

STEREOTYPES AND BEHAVIORAL CONFIRMATION: FROM INTERPERSONAL TO INTERGROUP PERSPECTIVES

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I. Introduction

Consider the case of a Belgian employer interviewing an applicant of Moroccan ancestry to determine whether this person is suitable for a highly competitive job. This employer may adhere to the stereotype, widely shared in Belgian society, that Moroccans are unreliable and not committed to their jobs. Guided by this stereotype, the interviewer may employ an interviewing strategy for evaluating this candidate's suitability for the job in question by asking him to talk about negative experiences in the job market or about interests outside of the workplace, on the workplace, on the assumption that unreliable employees will have numerous negative work-related experiences to report and those not involved in their jobs will be most eager to talk about their nonwork interests and activities. This information-gathering strategy is confirmatory in that the evidence that it attempts to gather would tend to be supportive of the interviewer's belief. Moreover, the candidate, in an effort to be responsive to the interviewer's questions, may answer these questions as fully and precisely as possible, reporting negative workplace experiences and describing extracurricular interests and activities. In doing so, the candidate may provide evidence in support of the interviewer's expectations and display behavior that would tend to confirm the stereotype held about people of Moroccan origin in Belgium. In this situation, the very existence of an expectation regarding the candidate set in motion a chain of events that eventually induced behavior consistent with this expectation. This example, loosely based on existing research, illustrates the process known as *behavioral confirmation*.

In the past several decades, researchers in social psychology have demonstrated, in a variety of laboratory and field contexts, that expectations about other persons can actually induce these persons to adopt behaviors consistent with these expectations (Jussim, Palumbo, Chatman, Madon, & Smith, 2000; Miller & Turnbull, 1986; Neuberg, 1994; Snyder, 1992; Snyder & Stukas, 1999). In one commonly used procedural paradigm (e.g., Snyder, Tanke, & Berscheid, 1977), two participants placed in separate experimental rooms communicate via a telephone system. Prior to the interaction, the experimenter provides one of the participants (the *perceiver*) with information regarding the personal attributes of the other participant (the *target*), either directly (such as providing access to personality test information indicating that the target is, for example, an extravert or an introvert) or indirectly by revealing the category membership of the target (such as providing a photograph that reveals, for example, the appearance, ethnicity, gender, or weight of the target) and relying on stereotypes about that category to generate expectations about the target. Actually, in investigations of behavioral confirmation, the expectation is defined randomly and is independent of the actual characteristics of the target; thus, perceivers are randomly assigned to conditions in which they are led to expect that their interaction partners are, for example, extraverts or introverts, attractive or unattractive, obese or normal weight, females or males.

The ensuing interaction between perceiver and target is tape-recorded for later rating by independent judges, blind to conditions, of the contributions of perceiver and target to the interaction. *Perceptual* confirmation is said to occur when, after the interaction, the perceiver views the target in a direction consistent with initial expectations. *Behavioral* confirmation is evidenced if the target's personality, as rated by judges who listen to tape recordings of the target's contributions to the interaction, differs in the two experimental conditions in the same direction. Both perceptual and behavioral confirmation effects have been documented, although there are limiting conditions to their occurrence (Miller & Turnbull, 1986; Snyder, 1984, 1992).

Two types of behavioral confirmation processes can and have been investigated in such procedural paradigms, and these two types of behavioral confirmation can be distinguished as a function of the source and the nature of the expectation. In the example involving the Belgian employer and the Moroccan candidate, the expectations that we have focused on derive directly from a social categorization of the target by the employer and of the activation of social stereotypes associated with the target's category membership. Such an interaction, although it involves only two people, can be regarded as essentially an intergroup situation because

the perceiver views the target in terms of his or her *social identity* (that is, as a prototypical member of a social category) rather than as an idiosyncratic individual (Brown, 1988; Moya, 1998; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). We shall label such a case of behavioral confirmation as an instance of *social stereotype confirmation*.

Of course, stereotypes based on a target's category membership are but one source of expectations (Olson, Roese, & Zanna, 1996). Quite possibly, our hypothetical Belgian interviewer, for idiosyncratic reasons unrelated to the job candidate's national origin, may expect the Moroccan candidate to be a shy person, rather than uncommitted to his job. In this instance, the perceiver's expectations are unrelated to the target's group membership because the trait "shy" is not stereotypical of Moroccans. It can therefore be viewed as a purely interpersonal expectation. Yet, by adopting a confirmatory information-gathering strategy in the job interview, the interviewer may lead the applicant to behave in accordance with this expectation as well. We shall label this case of behavioral confirmation an instance of *personal expectation confirmation*.¹

Much of the interest in behavioral confirmation processes derives from the role these phenomena may play in the maintenance of stereotypes and in the perpetuation or reproduction of the social structure (Claire & Fiske, 1998; Jussim & Fleming, 1996; Merton, 1948). Indeed, if members of advantaged groups can influence members of disadvantaged groups into performing the behaviors that confirm their negative expectations, they may thereby reinforce their privileged status in society. For example, if, time and again, Belgian interviewers could systematically influence North African interviewees into providing evidence of unreliability or incompetence, they could then use these behaviors as evidence that North Africans deserve their disadvantaged position in society and that equal opportunity policies and practices should not be implemented.

When considering these possible societal consequences of behavioral confirmation for understanding intergroup relations and the relative positions of groups within the structural organizations of society, the distinction between personal expectation confirmation and social stereotype confirmation takes on particular importance. The personal expectations that are brought to bear on social interactions may be as diverse as the individuals who hold those expectations and the individual targets of

¹Some instances of behavioral confirmation lie between these two extremes. This is the case when the source of the expectation is influenced by the category membership of the target whereas the perceiver is not. For example, our Belgian interviewer may have heard from a prejudiced colleague that the target possessed stereotypical traits. A perceiver possessing such stereotypical expectations may still view the target in terms of his or her personal identity.

those expectations. Hence, the consequences of the confirmation of personal expectations may be confined to individual pairings of holders and targets of expectations and, as such, will not be generalized to large segments of low status groups. On the other hand, social stereotypes are widely shared, collective representations (Schaller & Conway, 2001; Stangor & Schaller, 1996; Tajfel, 1981). If they are repeatedly confirmed in social interaction, they can contribute to the persistence of intergroup stereotypes and behaviors based on those stereotypes, such as discrimination, that serve to maintain existing patterns of intergroup relations. For this reason, in our theoretical analysis, we shall mainly be concerned with social stereotype confirmation as a form of behavioral confirmation.

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In spite of the assumed “intergroup” implications of behavioral confirmation processes, the methodological options generally pursued in research on behavioral confirmation, especially in laboratory experiments, do pose some difficulties for, and hence place some limits on, our ability to make the transition from the interpersonal level at which research is typically conducted (e.g., studies of interaction between individual perceivers and individual targets) to the intergroup level of analysis (e.g., the implications of behavioral confirmation for understanding intergroup relations, including the perpetuation of widely shared social stereotypes and the maintenance of the relative positions of power and influence of groups within society). First, studies relying on variations in the (expected) social category membership of the target (that is, studies of social stereotype confirmation) have been comparatively rare in comparison with those manipulating expectations regarding personality traits (that is, studies of personal expectation confirmation). For example, membership in an ethnic minority has only rarely been manipulated (for exceptions, see Chen & Bargh, 1997; Chidester, 1986; Word, Zanna, & Cooper, 1974) and to our knowledge, on experiment on behavioral confirmation has manipulated expectations about the sexual orientation of the target.

Second, even when categories have been used to define expectations in studies of behavioral confirmation, such studies have generally relied on situations in which the target did not truly belong to the stigmatized group. For example, targets described as “obese” (on the basis of a snapshot) in the Snyder and Haugen studies (1994, 1995) were not more likely to be overweight than other students and the supposedly black targets in the second study of Word et al. (1974) actually were white. Yet, when targets actually are nonstigmatized group members, their reactions to interactions with individuals who hold stereotyped expectations about them may differ from those of a truly stigmatized target. They are likely to be shaped in a large part by their personal history as a group member and

by the position of their group in the social structure (Claire & Fiske, 1998; Miller & Myers, 1998; Pinel, 1999). For example, our Moroccan job candidate may have been repeatedly confronted with prejudiced Belgians and may therefore have developed interaction strategies and tactics that allow him or her to project a favorable image in such contexts. Or, conversely, membership in a disadvantaged group may limit one's opportunities to enact these strategies and tactics, perhaps because the interviewer may be motivated to end the interaction more quickly as a result of prejudiced attitudes toward members of that group (Devine, Evett, & Vasquez-Suson, 1996; Hebl & Kleck, 2000). Membership in "real" groups may therefore expand or constrain the behavioral opportunities available to them when interacting with others who hold stereotyped expectations of them.

In this chapter, we seek to address these gaps in existing theory and research on behavioral confirmation, in order to further understand behavioral confirmation as an intergroup phenomenon, with its attendant implications for the perpetuation of social stereotypes, especially those about disadvantaged groups within society, and the maintenance of relations between groups within society. To do so, we will build a bridge between the processes of stigmatization and those of behavioral confirmation, drawing on the large body of literature examining dyadic interactions between members of stigmatized and nonstigmatized groups. More precisely, we shall try to answer two key questions.

First, how does stigmatization of one of the parties to a social interaction affect stereotype confirmation? Hence, functionally, we shall focus on situations in which the nonstigmatized party is the perceiver, holding stereotypes, and the stigmatized party is a target, or "victim" of stereotypes. In line with Crocker, Major, and Steele's definition, we shall define a stigmatized individual as "possessing (or believed to possess) some attribute, or characteristic, that conveys a social identity that is devalued in a particular social context" (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998, p. 505). In this respect, our analysis will be broad, and will not make explicit distinctions between different types of stigmatizing attributes that can be brought to bear on individuals as a result of their membership in groups about whom negative social stereotypes are held.

Second, we shall ask: How does stereotype confirmation contribute to the persistence of stereotypes and oppressive intergroup relations guided by these stereotypes? As a corollary to these considerations of how the large-scale consequences of behavioral confirmation can potentially constrain the opportunities of disadvantaged groups in society, we will also consider the implications of behavioral *disconfirmation* for the modification of social stereotypes and for changes in patterns of intergroup relations.

Our plan for addressing these two questions is to begin by proposing and articulating some key conceptual and theoretical distinctions. These distinctions concern the processes involved in behavioral confirmation, and the behavioral styles displayed in interactions between the nonstigmatized and the stigmatized. These distinctions will then be used to ascertain the impact of the target's membership in a stigmatized group on the occurrence of behavioral confirmation. We shall try to assess this impact in terms of three types of variables—variables related to the nonstigmatized perceiver, variables related to the stigmatized target, and sociostructural variables related to the perceiver–target dyad considered as a unit. Based on these considerations, we will then try to draw implications for understanding when and why the confirmation of expectations can contribute to the persistence of social stereotypes, as well as when and why their disconfirmation will lead to the modification of social stereotypes.

II. Processes Involved in Behavioral Confirmation

In accord with the plan that we have just laid out, let us begin by delineating two processes that, based on relevant theorizing and research, may underlie behavioral confirmation when it occurs in interactions between perceivers and the targets of their stereotype-based expectations.

A. RECIPROCATION STRATEGY

According to interaction adaptation theories (e.g., Argyle & Dean, 1965; Burgoon, 1978; Giles, Giles, & Coupland, 1991; Knowles, 1980), interactants can adopt two main strategies to respond to their partner's behavior. Reciprocation involves matching the partner's behavior by displaying a similar level of friendliness and warmth. Compensation involves, on the contrary, moving away from one's partner's interpersonal style (e.g., by behaving more warmly as a response to a partner's cold responses). Generally, reciprocation is thought to be the default strategy, but compensation can and does occur when the partner greatly violates expectations (Burgoon, Le Poire, & Rosenthal, 1995). For example, if a partner who is expected to be warm and friendly suddenly behaves coldly, displays of increased warmth can be used to restore the quality of the interaction.

According to an interpretation of behavioral confirmation based on these concepts, behavioral confirmation in social interaction can precisely be described as involving reciprocal patterns of behaviors on the part of the

perceiver and target (see, e.g., Burgoon et al., 1995; Jones & Panitch, 1971; Snyder, 1984; Word et al., 1974). For example, in the study by Snyder et al. (1977), expectations were manipulated by presenting to perceivers a picture of an attractive or unattractive target (this picture was of course independent of the real physical characteristics of the targets). Perceivers in the "attractive condition" may have relied on their stereotypes to anticipate friendly and warm behavior on the part of the target. In anticipation of such behavior, they may have made warm and friendly overtures to the target, thereby reciprocating their expectations with these behaviors. In turn, the target reciprocated the friendly behavior of the perceiver, which yielded an impression of the target as actually friendly and warm. A parallel process can explain the target's behavior in the "unattractive" condition, in which the perceiver's cool and distant overtures are reciprocated by cool and distant reactions from the target. Evidence that the perceiver's behavior, as evidenced by both verbal and nonverbal indices, is matched by the target's corresponding behavior can be taken as supportive of this interpretation of the dynamics of behavioral confirmation in social interaction.

B. CONFIRMATORY STRATEGY

A second interpretation of behavioral confirmation is based on the finding that subject to certain limiting conditions, perceivers generally attempt to confirm their initial expectations of their targets (Erber & Fiske, 1984; Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Snyder & Campbell, 1980; Snyder, Campbell, & Preston, 1982; Snyder & Cantor, 1979). This confirmatory orientation may lead perceivers to "bias" their interaction strategy such that targets have relatively great opportunities to behave in accord with the perceivers' expectations. Thus, in interview formats for studying behavioral confirmation, perceivers are likely to ask leading questions that provide targets with opportunities to talk about themselves in ways that would tend to confirm the expectation at hand but that are difficult to answer in a "disconfirming" manner (Neuberg, 1994; Snyder & Campbell, 1980; Snyder et al., 1982; Snyder & Cantor, 1979). The success of the perceiver's confirmatory strategy depends, to some extent, on rules of social etiquette and norms of conversational practice that favor a smoothly flowing and responsive pattern of conversation, one in which the target, in response to the topics of conversation laid down by the perceiver, answers these questions with docility, never trying to assert her own self-views. Such an interactional orientation on the part of the target is called "deferential" (Smith, Neuberg, Judice, & Biesanz, 1997) and is thought to be an expression of a "getting along agenda" motivated by the desire to have a

smoothly flowing and pleasing interaction with the perceiver (Snyder, 1992; Snyder & Haugen, 1995).

The success of the confirmatory strategy in eliciting behavioral confirmation is premised on the existence of a power differential between perceiver and target, as the perceiver needs to be able to impose his or her "script" on the target for behavioral confirmation to occur (Copeland, 1994; Neuberg, 1994, 1996; Snyder & Kiviniemi, 2001). This power differential can be the case either because the roles occupied by perceiver and target are associated with specific prescriptions or because the perceiver controls outcomes valued by the target. This power differential, however, need not be a formal one: A perceiver can, for example, feel subjectively that he or she deserves more power in the interaction because he or she feels more intelligent or competent than the target. Manifestations of this claim to greater power can be accepted and go unchallenged by the target. Indeed, empirical evidence shows that when the perceiver has greater power (Copeland, 1992, 1994; Harris, Lightner, & Manolis, 1998) or status (Viridin & Neuberg, 1990), behavioral confirmation is more likely to occur. When the target is deprived of power, she or he is even more likely to pursue a "getting along" agenda (Copeland, 1994), thereby facilitating behavioral confirmation.

III. Interactions between Stigmatized and Nonstigmatized Individuals

Next, following along with the plan we have laid out, let us examine two styles of interactions that nonstigmatized individuals can and do adopt in their dealings with the stigmatized, and consider how these two styles may lead the targets of stigmatizing expectations (especially those based on stereotypes about the groups to which the targets belong) to provide behavioral confirmation for these expectations. These two styles of interaction we label, respectively, avoidance and dominance.

A. AVOIDANCE

The "avoidance style" is a pattern of behaviors, both verbal and nonverbal, that tends to increase the perceiver's psychological and interpersonal distance from the target. Verbal behaviors, such as low self-disclosure or early interruption of the interaction, can be characterized as avoidant to the extent that they serve to increase the symbolic distance between two interactants. As well, nonverbal behaviors such as reduced eye contact, large interaction distance, backward lean, and silence are indicative of avoidance. The

avoidant style, when practiced by the nonstigmatized in their dealings with the stigmatized, can be contrasted with the moderately friendly behavior generally displayed toward other nonstigmatized group members. For example, when interacting with disabled individuals, able-bodied individuals tend to terminate interviews sooner (Kleck, 1969) and to distance themselves more from their partner (Kleck, 1968) than when interacting with other able-bodied individuals. They are also more likely to avoid the interaction altogether if it is possible to do so (Snyder, Kleck, Strenta, & Mentzer, 1979).

To the extent that the nonstigmatized manage to escape contact with the stigmatized, their stereotypes about them will, of course, go unchallenged and will, by default, persist. Hence, the absence of disconfirmation is often similar, in its effects, to confirmation. Moreover, even when the nonstigmatized have contact with the stigmatized, they may succeed in psychologically distancing themselves from the stigmatized through the use of avoidant styles. In doing so, they may also be functionally engaging in a confirmatory interactional strategy that will set the stage for behavioral confirmation of negative stereotypes about the stigmatized. For, if in accord with the principle of reciprocation that we have already articulated, the stigmatized target reciprocates this interactional style and matches the level of avoidance, detachment, and distancing displayed by the nonstigmatized, the perceiver's behavior will indirectly lead to the behavioral confirmation of negative expectations regarding the sociability of the target.

For example, if a European-American perceiver expects an African-American target to be hostile and hence behaves in an avoidant way, the African-American target may then respond by avoidant behavior as well (for an empirical illustration of this chain of events, see Word et al., 1974). This avoidant behavior can be interpreted as diagnostic of "hostility" or "coldness" and hence confirming of the perceiver's expectations. More generally, in such situations, negative expectations about a target individual, stigmatized because of his or her membership in a category about whom negative stereotypes are held, are likely to be confirmed. And, by extension, so too are the more general social stereotypes held by the nonstigmatized about the entire group to which the stigmatized target belongs confirmed by the events of an encounter built around an avoidant style of interaction.

B. DOMINANCE

Another style of interaction, likely to be adopted by members of nonstigmatized groups in dealing with members of stigmatized groups, can be characterized as "dominant"—that is, one involving attempts to control or manipulate the behavior of the other person (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974).

Behaviors characteristic of the dominant interactional style are visual dominance (i.e., looking at the other person more when speaking than when listening), rapid speech, a relaxed posture, a firm and loud tone of voice, orders, and interruptions of the partner. This style also involves attempts to influence the other person and to be less likely to listen to him or her. The counterpart of this style is a submissive style marked by little talking, tentative speech, little eye contact when speaking, and deference to the partner's injunctions.² Empirical evidence suggests that members of dyads and small groups or dyads tend to behave submissively in the presence of an interactional partner who displays a dominant style (e.g., Cohen & Zelditch, 1972; Ridgeway, 1987; Ridgeway & Berger, 1988).

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If stereotypes of a stigmatized social group depict members of this group as low in competence, for example (as do stereotypes of many disadvantaged groups, such as African-Americans in the United States and North Africans in Belgium), adoption of a submissive style by members of these groups in response to a dominant interactional style on the part of the nonstigmatized may lead to stereotype confirmation. Indeed, a submissive style is typically viewed as indicative of low intelligence and low task competence; for example, Ridgeway (1987) observed that individuals adopting this style were judged as having a lower GPA than those adopting a dominant style. Moreover, adoption of this submissive style in response to dominant overtures can also be considered as indicative of an inherent lack of assertiveness or leadership, a trait that is associated with many stigmatized groups (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Fiske, Xu, & Cuddy, 1999).

Most importantly, acceptance of the perceiver's attempts at asserting his or her power may contribute to the success of the perceiver's confirmatory strategy of acting on his or her expectations about the members of stigmatized groups. For, when the target defers to the perceiver, and explicitly or implicitly accepts his or her power by behaving submissively, this strategy is most likely to be successful at eliciting behavioral confirmation.

Considered together, the avoidant and dominant interactional styles of members of nonstigmatized groups in their dealings with members of stigmatized groups may be seen as attempts to exercise power—the power to control whether or not to have any dealings with the targets of stigmatized groups and the power to dominate and control one's dealings with them.

²Unlike Ridgeway (1987), and to simplify our terminology, when we refer to dominant behaviors, we include not only behaviors that directly attempt to control the partner's behavior but also those that do so indirectly, and sometimes unintentionally, by manifesting the actor's high level of competence or status. Conversely, submissive behavior includes not only behavior manifesting an acceptance of this control but also behavior manifesting low task competence or low status.

IV. The Perceiver's Perspective

Now that we have presented the building blocks of our analysis—reciprocation and confirmatory strategies as mechanisms of behavioral confirmation, and avoidance and dominance as interactional styles that members of nonstigmatized groups bring to bear on their interactions with members of nonstigmatized groups—let us proceed to examine how stigmatization of one of the interaction partners (the “target”) can affect the occurrence of behavioral confirmation in dyadic interactions. To do so, we shall extrapolate from lessons learned from the literature on interactions between the stigmatized and the nonstigmatized and, by building on the distinctions that we have already articulated, examine factors facilitating the confirmation of the stereotypes held by the nonstigmatized about the stigmatized.

To accomplish these goals, we first concentrate on factors related to the nonstigmatized person's (that is, the perceiver's) perspective and examine which factors can lead him or her to adopt behavioral styles conducive to behavioral confirmation, especially avoidance and dominance. Specifically, we will give special attention to the role of social categorization, a process that we view as necessary for the activation of group-based expectations. But, as well, we shall examine the role of factors such as the purpose of the interaction, the levels of prejudice and anxiety of the perceiver, and the content of the stereotypes being brought to bear on the interaction between perceiver and target—all of which may also contribute to the confirmation of social stereotypes.

A. SELF- AND OTHER-CATEGORIZATION AND BEHAVIORAL CONFIRMATION

In intergroup contexts, the activation of stigmatizing expectations about the target based on stereotypes about the group to which the target belongs requires, of course, that this target first be categorized as a member of the stigmatized group. If, as we have proposed, the use of avoidant and dominant behavioral styles by the perceiver derives from the activation of stereotypes based on this categorization, it is important to consider the factors that may lead to construe the stigmatized as a member of the social category to which these stereotypes are associated. Accordingly, let us examine relevant theoretical perspectives on the process of categorization as it occurs in interactions between the nonstigmatized and the stigmatized. As well, let us examine the empirical evidence relevant to the proposition that

perceivers do indeed rely on avoidant and dominant behavioral repertoires when interacting with a target who has been categorized as a member of a stigmatized group.

To understand the determinants and consequences of the categorization process, we shall draw on self-categorization theory (SCT; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). The main assumption of this theory is that social categorization is a flexible process and depends on the social context. Individuals can define themselves and others as members of different groups. They can also view themselves and others as individuals and define them in terms of their "personal" identity. For example, our Belgian interviewer may either perceive the Moroccan candidate as a typical Moroccan, interchangeable with other Moroccans, or as a unique individual, possessing an idiosyncratic personality that differentiates him from other candidates.

What are the consequences of categorizing the target as a member of an outgroup? According to SCT, such a categorization will be associated with expectations that will tend to involve traits differentiating members of the outgroup from those of the ingroup. In this case, members of the ingroup will be perceived as similar in terms of a common "self-stereotype" whereas outgroup members will be viewed in terms of an outgroup stereotype. Thus, a correlate of categorizing the target as a member of an outgroup involves the tendency to self-categorize as a member of an ingroup (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Hogg & Turner, 1987; Simon & Hamilton, 1994) and to behave in terms of the norms of this ingroup. By contrast, when the perceiver views himself or herself at a personal level, as an idiosyncratic individual, he is expected to view the target at the same level of abstraction. A theoretical implication of this analysis is that behavioral confirmation processes will take the form of personal expectation confirmation when the perceiver's personal identity is salient, whereas behavioral confirmation processes will concern stereotype confirmation when the perceiver defines himself or herself at a group level.

According to SCT, individuals defining themselves in terms of a social category tend to adopt behaviors, and to expect other ingroup members to adopt behaviors, construed as typical of the ingroup at the same time as they expect outgroup members to adopt behaviors typical of their group, that is to enact the outgroup stereotype (Turner et al., 1987; Turner, 1991). Different aspects of these stereotypes may be activated as a function of the social context as it affects the salience of the perceiver's self-categorization. For example, in the context of sports, a white perceiver may expect an African-American target to be particularly athletic, and self-define as not particularly gifted in sports. This categorization and the attendant activation of stereotyped-based expectations may lead to a form of

submissiveness on the part of the white perceiver, for example, if both individuals are part of a sports team. By contrast, in the context of a mathematics contest, traits related to African-Americans' athletic skills may not be activated whereas traits related to academic achievement (in particular, those relative to poor performance in mathematics on the part of the out-group) will be activated. In such a context, the white perceiver may self-define as able in mathematics and adopt a dominant behavioral style of dealing with an African-American partner.

SCT also suggests that attraction is influenced by the use of different self- and other-categorizations. According to this theory, attraction to other group members is a function of their similarity to the ingroup prototype. This prototype is made of the traits that best differentiate the ingroup from the relevant outgroup. An implication of this assumption is that individuals tend to experience positive affects toward prototypical ingroup members and aversion toward individuals they view as stereotypical members of an outgroup. Consistent with this assumption, attraction to other ingroup members is a function of the extent to which they match the groups' prototypical norms and values (for reviews, see Hogg, 1987, 1992; Hogg & Hardie, 1991). Hence, if the target is categorized as a member of an outgroup, perceivers may both activate negative expectations and be motivated to distance themselves from the target whereas the reverse should occur if the target is construed as a member of a psychological ingroup. According to this logic, an avoidance-oriented behavioral style should particularly be present in perceivers dealing with targets perceived as prototypical outgroup members.

To more precisely specify the applicability of the assumptions and propositions of SCT to our present concerns with the confirmation of social stereotypes in intergroup interactions, we find it useful to make a distinction between two types of interactions between stigmatized and nonstigmatized individuals, both of which are represented in the empirical literature:

In the first type of interaction, individuals engage in "getting-acquainted" interactions, in which the purpose of the interaction is specifically to meet and to get to know each other. Sometimes, although not always, this purpose is explicitly conveyed to the perceiver. For example, a participant designated as the "interviewer" may be asked to interview another participant, the "candidate," in order to form an impression of his personality. In such an instance, the perceiver is said to be in an "assessment set" (Hilton & Darley, 1991). In other instances, participants find themselves in a laboratory with the opportunity to converse with another person; although not necessarily explicitly described as such, it is not unreasonable to assume that one goal of interactions that occur in such a situation is to get acquainted with one's conversational partner (see, e.g.,

Ickes, 1984). In such getting-acquainted situations, perceivers are generally primarily interested in information regarding the sociability and morality of the target; they search for this type of information first and devote more attention to it (De Bruin & Van Lange, 2000).

In the second type of interaction, the purpose of the interaction is to cooperatively perform a task. In such interactions, in which task performance leads the agenda, impression formation is only a secondary goal of the interaction. Perceivers in such interactions may be said to be in an “action set” (Hilton & Darley, 1991). Here, with the success of the task being the chief purpose of the interaction, individuals may be particularly interested in traits relevant to the success of the task. If the task requires intellectual skills (as is usually the case in such studies), information regarding the intellectual capacities of the target may be particularly likely to be sought.

These two kinds of interactions provide a context for articulating the role of social categorization processes in the confirmation of social stereotypes. According to SCT (but see also, other theoretical frameworks: Fiske, 1998; Hilton, 1998; Snyder, 1998), perceivers should define the target in terms of trait dimensions that are relevant to the interaction’s goal, and are thereby made more accessible. If a social categorization can account meaningfully for differences and similarities between the perceiver and the target on these dimensions, this category should then become salient (Oakes, 1987; Simon, Hastedt, & Aufderheide, 1997; van Knippenberg & Dijksterhuis, 2001) and, for our purposes, more likely to engage interactional styles that culminate in behavioral confirmation. The question becomes: What trait dimensions are particularly likely to become salient in interactions that revolve around considerations of getting acquainted and those that focus on considerations of task performance?

In getting-acquainted interactions, social categorization may be organized around the dimensions of sociability. For example, if the target is black and the perceiver is white, and if blacks are expected to be hostile or otherwise undesirable interaction partners, a categorization in terms of race may make stereotypical attributes associated with racial categorization salient. In this case, the black target will be perceived as different from the white perceiver in terms of sociability (e.g., as hostile or cold). Avoidance is typically an anticipated reciprocation of these traits (Burgoon et al., 1995; Ickes, Patterson, Rajceki, & Tanford, 1982). Besides, when the purpose of the interaction is simply to get acquainted, perhaps as a prelude to developing some form of social relationship, attraction toward one’s ingroup and aversion for the outgroup may be likely to guide the nonstigmatized person’s behavior toward outgroup members. Accordingly, an avoidance-oriented interactional style can be an expression of the aversion toward prototypical outgroup members. We expect this scenario involving an

avoidance-oriented interactional style on the part of the perceiver to be particularly prevalent in “getting-acquainted” interactions, as sociability is the focus of these interactions.

Consider now an interaction focusing on performance of a task requiring intellectual skills. If the target is black, and if blacks are expected to be less intelligent than whites, categorization in terms of race may be meaningful and make racial categorization salient. The perceiver will then define himself as an “intelligent” white interacting with an “incompetent” black. According to SCT, salience of this categorization should then shape the perceiver’s behavior and lead to the adoption of behavior that is stereotypical of the ingroup. The activation of stereotypes of the ingroup as competent would then tend to produce a dominant behavioral style (Ridgeway, 1991). More generally, we would expect this pattern to be particularly likely in “task-oriented” interactions, as these interactions generally demand intellectual skills.

Altogether, this analysis suggests that as compared with situations in which they interact with other ingroup members, nonstigmatized perceivers should be more likely to display an avoidant style in getting-acquainted interactions and a dominant style in task-oriented interactions with outgroup members. As we have seen, these styles favor the emergence of stereotype confirmation if the target adopts the complementary avoidant or submissive style. So far, we recognize that this analysis has been somewhat speculative. Therefore, we shall now review evidence relevant to the predictions derived from it by examining studies of factors affecting category salience (from the perceiver’s perspective). It follows from our analysis that these factors should enhance the use of avoidant behaviors in getting-acquainted interactions and the use of dominant behavior in task-oriented interactions.

How do perceivers behave in the presence of an outgroup, as opposed to an ingroup member? In mixed settings, involving interactions of ingroup members with outgroup members, perceivers are more likely to define themselves in terms of their social identity than when interacting with other members of their ingroup (Haslam & Turner, 1992). We shall therefore examine whether perceivers behave differently when interacting with stigmatized partners than other members of their own (nonstigmatized) ingroup. Then, we shall consider the influence of factors that should enhance category salience over and above the influence of the target’s membership in a stigmatized outgroup.

Consider first studies that involve getting-acquainted interactions. Vorauer and Kumyhr (2001) noted that white Canadians were more likely to experience negative feelings oriented toward others (such as hostility or anger at others) when interacting with an aboriginal Canadian than with another white Canadian. Similarly, women can elicit distancing behaviors

from men in unstructured getting-acquainted interactions. For example, Saris, Johnson, and Lott (1995) found that men tended to distance themselves more from a woman when approached by a (male) investigator wearing a feminist T-shirt than when this investigator wore a blank T-shirt. It is likely that wearing this T-shirt made the gender categorization salient and elicited distancing from women.

The literature on interactions between able-bodied and disabled individuals provides convergent findings. Individuals are more likely to display avoidant behavior in the presence of a disabled than an able-bodied individual (for a review, see Hebl & Kleck, 2000). In addition, able-bodied individuals show lesser variability in their interactional styles when they interact with disabled persons than they do with other able-bodied interaction partners (Kleck, Ono, & Hastorf, 1966), suggesting that they may be particularly likely to categorize disabled persons as interchangeable members of an outgroup to be treated one and all in the same ways.

Several studies have documented the presence of avoidant nonverbal behavior on the part of whites in studies of unstructured getting-acquainted interactions between American whites and blacks (Crosby, Bromley, & Saxe, 1980; Hendricks & Bootzin, 1976; Ickes, 1984; Weitz, 1972; Word et al., 1974). For example, Ickes found that both members of a dyad including a prejudiced white behaved less warmly when the experimenter was black than white (Ickes, 1984). Presumably, being in a minority increased the salience of the ingroup vs. outgroup categorization, from the white's perspective (Oakes, 1987; Simon & Brown, 1987; Taylor, 1979). This factor may in turn have elicited negative behaviors in the black target.

What about task-oriented interactions? Consistent with our predictions, interactions between blacks and whites in task groups also reveal differences in dominance. In task-oriented situations, blacks tend to behave less assertively in the presence of whites (Adams, 1980; Cohen & Roper, 1972; Cohen, 1982; Katz & Benjamin, 1960) and tend to rely on more submissive behavior than their white partners. Conversely, white members of a mixed task group tend to become the leader of their group even if they are a minority of one (Kelsey, 1998). Studies conducted with other ethnic minorities reveal a similar pattern (for a review, see Ridgeway, 1991).

Similarly, the literature on gender in task situations suggests that men are more likely to adopt dominant behavioral styles when interacting with women than when interacting with other men. For example, they make more suggestions and engage in more active task behavior (Wood & Karten, 1986), they are more likely to be selected leader than women (Eagly & Wood, 1991), they show more visual dominance (Ellyson, Dovidio, & Brown, 1992), and they interrupt women more (Smith-Lovin & Brody, 1989; Zimmerman & West, 1975). These differences are typically absent in same-sex discussions

(Carli, 1990, 1991; Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999). Hence, these studies suggest that in task groups, men tend to use more dominant behaviors in the presence of women than in the presence of other men. This dominant behavioral style can also be coupled with manifestations of avoidance: For example, in a study using dyads cooperating on a task, Lott (1987) found that men simultaneously distanced themselves from their partner more if this partner was a woman than a man (a manifestation of avoidance) but followed their advice less and made more negative comments (manifestations of dominance).

Now that we have reviewed studies comparing nonstigmatized group members' behaviors in the presence of ingroup versus outgroup members, we shall consider several factors that are likely to enhance the salience of the perceiver's self-categorization when he or she interacts with an outgroup member. One factor likely to affect the self-categorization process on the part of the perceiver is the typicality of the target in regard to the perceiver's self-categorization. A target displaying traits that are perceived to be typical of his or her group is more likely to be categorized as a member of this group. In a study of interactions between Hindus and Muslims in India, Islam and Hewstone (1993) found that interactions with typical outgroup members are associated with more intergroup anxiety, typically a source of avoidant behavior (Daly, 1978; Pancer, McMullen, Kabatoff, Johnson, & Pond, 1979; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Similarly, Wilder (1984, experiment 3) observed that a target was rated as a less desirable interaction partner when that target was a typical rather than an atypical member of a rival college. Of course, these results need to be considered in the context of the competitive relations between the groups involved in these studies, the next factor that we shall consider here.

Intergroup competition tends to make group membership salient: Sherif's classic boy camps studies (Sherif, 1966) show that group members develop more avoidant behaviors when interacting with outgroup members in the context of competitive rather than cooperative relations. As a function of competition, group members not only displayed hostile behaviors but also developed attitudes of social distance toward outgroup members. These results have been replicated in organizational contexts (Blake & Mouton, 1964) and more recent studies also have provided consistent findings (Gaertner et al., 1990, 1999).

A third factor affecting the salience of an ingroup versus an outgroup categorization on the part of the perceiver is the typicality of the interactional task between perceiver and target in regard to this categorization. If the interaction involves a task construed as typical of one of the two groups, this categorization may be particularly salient and therefore generate behaviors typical of the ingroup. Thus, although stereotypes of

housewives generally portray this group as less intellectually able than men (Fiske et al., 1999), they are thought to be more competent than men in their own area of expertise (e.g., child care, home duties, or handling of emotions). If a woman and a man interact on a task demanding skills related to these areas, and assuming that their gender identities are salient, the man may activate self-stereotypes of men as unable to handle such tasks. The activation of such self-stereotypes may lead a man in such a situation to behave submissively and yield to the woman's greater (expected) competence. Consistent with this proposition, Dovidio (1988) has found, for example, that men's visual dominance increased when the two partners engaged in a masculine task as compared to a gender-neutral task, but that it decreased when the task was typically feminine (for other relevant evidence, see Eagly & Wood, 1991). Hence, in these cases, dyad members' behavior is shaped by their stereotypes about the relative competence of ingroup and outgroup members in their own areas of expertise. By adopting a dominant style when they expect to be competent, men encourage women to behave submissively and contribute to the confirmation of their stereotypes, whereas the reverse occurs when women are thought to be superior to men.

Taken together, these studies suggest that in interactions between members of nonstigmatized ingroups and stigmatized outgroups, self-categorization by the perceiver as a member of an ingroup coupled with categorization of the target as a member of an outgroup can encourage, depending on the purpose of the interaction, either dominant or avoidant behavior on the part of the nonstigmatized perceiver. Whereas a dominant interactional style is typically present in task-oriented interactions, avoidance is often present in getting-acquainted interactions. Moreover, factors increasing the salience of the perceiver's self-categorization, such as the typicality of the task with respect to the perceiver's self-categorization, the typicality of the target in relation to her group membership and perceived intergroup competition may moderate these effects. By encouraging behaviors likely to elicit stereotype confirmation, salience of the perceiver's group membership, coupled with categorization of the target into an outgroup, may therefore facilitate the occurrence of this phenomenon.

B. PREJUDICE OF THE PERCEIVER AND BEHAVIORAL CONFIRMATION

As much as the self-categorization processes that we have discussed may constrain the interactions between perceivers who are members of nonstigmatized ingroups and targets who are members of stigmatized outgroups, so too may the stable and enduring levels of prejudice that

perceivers brings to bear on their dealings with targets. As perceivers differ in their level of prejudice, they may also interact differently with members of the group against which their prejudice is directed. According to a classic definition, prejudice is “an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization” (Allport, 1954, p. 9). Accordingly, we shall now consider some of the consequences of prejudice for the perceiver’s interaction strategies and the occurrence of behavioral confirmation of social stereotypes associated with the prejudice of the perceiver.

AU5

First, prejudiced individuals should be especially likely to experience negative emotions when interacting with members of the groups toward which they are prejudiced and about which they apply stereotypes associated with their prejudices. These negative emotions may be expressed through avoidant behavioral styles. Following the now familiar scenario, targets may then reciprocate these behaviors, which could then be interpreted as indicative of coldness or hostility. If the negative stereotypes about the targets of prejudice concern these dimensions, which is typically the case for many targets of prejudice, such as blacks and Jews (see, e.g., Fiske et al., 1999, 2002), this scenario would be indicative of behavioral confirmation.

Is this intuitively plausible scenario supported by existing research? Based on Allport’s definition of prejudice, the answer is generally “yes.” Prejudiced individuals tend to experience negative emotions toward members of stigmatized groups (Devine & Monteith, 1993; Fiske, 1998; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Monteith, Devine, & Zuwerink, 1993; Stephan & Stephan, 2000; Vanman, Paul, Ito, & Miller, 1997). For example, according to Gaertner and Dovidio (1986), the most prevalent form of racism toward blacks involves a combination of egalitarian values and negative feelings toward blacks, such as discomfort and uneasiness. These feelings are hard to acknowledge and are therefore most likely to express themselves through avoidant behaviors if perceivers can attribute their behavior to factors other than prejudice. Consistent with this view, prejudiced individuals wish to limit their interactions with the targets of their prejudices (Pettigrew, 1998) and if they are forced to interact with them, they generally want to shorten the interaction (Devine et al., 1996). These avoidant tendencies are generally manifested by less friendliness in interactions with outgroup than ingroup members (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002; Ickes, 1984).

AU6

Research investigating the impact of prejudice on unstructured interracial interactions (e.g., Ickes, 1984) has found that when in the presence of African-Americans, whites who display avoidant tendencies toward blacks tended to elicit avoidant behavior as well. Similarly, heterosexuals high in prejudice toward homosexuals are more likely to be motivated to shorten an interaction with a homosexual than individuals low in prejudice toward this group (Devine et al., 1996). In the same vein, Dovidio, Kawakami, and

Gaertner (2002) found that (explicit) prejudice level was negatively correlated with nonverbal friendliness.

Generally, then, this analysis suggests a role for the prejudice of the perceiver in the confirmation of social stereotypes. For the evidence suggests that prejudice indeed produces an avoidant style of interaction and that, if reciprocated by the target, this style can be instrumental in confirming the perceiver's stereotype-based negative expectations about targets and the stigmatized groups to which they belong.

C. INTERGROUP ANXIETY AND BEHAVIORAL CONFIRMATION

Although prejudice may tend to be associated with increases in avoidant behavior, avoidant behaviors may be present even among people low in prejudice, perhaps due to anxiety stemming from contact with outgroup members. In this section, we shall examine the role of the perceiver's level of intergroup anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1985) on the occurrence of stereotype confirmation.

Regardless of their level of prejudice, interactions with the stigmatized seem to be threatening for nonstigmatized group members (Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, & Lickel, 2000; Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, Lickel, & Kowai-Bell, 2001; Devine et al., 1996; Vanman et al., 1997). Indeed, the evidence suggests that members of nonstigmatized groups experience emotions such as feelings of threat (Blascovich et al., 2000) and anxiety (Devine et al., 1996; Greenland & Brown, 1999; Islam & Hewstone, 1993; Stephan & Stephan, 1985, 2000) when in the presence of members of stigmatized groups. For example, Ickes (1984) has found that regardless of their level of prejudice, whites perceived interactions with blacks as less comfortable and as more strained and awkward than did their interactional partners. Moreover, in a study simultaneously measuring prejudice level and manipulating the composition of the interacting dyad (i.e., as involving two nonstigmatized versus one nonstigmatized and one stigmatized group member), European Canadian participants experienced more negative emotions (such as remorse, guilt, anger, and hostility) when interacting with aboriginal Canadians than with other European Canadians (Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001).

These studies, it would seem, suggest that both low- and high-prejudiced individuals can experience intergroup anxiety. However, this intergroup anxiety may stem from different sources, prejudice being one of them. First, prejudiced individuals may simply experience antipathy, or even disgust, toward members of the stigmatized groups and may therefore view contact as an uncomfortable experience. Second, anxiety may be due to the

perceptions of psychological danger elicited in nonstigmatized individual by stigma (Blascovich et al., 2000). Third, group members may expect to be viewed as prejudiced by their audiences (Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998) and may therefore be anxious about appearing nonprejudiced to their audiences (Devine et al., 1996). Fourth, they may simply be stressed because they do not know which interaction pattern to adopt with members of the stigmatized group (Hebl & Kleck, 2000; Langer, Fiske, Taylor, & Chanowitz, 1976; Moghaddam, Taylor, & Wright, 1993; Stephan & Stephan, 1985).

In which ways could these various forms of intergroup anxiety, when experienced by members of nonstigmatized groups in their dealings with members of stigmatized groups, affect the occurrence of behavioral confirmation? We suggest three routes by which intergroup anxiety can and does lead to behavioral confirmation of social stereotypes.

First, anxiety has cognitive consequences that may affect the perceiver's interaction strategy in ways that facilitate stereotype confirmation. That is, anxiety on the part of the perceiver increases the likelihood of categorization and stereotyping of the target (Greenland & Brown, 1999, 2000; Islam & Hewstone, 1993), perhaps because the arousal elicited by anxiety prevents perceivers from concentrating on individuating information (Baron, Inman, Kao, & Logan, 1992; Wilder & Shapiro, 1989). As the likelihood of categorization increases, so does the likelihood that expectations regarding the target's group will be activated and used by the perceiver in his or her interaction strategies. In line with this view, lack of cognitive resources does tend to increase the likelihood of behavioral confirmation (Biesanz, Neuberg, Smith, Asher, & Judice, 2001). This is so because trying to elicit information inconsistent with expectations and conducting the interaction in a way that allows the target's personality to express itself as richly as possible are relatively effortful. Thus, when cognitive resources are limited, it is tempting to rely on categorical information (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Macrae, Milne, & Bodenhausen, 1994). It follows from this line of reasoning, and the associated evidence, that it may be much less taxing for perceivers to adopt a stereotype-confirming than a stereotype-disconfirming interaction strategy with the targets of their stereotype-based expectations.

Second, out of anxiety, even low prejudiced perceivers may become highly self-conscious and behave awkwardly (Devine et al., 1996; Stephan & Stephan, 1985) in the presence of targets who belong to groups about which stigmatizing stereotypes exist. For example, as they are busy controlling their self-presentation, they may produce speech errors, talk less, avoid direct eye contact (Daly, 1978), or maintain a greater interpersonal distance (Pancer et al., 1979). Kleck et al. (1969) observed that the likelihood of

displaying avoidant behavior when interacting with disabled individuals was greater among able-bodied individuals who perceived the interaction as uncomfortable. In the same vein, Weitz' repressed affect model of interracial interactions (Weitz, 1972) suggests that even if they try to behave in a friendly way with blacks, whites' negative emotions are communicated covertly and detected. Similarly, Devine et al. (1996) have argued that behavioral correlates of anxiety could be interpreted as interpersonal distance. We would suggest that these correlates are functionally equivalent to (what we have labeled) an avoidant interactional style, one that may culminate in behavioral confirmation in social interaction. Indeed, members of stigmatized groups tend to be alert, and to try to actively detect any sign of hostility from the nonstigmatized (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991). A compelling example of this tendency has been provided by Kleck and Strenta (1980), who arranged for participants having cosmetic scars applied to their faces to interact with another participant. Actually, the scar had been removed unbeknownst to the participant. In spite of this removal, participants reported more negativity and behavioral discrimination than control individuals (who did not have any cosmetic scars applied to their faces).

This analysis suggests that avoidant behavior driven by anxiety can be interpreted by the stigmatized target as diagnostic of prejudice or hostility. According to the reciprocation hypothesis, this target may also respond by avoidant behavior, which could then be construed as confirmation of negative stereotypes about the group to which the target belongs.

Third, according to Stephan and Stephan (1985), intergroup anxiety may induce a rigid adherence to the normative standards required by the situation in which individuals interact. In task groups, such a tendency may produce excessively dominant behavior if the perceiver has higher formal power than the target. If the perceiver and target interact in the context of specific role relationships, this may also induce them to stick to their role rather than express their "personal" identity. To the extent that the roles occupied by members of stigmatized groups are often associated with their stereotypes (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Hoffman & Hurst, 1990), this may facilitate the behavioral confirmation of these stereotypes.

Although this analysis applies to all perceivers, those low in prejudice may be more able to overcome the debilitating aspects of their anxiety on the interaction. Consider, for example, Vorauer and Khumyr's study (2001): In spite of the negative emotions that were pervasive across all levels of prejudice, interactions seemed to be much smoother when they involved low prejudice than high prejudice whites. Low prejudice participants reported more positive emotions after interacting with a stigmatized than with a nonstigmatized person. Moreover, low prejudice participants thought that they were viewed

less in accordance with the white stereotype when interacting with an aboriginal than with a white. Conversely, aboriginal participants interacting with a high prejudice partner experienced more discomfort and self-directed negative emotions than those interacting with a low prejudice partner. Hence, it seems that in spite of their ambivalence (demonstrated by a combination of negative and positive emotions), low prejudice participants managed to make their partner feel comfortable in the interaction. As this study did not incorporate measures of expectations and ratings of the stigmatized person's behavior, it is difficult to draw definite conclusions regarding the occurrence of behavioral confirmation. However, it seems reasonable to infer that the aboriginal Canadians interacting with a low prejudice partner exhibited more warmth and friendliness, as a result of their greater comfort, than those who interacted with high prejudice participants, who experienced negative self-directed emotions and discomfort during the interaction. As we have seen, this discomfort can lead to the adoption of behaviors confirming negative stereotypes about the target's level of sociability.

In sum, based on the existing evidence, it seems that overall, across all levels of prejudice, intergroup anxiety may contribute to behavioral confirmation by making categorical perceptions and behavior that could be interpreted as a sign of avoidance, more likely to occur, with the attendant consequences of these avoidant styles of interaction on the part of the perceiver for behavioral confirmation on the part of the target. However, it also seems to be the case that as they are not exclusively motivated to distance themselves from the target and want to present an image of themselves as tolerant, low prejudice individuals are often able to overcome the negative impact of their anxiety.

D. STEREOTYPE CONTENT AND BEHAVIORAL CONFIRMATION

Let us now turn to the last of the factors that we propose to affect the perceiver's use of the avoidant and dominant styles of interaction that may generate behavioral confirmation—the very content of the perceiver's stereotype-based expectation about the target. According to the reciprocation interpretation, the avoidance style can be triggered by an anticipated reciprocation of behaviors diagnostic of the traits attributed to the target (Burgoon et al., 1995; Ickes et al., 1982). A more cognitive variation of this interpretation suggests that the activation of a stereotype automatically elicits behavior consistent with this stereotype (Bargh, Chen, & Burrows, 1996). As they categorize the target as “black,” for example, perceivers would activate the traits of coldness and hostility, and would perform behavior consistent with these traits of behavior thereby triggering the

reciprocation route to behavioral confirmation (Chen & Bargh, 1997). Accordingly, stereotype content would directly determine the perceiver's behavior (and may do so especially for prejudiced perceivers).

In addition, the avoidant and dominant styles of interaction can also be triggered by the content of the perceiver's stereotyped expectations of the target. For example, avoidance can also be triggered by the hostile attitudes and anxiety that may be elicited by many stigmatized groups. In these cases, stereotype content may play a role in these reactions as well, as the attribution of specific traits to a group can be associated with more negative attitudes and emotions toward these groups (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989; Esses, Haddock, & Zanna, 1993; Stephan & Stephan, 1993). For example, Mackie, Devos, and Smith (2000) have found that stereotype content (e.g., strength) predicted specific emotions (e.g., anger) and behavioral tendencies (e.g., aggression) toward members of outgroups.

Similarly, in task-oriented interactions, the dominant style can be triggered by the expectation that a member of the nonstigmatized perceiver's ingroup is more intelligent or competent than the stigmatized outgroup member, whereas a target adhering to the stereotype that the nonstigmatized group is more competent can adopt a submissive behavior (Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, 1972; Berger, Rosenholtz, & Zelditch, 1980; Ridgeway, 1987; Ridgeway & Berger, 1988). Findings consistent with this hypothesis have been observed in interview settings; for example, Rudman and Borgida (1995) found that men primed with ads depicting women in a stereotypic way (as "sexual objects") displayed more dominant behaviors in a subsequent interview with a women than unprimed men.

In sum, it seems that stereotypes of the outgroup as unsociable seem to elicit reciprocation (i.e., a behavior in line with the trait attributed to the target) whereas stereotypes of the outgroup as incompetent or submissive seem to elicit a behavioral style complementing the target's expected behavior (i.e., a dominant style). That is, it would appear that stereotypes may elicit from perceivers the very behavioral tendencies that make confirmation of those stereotypes likely.

E. CONCLUSION

Overall, this analysis suggests that when the target is categorized as a member of a stigmatized group, the nonstigmatized perceiver is likely to display avoidance or dominance. If the interaction is a "getting-acquainted" interaction, expectations regarding the sociability of the target are more likely to be activated and the main determinant of the perceiver's behavior will be attraction toward this target. In the presence of a stigmatized group

member, less attraction should be present than in the presence of another nonstigmatized and the outcome may be avoidant behavior. This will be particularly true if the perceiver has a high level of prejudice and experiences intergroup anxiety. We have also seen that stereotype content could directly affect the perceiver's behavioral style, in such a way that negative expectations regarding the target's level of sociability tend to elicit avoidance. If the interaction involves the joint performance of a task, on the other hand, expectations regarding competence will be activated and the nonstigmatized group member is more likely to behave in a dominant way. These behavioral styles on the part of perceivers are, of course, precisely the ones that set the stage for behavioral confirmation on the part of the targets of their stereotype-based stigmatizing expectations.

V. The Target's Perspective

Now that we have examined how the perceiver's self-categorization can and does affect the occurrence of stereotype confirmation, let us turn to the target's perspective and try to understand how stigmatization can affect his or her interaction strategies in ways that may influence the occurrence of stereotype confirmation. To date, most theorizing about behavioral confirmation has, either by design or by default, viewed the target as if he or she docilely responds to the perceiver's behavior. For example, it has been demonstrated that the typical interactional strategy used by targets involves trying to get along well with the perceiver by tuning their behavior to the perceiver's behavior and rendering the flow of conversation as smooth as possible (Snyder, 1992). As we have seen, this strategy generally results in behavioral confirmation.

Of course, this strategy is not the only one that targets could use. They could, instead of reciprocating the perceiver's overtures, *compensate* for them, responding, for example, to a perceiver's cold behavior with an increased level of friendliness (Burgoon et al., 1995; Ickes et al., 1982). Or, they could refuse to abide by the perceiver's script and impose their own self-presentational agenda (Neuberg, 1996; Smith et al., 1997). Accordingly, we shall now examine factors that affect the target's strategies for interacting with perceivers who hold stereotype-based expectations about them, focusing especially on those defined at an intergroup level.

We propose that the primary determinant of the target's strategies is whether the target is aware that her or his social identity as a member of a stigmatized group is known by the perceiver. When this is the case, targets may be said to be in a state of "stigma consciousness" (Pinel, 1999), a term

that denotes the belief that one is viewed as a stereotypical member of the stigmatized group. Although this concept has typically been defined as an individual differences variable (Pinel, 1999, 2002), it can also be viewed as being determined by features of the situation in which perceiver and target interact. Depending on the context in which an individual is placed, his or her degree of stigma consciousness may vary (Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999). Several factors, each of which has its particular relevance to behavioral confirmation scenarios, may influence stigma consciousness.

The first such factor is visibility to the perceiver: If the target does not believe that his or her stigmatized attributes are readily visible to the perceiver, he or she will not expect to be treated in terms of his or her group membership. In fact, stigmatized individuals may develop strategies aimed at dissimulating their stigmata. When they do not desire to be viewed in terms of a devalued social identity, one of the most common strategies involves "passing" for a member of the nonstigmatized, advantaged group (Goffman, 1963). Passing can involve trying to eliminate the features that mark the individual as a member of a stigmatized group (thus, an immigrant can change nationality, an obese person can try to lose weight), to conceal it (e.g., a closeted gay man may tell fictional accounts about his success with women; a facially disfigured person can use special headwear dissimulating the disfigurement), or to deny it (e.g., a deaf person can act as if his or her hearing was good, a former delinquent may refuse to acknowledge his or her past).

Second, stigma consciousness may depend on the salience of the target's group identity. As a function of the intergroup context, targets may vary in the extent to which their identity is salient (Oakes, 1987; Turner et al., 1987; van Knippenberg & Dijksterhuis, 2001). For example, in the context of a discussion on abortion rights, religious identity may be a particularly salient category and induce a target, who happens to be highly religious, to be treated in terms of this identity. By contrast, this identity may be less salient in the context of a discussion on affirmative action.

Third, repeated and chronic exposure to situations evoking stigma consciousness makes it especially likely that targets will expect to be stereotyped in their interactions with members of a nonstigmatized group. In this regard, perceived personal and group discrimination seem to be strong predictors of stigma consciousness (Pinel, 1999), and a history of experiencing discrimination increases the likelihood that people will expect to be the targets of stereotypes and prejudice (Crocker et al., 1998).

Now, based on these considerations of stigma consciousness, we can articulate the features of two scenarios in which stigma consciousness on the part of targets of stereotype-based expectations will or won't be present, with attendant consequences for whether or not these scenarios will culminate in stereotype confirmation.

A. THE TARGET DOES NOT EXPECT TO BE VIEWED AS A MEMBER OF A STIGMATIZED GROUP

Consider the case of a second-generation Mexican newly hired to work in an American firm that proclaims its commitment to diversity and tolerance. This person, however, views himself or herself as a dedicated member of his or her profession before being someone of Mexican ancestry. When interacting with Anglo employees, he or she may not expect to be categorized as “Hispanic” and perceived through the lens of stereotyped beliefs and expectations about members of this group. Being unsuspecting, our new member of the firm may try to get along and to have smooth interpersonal dealings with others in the firm. But, in spite of the tolerant values proclaimed by the firm, many of its employees may still expect their new Mexican colleague to be a typical Hispanic and not try to perceive him instead in terms of his or her unique personal and professional identity. In such a situation, the new employee, as a target of stereotypes about his or her nationality, may not actively try to self-present in ways that would disconfirm such stereotypes and may instead tend to fall prey to the confirmatory strategy of those co-workers who, as perceivers, treat him or her in accord with their stereotype-based expectations. Hence, at least in this example, the absence of stigma consciousness may place the target in an ideal position to display stereotype confirmation. In fact, to the extent that targets in such situations repeatedly and chronically enact such getting along strategies, and do so regularly and consistently with many different perceivers who share the same social stereotype about the targets’ group membership, not only will such group stereotypes appear to be confirmed but they will be reinforced and maintained.

One key feature of this example is the asymmetry between the perceiver’s and the target’s levels of categorization—whereas the target self-categorizes at the individual level, the perceiver categorizes at the group level. This type of asymmetry between the perceiver’s and the target’s levels of categorizations, we would suggest, is often inscribed in the typical behavioral confirmation scenario. In its basic form, this paradigm involves two different expectations. Usually one of these expectations is positive (e.g., intelligent, extraverted, normal-weight, attractive) whereas the other expectation is negative and associated with a stigmatizing, or a negatively valued, characteristic (e.g., black, obese, introverted, unintelligent).

In the “negative” expectation condition of the typical behavioral confirmation experiment, the only information that the perceiver possesses about the target is that he or she belongs to a stigmatized outgroup. However, targets in the typical behavioral confirmation experiment do not truly belong to the categories associated with the expectations. That is, the

target is not, in fact, black, obese, or introverted, but rather has been labeled as such by the random assignment of expectations to perceivers. Accordingly, targets in the negative expectation condition of the typical behavioral confirmation experiment, although stigmatized by the expectations assigned to the perceiver, are not in a position to actually be "stigma conscious." Therefore, it is also impossible for them to define themselves in terms of a collective identity and to try to enact positive' self-stereotypes associated with this group membership. They may, however, try to simply reciprocate the perceiver's behavior and abide by his or her script.

On the other hand, in the "positive expectation" condition of the typical behavioral confirmation experiment, the target can usually be construed as a member of the perceiver's own ingroup. Targets in behavioral confirmation studies of expectations based on racial categories have, in fact, been, like their perceivers, white, of average weight, and more likely to regard themselves as extraverts than introverts (Klein & Snyder, 2000). Thus, in the "positive expectation" condition of the typical behavioral confirmation experiment, such an intragroup interaction should therefore follow standards of interpersonal conversational friendliness, with the perceiver treating the target as an individual member of his or her own ingroup, and the target in fact self-perceiving and self-categorizing in like terms.

Taken together, these considerations of the levels of self-categorization and other-categorization on the part of perceivers and targets suggest that the perceiver is more likely to perceive the interaction as intergroup when the expectation is negative or concerns a stigmatized group membership than when the expectation is a positive one. The target, on the other hand, should always perceive the interaction as an interpersonal one because he or she has no reason to suspect that the perceiver holds an expectation, whether positive or negative, and because the target in the negative expectation condition does not in fact belong to the group associated with the perceiver's expectation, is in no position to be or to become stigma conscious. Hence, the target should follow the interpersonal strategy of interpersonal adjustment ("getting along") that typically leads to behavioral confirmation (Snyder & Haugen, 1995). Behavioral confirmation, it follows from this line of argument, is facilitated when the perceiver treats the target in terms of his or her group membership and when the target is not "stigma conscious." Hence, this discrepancy between the perceiver and the target's levels of categorization facilitates behavioral confirmation.

But what about studies in which the target actually belongs to the stigmatized category associated with the perceiver's expectations? Although such studies are rare, they do tend to offer findings consistent with our analysis. When the target is a member of a stigmatized category, and is not stigma conscious, stereotype confirmation is often exacerbated (Miller &

Myers, 1998; Miller, Rothblum, Barbour, Brand, & Felicio, 1990; Miller, Rothblum, Felicio, & Brand, 1995; see also Jussim, Eccles, & Madon, 1996). Perceivers tend to evaluate stigmatized persons, such as the obese (Miller et al., 1990, 1995) and unattractive women (Goldman & Lewis, 1977), more negatively than nonstigmatized persons even when these targets know that the perceiver is unaware of their stigmatized status. Miller et al suggest that, as compared to situations in which their social identity is visible, the stigmatized underestimate the social skills needed for making the interaction smooth and pleasant, and therefore do not mobilize sufficient energy for implementing a favorable impression. Thus, being unaware of how difficult it is to overcome the impact of stigma on their self-presentation, they may infer that achieving their impression management goals is a relatively easy task when their stigma is not visible. Hence, they may remain somewhat passive and aloof, not suspecting that achieving a positive self-presentation is an effortful task even in the absence of visible stigma. Overall, the results of Miller et al. suggest that the stigmatized may be especially vulnerable to the confirmation of negative stereotypes when they are not stigma conscious. Note, however, that such situations are exceptional. As stigmatized individuals tend to be constantly on the lookout for evidence of prejudiced behavior (Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker et al., 1991; Goffman, 1963; Kleck & Strenta, 1980), they may only rarely be stigma “unconscious.”

B. THE TARGET DOES EXPECT TO BE PERCEIVED AS A MEMBER OF A STIGMATIZED GROUP

In the typical behavioral confirmation study, targets are unaware of the perceiver's expectations and are therefore not prepared to counteract a confirmatory strategy by displaying disconfirming behavior. However, when targets in behavioral confirmation studies are made aware of negative expectations, they may try to dispel them especially if they are negative: For example, Hilton and Darley (1985) found that targets who were aware that they were perceived as cold tried to disconfirm these expectations by behaving warmly. Nevertheless, other data suggest that targets do not necessarily compensate for negative expectations. Thus, Curtis and Miller (1986) found that targets who erroneously thought that a perceiver disliked them disclosed less to their partner and behaved less warmly, which had the effect of making the perceiver's expectation become true (for convergent findings, see also Farina, Gliha, Boudreau, Allen, & Sherman, 1971; Farina, Sherman, & Allen, 1968).

These studies, in which targets are aware of the perceivers' expectations, it should be noted, all concern expectations about the traits of the targets as individuals; that is, in terms of the distinction that we offered early on in our analysis, they concern personal expectation confirmation rather than social stereotype confirmation. The question thus arises of whether the processes at work in these studies can be generalized from these relatively interpersonal situations to the intergroup level of analysis, in which the expectations at issue derive from the membership in groups about which potentially stigmatizing stereotypes exist. That is, what will be the effects of the target becoming aware that the perceiver has categorized the target as a member of a stigmatized group? In answer to this question, the relevant evidence indicates that if the target expects to be viewed as a typical member of the stigmatized category, he or she does become aware of the meta-stereotype (Vorauer et al., 1998), that is, the stereotype held by the perceiver's group about the stigmatized group. This meta-stereotype determines how the target expects to be treated by the nonstigmatized perceiver. Hence, the meta-stereotype plays the same role as the information about individual traits that Hilton and Darley (1985) communicated to their targets regarding the expectations induced in the perceiver.

To further explicate the role of stigma consciousness on the part of targets who do expect to be perceived as members of stigmatized groups, and the implications of these perceptions for behavioral confirmation, let us focus on two types of situations. The first type of situation is that in which the target performs behaviors that are consistent with the perceiver's stereotypes regarding the stigmatized group (which we will refer to as "stereotype enactment"). The second type of situation is that in which the target purposefully adopts behaviors that contradict the perceiver's stereotypes (which we will refer to as "stereotype compensation")³.

³A third option can be considered. Stigmatized individuals who are high in stigma consciousness (because, for example, their stigma is visible) may simply wish to avoid contact with the nonstigmatized because of the threat and anxiety it creates. Goffman (1963) calls this strategy defensive cowering. If a total absence of contact is impossible, a similar strategy involves avoiding contact situations in which the negative stereotypes may be applied to the self. This type of strategy seems particularly common among people high in stigma consciousness: According to Pinel (1999, 2002), these people are particularly reluctant to being stereotyped because the stereotype provides self-discrepant feedback. Hence, they may forego opportunities to disconfirm stereotypes. She found, for example, that women who expected to compete on a jeopardy-like task were less likely to choose stereotypically male topics if they expected to compete with a man than a woman. There was no difference among women low in stigma-consciousness. If generalized, both defensive cowering and this avoidance of opportunities to disconfirm stereotypes when interacting with the nonstigmatized will contribute to the persistence of stereotypes regarding the stigmatized group.

1. Enactment of the Perceivers' Stereotype

When targets enact behaviors in accordance with stereotypical expectations, they do, by definition, provide behavioral confirmation for the perceivers' expectations based on those stereotypes. For the most part, as we have argued, targets will be particularly likely to confirm perceivers' stereotypes when they are not stigma conscious. Why, it should be asked, would targets ever enact the perceivers' stereotypes when they are, in fact, stigma conscious?

One determinant of stereotype confirmation in the presence of stigma consciousness is lack of capacity to enact positive self-views, either because of a constraining situation, or because of lack of skills. Even if the stigmatized target does not adhere to the meta-stereotype, the stigma in itself can be threatening and may be a source of anxiety and discomfort (Steele, 1998; Steele & Aronson, 1995). These states can have detrimental effects on both performance (a phenomenon known as "stereotype threat") and the warmth of interpersonal behavior. For example, in a study by Farina, Gliha, Boudreau, Allen, and Sherman (1971), psychiatric patients who thought that perceivers were aware of their stigma performed less well on a task and were perceived as more anxious and less adjusted than those who interacted with a perceiver who was unaware of their stigma. Similarly, Comer and Piliavin (1972) reported that when interacting with able-bodied persons, physically disabled participants displayed more signs of avoidance (as revealed by quicker termination of the interaction, greater interpersonal distance, and reduced eye contact) than when interacting with another disabled person. According to Comer and Piliavin, this avoidant behavior seems to be due to the anxiety and discomfort elicited by interactions with nonstigmatized individuals. Such situations may place a heavy burden on the stigmatized, who often have to simultaneously pursue multiple impression management goals such as, using Goffman's terminology (Goffman, 1963), "carrying their lot lightly," or "being well adjusted" but "not behaving inappropriately for a person with a disability."

In a very different context, Pintel (2002) obtained quite similar findings. In her study, women, whose level of stigma consciousness had been previously measured, interacted with a man whom they expected to be sexist or not. Following the interaction, women high in stigma consciousness, but not those low in stigma consciousness, were rated as less friendly and warm than their male partner if they expected him to be sexist. Hence, they enacted the negative views hostile sexists may hold about women. In this case, stigma conscious women experienced discomfort engendered by the idea of having to interact with a sexist man. They therefore behaved in a more avoidant way.

Note that, consistent with self-categorization theory, stigma consciousness is context dependent and very subtle contextual changes may affect the occurrence of behavioral confirmation. In a study of stereotype threat, Shih et al. (1999) have observed that Asian-American women performed better on a mathematical test when their Asian identity (stereotypically associated with success on mathematical tasks) was salient than in a comparison condition in which no identity was made salient. Conversely, they performed less well when their female identity (stereotypically associated with poor performance in mathematics) was salient than in the comparison condition.

Another reason why targets may enact unfavorable stereotypes, even when stigma conscious, is that they expect rewards to accrue to them from confirming expectations that others hold for them (Miller & Turnbull, 1986). Thus, if the target wishes to have a pleasing interaction with the perceiver (perhaps, in hopes of winning acceptance, gaining affection, or obtaining a job), he or she may not be motivated to dispel negative stereotypes regarding his or her group. For example, women have been found to strategically conform to the sexist stereotypes presumed to be held by a man if they found this man attractive (Zanna & Pack, 1975) or if he was a job interviewer (von Baeyer, Sherk, & Zanna, 1981).

A further reason why targets, even when stigma conscious, may nonetheless confirm stereotypes held about their groups, is that, for members of stigmatized groups, stereotypes are not necessarily perceived uniformly negatively. In fact, stereotypes of many stigmatized groups are actually ambivalent (Fiske et al., 1999; Glick & Fiske, 2001): At the same time as they characterize stigmatized groups as incompetent, they often portray them as sociable and warm. Thus, the enactment of the "positive" aspects of these stereotypes may be rewarding and help the target develop a smooth interaction with members of the nonstigmatized group. For example, Goffman (1963) cites the example of a female dwarf who, in spite of her introverted character, was always joyful and merry in the presence of people of normal size in order to have positive interactions with them. More generally, stigmatized individuals typically have few relationships with the nonstigmatized, often because they are not valued by the latter (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001) or because the nonstigmatized feel threatened and anxious in their presence (Blascovich et al., 2000; Goffman, 1963; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Hence, they may find themselves motivated to present the most acceptable, and unthreatening, social face rather than disconfirming negative stereotypes about their incompetence, all in hopes of increasing their chances of initiating and maintaining social contact with the nonstigmatized.

Finally, stereotypes may be enacted by targets, even the stigma conscious, simply because they are thought to be true. Stigmatized groups have been

known to apply the negative views of society concerning their groups to themselves (Crandall, 2000; Wright, 1983), although this may actually be a rare occurrence (Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker et al., 1998). According to Swann (1983; Swann & Read, 1981), individuals are motivated to verify their self-conceptions. Interactions with members of a nonstigmatized group may actually constitute an opportunity to verify their self-views, which may at times actually lead to behavioral confirmation of stereotypes. Consider, for example, a woman who, in accordance with stereotypes about her gender (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989; Kray, Thompson, & Galinsky, 2001), views herself as unassertive. In the presence of a male perceiver who holds stereotypical expectations about women as a group, she may try to affirm her self-views. For example, she may try to elicit questions that will help her confirm her self-views, or she may lead the perceiver to provide feedback consistent with her self-views (Swann & Read, 1981). Although she may be aware of the perceiver's expectations, such a behavior can be interpreted as consistent with the stereotype of women, and hence be viewed as an example of stereotype confirmation.

2. Stereotype Compensation

Although, as we have seen, there are a variety of reasons why targets, even when their stigma consciousness is high, will confirm stereotypes about their groups, it is possible to specify circumstances in which targets will try to actively show that they do not possess the negative traits stereotypically attributed to their group. This strategy, which we refer to as stereotype compensation, may serve the same purpose as "passing" as a member of the nonstigmatized group. However, it is used in situations in which the target's stigma is visible; in such circumstances, although the target cannot conceal his or her membership in the stigmatized group, he or she can create the appearance of not possessing the attributes stereotypically associated with membership in that group. As stereotypes and their associated traits are often negative, they may often hinder the accomplishment of their targets' interaction goals. Consider the case of an obese woman who expects to be viewed as introverted; for her, the goal of having a pleasing interaction with a normal-weight person may require her to show that she is socially skilled and enthusiastic. Indeed, obese targets have been shown to use compensatory strategies when aware that a normal-weight perceiver could see them, behaving in a more cheerful way than when they thought that the perceiver could not see them (Miller et al., 1995). That is, rather than simply reciprocating their partner's level of friendliness, they appear to have purposefully compensated for the coldness initially displayed by their perceivers by engaging in a friendlier interactional style.

This strategy of self-enhancement is likely to differ from the “getting along” strategy. It will often require that the target actively disrupt the flow of conversation if the conversational script imposed by the perceiver does not enable the target to express her self-views (Neuberg, 1994). By contrast, a target who hopes to ingratiate herself by “getting along” with the perceiver will try to keep the flow of conversation as smooth as possible. Hence, the use of such nondeferential behavior may serve to obstruct both the confirmatory strategy and the reciprocation routes to behavioral confirmation.

When the perceiver’s behavior toward the target is cold or unfriendly, the choice of a strategy of compensation, rather than of reciprocation, may reflect the target’s desire to form or maintain a relationship with a perceiver who is appealing as a relationship partner. Thus, Burgoon, LaPoire, and Rosenthal (1995) propose that compensation is likely to be chosen when targets wish to promote a relationship with a perceiver who is valued but who behaves (or who is expected to behave) coldly. On the other hand, according to Burgoon et al. (1995), when the perceiver is negatively valenced, unfriendly or cold behavior on her part should be reciprocated. For example, from this perspective, it is conceivable that targets in the study by Hilton and Darley (1985) expected the perceivers to be likable and wished to maintain a positive relationship with them; after all, the perceiver was another student (like the target) and had received a random profile that depicted the target as cold and introverted. Hence targets, wanting to forge a positive relationship with an attractive perceiver, may have been motivated to refute the negative attributes imputed to them in the perceiver’s expectation, about which they had become aware during the experiment. Similarly, obese targets in the study by Miller et al. (1995) had no reason to believe that the perceivers they were interacting with were dislikable and, certainly having no reason to think otherwise, most likely assumed by default that they were likable. They may have feared that the information regarding their obesity could lead to inaccurate impressions on their part. They may therefore have wanted to correct the biasing influence of negative stereotypes associated with their social category.

However, it is important to recognize that being motivated to compensate for, and therefore disconfirm negative stereotypes is not the same thing as actually succeeding in dispelling those negative stereotypes. For example, consider the nonstigmatized participants in the study by Farina, Allen, and Saul (1968) who thought they were viewed by a perceiver as either homosexual or mentally ill. Compared with a control condition, in which no such meta-perception was induced, participants were actually viewed more negatively although they tried to dispel the negative image associated with the stigma. As we have noted, to be able to overcome the negative

consequences of stigma consciousness, stigmatized group members need to have developed skills that enable them to compensate for the situational demands posed by interaction with potentially prejudiced members of nonstigmatized groups (Miller & Myers, 1998; Miller et al., 1995). For example, as overweight people may be ignored or treated negatively by others, they have to respond to others' behavior with more outgoingness and warmth than those of normal weight. This requires the development of special skills of sociability. Participants in the study by Farina et al. (1971) were psychiatric patients whereas those in the study by Farina et al. (1968) were nonstigmatized Ivy League students. Hence, it is unlikely that either group had developed sufficient skills to allow them to compensate for the demands placed on them by the situations created in these studies.

For the target to effectively compensate for negative expectations, it is important that the meta-stereotype be clearly activated, that is, that the target be fully aware of the stereotype held by the perceiver's group about the social group to which the target belongs. In a recent experiment by Kray, Thompson, and Galinsky (2001, study 2), women and men were informed that traits such as assertiveness and rationality (associated stereotypically with men) contributed positively to performance in negotiations, whereas traits such as emotionality and accommodatingness (stereotypically associated with women) were associated with poor negotiation performances. In such circumstances, women performed less well than when the stereotype was not primed. In a following study (Kray et al., 2001, study 3), when participants were explicitly informed that women performed less well than men because of gender differences on these same dimensions, women performed better than in a control condition in which this stereotype was not activated. According to Kray et al., explicit priming of the stereotype enables targets to react to its adverse effects. When the stereotype is subtly primed, individuals are not able to effectively correct its biasing influence and tend to conform to the stereotype (see: Steele, 1998; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Similarly, in Curtis and Miller's study (1986), targets who thought that they were disliked may not have been able to respond effectively to the perceiver's behavior as there was no clear expectation to disconfirm.

Altogether, our analysis of the role of stigma consciousness in targets' interactions with perceivers who hold negative stereotypes about them shows that even in the face of stigma consciousness, targets can fall prey to negative stereotypes. For targets to be able to disconfirm these negative stereotypes, several conditions must be met. First, they must view the stereotypes as not applying to themselves. Second, they must be motivated to present themselves in stereotype-inconsistent ways and they must have the power and the opportunity to do so. And, third, they must have the

necessary skills to implement these stereotype-disconfirming behaviors and the opportunity to exercise those skills. In the next stage of our analysis, we will examine, in keeping with the group level perspective that we seek to apply, how these conditions can be fulfilled through the pursuit of *collective* strategies.

3. Stereotype Change as a Collective Strategy

When asked what a feminist is, journalist Anne Marlowe (2002) responded “someone who believes that she should pay for her own dinner.” As this example illustrates, what is traditionally seen as an interpersonal encounter, a dinner date in this example, can be an opportunity to engage in intergroup behavior, in this case refusing to be treated to a dinner in order to manifest the independence of women. In doing so, the “someone” of Marlowe’s example may hope to disconfirm a sexist man’s view of women as a group.

So far, we have treated compensation as primarily an interpersonal strategy used by members of disadvantaged groups to show that they were not typical members of their groups. By using self-presentations that differed markedly from the stereotype of their group, they seek to be viewed as atypical members of their group, or even as members of a more prestigious group. For example, our job applicant of Moroccan ancestry may display clear signs of a work ethic in an effort to show that he is a “true” Belgian. Similarly, an obese person may behave in a most cheerful manner as evidence that she should not be categorized as an obese but as a “normal” ingroup member. In this regard, passing and compensation can be viewed as individual strategies of upward mobility, following social identity theory’s classifications of identity management strategies (Tajfel, 1975; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). According to this theory, individuals are motivated to have a positive social identity, which depends on the existence of favorable comparisons to outgroups. By definition, members of stigmatized groups possess a negative social identity. So far, the examples of stereotype compensation that we have considered involved situations in which members of the stigmatized group responded to their predicament by dissociating themselves from the devalued ingroup and trying to acquire membership in (or at least association with) a more prestigious outgroup.

However, as Anne Marlowe’s example suggests, members of stigmatized groups may also try to disconfirm the negative stereotypes held about their group by embracing and enacting more positive self-stereotypes rather than psychologically escaping from their group. When members of a stigmatized group have developed a collective identity, their self-stereotype generally differs from the stereotype held by the dominant group about their ingroup

(Judd, Park, Ryan, Brauer, & Kraus, 1995; Klein & Azzi, 2001; Krueger, 1996). In this case, the target's behavior will not be directed at defending the individual self through disconfirming expectations about himself or herself as an individual, but rather at upgrading the position of the group as a whole by changing collective perceptions of the group itself. In this regard, stereotype change can be viewed as part of a "collective" strategy, in Tajfel's classification (Tajfel, 1981a; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Such a strategy will manifest itself by the enactment of the group's self-stereotypes (Turner et al., 1987). For example, women who have a high feminist consciousness may try to display particularly assertive behavior when interacting with men in an effort to change their view of women as dependent and submissive.

This strategy may express itself in several ways. One such manifestation consists of openly acknowledging one's stigma in the presence of nonstigmatized individuals. This "breaking through" can dispel the discomfort created by the stigma and implicitly allow both the nonstigmatized and the stigmatized to talk about the stigmatizing condition (Hebl & Kleck, 2000). For example, consider a disabled individual who talks openly about the problems posed by his or her disability. Implicitly, this means that the stigma can be talked about and does not need to be eluded. Talking openly about the stigma should reduce anxiety on the part of both participants and, to the extent that the manifestations of anxiety are often taken as confirmation of negative stereotypes, make the confirmation of negative stereotypes less likely. Consistent with this analysis, perceivers do view a person who acknowledges his or her stigma in a more positive light than a one who does not (Hastorf, Wildfogel, & Cassman, 1979; Hebl & Kleck, 2000).

A similar strategy can also be used when the stigma is invisible. For example, gay people may "come out" and openly acknowledge their sexual orientation. In the same vein, Goffman (1963) cites the example of second-generation immigrants who interlace their speech with Jewish idiom and accent. When the stigma is not directly visible, however, acknowledgment of it is not intended to reduce the perceiver's discomfort. It may, instead, actually serve the function of stereotype disconfirmation. For, acknowledgment forces the perceiver to categorize the target as a member of the stigmatized group. Hence, acknowledgment may be part of a strategy of influence aimed at inducing the perceiver to view behavior consistent with the target's positive self-stereotype as characteristic of the stigmatized group. In other words, the stigmatized target may try to change the perceiver's stereotype, which would be impossible had the perceiver not initially categorized the target as a member of the stigmatized group. For example, the Jews described by Goffman may want to affirm not only that they are Jews, which is not directly visible, but that Jews are proud of their

group membership and the many positive attributes that they associate with their group membership.

More directly, members of stigmatized groups can purposefully display counternormative behavior as a way of affirming their rejection of behavioral standards associated with their groups. One such example is Anne Marlowe's feminist who refuses to allow anyone to pick up her check. In such instances, members of stigmatized groups indirectly challenge stereotypes and the behavioral norms that are often inscribed in the group's stereotype (e.g., the stereotype of women as financially dependent and therefore in need of others to pay their way).

Now that we have viewed some of the forms such a collective strategy may take in interpersonal interactions, let us examine how it may affect stereotype confirmation. We have seen that one of the main factors determining stereotype confirmation is the use by the target of a deferential behavioral style, which allows the perceiver to implement a confirmatory strategy. The examples of collective strategies we have encountered, such as refusing a free dinner or openly acknowledging one's stigma, reveal that the target's strategy can express itself through assertive, nondeferential, behavior. We shall now discuss several of the processes through which a collective identity may influence the use of nondeferential behavior, and thereby encourage behavioral disconfirmation.

First, highly identified members of stigmatized groups are more likely to view their position as illegitimate or as the result of discrimination (Postmes, Branscombe, Spears, & Young, 1999). This means that they are less likely to attribute their disadvantage to the inner dispositions and capacities of their group in comparison with outgroup members, viewing it instead as the outcome of illegitimate behaviors and acts. These individuals are generally more willing to take risks on behalf of their group (Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1999; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997; Ellemers, Van Rijswijk, Bruins, & De Gilder, 1998) in order to respond to this perceived injustice, perhaps because they "depersonalize" their interests and identify with the well-being of the group as a whole (Simon, 1998). As a consequence, even if they are powerless and even if it could be costly, they may be more likely to engage in stereotype-disconfirming behavior.

In addition, groups provide a sense of social support that enables their members, not only to perceive their situation in group terms, but also to claim the group norms and values, even if doing so entails risks (Doosje et al., 1999; Ellemers, Barreto, & Spears, 1999). For example, in studies by Reicher, Levine, and Gordijn (1998), making students visible to each other increased their propensity to publicly endorse student norms (cheating) that were punishable by the staff. The knowledge that others support the target's action may be central in this regard. In the typical behavioral confirmation

scenario, the target is alone. A sense of collective identity is associated with the awareness that one is not an isolated group member but that others can support your action. Hence, through its empowering influence, collective identity may lead to less deference toward perceivers belonging to advantaged groups. For example, in a large-scale study, Gruber and Smith (1995) have shown that women were more likely to respond assertively to sexual harassment attempts if they had a high feminist consciousness.

Not only may group support empower individuals, but it may also contribute to skill development. Group members can help the stigmatized by instigating techniques and behaviors enabling them to behave appropriately in their interactions with the nonstigmatized and to do so in ways that express the group's view of itself. For example, in Britain, several feminist organizations have centered their campaigns on the idea that the oppression of women occurred in personal relationships, and that therefore "the personal was political" (Charles, 1993). Hence women were invited to live their politics in their homes. They were given guidelines on how to proceed for doing so, such as by negotiating (or even doing battle) with their partners to share child care and housework.

If the relations between ingroup and outgroup are perceived as conflictual, another consequence of the target's self-definition in terms of a social category can be greater interpersonal distance, and a more conflictual stance toward a perceiver categorized as an outgroup member. Depending on the expectations held by the perceiver, this type of behavior can be construed as consistent with these expectations, especially if these expectations concern sociability (such as coldness, aggression, hostility). For some suggestive evidence in support of this assumption, consider the research on linguistic accommodation (for a review, see: Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991), which shows that individuals with an insecure social identity are likely to adopt a "competitive" linguistic style (such as the ingroup's idiom or accent) when interacting with members of relevant outgroups. A study conducted in Belgium by Bourhis, Giles, Leyens, and Tajfel (1979) illustrates this process. In this study, Flemish (Dutch-speaking) participants were addressed in French by a Walloon (French-speaking) confederate after having spoken in English for a few minutes. When this happened, participants tended to respond in their own idiom, Flemish, as a way of affirming their threatened identity. Following the terminology of Smith et al. (1997), linguistic divergence is an instance of "nondeferential" behavior in which participants refuse to abide by the conversational script imposed by their partner.

Nondeferential behaviors, like divergence, may have clear implications for the occurrence of behavioral confirmation and *dis*confirmation of social stereotypes. As we have already noted, nondeferential behavior on the part

of the target prevents the perceiver from imposing his “script” on the interaction, and it is therefore likely to disrupt the strategy of confirmatory hypothesis testing (Neuberg, 1996; Smith et al., 1997). The consequences of such disruptions may depend on the content of the perceivers’ expectation about the target’s group. When the target is seen as belonging to a low status group that has a cooperative relation with the higher status perceiver’s group, stereotypes may represent the stigmatized as inherently friendly and docile (Fiske et al., 2001). In this case, an outcome of the adoption of a nondeferential, challenging, behavior may be behavioral disconfirmation. When the target is seen as belonging to a group perceived as having a competitive relation with the high status perceiver’s group, stereotypes may represent the stigmatized as hostile and aggressive (such as black professionals, Jews, or rich people). In this case, the outcome of the adoption of a nondeferential behavior may be behavioral confirmation.

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C. THE CHOICE OF AN INDIVIDUAL VERSUS COLLECTIVE STRATEGY

Having identified both individual and collective strategies that may be employed in attempts to disconfirm stereotypes, the following question naturally arises: What determines the type of strategy that targets will adopt? A factor that may increase the likelihood of adopting a collective strategy when one suffers from a negative or stigmatized identity is the perception that boundaries between the stigmatized group and more prestigious other groups are impermeable (Tajfel, 1975; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Taylor & McKirnan, 1984; Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). Thus, if members of a social group believe that it is possible to move individually from one group to another, they may favor a strategy of individual mobility in order to obtain a satisfactory social identity. Beyond the objective stratification of society, legitimizing ideologies (such as the Protestant work ethic) and the presence of successful tokens (Wright & Taylor, 1998, 1999) influence this perception. Because of these factors, boundaries that are almost impermeable can be perceived as permeable. On the other hand, when members of a disadvantaged group perceive that barriers between their own ingroup and other, more prestigious outgroups are impermeable, they are likely to believe that a satisfying social identity cannot be achieved unless a collective effort is undertaken (Tajfel, 1975; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Taylor & McKirnan, 1984).

When group boundaries are perceived to be impermeable, other factors may come into play, including the perceived legitimacy and stability of existing status differentials. If group members feel that their disadvantaged

status is legitimate, they may view collective action as unwarranted and, if they view the dominant outgroup as sufficiently powerful to maintain the status quo, they may refuse to engage in such action fearing that it will be unsuccessful. In such a situation, they may choose other comparison groups, or rely on intragroup comparisons to achieve a positive social identity. They are then likely to accept the stereotypes legitimizing their disadvantage (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), and to enact them in interpersonal interactions with members of the advantaged group.

Perceived instability and illegitimacy may be viewed as the “cognitive alternatives” to the existing situation, alternatives that enable targets to believe in the feasibility and legitimacy of this strategy (Ellemers, 1993; Wright & Taylor, 1998; Wright et al., 1990). When they are present, strategies such as social competition (competing with the outgroup on existing dimensions of comparisons) or social creativity (defining new dimensions of comparisons favoring the ingroup) are likely to be implemented. In such a case, targets will be motivated to change the stereotype of their group in order to create more favorable comparisons to relevant outgroups (Tajfel, 1981b).

D. CONCLUSION

Altogether, our analysis of the situation of the target of stigmatizing social stereotypes suggests that when intergroup boundaries are perceived to be permeable, targets may engage in a strategy of individual mobility if they are stigma conscious. If successful, the outcome of this strategy should be stereotype disconfirmation in interactions with the nonstigmatized. However, we have seen that there may exist powerful barriers to the implementation of this strategy, especially lack of skills and lack of power. When targets are not stigma conscious, they may develop a strategy of interpersonal adjustment, which leads to stereotype confirmation. By contrast, when group boundaries are perceived as impermeable, targets may engage in a collective strategy of stereotype change, if they perceive alternatives to the existing status system. In the absence of alternatives, real or perceived, targets are likely to endorse the stereotype and to enact it.

This analysis suggests that targets who identify with the stigmatized group may be able to resist the perceiver's expectations because their identification makes them more likely to be stigma conscious. Moreover, group consciousness may provide a sense that their disadvantage is illegitimate and does not reflect the inner dispositions and traits of members of the target group. The group may also empower them by providing a perception of social support and skills that can enable them to interact with outgroup

members. All of these factors may make them more willing to endure personal risks on behalf of the group. Hence, a sense of collective identity on the part of members of groups that are the targets of stigmatizing social stereotypes may undermine and overcome the influence of those factors that tend to facilitate, at an individual level, stereotype enactment even in the presence of stigma consciousness.

VI. Power and Status Differences in the Dyad

So far, in our analysis, we have considered the perceiver and the target separately. Now, let us build on these considerations to examine the dyad composed of the perceiver and the target as a structural unit. Specifically, we shall examine how stigmatization can affect power and status relations within this dyad in ways that affect the occurrence of behavioral confirmation of social stereotypes.

We have already seen that as the perceiver's power in relation to the target increases, so does the likelihood of behavioral confirmation (Copeland, 1994; Harris et al., 1998). Several authors have argued that power differences combined with an implicit or explicit acceptance of it by the target are necessary for behavioral confirmation to occur (Neuberg, 1996; Snyder & Kiviniemi, 2001). Our analysis of the intergroup dimension of behavioral confirmation therefore must attend to the ways that the relations between the groups to which the target and the perceiver belong affect the balance of power in their interaction.

First, behavioral confirmation of stereotypes regarding stigmatized groups are more likely to be behaviorally confirmed if members of those groups tend to occupy positions of low power in relation to members of nonstigmatized groups who adhere to these stereotypes. This position of lesser power seems to be the rule for members of stigmatized groups. For example, in a study by Ramirez and Soriano (1993), European Americans reported being less likely to encounter members of ethnic minorities in equal and higher power positions than in lower power positions. The reverse held for participants belonging to such minorities (blacks, Hispanics, Asian-Americans). A similar pattern obtains for women in relation to men (Smith-Lovin & McPherson, 1991) as well as for other minorities in relation to the majority group (McPherson et al., 2001). One of the implications of these findings is that stereotype confirmation may sometimes be *directly* due to differences in status and power, and not only *indirectly* through the acceptance of the perceiver's script by the target. For example, Henley and colleagues have suggested that gender differences in nonverbal behavior

were due to women's lesser status and power, but that these differences disappeared when power and status were controlled (Henley, 1977, 1995; LaFrance & Henley, 1994). If this is the case, stereotypes could be confirmed *only* because men tend to have a higher status than women in interpersonal interactions. Although Henley's hypothesis has been contested (Hall & Friedman, 1999), status differences seem to indeed contribute to behavioral differences that may, falsely, be attributed to women's inner traits and dispositions.

Moreover, power differentials are not distributed evenly across groups. Some groups tend to accumulate power and status on many important dimensions whereas other groups accumulate "powerlessness" on these same dimensions (Fiske, 2001; Pratto & Walker, 2001; Sidanius & Prato, 1999). A consequence of these differences in power is that members of a subordinate group may be deprived of power in interpersonal interactions even if the power differential along which this difference is defined is not directly relevant to the interaction. Pratto and Walker (2001) note, for example, that constraints on women's power in their families limit their power with their employers. If a professional woman is constrained to perform most of the housekeeping and child-rearing activities, it will be generally more difficult for her to commit herself as much to an organization as her male domestic partner who does not experience such constraints. In turn, this lesser commitment may deteriorate her potential value for the employer, and hence her power within the organization.

Third, belonging to a low status groups can, in and of itself, be a source of low power in interactions with nonstigmatized people. The studies that we have considered so far rely on a *formal* definition of power, generally defined as "legitimate" power in the terminology of French and Raven (1959). Nevertheless, *informal* differences in power can also be present in dyads. Consider, for example, the case of two members of a dyad cooperating on a task in order to obtain financial rewards. One of the dyad members may, for whatever reason, consider that his or her partner is more task-competent and therefore choose to follow the partner's guidelines for performing the task. In such a situation, this dyad member voluntarily yields control of the valued reward to his or her partner who, therefore, has more power.

How does such an imbalance in power emerge? According to expectation states theory (EST: Balkwell & Berger, 1996; Berger et al., 1972; Ridgeway & Berger, 1988; Wagner & Berger, 1993), members of such task groups form performance expectations about the other group members. An informal "status and prestige order" typically emerges as a function of these expectations. Individuals who are expected to perform best have greater power and influence over others. These expectations are informed by "status

characteristics" that may include actual evidence of skills at performing the task (e.g., diplomas, prior experiences), but they can also depend on stereotypes associated with the group members' social categories. Thus, women are often expected to be less competent than men in mechanical tasks and may therefore be given lesser status than men in interactions revolving around task performance. In this case, stereotypes serve to legitimize interpersonal power differences.

However, sometimes, there is no a priori link between a social category membership and performance expectations. For example, if the task involves solving an anagram, women may not be expected to be particularly less efficient than men (and vice versa). In such instances, however, EST argues that people will act under the assumption that this social category is relevant and can be used for making performance expectations *unless the evidence shows that it is irrelevant*. In this case, they will use the position of the group in the social structure as a guide for forming performance expectations. When this group membership is salient in the interaction, and when these beliefs are relevant to the purpose of the interaction, it leads to consensual expectations that the participant belonging to the high-status group will be more competent, and perform better, than the other participant. These expectations may then shape behavior in a self-fulfilling way, such that the high-status group member will tend to behave more assertively and influence the low-status group member whereas the low-status group member will behave with deference and accept influence attempts. In other words, status determines power in these interactions. High status will be associated with patterns of dominant behavior, indicative of high task competence (such as a fast speech rate, a firm tone of voice, few hesitations) whereas low status will be associated with behaviors indicative of low competence (Ridgeway, 1987, 1991). The high-status member's power can materialize itself by greater control over the task and more influence over the choices made by the dyad. Hence, if both participants share the same cultural beliefs regarding the performance expectations associated with their respective group memberships, these expectations can become self-fulfilling.

EST, which has received ample empirical support (for reviews, see Berger, 1992; Berger et al., 1972, 1980; Ridgeway, 1991, 2001), therefore suggests that members of stigmatized groups may similarly tend to adopt submissive behavior even when they are formally as powerful as their nonstigmatized partner. Consider, for example, a study conducted in an Australian context by Riches and Foddy (1989). These authors manipulated the accent used by a confederate to address participants in the context of a joint decision-making task. Participants behaved with greater deference and were more likely to accept influence attempts from the confederate if he spoke with the

dominant Anglo-Australian accent than if he spoke with a Greek accent (Greeks constitute a low-status ethnic minority in Australia) although the task was unrelated to the stereotype of Greeks in Australia. When the stigmatized group members try to adopt a “more” dominant style in such groups, they are often met with resistance on the part of the nonstigmatized. For example, in cooperative tasks involving cognitive problem solving, attempts at achieving equal status interactions between whites and blacks by training the latter to use a more assertive behavior failed because whites resisted these attempts (Katz, 1970; Katz & Cohen, 1962). Similar findings have been reported in the context of task groups involving men and women (Ridgeway, 1982; Ridgeway & Berger, 1988) as well as other ethnic minorities (Cohen, 1982; Ridgeway, 1991). In line with EST, these findings suggest that intergroup differences in power can result in interpersonal differences in power.

Overall, in our considerations of the structural qualities of perceiver–target dyads, we have seen that members of stigmatized groups (as targets) tend to have lower power and status in their interactions with members of nonstigmatized groups (as perceivers), which increases the likelihood of behavioral confirmation of stereotypes about the stigmatized group. In line with this analysis, Maddon, Jussim, and Eccles (1997) have shown that disadvantaged groups such as African-Americans and people low in socioeconomic status (SES) were most vulnerable to stereotype confirmation. Similarly, women are more vulnerable to stereotype confirmation than men (Christensen & Rosenthal, 1982; Johanson, 1999; Snyder & Oyamoto, 2001) and less likely to induce it (Dvir, Eden, & Banjo, 1995). This evidence suggests indeed that disadvantaged groups are more vulnerable to behavioral confirmation when they are in contact with members of an advantaged group.

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VII. How Does Behavioral Confirmation Affect Stereotypes and Intergroup Relations?

Now, building on our considerations of the interactional strategies of perceivers and targets, we shall turn to our ultimate question, which concerns the impact of behavioral confirmation and disconfirmation on social stereotypes and intergroup relations. When are the stereotypes held by a nonstigmatized group about a stigmatized group likely to be maintained or to be changed as a result of behavioral confirmation or disconfirmation of expectations based on these stereotypes in dyadic encounters between members of these two groups? And what is the impact

of behavioral confirmation, as it occurs in interpersonal interactions between individual members of these groups, on the structure and dynamics of intergroup relations between the groups themselves? Thus, although much of what we have to say in answer to these questions is admittedly speculative, we are attempting to address the question of how the “micro” or interindividual level of analysis can affect the “macro” or sociostructural level of analysis.

Consider the case of a white settler interacting with his local servant in colonial Africa. He may display the typical paternalistic attitude, combining a form of benevolence with power and authority. Conversely, the African servant may adopt a complementary behavioral style, combining signs of gratitude and submission to his master’s authority. In such a situation, the adoption of this style by the servant may be construed as confirming the white man’s stereotype of Africans as inherently stupid and submissive. As these types of relations were common in colonial Africa, such a process of stereotype confirmation may have served to reinforce the regime by legitimizing the domination of the Europeans over the Africans.

But, how readily can such bridges from the interpersonal to the intergroup level of analysis be built, especially when they are to be built on the foundations provided by social psychological research on the confirmation of stereotype-based expectations in dyadic social interaction? Although this question has rarely been addressed, it has not been completely neglected either. One answer has been offered by Jussim (Jussim & Fleming, 1996; Jussim et al., 1996, 2000), who has drawn a distinction between *dyadic* self-fulfilling prophecies (the typical interactions studied in research on behavioral confirmation) and *sociological* self-fulfilling prophecies, which require the action of many people (often in the form of social/cultural institutions).

In terms of this distinction between dyadic and sociological self-fulfilling prophecies, it is the sociological ones, rather than their dyadic counterparts, that are thought to contribute to the maintenance of social stereotypes:

Although self-fulfilling prophecies clearly occur in dyadic interactions, they may have only limited involvement in many of the deepest and most intractable social problems associated with stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. For example, the ghettoization of Jews in Europe, the Hindu caste system, American slavery and South African apartheid could not have been maintained by the actions of a handful of individuals. (Jussim & Fleming, 1996, p. 179)

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In this view, dyadic interactions cannot contribute to intergroup relations because they do not involve a large number of people. For example, in our example, the interaction between the white settler and his African servant has, according to this point of view, no bearing on the social stereotypes

held by each group regarding his or her counterparts; what matters, instead, is colonialism as an institutional and political endeavor.

To assess the validity of this argument, we shall delineate three conditions that are necessary for behavioral confirmation processes to affect the actual content of social stereotypes. *First*, the nonstigmatized perceiver must view the stigmatized target's behavior as either confirming or disconfirming his or her expectation and attribute this behavior to the target's inherent dispositions. *Second*, the nonstigmatized perceiver must maintain or change his or her stereotype of the target's group in a direction consistent with his or her perception of the target's behavior. Thus, not only must the stereotype inform his or her expectation, but behavioral confirmation of this expectation derived from the stereotype must "feed back" to the stereotype itself and either strengthen it or modify it. In other words, perceptual confirmation or disconfirmation needs to be generalized to the stigmatized group as a whole and become actual stereotype confirmation or disconfirmation. And, *third*, this process must occur at a "macro" level, such that the stereotype, viewed as a collective representation shared by the members of the nonstigmatized group, needs to be affected in the same way. That is, the perceptual and behavioral confirmation or disconfirmation of expectations and their consequent feedback to the general stereotypes from which they are generated need to be consistent across a broad array of individual nonstigmatized perceivers.

Let us consider each of these three conditions in turn, and examine whether it can plausibly be fulfilled. Once we have examined each of these conditions, we shall be in a position to address the relevance of dyadic self-fulfilling prophecies to the "macro" context of intergroup relations.

A. PERCEIVING AND EXPLAINING THE TARGET'S BEHAVIOR

Even in the presence of disconfirming behaviors, perceivers may nonetheless manifest perceptual confirmation and fail to modify their expectations regarding the target's traits and dispositions (Bond, 1972; Hilton & Darley, 1985; Ickes et al., 1982; Jones & Panitch, 1971; Miller & Turnbull, 1986; Neuberg, 1989; Snyder & Haugen, 1995; Swann & Snyder, 1980). Thus, perceivers tend to maintain their expectations. As Miller and Turnbull (1986) have noted, this effect may be due to lower level encoding processes in which perceivers selectively focus on expectation-consistent behavior and use this behavior when forming an impression of the target. Consistent with this assumption, expectation-congruent behaviors tend to be better remembered and integrated in judgments than expectation-incongruent behaviors (Rothbart, Evans, & Fulero, 1979).

Second, expectation-congruent behaviors are more likely than expectation-incongruent behaviors to be attributed to internal and stable dispositions of the actor; expectation-incongruent behaviors, by contrast, are preferentially attributed to external and unstable factors (Bond, Omar, Pitre, & Lashley, 1992; Miller & Ross, 1975; Olson et al., 1996; Weiner, 1986). Similarly, the prevalent process of social attribution involves the tendency to attribute stereotype-consistent behavior more so than stereotype-inconsistent behavior to inner dispositions (Deschamps, 1973–1974; Duncan, 1976; Yzerbyt, Corneille, & Estrada, 2001). For example, if the imaginary Moroccan job candidate of our opening example conveys an interest in extracurricular activities, and expresses correspondingly little professional ambition, the Belgian interviewer may be much more likely to attribute these behaviors to inner dispositions (e.g., laziness) than if the job candidate displayed stereotype-inconsistent behavior. But stereotypes may even reinforce this tendency. According to Leyens, Yzerbyt, and Schadron (1994), stereotypes are “naive theories” that can be used for explaining the behavior of members of the target group. People tend to attribute stereotype-consistent behavior to the underlying essence of the group, or its deep psychological properties (Rogier, 1999; Yzerbyt et al., 2001; Yzerbyt, Rocher, & Schadron, 1997). Thus, our interviewer may not only view the Moroccan candidate as lazy, but consider this laziness as reflecting the underlying essence of Moroccans, their “Morocanness.” To the extent that stereotype-inconsistent behavior cannot be linked to an underlying essence, it may be more easily discarded as a consequence of the situation. For example, the interviewer may attribute any claims the job candidate makes about commitment to work as reflecting a self-presentational agenda rather than any inner motivations and capacities. This analysis suggests that when nonstigmatized group members hold stereotypic views of the stigmatized group, interactions between members of stigmatized and nonstigmatized groups are much more likely to contribute to the confirmation of these views than to their modification.

It follows, too, from this line of argument that the target may actually need to explicitly dissociate himself or herself from the stigmatized group in order to escape perceptual confirmation. For example, the Moroccan candidate may try to display evidence of many attitudes and behaviors thought by the interviewer to be atypical of Moroccans as a group (e.g., not practicing Islam, being favorable to the emancipation of women, or being very individualistic). If the job candidate pursues this strategy, he is likely to be viewed as a very untypical Moroccan and the stereotype will be perceived as less relevant in judging him and his suitability for the job in question.

So far, this analysis suggests that stereotypical information seems to be more easily integrated in the judgment of the target than

counterstereotypical information. However, when behavior is extremely incongruent, the advantage of congruent information on the encoding process tends to disappear (Hashtroudi, Mutter, Cole, & Green, 1984; Hastie & Kumar, 1979; Stern, Marrs, Millar, & Cole, 1984). When they are very surprising, these events may attract attention and be integrated in the judgment. Thus, our Moroccan candidate may adopt a second strategy, one that consists of remaining a “true Moroccan” but display extremely counterstereotypical behavior on the few dimensions of comparison that may be relevant to the interviewer’s judgment. For example, he may show his adherence to family values and to Islam at the same time as he displays ample evidence (far beyond that expected of a non-Moroccan candidate) of his commitment to work (e.g., through letters of recommendation, diplomas, awards).

Thus, although a variety of processes work together to make behavioral disconfirmation go unnoticed much of the time, behavioral disconfirmation will attract attention to the extent that the target succeeds in dissociating his or her image from the group or displays extreme instances of disconfirming behavior.

B. MAINTENANCE AND CHANGE OF THE PERCEIVER’S STEREOTYPES

According to the logic of essentialist theorizing (Yzerbyt et al., 1997, 2001; Yzerbyt & Rogier, 2001), stereotype-confirming behavior is not only attributed internally, but serves to reinforce the stereotype. The explanatory value of the stereotype is bolstered by the evidence it serves to explain. Thus, in our example of the Moroccan job candidate, evidence indicating lack of commitment or initiative may not only be viewed as reflecting the Moroccan’s inherent essence but as confirming that laziness is part of this essence. Thus, there may be an asymmetry between confirmation and disconfirmation, with stereotype-consistent behavior being more likely to lead to the maintenance of the perceiver’s stereotype than stereotype disconfirmation is to contribute to changing the perceiver’s stereotype. As we have seen, the target may need to dissociate himself or herself from the group if he or she wishes to succeed in changing the perceiver’s mind. But as a consequence, the perceiver may not view this target’s behavior as relevant to the group stereotype. After all, as our hypothetical job interviewer might reason, if this candidate is such an idiosyncratic Moroccan, his commitment should not be taken as evidence that Moroccans in general can be committed to their job.

The literature on stereotype change is consistent with this line of reasoning. Although there seems to be a natural tendency for group members to generalize the behavioral information they possess regarding an individual outgroup member to his or her group as a whole (Quattrone & Jones, 1980), this target needs to be viewed as a typical exemplar of the group for this to be the case (Hewstone, 1996; Hewstone & Brown, 1986; Rothbart & John, 1985; Weber & Crocker, 1983; Wilder, 1984). Changing the stereotype of the group may therefore demand that the stigmatized be perceived as a typical member, that is, as "fitting" the category (Rothbart & John, 1985). Hence, the most fruitful strategy for changing negative stereotypes, and associated prejudicial attitudes, toward the target group may involve the display of extreme counterstereotypic behavior on an important dimension of comparison rather than a total dissociation from the stereotype.

A study by Brown, Vivian, and Hewstone (1999; study 1) illustrates this strategy for changing negative stereotypes. In this study, British participants interacted with a German target (actually, a confederate) who was either typical or atypical of stereotypes about Germans, based on an alleged personal profile read by the British participant prior to the interaction. After the interaction, participants reported that their perception of Germans as a group had changed, on both stereotype-relevant and stereotype-irrelevant attributes, but these changes were especially pronounced when the confederate was described as a typical German. Thus, only when the target was perceived as a typical member of the outgroup were ratings of the individual German target generalized to the outgroup as a whole. In their interpretation of these findings, Brown et al. (1999) proposed that typicality enhances the salience of the target's group membership. And, as we have already seen, SCT holds that category salience entails perceptions of the outgroup as undifferentiated and homogeneous (for a review of empirical evidence, see Haslam, Oakes, & Turner, 1996), with each group member viewed as a prototypical and interchangeable member of the group. Hence, under conditions of category salience, perceptions of individual group members are more likely to be generalized to the group as a whole.

So far, we have treated category salience from the nonstigmatized perceiver's perspective. But the salience of the stigmatized target's self-categorization may also contribute to the generalization of the nonstigmatized perceiver's beliefs and expectations about individual group members to their stereotypes and attitudes toward the target's group as a whole entity. First, when his or her social identity is salient, the stigmatized target is more likely to self-stereotype himself or herself, and thereby adopt the attitudes or behaviors stereotypically ascribed to his or her group. Such self-stereotyping may make the target less likely to explicitly dissociate himself or herself from

the target's group and, thus, may be associated with a greater likelihood of generalization of the exemplar to the group.

Moreover, when the stigmatized target's identity is salient, not only does the target display behavior that he or she views as prototypical of his or her group, but he or she is motivated to be viewed as a typical member of this group (Klein, Licata, Azzi, & Durala, in press; Noel, Wann, & Branscombe, 1995). Hence, even if the target's self-stereotype may differ in many ways from the perceiver's view of the stigmatized group, the target's motivation and efforts to show that he or she is a representative and "true" member of the stigmatized group should minimize the perceiver's tendency to view him or her as an atypical exemplar.

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Finally, the salience of the targets' self-category may also be associated with a process of "depersonalization" in which targets will view themselves as interchangeable members of the group and identify with the interests of the group as a whole (Simon, 1998; Simon et al., 1997). Hence, rather than modifying the view held by the perceiver about himself or herself as an idiosyncratic individual, the target may be motivated to change the view and attitudes held by the perceiver regarding the stigmatized group as a whole. In other words, under such circumstances, the target is more likely to follow a collective strategy of stereotype change. Conversely, the pursuit of an individual strategy by the target may contribute to the persistence of the perceiver's stereotype. Group members who succeed in their attempts at social mobility not only tend to dissociate themselves from their group, but they are particularly likely to endorse negative stereotypes concerning their group. For example, Ellemers (2001) has found that female, but not male, university professors described women Ph.D. students as less committed to the university and their career than male students, thereby perpetuating the stereotype of women as less ambitious than men.

Altogether, the foregoing analysis suggests that salience of the *perceiver's* identity facilitates the generalization of the target's behavior to the stigmatized group by inducing a view of the target's group as undifferentiated. Moreover, salience of the *target's* identity also facilitates this process by making it more likely that the target will behave as a typical ingroup member, and be motivated to be viewed as such by other people.

C. MAINTENANCE AND CHANGE IN GROUP PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES

So far, we have examined how confirmation or disconfirmation could affect the nonstigmatized group member's stereotype of the stigmatized group. In doing so, we have considered the stereotype at the level of the

individual perceiver. But what about the impact of stereotype confirmation and disconfirmation on intergroup perceptions—that is, on the collective representations held by the nonstigmatized group as a whole? We shall address this question in two steps: first, by examining stereotype maintenance and, second, by examining stereotype change.

1. Stereotype Maintenance

A simple way to address the transition from the interpersonal to the intergroup perspectives on stereotypes and their confirmation involves considering that collective representations will be maintained to the extent that it is the rule for the nonstigmatized perceivers' stereotypes regarding the stigmatized group to be subjectively confirmed, or at least not disconfirmed, when they interact with members of this group. This condition, of course, can hold only if the stereotypes held by individual perceivers are shared with great regularity and consistency across members of the nonstigmatized group when they interact with members of the stigmatized group. If not, each instance of behavioral confirmation or disconfirmation will concern different stereotypes and, considered globally, these episodes are unlikely to have an impact at a group level.

Stereotypes, it has often been noted, are flexible and their content can vary as a function of the social context, even among the same perceivers (see, e.g., Devine & Elliot, 1995; Diab, 1962; Haslam & Turner, 1992, 1995; Haslam, Turner, Oakes, & McGarty, 1992; Karlins, Coffman, & Walters, 1969). Hence, it is imperative to specify those conditions in which there will exist such great consistency and regularity in nonstigmatized group members' view of stigmatized targets. Again, category salience seems to provide an answer. Group members are most likely to agree on a consensual representation of a target group when their own identity is salient (Haslam, 1997; Haslam, Oakes, Reynolds, & Turner, 1999; Haslam, Turner, Oakes, McGarty, & Reynolds, 1998). For example, Haslam et al. (1999) found that Australians were more likely to use the same traits to describe their ingroup when their social identity had been made salient (i.e., by asking them to list activities they and Australians did well, badly, frequently, and rarely) than when their personal identity was made salient (i.e., by asking them to list activities they personally did well, badly, frequently, and rarely). If perceivers tend to share a common self-categorization when they interact with members of the stigmatized group, their stereotypes will be shared.

But, even more importantly, their behavior as perceivers will be affected in similar ways by the salience of their common group identity. For individuals adopt what they perceive to be the shared and normative patterns of action when their social identity is salient (Turner et al., 1987). In

the present case, their actions will tend to be shared to the extent that they are informed by common, shared expectations and that they reflect consensual norms toward members of the target group. For example, the dominant style of the European colonialist reflects a form of normative "etiquette" indicating how relationships with Africans should be handled. Through these shared patterns of action, the nonstigmatized group may exert a truly collective influence on the stigmatized group by inciting its members to perform stereotype-consistent behaviors, even if they are physically isolated.

Can this condition be fulfilled? Is it likely that perceivers would separately tend to use a common self-categorization when they interact with members of a stigmatized group? For this to be the case, factors that transcend the context of the interaction need to uniformly affect perceivers, as a group, in such a way that they tend to rely on the same stereotypes to describe members of the target group. For example, when Belgians interact with Moroccans, they should tend to define them as Moroccans (rather than as men, or as fish lovers, or any of a variety of idiosyncratic categories) and they should activate the same expectations regarding Moroccans. In fact, there are several reasons to believe that nonstigmatized perceivers are likely to view stigmatized targets in categorical terms rather than in terms of their idiosyncratic traits and dispositions.

First, there seems to be a general tendency to view outgroup members in categorical terms and ingroup members in terms of personal categories (Park & Rothbart, 1982; Quattrone & Jones, 1980; Sedikides, 1997). As outgroup members are generally appraised in intergroup contexts and ingroup members in intragroup contexts, this is consistent with SCT⁴ (Haslam et al., 1996). This effect, known as the differential processing effect, is more likely when the perceiver belongs to a higher status group than the target (Sedikides, 1997). Thus, high-status group members tend to view members of disadvantaged groups as prototypical and interchangeable members of their group and other advantaged group members as idiosyncratic individuals. Hence, nonstigmatized perceivers should tend to uniformly view their stigmatized targets as interchangeable prototypical exemplars of their category.

However, for a common category to be used across perceivers to define targets belonging to a stigmatized group, this category may need to be a particularly meaningful and global category, so that it is likely to be salient across a variety of contexts. For example, categories based on sex, race, and

⁴Note that Haslam et al. (1996) have shown that the ingroup and the outgroup are perceived as equally homogeneous when they are both appraised in intergroup rather than intragroup contexts.

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age define such categories in American society (Fiske, 1998) just as language does in Canada and Belgium, or as caste does in India. The importance of specific categorical criteria is mainly a function of the history of intergroup relations, as these relations define which categories have an important meaning within a particular society.

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But even if perceivers all categorize the low-status target in the same way, are they likely to use the same stereotypes to describe this target, and hence to develop the same expectations to guide their treatment of the target? This is, of course, our second condition for making the transition from the interpersonal to the intergroup level. As we have seen, stereotypes tend to be known and shared across group members (Gordijn, Koomen, & Stapel, 2001; Haslam, 1997; Madon et al., 2001). Nevertheless different traits might be activated depending on the context in which the interaction takes place. Hence, this condition is most likely to be fulfilled if the contexts of the interactions between members of the advantaged and disadvantaged group tend to be consistent. Such a homogeneity in the contexts of interactions will tend to lead to the activation of the same traits. For example, the white settler of our example meets blacks in only limited social roles and may therefore activate a small set of traits concerning blacks, whereas another person who meet blacks in a variety of roles and statuses may find a variety of different traits or subtypes become relevant to perceiving blacks.

For many minority groups in the United States, the fulfillment of this condition seems to be facilitated by the presence of group segregation in many important contexts of social life. For example, a recent study using a representative sample of African-Americans (Brown, 2001) indicates that most respondents lived most of their life in all-black, or predominantly black, contexts (e.g., school, church, neighborhood). The only mixed settings were usually the workplace and college. This finding is important in itself as the influence of stereotypes on majority group's judgments of minority groups is proportional to the degree of segregation in this setting (Kraiger & Ford, 1985; Reskin, McBrier, & Kmec, 1999; Sackett, DuBois, & Noe, 1991).

Studies in workplace settings, one of the few contexts in which mixed interactions regularly occur, indicate that such interactions are likely to be very stereotyped for at least two reasons. First, groups tend to have homophilous social networks in organizations; that is, they tend to develop relationships with members of the same ethnic group (for a review, see McPherson et al., 2001), which suggests that intergroup interactions are generally formal ones that involve strong role constraints. Second, blacks are often segregated in a limited array of low power positions and social roles within contemporary American organizations, especially small ones (Reskin et al., 1999), which means that white employees may interact with

blacks in the context of only a handful of subordinate social roles. This pattern of segregation should lead whites, as perceivers, to consistently rely on similar expectations in their interactions with blacks (Eagly, 1987). Even when blacks manage to access higher power positions, they may tend to become “tokens” and their relationships with whites often become even more stereotypic. According to Ibarra (1993), “the presence of tokens produced boundary-heightening processes by which dominants exaggerate group differences to reinforce their common bonds” (p. 69). The foregoing considerations may apply to other ethnic minorities (Ibarra, 1995) and to women as well (Smith-Lovin & McPherson, 1991).

Where, then, do we stand with respect to the conditions for the maintenance of collective stereotypes as a result of stereotype confirmation processes that we set forth, namely that nonstigmatized perceivers adopt a common self- and other-categorization when interacting with members of the stigmatized groups, and that they rely on the same stereotypes during these interactions. We have seen that such conditions could plausibly be fulfilled, and even facilitated, in at least some types of intergroup relations, such as those between ethnic majority and some minorities in the United States. Let us now consider whether stereotype *change* could be plausibly affected by stereotype disconfirmation.

2. *Stereotype Change*

Stereotype change should occur to the extent that the stereotypes held by the nonstigmatized group tend to be perceptually disconfirmed when they interact with members of the stigmatized group. Any generalized transition from the micro- to the macrolevel may be harder to accomplish as the multiple evidences of stereotype disconfirmation would need to be consistent and follow a regular pattern if they were to affect consensual stereotypes. Yet, several roadblocks may stand in the way of such an outcome. There is, of course, the well-documented reluctance of perceivers to abandon the stereotypes that they hold, even in the face of disconfirming evidence; accordingly, instances of disconfirmation may need to be extremely systematic, consistent, and frequent if they are to affect perceivers (see, for example, Garcia-Marques & Mackie, 2001; Kashima, Woolcock, & Kashima, 2000; Weber & Crocker, 1983). Moreover, to the extent that perceivers acknowledge instances of disconfirmation, but treat each instance of stereotype disconfirmation as if it were an isolated and idiosyncratic occurrence with each one believed to concern a different specific aspect of the overall general stereotype, their impact will not be systematic and may have inconsistent effects on shared views of the target group. This may likely be the case if the target chooses to “pass” as a member of the

nonstigmatized group, or to adopt an individual self-presentational agenda of emphasizing his or her own individual achievements and qualities, which are likely to differ from those of other members of stigmatized groups pursuing this strategy.

For a widespread pattern of disconfirmation of stereotypes to occur, and for it to be regularly and consistently acknowledged and accepted by perceivers, several conditions would seem to need to be met. Members of the stigmatized group would need to consistently follow a shared and common self-presentational agenda geared at advertising new self-stereotypes of the target group. This would, in keeping with our earlier considerations, require the salience of a common self-category. As we have seen, to the extent that their social identity is salient, each group member would then endorse the consensual self-stereotype, adopt shared patterns of behavior, and expect other group members to do so (see the section on collective strategy). By adopting the same behaviors, the stigmatized group can therefore also exert a collective influence on the nonstigmatized group.

Is the pursuit of a collective strategy by nonstigmatized group members likely, or even possible? As we have argued, targets may pursue this strategy when they perceive intergroup boundaries as impermeable but when, simultaneously, they view cognitive alternatives to this situation. Such perceptions are common in social movements and are likely to arise among members of stigmatized groups (see, e.g., Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996; Tajfel, 1975). The main difficulty, however, lies in the enactment of the collective strategy of stereotype change. As we have seen, when an individual's social identity is salient, such an enactment is mainly a problem of power. If members of a disadvantaged group have a collective consciousness but only encounter members of the advantaged group as their supervisors or their bosses, it may be extremely costly for them to enact positive self-stereotypes. As we have seen, this consciousness and the support provided by other group members can help these individuals overcome these risks. In fact, they may sometimes endure personal costs in the interest of the group. An extreme, but relevant, historical example is Rosa Parks, who refused to sit in the "black" section of a bus in Alabama in December 1955. By denouncing the illegitimacy of segregation, her behavior, later imitated by numerous blacks, contributed to the success of the Civil Rights movement in the United States. In less extreme ways, disadvantaged group members may express their identity in ways that do not entail risks for the self, such as the expression of collective beliefs and attitudes that are not punishable by powerful others (Reicher & Levine, 1994). Hence, a salient social identity may often find avenues for expression itself even in the face of powerful opposition.

In addition, the existence of a collective consciousness often creates opportunities for mixed interactions in new contexts. Collective movements

can indirectly affect stereotype change by helping to modify the contexts in which mixed interactions take place and in which stereotype disconfirmation is therefore facilitated. For example, as women massively entered British universities as a result of feminist movements (Charles, 1993), interactions between men and women took place in new and different contexts. These new contexts allowed women to enact self-stereotypes different from those of the loving, caring wife or mother. In turn, and by extension, the interactions that occurred in these new contexts then empowered them in other spheres of their lives. Existing studies suggest, for example, that as the number of women in an organization increases, the more likely it is that men will hold nonsexist attitudes and stereotypes regarding women in general (Heilman, 1980; Konrad, Winter, & Gutek, 1992; Reskin et al., 1999).

D. INTERACTIVE LEVELS OF ANALYSIS IN STEREOTYPE CONFIRMATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Our attempt to build a bridge between interpersonal and intergroup levels of analysis suggests that dyadic behavioral confirmation will preserve general stereotypes to the extent that members of the nonstigmatized group tend to view their stigmatized interaction partners as typical members of their groups and share common expectations across perceivers regarding the traits displayed by members of this group. We further suggested that this was particularly likely to be the case if their identity as a member of the nonstigmatized group was salient during these interactions. Conversely, we proposed that behavioral disconfirmation would contribute to changes in general stereotypes to the extent that members of the stigmatized group tended to adopt a shared pattern of action and try to advertise common aspects of their self-stereotypes when interacting with members of the nonstigmatized group. This outcome would be most likely, we suggested, when their self-categorization as members of the stigmatized group was salient during interactions with members of the nonstigmatized group.

Our analysis of the relations between behavioral confirmation and the associated consequences of social reproduction and social change (in general stereotypes and in the relations between groups who hold and who are the targets of social stereotypes) is compatible with a symbolic interactionist perspective (Blumer, 1969). According to this view, the large-scale institutions that form the structure of society at a macrolevel are partly maintained and reproduced, through face-to-face interactions (Becker, 1963; Blumer, 1969; Couch & Hintz, 1975; Maines, 1982; Maines &

Charlton, 1985; see also Cohen, 2001 for a similar perspective on cultural variation). For example, colonialism was, in part, reproduced and maintained as an institution through the kinds of face-to-face contacts that we used to open this section. Joint activity in face-to-face contact is interwoven within other types of activities, of increasing complexity and scale but all these layers, by their very interactive nature, contribute to social reproduction and social change. This view does not consider social institutions as independent of face-to-face contacts, or as determining them. Rather, it suggests that face-to-face contacts can serve to maintain and change institutions even if they are constrained by larger scale factors.

In this regard, we are not proposing that dyadic behavioral confirmation can, in and by itself, fully account for stereotype maintenance and change. Other layers of social organization constrain the contexts in which interactions tend to take place and, by the same token, determine the likelihood of confirmation or disconfirmation occurring, whether at the interpersonal or at the intergroup levels. For example, in a colonial society, contact between the colonizers and the colonized tended to take place in very specific social contexts, associated with role prescriptions that allow only for a limited range from both groups, making behavioral confirmation particularly likely. These contexts may limit the very occurrence of a contact: In a segregated society, for example, opportunities for contact between the races may be altogether absent. The very nature of these contexts is determined by the power and status relationships between groups.

As we have seen, though, as relations between groups evolve, these contexts are likely to change, and so will the opportunities for stereotype confirmation and disconfirmation in social interactions. In turn, stereotype confirmation and disconfirmation may facilitate change at a higher level and make it more acceptable (witness, for example, the Rosa Parks example). Hence, our analysis, compatible both with SCT and a symbolic interactionist perspective, proposes that there is no discontinuity between the individual and the collective level of analysis—both levels interact and mutually influence each other.

VIII. Stereotype Confirmation, Stereotype Maintenance, and Stereotype Change: An Integration

In our considerations of how targets would respond to perceivers who act toward them in terms of their membership in a devalued social category, we have envisaged several strategies that targets may use to respond to

perceivers. In the present section, we shall integrate these identity management strategies and, by building on the previous sections, examine how the use of these strategies can affect stereotype confirmation in interpersonal encounters as well as contribute to stereotype maintenance and change in intergroup relations.

Critical determinants of the strategies chosen by targets, we have argued, are the permeability of the boundaries between the groups to which stigmatized targets and nonstigmatized perceivers belong, the stigma consciousness of the target, and the availability of cognitive alternatives to the existing position of the stigmatized group. Figure 1 presents the four strategies elicited by the interactive operation of these factors, as well as the outcomes of these strategies at the levels of personal expectations (what the perceiver believes about the target as an individual), individual stereotypes (what the perceiver believes about the target's group), and collective stereotypes (what the perceiver's group believes about the target's group).

Let us consider these four strategies in turn, beginning with those situations in which group boundaries are perceived as permeable. In such situations, stigmatized group members, we have argued, will seek to upgrade their status as individuals; however, stigma consciousness will play a key role in determining which strategy they will pursue.

A. INTERPERSONAL ADJUSTMENT: "GETTING ALONG"

If their group membership is not salient, if they have rarely been confronted with racism or discrimination, or if they enter a context that they expect to be tolerant, members of stigmatized groups may not be stigma conscious. In such circumstances, as we have seen, they may be particularly likely to rely on the "getting along" strategy of ensuring a smooth and pleasant relationship with the perceiver. This strategy, we have seen, is conducive to both perceptual and behavioral confirmation of the perceiver's expectations. Such confirmation may in turn serve to bolster the perceiver's stereotypes concerning the group to which the target belongs. Theoretically, if stigmatized group members consistently follow this strategy in the presence of members of the nonstigmatized group, this outcome should contribute to the maintenance of social stereotypes. However, it is unlikely that members of the stigmatized group would continually ignore the facts that they may be the targets of stereotypes and prejudice. For, as we have seen, members of stigmatized group tend to be constantly on the lookout for evidence of discriminatory behavior, not least because it protects their self-esteem (see, e.g., Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker et al.,

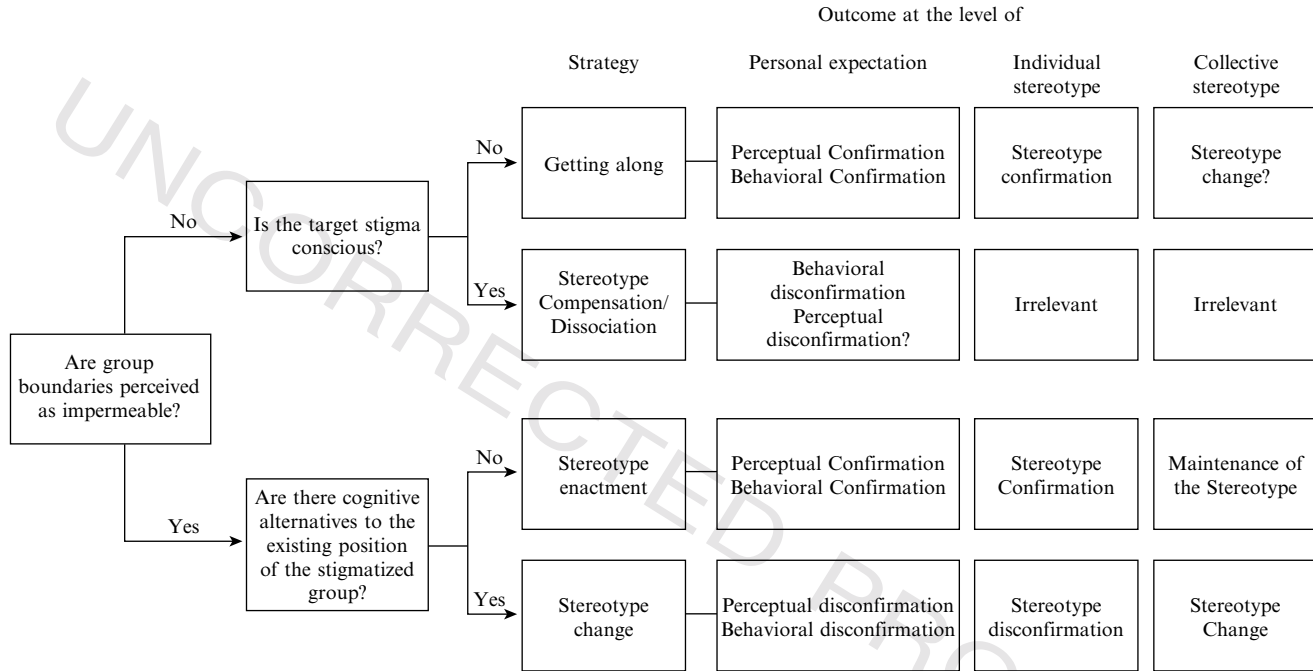


Fig. 1. Influence of the target's strategies on stereotype confirmation at the individual and group level.

1991). Accordingly, the adoption of such strategies by targets may not necessarily result in the perpetuation and persistence of stereotypes.⁵

B. STEREOTYPE COMPENSATION

When targets are stigma conscious, we have argued, they may be likely to engage in strategies in which they try to access a more prestigious group by actively dissociating themselves from their stigmatizing identity. If targets possess sufficient skills and power, they will try to show that they do not possess the attribute that are stereotypical of their group. By dissociating themselves from their group, the stigmatized may disconfirm the perceiver's expectations regarding themselves as individuals. If this strategy is successful, the perceiver will view the target as an atypical exemplar and may not consider the stereotype as applicable to her. As a consequence, the target's behavior may not elicit stereotype disconfirmation and will not contribute to stereotype change.

This strategy of stereotype compensation is sometimes unsuccessful, especially if the target lacks the necessary skills or power for disconfirming the expectations. In this case, its net result may be stereotype confirmation, or at least the absence of disconfirmation. Failures of this strategy may also be due to the perceivers' cognitive biases in favor of confirmatory information and their tendency to discount stereotype-inconsistent information as due to situational factors.

C. STEREOTYPE ENACTMENT

When intergroup boundaries are perceived as rigid and impermeable, stigmatized targets are generally stigma conscious when interacting with members of nonstigmatized groups. When these targets perceive that there are no alternatives to their current situations, they generally will not try to challenge the power and status of the stigmatized group. Neither are targets likely to challenge the stereotype of their group held by nonstigmatized advantaged groups (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost, Burgess, & Mosso, 2001). On the other hand, in such a situation, targets may view these stereotypes as legitimate and enact them, especially their positive aspects. As we have seen, they may be encouraged to do so because this behavior is rewarded by powerful perceivers. This strategy facilitates behavioral and perceptual

⁵For this reason, we have inserted a question mark after "Maintenance of the stereotype" in the relevant box of Fig. 1.

confirmation. In turn, the perceiver is likely to view the target's behavior as confirming his or her stereotypes concerning the stigmatized group. Finally, in a society characterized by such a structure, targets are likely to interact with members of the nonstigmatized group in a limited array of context and social roles, and also to consistently enact common elements of the stereotypes. Hence, multiple and consistent instances of individual stereotype confirmation contribute to the maintenance of collective views of the stigmatized group.

D. STEREOTYPE CHANGE

Finally, when cognitive alternatives to the current position of the stigmatized group are present, targets may be motivated to improve their social identity by modifying the position of the group as a whole. In this case, targets will self-categorize in terms of the target group and view themselves as a typical member of this group. They are then likely to enact and advertise the self-stereotype endorsed by other ingroup members, especially if they have the power and the skills to do so. In this regard, the group may play an important role in empowering the target and providing guidelines for action. The target may try to challenge the dominant group on existing dimensions of comparisons or seek other dimensions of comparisons allowing the ingroup to compare positively to the outgroup.

In the context of an interpersonal interaction, this strategy may lead to behavioral disconfirmation. It may also lead to stereotype disconfirmation, especially if the perceiver repeatedly encounters targets who display stereotype-inconsistent behavior and if the stigmatized is perceived to be a typical member of his or her group. These two conditions are facilitated by the tendency for members of a common salient ingroup to define themselves as prototypical members of their group and, therefore, to adopt common patterns of behaviors. Finally, if targets consistently advertise these alternative self-stereotypes in the presence of members of the advantaged group, they may successfully implement stereotype change.

IX. Summary and Conclusions

"The organization of society is the framework inside of which social action takes place Such organization and changes in it are the product of the activity of acting units and not of 'forces' which leave such units out of account."

—Herbert Blumer (1962, p. 189)

The longstanding interest aroused by research on behavioral confirmation in social interaction has been motivated, in part, by the implications of this phenomenon for interactions at an intergroup level. For if members of disadvantaged or stigmatized groups can be led to conform to the derogatory stereotypes held by a dominant group, the latter can maintain their positions of privilege and power. However, most studies on behavioral confirmation have concerned interactions between individual perceivers and individual targets. Moreover, these interactions have generally not been defined as involving intergroup relations, as the expectations induced in the perceiver have generally concerned personality traits attributed to the target as an individual rather than to the target's group membership *per se*. Hence, although it is quite possible that behavioral confirmation may take place during intergroup contact, the relevance of existing studies of interpersonal interactions to these settings needs to be established, both theoretically and empirically. Accordingly, our primary goal in this chapter has been to address this transition from the interpersonal to the intergroup levels of interaction by trying to answer the following question: How does stigmatization of one of the group members affect the confirmation of stereotypical expectations (a process that we labeled as "stereotype confirmation") during contact between members of these groups?

To address this question, we began by articulating two processes believed to underlie stereotype confirmation in interpersonal settings: (1) the reciprocation of the perceiver to the target's anticipated behavior, and the target's own reciprocation of the perceiver's overtures; and (2) the pursuit of a confirmatory strategy by the perceiver, coupled with deference on the target's part. Then, we drew on the literature on interactions between nonstigmatized individuals (as perceivers) and stigmatized individuals (as targets) to suggest two behavioral styles likely to be adopted by the former—avoidance and dominance—in their dealings with the latter. Specifically, we reviewed relevant empirical data suggesting that avoidance coupled with reciprocation is particularly likely to lead to the confirmation of stereotypes regarding the sociability of the target, whereas the dominant style will facilitate the implementation of a confirmatory strategy and the consequent confirmation of expectations regarding the stigmatized target's competence to the extent that the target adopts a complementary submissive style.

Based on these distinctions, we next identified which aspects of the interactions between members of stigmatized and nonstigmatized groups may facilitate stereotype confirmation and disconfirmation, respectively. Among these aspects, we first considered those that are related to the *perceiver*. We hypothesized that in unstructured interactions, category salience, intergroup anxiety, and prejudice each should facilitate the use of the avoidant style by the perceiver, whereas in structured interactions

(involving the performance of a joint task), category salience should facilitate the use of a dominant style by the perceiver. A review of the relevant literature on the interactions between members of various stigmatized and nonstigmatized groups proved to be generally consistent with this prediction.

Second, we considered aspects related to the stigmatized *target*, and how the target's response to the perceiver's behavior could affect stereotype confirmation. We proposed that this response may depend on the perceived permeability of group boundaries. When these boundaries are perceived as permeable, we proposed that the awareness that the perceiver may stereotype oneself ("stigma consciousness") is the crucial factor determining the occurrence of behavioral confirmation or disconfirmation. When not stigma conscious, targets are especially vulnerable to stereotype confirmation. When they are stigma conscious, we draw on social identity theory to suggest that they may try to dissociate themselves from their group in order to show that the stereotype does not apply to themselves. These actions, we have argued, may lead to perceptual disconfirmation. By contrast, when intergroup boundaries are perceived as impermeable, we suggested that targets may respond differently as a function of whether they perceive cognitive alternatives to the existing status differences. If there are none, targets may simply endorse the negative stereotypes and enact them. If there are such alternatives, targets may engage in a collective strategy of stereotype change. They are then likely to enact more positive stereotypes of their group and elicit behavioral disconfirmation.

Third, we examined how the target's membership in a stigmatized group can affect the very structure of the interaction with a nonstigmatized perceiver. Specifically, we reviewed empirical evidence showing that members of stigmatized groups tended to occupy positions of lesser interpersonal status and power when interacting with nonstigmatized group members and that this inferior position makes them particularly vulnerable to behavioral confirmation. Based on evidence drawn from expectation states theory, we showed that this power imbalance concerns both formal and informal aspects of status and power.

Finally, after having considered the impact of stigmatization on stereotype confirmation during interpersonal and intergroup interactions, we addressed the question of how stereotype confirmation and disconfirmation during these contacts can actually affect stereotype persistence and change. Based on theories of intergroup contact, we proposed that such an influence of the interpersonal on the intergroup level will hold only to the extent that the perceiver construes the contact as intergroup rather than interpersonal. This, we suggested, will be facilitated to the extent that the target pursues a collective strategy.

This analysis has been consistent with the idea that stereotype confirmation processes are heavily influenced by factors defined at an intergroup level (such as permeability of group boundaries, group differences in power and status, as well as the perceived legitimacy and stability of these differences). Further, we have also suggested that these processes could play a role in the maintenance and change of intergroup relations. Nevertheless, in accord with the quotation that opens this section, we have argued that to understand this influence of the “micro” on the “macro” level, one must take into account the interactions between the sociostructural level of analysis as they affect the contexts in which dyadic interactions take place and the processes occurring at the level of these interactions themselves.

This interactive standpoint has at least two major implications with respect to traditional social psychological research and theory on behavioral confirmation. First, it implies that the study of behavioral confirmation processes can, at least partially, inform an understanding of social processes occurring at superordinate levels of analysis and, hence, serve to address global social problems. Second, it implies that conceptualizations of behavioral confirmation processes should take into account the intergroup contexts in which the confirmation of stereotypes may take place. For such intergroup contexts can and do constrain the settings in which interactions between individuals take place as well as the expectations held by the interacting partners.

Obviously, these two implications are complementary. It is only to the extent that it is informed by an understanding of the societal context in which interaction takes place that behavioral confirmation research can contribute to an understanding of these wider social problems. For example, an issue that may benefit from such an interactive analysis is soccer violence, a phenomenon that is seen as extremely prevalent among English supporters. Typically, the mass media portray supporters of the English soccer team as dangerous “hooligans” (see, for example, Dunning, Murphy, & Williams, 1991). In turn, these stereotypes may become the basis of the actions performed by non-English people when they interact with their targets out of their country. For example, Stott, Hutchinson, and Drury (2001) have shown that during the World Cup held in France in 1998, local youth, but also the police, tended to behave aggressively and indiscriminately toward these English fans, probably as a result of these stereotypes. This observation is consistent with a laboratory study showing that perceivers expecting a target to be hostile tended to behave more aggressively toward this target than perceivers interacting with a target who had not been described as such (Snyder & Swann, 1978). In this study, targets who had been randomly labeled as hostile did indeed behave more aggressively toward the perceivers who had so labeled them. Just like these targets, the supporters of the English team, who until their interaction with the local

youth had been peaceful, felt unjustly treated and retaliated (Stott et al., 2001). Their behavior, which was publicized in the media, therefore served to reinforce the stereotype of the English supporter as a "hooligan." The analysis of this social problem by Stott et al. (2001) illustrates the relevance of a dynamic analysis of the relations between the local level of analysis (here, specific supporters interacting with specific police officers and local youth) and the global level of analysis (the mass media, English supporters in general, the police, and so on).

Methodologically, our analysis suggests that efforts can and should be made to increase the relevance of the typical behavioral confirmation scenario in which an individual perceiver interacts with an individual target, to larger intergroup phenomena; the same, of course, can be recommended more generally of studies of individual and dyadic level phenomena and processes. First, the analysis that we have presented here points to the necessity of using the laboratory to examine the impact of expectations on individuals who truly belong to the groups targeted by expectations, a step that has already been taken in field studies (Dougherty, Turban, & Callender, 1995; Harris Kern & Perkins, 1995; Harris, 1994; Jussim, 1989; Jussim, Eccles, & Madon, 1996). As we have pointed out, people who have a history of living with the burden of expectations may react very differently to a perceiver than individuals who are not even aware that they could be treated as a member of a group (of which they are generally not members). Second, explicit comparisons should be made between situations in which the target belongs and does not belong to the stigmatized group, a path that has almost never been taken (Miller & Myers, 1998). The target's "real" traits, as revealed by personality assessment devices, could then be entered as a covariate in an analysis of the impact of different expectations on ratings of the personality of the target. Doing so would allow the researcher to disentangle the impact of present expectations and the role of more chronic dispositions in determining the target's behavior. Third, explicit attempts to study the impact of interpersonal behavioral confirmation processes at the group level should be pursued. This could be accomplished, for example, by examining how a nonstigmatized perceiver communicates his or her perception of the target's behavior, that is, whether perceptual confirmation can be communicated to third parties (Kashima, 2000; Ruscher, 1998, 2001; Thompson, Judd, & Park, 2000).

More generally, it is apparent from our analysis that many aspects of group relations that shape interpersonal interactions are often implicit in studies using the behavioral confirmation paradigm. Although the setting may seem somewhat artificial and impoverished, perhaps even vacuous, when compared to naturally occurring social interactions, its interest may actually stem precisely from this "bareness"—if such a minimally defined

situation can contribute to reproducing stereotypical expectations, and make them become true, the power of expectations must indeed be noteworthy. In this regard, it may be worth drawing an analogy with the minimal group paradigm (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971); just as this paradigm illustrates the minimal conditions for intergroup bias to occur, so too may the behavioral confirmation paradigm highlight the minimal conditions for the realization of expectations.

In closing, we note that the great sociologist Georg Simmel (1971) compared the structure of society to that of the natural world, in which “not a single grain of sand could have a shape different from what it has, or be in a position different from its actual position, without first conditioning the alteration by a change of the whole, and without entailing such a change in the whole” (p. 19). Individuals taking part in dyadic interactions are, in terms of Simmel’s analogy, adjacent grains of sand within the deserts and beaches constituted by groups, institutions, and societies. In this chapter we have attempted to offer a novel perspective on the interplay between interpersonal and intergroup processes involved in stereotype confirmation. We have done so by integrating behavioral confirmation processes with separate strands of relevant theory and research (expectation states theory, the literature on the influence of stigma on social interaction, the social identity perspective). In this view, stereotype confirmation in interpersonal settings is considered both as an outcome and as a determinant of specific patterns of intergroup relations. In developing this perspective, we hope that we have convincingly shown that the study of stereotype confirmation can contribute meaningfully to understanding larger societal phenomena. If there is a grain of truth in Simmel’s analogy, this may not be wishful thinking.

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