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Introduction

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Diversity has become the defining characteristic of our social and cultural worlds. We are now constantly confronted with a multitude of ways in which we can define ourselves, and categorize others. Ethnicity, nationality, gender, religion, occupation, politics—our social and cultural worlds are increasingly, and unassailably, multifaceted. Since the mid-1950s we have seen unprecedented intercultural exchange, and the geographical boundaries that previously divided cultures have been slowly but surely eroded. In the United States, for example, 33.5 million people (12% of the population) were born overseas (US Census Bureau, 2004), and in the United Kingdom it is 4.9 million (8.3% of the population) (National Statistics, 2001). We no longer live in the provincial, homogenized worlds that characterized much of human history; we live in worlds defined by diversity.

As a consequence, diversity is arguably *the* most persistently debated characteristic of modern societies. The nature of a world in which traditional social, cultural, and geographic boundaries have given way to increasingly complex representations of identity creates new questions and new demands for social scientists and policymakers alike. Understanding the psychology of social and cultural diversity is critical to how we answer these questions, and meet these demands. This book is all about the multifaceted nature of modern society and, in particular, the psychological and behavioral consequences of increasing social and cultural diversity. The book brings together scholars from a wide range of perspectives to offer, for the first time, an integrated volume that explores the psychological implications and applications of this timely social issue. The contributors provide cutting-edge analyses and discussions of theory and research as well as directly addressing policy implications and prospective interventions.

The chapters are organized into six thematic groupings that highlight the range of perspectives that characterize the field: *social identity*, *culture*, *intergroup attitudes*, *intergroup relations*, *group processes*, and *interventions*. As well as illustrating how social and cultural diversity is an important focus in all of these domains, these groupings provide the basis for drawing parallels in theory and research that crosscut these boundaries. A summary and introduction to what you will find in these chapters is outlined below.

Part I: Social Identity

The three chapters in Part I focus on how diversity can define social identity and, in particular, antecedents, processes, and consequences of possessing multiple identities for social behavior. In Chapter 2: *Social Identity Complexity and Acceptance of Diversity* Marilyn Brewer discusses recent research developing the concept of social identity complexity. The notion of identity is central to social and cultural psychology, and social identity complexity is an approach that incorporates an understanding of our evolving societies with these perspectives. Brewer argues that in large and complex societies people are differentiated along many meaningful dimensions, including gender, age, religion, ethnicity, and political ideology. Furthermore, such categorizations are crosscutting so that people can share a common ingroup membership on one dimension but be different along others. Social identity complexity conceptualizes the way in which this complex and differentiated social structure is reflected in individuals' representations of their own identity. In this chapter Brewer outlines theory and empirical support for the idea that social identity complexity can promote generalized tolerance and acceptance of diversity for individuals, groups, and society at large.

Building on the idea that social and cultural diversity can have a considerable impact on self-construal, in Chapter 3: *Facilitating the Development and Integration of Multiple Social Identities: The Case of Immigrants in Québec* Catherine Amiot and Roxane de la Sablonnière outline their model of social identity development that focuses specifically on how individuals integrate multiple identities into their self-concept. Their model draws conceptual links between social psychological theories (i.e., social identity theory, self-categorization theory) and developmental principles to outline the factors that facilitate identity integration. In particular, they argue that the integration of multiple social identities should be facilitated when membership of

multiple groups is meaningful to the individual, and those groups support, recognize, and value the contribution made by their individual members. They discuss factors that may inhibit this integration process (threat, status, and power differentials) and apply their model to the case of immigration in Québec.

In Chapter 4: *Costs and Benefits of Switching among Multiple Social Identities* Margaret Shih, Diana Sanchez, and Geoffrey Ho discuss research that has revealed considerable benefits of possessing multiple identities for psychological health. This research has shown how diversity that defines the self (for instance, regarding being both a woman and Asian as central to one's identity) can afford a psychological buffer against negative life events. They discuss research showing that people with accessible multiple identities can identify flexibly with one or other of these identities depending on factors such as individual differences, motivations, and social context, and how this flexible self-construal may afford an adaptive and effective psychological buffer against negative life events, enhancing well-being and promoting positive adjustment outcomes.

Part II: Culture

The chapters in Part II continue to examine the implications of possessing multiple identities for the self-concept, but from the perspective of cross-cultural psychology. In Chapter 5: *Multicultural Identity: What It Is and Why It Matters* Angela-MinhTu D. Nguyen and Verónica Benet-Martínez outline theory and research on biculturalism, and in particular, the concept of bicultural identity integration. Being bicultural (e.g., Chinese Americans who maintain both their Chinese cultural identity as well as identifying with American culture) has been found to have unique and positive impacts on a range of cognitions and behavior. Nguyen and Benet-Martínez define biculturalism, its components, and related constructs (e.g., acculturation strategies) and go on to compare the different ways of measuring it (e.g., unidimensional versus bidimensional models). They focus in particular on bicultural identity integration and discuss the impacts of differing degrees of integration on a range of cognitions and behaviors.

In Chapter 6: *What I Know in My Mind and Where My Heart Belongs: Multicultural Identity Negotiation and its Cognitive Consequences* Carmit Tadmor, Sun No, Ying-yi Hong, and Chi-yue Chiu outline an integrative model of the development and cognitive consequences of possessing a multicultural identity (that is, defining one's identity in

terms of more than one culture). The authors argue that developing a multicultural identity involves integrating ideas and practices from different cultures, processes that have a significant and lasting impact on cognitive functioning. In particular, such experiences can lead to greater cognitive flexibility, through the process of cultural frame-switching, and the authors illustrate how this can be demonstrated in disparate domains such as creative performance. The authors discuss the model's implications for immigration policies and the development of multicultural competence.

Part III: Intergroup Attitudes

While Parts I and II focus on examining how diversity defines identity, the chapters in Part III move on to consider how exposure to social and cultural diversity impacts attitudes toward *others*. While these chapters broadly shift to exploring the implications of perceiving, rather than possessing, multiple identities, the work discussed draws upon key themes that have been developed in the previous chapters (such as the psychological and behavioral benefits of diversity, and the psychological processes that are engaged to deal with a world characterized by diversity).

The first chapter in Part III illustrates how researchers have examined multicultural diversity from two vantage points—not only the effects on the individual who is defined by multiple identities but also the effects of diversity on perceivers. In Chapter 7: *Multiculturalism and Tolerance: An Intergroup Perspective* Maykel Verkuyten examines key questions faced by multicultural societies, including: “Should Sikhs be allowed to wear a turban rather than a helmet on construction sites or a crash helmet when riding a motorcycle?” “Should Muslim teachers refuse to shake hands with children’s parents of the opposite sex?” and “Should civil servants be allowed to wear a headscarf or students wear a burqa or a niqab?” Verkuyten examines multiculturalism and tolerance as they relate to social and cultural diversity, exploring the interaction between salient policies of multiculturalism versus assimilation and psychological processes, and the notion that multicultural policies should involve active support for cultural difference.

In Chapter 8: *Diversity Experiences and Intergroup Attitudes* Christopher Aberson explores the impact of diversity experiences and beliefs on intergroup attitudes. This work illustrates how it is not only important to experience diversity *per se*, but that there are a number of conditions that are critical to ensure that diversity is experienced in the *right way*,

and that such experiences are valued, and have an impact on individuals' broader ideological orientations. He first examines the impacts of diverse educational and work experiences, with a special focus on interventions designed to promote positive experiences and attitudes. He then discusses research on diversity-valuing attitudes and their relationship to more positive intergroup attitudes, focusing on research that has illuminated the psychological mechanisms that mediate the relationship between attitudes and experience. The chapter ends with a discussion of the implications of this work for social policies such as affirmative action, as well as suggestions for future research.

Part IV: Intergroup Relations

Chapters 7 and 8 introduced the idea that exposure to social and cultural diversity can have significant implications not only for the self, but for how individuals perceive and evaluate others. The two chapters in this section develop this idea in their discussions of the impact of exposure to diversity on intergroup relations. In particular, these chapters have developed laboratory-based analogues of the categorization processes that defined exposure to diversity. This has allowed an examination of the basic cognitive, motivational, affective, and ideological processes that underlie reactions to diversity and differentiation. As these authors illustrate, lessons learned in the laboratory can then usefully inform and instruct the ways in which policymakers should implement strategies for improving intergroup relations.

In Chapter 9: *The Effects of Crossed Categorizations in Intergroup Interaction* Norman Miller, Marija Spanovic, and Douglas Stenstrom discuss research into the impacts of crossed categorization on intergroup bias. The crossed categorization paradigm is a precise experimental analogue of the relationship between the self and others in socially diverse contexts. The authors illustrate how crossed categorization is a structural feature of societies and human relations that has a significant impact on how we perceive, understand, and relate to others. They use the crossed categorization paradigm to answer questions such as: "How do people process, integrate, and categorize others in the face of complex social and cultural diversity?" "What occurs when one category dominates the intergroup setting?" and "How do affective and cognitive processes influence the categorization process?" They argue that at the heart of crossed categorization research is the ability to model real-world situations wherein individuals are routinely faced with multiple salient categorizations.

In Chapter 10: *Complexity of Superordinate Self-categories and Ingroup Projection* Sven Waldzus discusses how diversity impacts on processes described by the ingroup projection model. This model is a psychological account of how social groups are evaluated within the context of a common frame of comparison. In other words, it provides a framework for understanding how high-status and/or majority groups can psychologically exclude minority groups. According to the model, ingroup members tend to project their group's characteristics (e.g., White) on to the superordinate group prototype (e.g., British), providing a basis for discriminating against other (typically minority) groups (e.g., Asian), because they then deviate from the ingroup norm (which has been defined by the dominant majority group). Waldzus describes research that has examined whether it is possible to reduce ingroup projection by encouraging more complex (diverse) representations of superordinate categories, and the potential benefits of highlighting diversity for social relations that are defined by differing status.

Part V: Group Processes

Continuing with the theme developed in Parts III and IV, that exposure to social and cultural diversity can have an impact on attitudes and behaviors toward others, and developing the idea that diversity can be represented by social categories that either reinforce or crosscut existing differences, the next two chapters examine the effects of diversity on performance in work groups and organizations. In Chapter 11: *The Categorization-Elaboration Model of Work Group Diversity: Wielding the Double-Edged Sword* Daan van Knippenberg and Wendy van Ginkel outline how work group diversity affects group functioning and performance. In particular, they describe the Categorization-Elaboration Model, a model that can account for diverging outcomes observed in several decades of research on work group diversity. The model accounts for how diversity can both disrupt group performance by forming “faultlines” along converging bases for group differentiation but, under the right conditions, can also stimulate elaborative processing of task-relevant information leading to facilitated group performance. The authors discuss empirical evidence in support of the model, from experimental and field research, and its implications for the management of diversity, focusing on a variety of factors including team composition, leadership, training, and development.

In Chapter 12: *Divided We Fall, or United We Stand? How Identity Processes Affect Faultline Perceptions and the Functioning of*

Diverse Teams Floor Rink and Karen Jehn further discuss the implications of faultlines in work groups, using the social identity and self-categorization perspectives. They argue that identity processes determine whether diversity faultlines will result in a negative or positive impact on work teams. Drawing on research using the common ingroup identity model that shows how subgroup identification moderates reactions to weakened group boundaries, the authors discuss a number of practical ways in which groups and organizations can deal with diversity that is perceived as threatening, and illustrate the value in combining research in social categorization, intergroup relations, and group productivity.

Part VI: Interventions

In Part VI two chapters describe how research on diversity is being harnessed to develop interventions for promoting tolerance, improving intergroup relations, and enhancing well-being and psychological health. In Chapter 13: *Combined Effects of Intergroup Contact and Multiple Categorization: Consequences for Intergroup Attitudes in Diverse Social Contexts* Katharina Schmid and Miles Hewstone combine some of the concepts already discussed in this volume in their research, showing how intergroup contact can lead to more differentiated perceptions of outgroups via enhanced social identity complexity. Drawing on research into crossed categorization, they examine the combined effects of intergroup contact and multiple categorization processes on perceived differences and intergroup bias in socially and culturally diverse contexts.

Finally, in Chapter 14: *The Application of Diversity-based Interventions to Policy and Practice* Lindsey Cameron and Rhiannon Turner discuss the prospects for application of psychological interventions based on diversity research to educational contexts. They illustrate how the school environment provides the most likely context within which children will come into contact with others from different ethnic or racial backgrounds. However, they point to evidence that shows how children typically choose friends from within their own ethnic or racial group rather than spontaneously developing cross-group friendships. They show how encouraging, in particular, intervention strategies that encourage cross-group friendship may be one of the most effective methods by which the opportunity for diverse contact experiences can be harnessed, leading to reduced prejudice in both children and adults.

References

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