Stigma: An Insider's View

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The literature on stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination has typically focused on the ways dominant groups negatively view and respond to minority groups. We suggest an insider's perspective to focus attention on the stereotyped or stigmatized ingroup's responses, experiences, and beliefs and the paradox of being both an active constructor of one's everyday reality and an involuntary target of negative attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that shape this reality. We propose that an insider's perspective affords a view of stigmatized groups as actively seeking to make sense of their social world and attain positive outcomes, not simply avoid negative outcomes. In this sense, an insider's perspective acknowledges that stigmatized groups are not simply victims or passive recipients of stereotyping but rather actively attempt to construct a buffering life space.

The literature on stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination has typically focused on the ways dominant groups negatively view and respond to minority groups, illustrating the extent, pervasiveness, and influence of negative attitudes and stereotypes on information processing, memory, judgment, and emotional response of dominant group members. In this way, dominant groups have been the subject and subordinate groups the object of research, with stigmatized group members being seen as victims or targets: objects rather than active agents.

For example, much of the history of the study of prejudice has dealt with studying the individual, intergroup, and cultural origins of racism among dominant

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group members, often with the implicit or explicit assumption that minorities internalize these negative views (Duckitt, 1992). Similarly, the content of Whites' attitudes about Blacks has been studied much more extensively than Blacks' views either about Whites or about themselves (e.g., Biernat & Crandall, 1999; Brown-Collins & Sussewell, 1986; J. S. Jackson, McCullough, Gurin, & Broman, 1991; Judd, Park, Ryan, Brauer, & Kraus, 1995; Pettigrew, 1989). The same pattern appears with research on sexism, which typically examines attitudes, beliefs, and behavior toward women, with a focus on the perspective of men (Swim & Campbell, in press). Further, although there has been much less work done on prejudice toward other groups (e.g., gays and lesbians or heavy people), focus has been on attitudes, beliefs, and responses of the dominant group to these ingroups (e.g., Crandall, 1994; Herek, 1998). This work can be termed an "outsider's" view of stereotyping and prejudice in that it focuses on the ways outgroups, typically dominant or majority groups, view and respond to ingroups, typically stigmatized groups, rather than, for instance, the response of ingroups to stereotyping and prejudice or mutual stereotyping and prejudice.

Focus on the outgroups' views has meant that important insiders' perspectives on what constitutes prejudice and insiders' contributions to interactions go unrecorded. It has also obscured systematic differences in the degree and nature of intergroup contact experienced by stigmatized and dominant group members. As outlined below, dominant group members are likely to have both less familiarity with intergroup experiences and more power and status in intergroup experiences, making the *experience of contact* different for members of dominant and stigmatized groups (e.g., Hyers & Swim, 1998). Further, focus on the outgroup's perspectives has meant that basic research insights are too often taken from outsider rather than insider perspectives. For example, in 1965 Morris Rosenberg's careful analysis of self-esteem in children showed that Black children's self-esteem was not lower than White children's self-esteem. Puzzled by this finding, Rosenberg suggested that social arbitrators of self-worth are those who are trusted and that these arbitrators can buffer the negative effects of negative stereotypes about the group. Mainstream social psychologists did not pick up this notion for decades, most noticeably until after Crocker and Major (1989) outlined the self-protective properties of stigma.

To distinguish it from the more common outsider perspective, we label research as having an insider perspective when it focuses attention on a stereotyped or stigmatized ingroup's responses, experiences, and beliefs and the paradox of being both an active constructor of one's everyday reality and an involuntary target of negative attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that shape this reality. An examination of intergroup experiences and their variety, quality, and pervasiveness provides some insight into the need to study an insider's perspective. Insiders are stigmatized; that is, they possess an attribute that disqualifies them from full acceptance in the eyes of outgroups or dominant society in general. This stigmatizing attribute creates a taint

or sense that insiders are marginal to the dominant group or larger society, fertile grounds for stereotyping and prejudice (Goffman, 1964). Anyone can be stigmatized, depending upon the immediate social context, because the particular attribute that appears to be abnormal or deviant can differ from situation to situation.

In this *Journal* issue we focus on those people who find themselves stigmatized by the mainstream culture or society in which they live as a result of their membership in a social group or category (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998). We focus on this group because their repeated and pervasive experience of being stigmatized is likely to be different from that of those who are temporarily stigmatized by a particular experience (Miller & Myers, 1998). Understanding the insider perspective of the chronically stigmatized allows us to understand most fully the effects of prejudice, including its influence on the ways stigmatized ingroup members define themselves, the strategies they use to cope with stigma, the source of opinions they value, and the methods they use to deflect societal stigmas.

More generally an insider perspective highlights the importance of cognitive construals in differential awareness of and sensitivity to prejudice and potentially prejudicial encounters and differences in cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to prejudice. By taking an insider's perspective, we are better able to appreciate differences in sociocultural worldviews underlying differences in cognitive construals and the implications of these differences for the perception of prejudice, the coping mechanism selected, and the psychosocial consequences of prejudice.

This issue advances an insider research agenda in three ways: first, by adding to the empirical base of evidence about insiders' experiences and perceptions; second, by connecting the theoretical basis of this research to the larger social psychological literature; and third, by providing a means to unravel the process by which outgroup stereotypes and prejudices and ingroup behavior, attitudes, and coping strategies are intertwined.

Organization of the Issue

We have organized the issue into three sections: (1) Perceptions of and Affective Reactions to Prejudice and Discrimination, (2) Coping With Prejudice and Discrimination, and (3) Cultural Matches and Mismatches. These three areas delineate distinct though interrelated issues regarding an insider's perspective on the experience of being a member of a culturally stigmatized group. Below we first discuss general issues regarding these three areas and then we describe the contributions of the specific articles in this issue.

Perceptions of and Affective Reactions to Prejudice and Discrimination

Dominant groups and mainstream cultural frames influence the everyday life of subordinate groups. Intergroup experiences are likely to be a more pervasive

part of the everyday lives of stigmatized group members than of dominant group members, and the roles stigmatized and dominant group members play in these contact experiences are likely to differ. Moreover, rather than contact fostering understanding, intergroup experiences elicit expression of stereotypes and prejudice. For example, although high levels of urban neighborhood segregation limit contact in elementary schools and neighborhoods, advanced educational experiences, public spaces and workplaces are more likely to involve European Americans than African Americans (M. R. Jackson, 1994). African Americans are more likely to have extensive contact with European Americans than European Americans are to have such contact with African Americans. With regard to gender, in spite of high levels of contact in schools, in relationships, and as part of families, men's roles are more likely to be in dominant or agentic than women's (Eagly, 1987), and men are more likely than women to be in own-gender-only work environments (M. R. Jackson, 1994). Differences in degree of intergroup contact are similarly likely for other stigmatized groups, especially numerical minorities.

Although ingroup members may share outgroup prejudices among themselves, intergroup contact may be particularly likely to prime stereotypic thinking. When stereotypes are made salient, they are likely to be undermining for stigmatized group members, who experience sexist jokes (Swim, Hyers, Cohen, & Ferguson, this issue) and racist expectations (Celious & Oyserman, this issue) as well as the interfering activation of these negative stereotypes in their own mind (Quinn & Spencer, this issue). The way that everyday intergroup situations differ for members of stigmatized versus nonstigmatized groups is captured by the phrase "driving while Black." Simply driving is not simply driving if one is Black, especially a young Black male, since one's mere presence makes salient stereotypes about young Black men as likely to be involved in illegal activities.

Examining subordinate group members' assessment of and responses to everyday situations and their goals and motivations when choosing whether and how to respond to these situations provides additional insight into the insider's perspective. Insiders' assessments of situations may be a function of their personal history, sensitivity to prejudice (Pinel, 1999), and past experiences with discrimination, and these factors may increase or decrease their willingness to see an outcome or situation as prejudicial (Feldman Barrett & Swim, 1998). Since intergroup contact is common for stigmatized group members, they are likely to encounter these prejudices on an everyday basis. In this way stigmatized group members' everyday encounters with dominant group members are likely to include stereotypes and prejudice directed either at themselves personally or at their group generally (see Swim et al., this issue; Swim, Cohen, & Hyers, 1998). Even when no overt expressions of prejudice occur, the possibility of stereotyping leads to vigilance to potential threat, which can also negatively influence stigmatized individuals (Steele, 1997).

Coping With Prejudice and Discrimination

A useful way to understand stigmatized group members' coping responses to intergroup experiences with prejudice and discrimination is to see these encounters as stressors in their lives (e.g., Allison, 1998; Miller & Kaiser, this issue). Responses can be focused on changing the stressor or adapting to it through affective repair or cognitive restructuring. Targets may focus on the event or their emotional reaction to it; they may attempt to respond to the event or to their anger or confusion about the event. Further, situations are likely to differ in their potential to elicit a focus on avoiding negative consequences of prejudice versus a focus on attaining successful outcomes in spite of potential prejudice. For example, in some classroom settings, minority students may be focused on attempting to learn, whereas in others, minority students may be focused on avoiding being seen as less competent than majority students or on trying to avoid replicating failure experiences of ingroup peers.

In this way, an insider's perspective highlights at least two distinct ways of coping with actual or potential negative intergroup situations. One possibility is to attempt to avoid negative consequences of prejudice, either by attempting to avoid situations where stereotyping may arise or by attempting to distinguish oneself from the stereotype. This coping focus may be termed a prevention focus (Higgins, Roney, Crowe, & Hymes, 1994). Prevention focus involves efforts to minimize prejudicial encounters and their negative effects by, for example, avoiding certain situations (Cohen & Swim, 1995; Pinel, 1999) or focusing attention and resources on ingroup membership (e.g., Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Oyserman, Kemmelmeier, & Brosh, 2000) rather than attempting to be part of larger society. Individuals can also attempt to prevent or minimize prejudicial response by being especially socially competent in intergroup situations (Miller & Myers, 1998), educating others (Hyers, 1999), or withdrawing from stereotype-laden situations by "disengaging" or "disidentifying" with these domains (Ogbu, 1991; Schmader, Major, & Gramzow, this issue; Steele, 1997). In this issue, Schmader et al. explore the link between perceiving school failure as due to racial bias and "disengaging" from school, that is, reducing the importance of school success to one's positive self-evaluation.

By taking an insider's perspective, however, it becomes clear that prevention is not the only possible response to being a member of a stigmatized group. Rather, individuals may focus on attaining positive outcomes and success in spite of prejudice by seeking out additional opportunities, putting in extra effort at a task or encounter, or trying another angle or vantage point. Following the school effort example, a promotion focus would entail efforts to engage teachers and to seek out more learning opportunities, even if current grades are not good. It can also be seen in the sophisticated social skills that heavy individuals may develop to attain positive outcomes in encounters on the job or in social settings (Miller & Myers, 1998).

Whereas preventive efforts focus on the goal of reducing the negative experience of prejudice, promotive efforts (Higgins et al., 1994) focus on attaining goals independent of or despite the hurdles prejudice poses. This distinction highlights the fact that targets of prejudice must attempt both to reduce or minimize the negative consequences of prejudice and to increase their chances of attaining other important life goals such as achieving in school or on the job, being happy, and being liked, valued, and respected. In our own laboratory, we find that when racial identity contains both ingroup focus and positive connection to larger society, promotion focus is more likely, perhaps because such individuals evoke positive larger societal images as self-defining and in this way maintain focus on attaining goals such as school success (Oyserman et al., 2000).

Cultural Matches and Mismatches

Since stigmatized and dominant groups are socially created realities that must be maintained in moment-to-moment interactions if they are to continue to exist, an important question emerging from the insider's view is whether insiders have differing perspectives on the nature of intergroup moment-to-moment interchanges and whether these differences are based in more chronic or stable differences in cultural worldviews. For example, "gender" is created both in ongoing and small interactions between men and women (Deaux & LaFrance, 1998; Deaux & Major, 1987; Lips, 1999; Rakow & Wackwitz, 1998) and through a socialization process that sets up chronic differences in whether the self and others are seen as separate or linked to one another (Cross & Madson, 1997; Markus & Oyserman, 1989).

More generally, individuals with less power are likely to be chronically more attuned to the situation, to shifts in affective and nonverbal tone of the other, generally paying more nuanced attention to the other (Hall & Briton, 1993). Women, for example, are less susceptible to seeing outgroups as homogeneous than are men, perhaps because of their greater attention to specifics about dominant groups given their subordinate social role (Lorenzi-Cioldi, Eagly, & Stewart, 1995). The notion that stigmatized individuals must carefully monitor their behavior to fit into a society dominated by others has been raised in reference to gays and lesbians among other groups as well (for a review see Frable, 1997). In this way, structural differences between dominant and subordinate groups are posited to result in differences in chronic accessibility of interpersonal and situational focus. Because contexts are less likely to be sources of negative constraint, negative attitudes, stereotypes, and prejudice, dominant group members can ignore context and focus on the individual as a free agent whose behavior is due to personal choices, traits, and characteristics and not situational limitations.

By chronically focusing attention on the other, the situation, and the relationship between the self and the other, a subordinate position is likely to set up a

worldview or perspective that differs from that of the dominant position. The notion of differing basic perspectives has also been advanced in recent discussion of cultural frames (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, in press; Triandis, 1995), particularly the differences between independent and interdependent worldviews (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Cultural and cross-cultural psychologists suggest that perception, information processing, and attribution style may be influenced by cultural perspective (for a review see Choi, Nisbett, & Norenzayan, 1999, or Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998). This research implies that situations may be more likely to be taken into account by those with an interdependent worldview, whereas those with an independent worldview may be more likely to ignore situational cues.

Utilizing this framework, Cross and Madson (1997) review literature highlighting the possibility that women are more relational in their self-concepts than men, defining the self in terms of relationships and being sensitive to social and contextual feedback. Further, Asian Americans and Latinos/as are more likely than their Anglo counterparts to endorse communal and familial values, whereas African Americans are more likely to value individual difference and uniqueness, perhaps because of the need to struggle to attain a sense of human dignity in the face of discrimination and in the wake of slavery (for a review of this literature, see Coon & Kemmelmeier, 2000; Oyserman et al., 2000). Thus cultural, cross-cultural, and gender studies all suggest that there may be systematic differences in (chronically accessible) perceptual organization between European males and others that may be useful in understanding the differences in the perspectives of these groups.

These differences in worldviews can have consequences for the quality of intergroup encounters and the ability of stigmatized group members to make sense of and fit into dominant group social institutions. For example, Triandis (1989) proposed that mismatches in values may occur in the interactions between Hispanic and Anglo individuals with Hispanic individuals valuing establishment of relational bonds or a sense of "simpatico" even in work situations and Anglos attempting to be instrumentally focused. A recent review of the cross-cultural literature suggests that the propensity to work in groups and attempt to forge relational bonds at work is less likely to characterize White middle-class Americans than others (Oyserman et al., 2000). Even knowing that the other has a different cultural script is unlikely to reduce the perception that the interchange is not smooth in such circumstances (Oyserman & Markus, 1993), fostering a sense that the other is disingenuous or false in his or her response. The insider's perspective raises the question of whether and how subordinate group members identify mismatches between their own perspective and that of the dominant group or whether each group simply sees reality through its own prism and assumes that this perspective is the only or natural one.

Articles in the Issue

In the first section of this issue, an insider perspective is used to describe women's experiences with sexism. The unique experience of insiders is examined by exploring how stigmatized group members perceive and respond to actual and anticipated prejudice and discrimination. Using creative experimental and diary-based techniques, authors in this section give the reader a glimpse of the insider's view of intergroup experiences, highlighting the ways that larger societal stereotypes and beliefs scaffold and frame responses to stereotyping and discrimination. First, Woodzicka and LaFrance illustrate the difference between expected and experienced responses to gender-based harassment. In a clever experimental manipulation, they show that although women *expect* to respond to sexual harassment with direct action and anger, in a real world simulation, they do not respond as expected. Instead, they do not take action and feel afraid, not angry. Thus, Woodzicka and LaFrance show how disparate are the actual responses to sexual harassment in a workplace setting and the beliefs about those responses: Though women expected that they would be able to leave such situations or tell off the harasser, in a job interview experiment, women neither left the situation nor told off the harasser.

Swim, Hyers, Cohen, and Ferguson document how common, everyday, and mundane negative gender-based comments are and that these comments have the potential to focus women on their bodies and gender roles, rather than other productive social roles, such as the student role. These authors illustrate that women's experiences with everyday, interpersonal forms of sexism are quantitatively and qualitatively different from men's experiences. Women are about twice as likely to experience these types of daily hassles as men, accounting in part for women's tendency to experience more total daily hassles than men. Women's experiences are more likely to contain forms of sexual objectification, in addition to the traditional gender role and demeaning comments that both genders experience. Further, although everyday experiences with sexism dampen both women's and men's positive mood and state self-esteem, the implications are greater for women than men given the differences in the quantity of experiences.

Quinn and Spencer show that being reminded of being a woman dampens female students' math performance, particularly in the domain of verbal problems, a domain in which women are stereotyped to perform more poorly than men. In this way, Quinn and Spencer focus on the threat stigmatized people experience when they are performing in stereotyped domains. They demonstrate that stereotype threat can affect how women approach mathematical tests in ways that can impede their performance on these exams. When being female was made salient and relevant to performance, women were more likely to report having no idea of how or strategy with which to solve a problem.

The second section of this issue provides insight into the ways that ingroup members can cope with stigma, stereotypes, and prejudice in ways that can minimize the negative affective and behavioral consequences illustrated in the first section. Choices of coping strategies and the likely consequences of these strategies are discussed in this section. In the first article, Miller and Kaiser review literature that links coping with stigmatization to coping with other chronic stresses, such as poverty. Their review illustrates the benefits of understanding these coping responses in terms of the broader coping literature on stress and provides a general framework for understanding the multiple responses stigmatized individuals can have to prejudice and discrimination.

The next two articles provide specific illustrations of coping responses to prejudice and discrimination. Schmader, Major, and Gramzow present correlational data to explore the relationship between perceived racial barriers to economic and academic success and disengaging from academics so that school failure is no longer as damaging to feelings of self-competence. They suggest that, although disengagement processes can protect the self-esteem of nonstigmatized groups (European Americans) and stigmatized groups (African Americans and Latino/a Americans), the source of the disengagement differs. For African Americans and Latinos/as, perceived injustices lead either to devaluing academic success or to discounting the validity of intellectual tests, whereas for European Americans, devaluing and discounting are more exclusively a result of their own level of academic performance.

Lastly, Gaines explores the ways that in- and outgroup members may differ in their ability to provide social support to stigmatized group members who experience negative workplace environments because of their stigmatized status. Since social support is an important way to buffer stress in general, he examines the role of relationships with stigmatized and nonstigmatized partners as a source of social support for the stigmatized. Gaines explores different types of relationships between stigmatized and nonstigmatized individuals as well as the characteristics that can make relationships between members of stigmatized groups particularly beneficial for the stigmatized.

The final section of this issue provides the reader with a reminder of the heterogeneity of possible social categorizations and the interface between race, gender, and socioeconomic status. This section highlights the sometimes surprising implications of thinking about the self as different from others, as similar to others, as part of a common superordinate group, or as part of a distinct subgroup and the unique experiences of stigmatized individuals as they move between their own group's cultural views and the cultural views of the dominant group. Authors in this section propose that basic differences in worldviews complicate interactions between groups because of mismatches in worldviews.

Kemmelmeier and Oyserman provide experimental evidence that compared to men, women are more likely to feel that another's failure reflects on their own

chance of success, especially when the other's failure is framed as being due to personal traits and characteristics. Conversely, men are more susceptible to dampened self-evaluations in the light of another's failure if the failure is framed as being due to circumstances. These authors argue that underlying these differences is a gender difference in self-concept construction, with women seeing the self in relation to others and the situation and men seeing the self as distinct from others. In this way, attempting to separate oneself from the stigmatized group by focusing on differences in traits and personal characteristics may backfire when identity is relationally focused.

Next, Celious and Oyserman examine the implications of the interplay between gender, socioeconomic status, and different skin tones among African Americans. Whereas outgroup members may classify nearly all people who have a certain degree of African ancestry as being "Black," variations in skin tone can have important implications for how such "Blacks" are treated by outgroup members and by members of their own ingroup. Recognizing the complex interplay among gender, socioeconomic status, and differences in skin tone can be essential to understanding the views that African Americans have of themselves and the heterogeneity that exists within this community. Celious and Oyserman explore heterogeneity within racial groups, highlighting the importance of taking into account the way that gender, socioeconomic status, and physical attributes such as skin tone create distinct subgroups with intra- and intergroup experiences that differ from those of the lower-class young Black males, who form the core of larger society's racial stereotypes about African Americans.

Finally, Dovidio, Gaertner, Flores Niemann, and Snider address intergroup relationships between the stigmatized and nonstigmatized. They illustrate how the perspectives that majority and minority groups have on particular intergroup interactions can differ in fundamental ways that can be linked to differences in numerical representation and biases from categorization processes. They also illustrate, however, the importance of the fluidity of self-categorization processes and how differing self-categorizations can affect one's experience in intergroup interactions, particularly if one's categorization expands to be defined in terms of a superordinate identification that includes previously excluded members within one's ingroup. In this way they highlight the ways that group identity influences sense of inclusion and willingness to take on different superordinate identities, with African Americans being less willing to be submerged into a common "we are all one group" identity and more willing to connect to others with a "different groups all working together" identity.

Conclusion

Studying stigma from an insider's perspective helps us alter the way that we think about and study the stigmatized and prejudice more generally. First, this

approach helps us know more about targets of stereotyping. We are able, at a minimum, to get a glimpse at stigmatized individuals' affective and cognitive reactions to discrimination and the means that they use to cope with prejudice. We are also able not only to understand how their life experiences and worldviews may differ from those of nonstigmatized people but also to understand variations among different stigmatized groups (e.g., African Americans vs. Latino/a Americans, Chinese Americans vs. Vietnamese Americans). This perspective also highlights the possibility of important within-group heterogeneity in the likelihood that prejudice is anticipated or perceived, in the means selected to cope with it, and in self-definitions and categorization. Moreover, by knowing more about the stigmatized, we are also able to understand their resiliency and strengths rather than simply understanding them as objects or victims of others' prejudice.

Second, by taking an insider's view of prejudice we are able to have a broader view of stigma perpetrators, intergroup interactions, and prejudice. By examining insider views on prejudice we come to understand the breadth and variety in types of events that can be perceived as threatening and prejudicial. Differences in perceptions can illustrate that what is felt as prejudiced or discriminatory varies and that dominant group members may not see insider responses as a reaction to dominant group prejudice or discrimination, even if it has been influenced by it. We are also able to consider how both stigmatized and nonstigmatized group members contribute to intergroup interactions. Stigmatized individuals will have their own expectations and prejudices about outgroups (i.e., other stigmatized groups as well as nonstigmatized groups). Just like nonstigmatized individuals' expectations and prejudices, stigmatized individuals' expectations and prejudices may create tensions within intergroup interactions. Stigmatized individuals are likely, however, to have had more opportunities to develop skills in bridging cultural views, and they may be able to lead the way to more satisfying intergroup interactions, perhaps moving nonstigmatized individuals not just to tolerate stigmatized group members but also to fully accept them.

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