1999) conducted a series of experiments to test the relative impact of ingroup and outgroup majorities and minorities. In addition to demonstrating that the immediate influence of ingroups was positive (i.e., towards the source's position), and

the immediate influence of outgroups was negative (i.e., away from the source's position), these studies highlighted the power of ingroup minorities to produce greater attitude change over time. Crano (2001) has proposed a leniency contract model to account for the ability of ingroup minorities to produce majority opinion change. Integrating insights from both social identity and information processing approaches, Crano argues that ingroup minorities exert influence because of the lenient evaluation afforded members of the same social category. Provided that the minority does not pose a threat to the majority, shared group membership allows for relatively open-minded elaboration, because the majority attempts to understand the unexpected position held by this minority of fellow ingroup members, which ultimately creates pressures for attitude change.

One consequence of successful minority influence is not just change in the individual attitudes of group members. Successful minority influence also changes the structure and meaning of minority and majority groups. Prislin and her colleagues have highlighted the dynamic nature of minority influence (see Prislin & Christensen, 2005, for a review). For example, majorities who find themselves in a new minority position tend to agree with the newly emerging attitudinal consensus (Prislin et al., 2000) and to interpret attitudinal differences within the group as diversity rather than deviance (Prislin, Brewer, & Wilson, 2002). In contrast, successful minorities bolster their attitudes by enhancing attitudinal importance, restricting what are considered as acceptable attitudes, and expressing less tolerance of minority views. It is clear that changes in the attitudinal landscape influence the social context of identities just as changes in the social context of identities influence the attitudinal landscape.

The Third-Person Effect

Social identity processes not only influence persuasion and attitude change processes, they also influence the extent to which individuals perceive that they, and those around them, are influenced by persuasion attempts. The third-person effect refers to the tendency for people to perceive that others are more influenced by persuasive communications than they are themselves (Davison, 1983). Moreover, people act on the basis of these distorted perceptions – attitudinal and behavioral change may result from the belief that the options of others have been altered (e.g., Gunther, 1995).

From a social identity perspective, third-person perceptions should be highly sensitive to the categorization of self and other into relevant ingroups and outgroups. Perceptions of influence are dependent on salient social identities – perceived self-other differences in persuasibility are affected by the social context and reflect ingroup norms about the acceptability of acknowledging influence. Duck and associates (Duck, Hogg, & Terry, 1999, 2000; Duck, Terry, & Hogg, 1998) have demonstrated that evaluations of influence are governed by group memberships and the extent to which being influenced is normative for the relevant ingroup or outgroup (see also Reid & Hogg, 2005). When it is normative to resist persuasion, such as for negative media content (e.g., pornography, violence), individuals will see themselves and members of their ingroup as highly resistant and see members of the outgroup as less resistant (a third-person effect). In contrast, when it is normative to acknowledge persuasive influence, such as for positive media content (e.g., public health announcements), individuals will see themselves and members of their ingroup as quite yielding and see other targets as less so (a reverse third-person effect or a first-person effect).

A social identity account for the third-person effect has been supported in a number of areas, including political campaigning (Duck et al., 1998), public service advertising (Duck et al., 1999), and the relative influence of different media (Reid & Hogg, 2005). Third-person

effects are dynamic and influenced by changing intergroup contexts – these perceptions can change suddenly and dramatically overtime in response to changes in the current status and power structure (Duck et al., 1998) or changes in the target of social comparison (Reid & Hogg, 2005). Thus, perceptions of the relative impact of persuasive communications are context-dependent and fluid and reflect salient social comparisons and social identities within the immediate social context.

Attitudes and Action

One of the key issues in attitude research has been the relationship between attitudes as internal representations and overt behavior (what people say and do). Indeed, one of the reasons that researchers and practitioners are interested in attitudes is because it is assumed that attitudes predict action (see Aizen, this volume). If you cannot predict behavior from attitudes, or vice versa, then attempts to change people's health related, consumer or voting behavior via public education, propaganda, and advertising are pointless.

Attitude-Behavior Relations

Early attitude researchers often assumed, in line with common opinion, that attitudes translate into overt behavior, despite evidence that attitudes and behavior were largely unrelated (Kutner, Wilkins, & Yarrow, 1952; LaPiere, 1934). Although early reviews of the field suggested that attitudes typically did not predict behavior well (Wicker, 1969), it is now generally accepted that there is a relationship between attitudes and action (Kraus, 1995), and recent research has focused on elucidating under what conditions attitudes influence behavior (the “when” question – see Zanna & Fazio, 1982). One of the most influential outcomes of this line of research was the acknowledgement that it is necessary to take into account other variables in addition to attitude to understand fully the nature of the attitude-behavior relationship.

Of particular relevance to social identity theory is the role of norms in attitude-behavior correspondence. The theories of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1974) and planned behavior (Ajzen, 1989) are notable in their inclusion of a role for social norms. These models argue that subjective norms influence attitude-behavior consistency. What is meant by this is that if one knows that significant other individuals (e.g., friends, family members) approve of engaging in a particular behavior, one's attitude is more likely to translate into behavior. However, although normative support does improve attitude-behavior correspondence, research shows the effect to be surprisingly small. A number of meta-analyses have suggested that the predictive ability of the subjective norm construct is limited (Farley, Lehmann, & Ryan, 1981; Hausenblas, Carron, & Mack, 1997) and that subjective norm is the weakest predictor of behavior (Armitage & Conner, 2001). The weakness of the link between norms and behavior even led Ajzen (1991) to conclude that personal factors are the primary determinants of behavior.

According to Terry and Hogg (1996, 2001), one reason for this relatively weak effect may be the way that norms are conceptualized. In the theories of reasoned action and planned behavior norms are separated from attitudes – attitudes are “in here” (private, internalized cognitive constructs), whereas norms are “out there” (public, external pressures representing the cumulative expectations of others). This conceptualization of norms is different from that used by social identity theory (Turner, 1991), and by much of contemporary social psychology of groups (Brown, 2000).

Drawing on the social identity perspective, Terry and Hogg and their associates (Terry & Hogg, 1996, 2001; Terry, Hogg, & Duck, 1999; Terry, Hogg, & White, 2000) argue that attitudes are more likely to express themselves as behavior if the attitude (and associated behaviors) are normative properties of a social group with which people identify. In

circumstances where membership of a particular social group becomes a salient basis of self-definition, attitudes and group norms come to govern our own behavior. Attitudes express themselves as behavior if they are group normative and if group membership is salient. Thus, it can be predicted that the relationship between attitude and behavior will be strengthened when group members perceive that the attitude is normative for the group and weakened when group members perceive that their attitude is out of step with the group.

In two tests of the theory of planned behavior, Terry and Hogg (1996) examined longitudinally students' intentions to exercise regularly and to engage in sun-protective behavior. They found that the perceived norms of a specific and behaviorally relevant reference group were related positively to students' intention to engage in health behaviors. These intentions were significantly stronger among participants who identified strongly with the reference group. Other field research has replicated this effect in studies of smoking in young people (Schofield, Pattison, Hill, & Borland, 2001), healthy eating behavior (Astrom & Rise, 2001; Louis, Davies, Terry, & Smith, in press), recycling behavior (Terry, Hogg, & White, 1999), and environmental behavior (Fielding, Terry, Masser, & Hogg, 2006).

Subsequent experimental and field studies have replicated this finding and have explored moderators and boundary conditions. These studies, which have examined a range of attitude issues (e.g., campus and political issues, career choice), have demonstrated consistently that the attitude-behavior relationship is strengthened when group members are exposed to an ingroup norm supportive of their initial attitude, and weakened when exposed to a non-supportive ingroup norm, but only when group membership is salient or when individuals identify strongly with the group (Smith & Terry, 2003; Terry, Hogg, & McKimmie, 2000; Wellen, Hogg, & Terry, 1998; White, Hogg, & Terry, 2002). Furthermore, it has been shown that group members are sensitive to the relevance of an attitude to the group. Attitudes

that are more central or relevant to a group are perceived to be more personally important and relevant to group members and, in turn, are more predictive of behavior (Smith, Terry, Crosier, & Duck, 2005).

In addition, Terry, Hogg, and colleagues have demonstrated that social factors, such as the salience or importance of social identity and group norms, have more impact on the attitude-behavior relationship than more cognitive factors, such as attitude accessibility or mode of decision-making (Smith & Terry, 2003; Terry, Hogg, & McKimmie, 2000; Wellen et al., 1998). For example, Smith and Terry (2003) considered simultaneously attitude accessibility and mode of decision-making as the cognitive factors associated with Fazio's (1990) MODE (*Motivation and Opportunity as DEterminants of mode of behavioral decision-making*) model and identification and ingroup norms as the social factors associated with the social identity approach. Contrary to the predictions of the MODE model, two studies found that attitude accessibility had no effect on behavioral intention or behavior, and that ingroup norms influenced behavioral intentions and behavior in both the spontaneous and deliberate decision-making modes. Furthermore, group norms had a stronger effect for high identifiers in the deliberative, as opposed to the spontaneous, decision-making conditions, suggesting that individuals who are strongly identified with a group are motivated to process group-relevant information carefully and effortfully (see also Mackie & Queller, 2000).

Research within the social identity approach to attitude-behavior relations has also focused on the motivations that may underlie group-mediated attitude-behavior consistency. According to uncertainty-identity theory (Hogg, 2000, in press) feelings of self-related uncertainty motivate people to identify with self-inclusive groups and to identify more strongly with such groups. Research has shown that self-related uncertainty influences the attitude-behavior relationship. Smith, Hogg, Martin, and Terry (in press) report two studies in

which feelings of self-uncertainty were manipulated and participants were exposed to attitude-congruent, attitude-incongruent, or ambiguous group norms. In both studies, more self-uncertain participants expressed greater intentions to behave in line with their attitudes when their attitude was normative for the ingroup, whereas more certain participants' behavioral intentions were unrelated to the level of normative support. Thus, conformity to group norms is enhanced when individuals feel uncertain, suggesting that the desire to resolve uncertainty may underpin group-normative behavior.

In addition to an epistemic, uncertainty-related motive, group members also conform to group norms for strategic, self-presentation reasons. Drawing on recent research and theorizing on the strategic expression of social identity (see Reicher, Spears, & Postmes, 1995), Smith and colleagues (Smith, Terry, & Hogg, in press, 2006) have shown that strategic concerns, such as those associated with accountability to particular audiences, influence the expression of group-normative attitudes and behavior. In two experiments, Smith et al. manipulated level of normative support and response context (anonymity vs. accountability). In addition, the importance of the social identity to the individual was either measured (Study 1) or manipulated (Study 2). Across both studies, it was found that low identifiers, or individuals in low-salience contexts, were more inclined to follow an ingroup norm when accountable to the ingroup than when anonymous to the ingroup, suggesting that these individuals may be more subject to self-presentational concerns, such as a desire for positive evaluations (see also Barreto & Ellemers, 2000). In contrast, high identifiers, or individuals in high-salience contexts, were more likely to follow the ingroup norm in anonymous conditions. This latter effect, which is inconsistent with past research and theorizing on the communicative aspects of group behavior (e.g., Emler, 1990) was thought to reflect an intrinsic motivation on the part of high identifiers and high-salience participants to act and

perceive themselves as worthy group members. That is, and in line with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), individuals who are intrinsically motivated to engage in particular courses of action, such as high identifiers engaging in group-normative behavior, are more likely to engage in the action in anonymous conditions because such behavior cannot be attributed to external constraints and, therefore, may be more diagnostic of loyalty to the group.

This growing body of research in the attitude-behavior context highlights the widespread and pervasive influence of group factors on the attitude-behavior relationship. Social identity and group norms influence the attitudes and actions of *all* group members under a range of decision-making conditions and in a range of social contexts.

Collective Action

According to the social identity analysis of attitudes, people are more likely to behave in line with their attitudes if the attitudes and behaviors are normative of a salient social group with which they identify strongly. The more definitional of the norm the attitudes and behavior are, and the more injunctive the norm itself is, the stronger the likelihood. This idea has important implications for collective mobilization, the study of how individual attitudes are transformed into collective action (Klandermans, 1997; Reicher, 2001; Stürmer & Simon, 2004; Tyler & Smith, 1998), and how and why people who have sympathetic attitudes towards an issue become mobilized as activists or participants. From a social identity perspective, collective action that is attitude-consistent is most likely when the attitude and action are normative of a group with which people identify and therefore feel motivated to follow. The normative attitude co-ordinates group members to advance group interests, translating the group-normative attitude in actions that generate benefits to the group and the individual group member. Ultimately, it is group identification that increases the probability of social action and

collective protest (Stürmer & Simon, 2004). Identification is associated directly with collective action, independently of “rational” cost-benefit analyses (Simon et al., 1998; see also Kelly & Breinlinger, 1995). Identity, and the norms associated with that identity, influence perceptions of the consequences of collective action (Louis, Taylor, & Neil, 2004). Individuals will strategically conform to, or violate, ingroup and outgroup norms to acquire benefits for the group and avoid costs (Louis, Taylor, & Douglas, 2005). Furthermore, for individuals who identify with a particular group, engagement in collective action may be less about the effectiveness of the action in influencing public opinion or one’s opponents, and more about the effectiveness of the action in building an oppositional or political movement (Hornsey et al., 2006). The decision to engage in collective action, and collective mobilization itself, is shaped and guided by social identity, normative attitudes, and normative behavior

Summary and Closing Comments

The study of attitudes, how they are structured, how they are formed, how they change, and how they influence behavior, has always lain close to the heart of social psychology. Although it is clearly acknowledged that attitudes are formed, sustained and changed through social interaction, traditional research on the social psychology of attitudes has focused on the intra-individual dimensions of attitudes and on processes of inter-individual influence and persuasion that produce attitude change. The wider social context of attitudes as normative attributes of social groups and identities located in intergroup contexts has, but for some notable exceptions (Crano, in press; 2001; Prisman & Wood, 2005), been conspicuously under-researched.

In this chapter we document and explain how the social context can be integrated more completely into the study of attitudes by approaching the study of attitudes from the perspective of social identity theory. We have described how social identity theory

conceptualizes attitudes, viewing them as normative attributes of social groups that define who we are and provide us with an identity in society. This social identity function of attitudes means that attitude phenomena are closely tied to collective self-conception and to the dynamics of group life and intergroup relations. By considering attitudes from a social identity perspective, we can see how three common motives for attitude phenomena – the need to understand reality, the need to achieve a positive and coherent self-concept, and the need to relate to others and convey an appropriate impression to them (Chen & Chaiken, 1999; Prislin & Wood, 2005) – can all be satisfied by the processes of self-categorization and social identification.

The processes of social categorization and prototype-based depersonalization associated with social identity translate group normative attitudes into individually held attitudes – cognitive representations in the mind of individuals. Social identity processes also influence how we construct and perceive group norms and who or what is most influential in providing norm-relevant information. Because normative attitudes delineate and define groups relative to other groups, they tend to be polarized in social identity contexts. Furthermore, this self-definitional function of attitudinal norms means that group-defining attitudes are more likely to be reflected in behavior when people identify strongly with a group – a process that can mobilize sympathizers to engage in collective action and social protest.

There is relatively robust empirical evidence for much of the social identity analysis of attitudinal phenomena. However, there are avenues for further research in a number of areas – for example, the role of dissonance processes in social identity related attitude change (Cooper & Hogg, 2002) and the role of uncertainty in social identity mediated normative attitudinal structure (Hogg, in press). The study of implicit attitudes, which has become popular in recent years (see Devos, this volume; Greenwald et al., 2002), is another avenue for future research –

prompting the question of the extent to which social identity processes influence implicit, as well as explicit, attitude phenomena. On a more practical note, one challenge is to apply the social identity analysis of attitudes more consistently to issues of social concern such as health behaviors, environmental behaviors, and prejudice and discrimination. Some advances in this domain have been made (e.g., Fielding et al., 2006; Terry & Hogg, 1996; Terry et al., 2001), but more research needs to be done to realize fully the social and theoretical impacts of this approach. Many exciting and interesting challenges remain in studying attitudes under conditions that take into account the complex embedding of attitudes in group and intergroup contexts that extend over time.

All in all, however, we hope we have shown how social identity theory provides an integrative group-based analysis of attitudes and attitude phenomena - an approach that explicitly ties attitudes to the wider social context of social identities, social groups, and the dynamics of intergroup relations. This perspective provides a powerful and fresh complement to the more traditional social psychological approach to attitudes that focuses on the individual and on interindividual interaction.

Author Notes

We would like to acknowledge the valuable empirical and conceptual contributions made over the years by our colleagues and collaborators in the Centre for Research on Group Processes at the University of Queensland to the development of some of the ideas presented in this article. Their work is liberally cited in the chapter

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