Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination

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The Role of Entitativity in Stereotyping

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HANDBOOK OF PREJUDICE, STEREOTYPING, AND DISCRIMINATION

Edited by Todd D. Nelson
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We encounter a broad spectrum of groups in our daily lives. We all belong to families; we work closely with colleagues in our careers; we belong to social, sports, and religious organizations; and we are all members of multiple social categories based on gender, race, nationality, socioeconomic status, age, and occupation, among others. It is not surprising then that social psychology has long been dedicated to the study of groups (Allport, 1954; Campbell, 1958; Heider, 1958; Lewin, 1948; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Over the decades, a large corpus of theoretical and empirical research has accumulated on how groups form and develop, how we categorize group-related information, and how we develop and rely on impressions of the groups that we encounter in everyday life.

Often those groups are large social categories reflecting groupings based on race, gender, nationality, religion, social class, and various aspects of lifestyle. As the chapters in this volume document, these large social categories have throughout history shaped the very nature of social life. Categorical distinctions impact how we think about, perceive, feel about, and interact with members of those categories, and they often determine the way the groups themselves relate to each other. Of particular relevance in this chapter, people develop belief systems—stereotypes—about those groups. In this chapter we explore some long-standing questions regarding the cognitive foundations of stereotypes, the conditions under which stereotypes are most likely to be formed and applied, and the types of groups about which stereotypes form.

A stereotype can be defined as a person’s “knowledge, beliefs, and expectancies about some social group” (Hamilton & Trolier, 1986, p. 133). They are belief systems about groups, belief systems that represent the attributes, characteristics, behavior patterns, and so on, associated with a particular group. Once formed, that set of beliefs is applied to all members of the group, generalizing across individuals, despite the fact that those persons may show considerable variation in numerous respects. This generalization process leads to the perception of homogeneity among group members. This perception of homogeneity is inherent in stereotyping, and consequently, as Allport (1954) emphasized, stereotyping involves the overgeneralization of attributes to group members.
However, we do not form stereotypes of all groups. Members of the category “left-handed people” are homogeneous in their handedness, but we usually do not have stereotypes about them as a group. What are the constraints on stereotype formation? What are the preconditions that increase the tendency for stereotyping? What types of groups are most likely to be stereotyped? This chapter addresses some of these questions, and in doing so, we hope to specify some of the preconditions that underlie stereotypes of social groups.

**ENTITATIVITY: THE GROUPNESS OF GROUPS**

One fundamental way in which groups differ is the degree to which they may be viewed as coherent units or entities (Campbell, 1958; Hamilton & Sherman, 1996; Hamilton, Sherman, & Lickel, 1998; Lickel et al., 2000). Collections of individuals differ in the extent to which they possess the quality of “groupness.” All would agree that a family, a work team, and a jury are likely to be viewed as highly interactive, interdependent, and meaningful social units. In contrast, the crowd of fans attending a baseball game and the people shopping in a grocery store are less likely to be perceived as highly uniform and cohesive groups of people. Campbell (1958) introduced the term entitativity to refer to the degree to which members of a group are bonded together in a coherent social unit. In recent years, theoretical and empirical work on the perception of group entitativity has significantly advanced our understanding of the construct (for reviews, see Brewer & Harasty, 1996; Brewer, Hong, & Li, 2004; Hamilton, Sherman, & Castelli, 2002; Hamilton et al., 1998; Hamilton, Sherman, & Rodgers, 2004; Sherman, Hamilton, & Lewis, 1999; Sherman & Johnson, 2003; Yzerbyt, Castano, Leyens, & Paladino, 2000; Yzerbyt, Rocher, & Schadron, 1997).

Much of the entitativity research has focused on identifying the perceptual cues that perceivers rely on when making entitativity judgments. These factors include group size, the degree of spatial proximity and amount of interaction among group members, the importance or social identity value of the group to its members, and perceived common goals and outcomes among group members (Campbell, 1958; Lickel et al., 2000). For instance, all other things being equal, numerical minorities may be perceived as higher in entitativity than majorities (Brewer & Harasty, 1996; Brewer, Weber, & Carini, 1995; although see McGarty, Haslam, Hutchinson, & Grace, 1995). Many researchers have emphasized the close relationship between the perceived homogeneity of a group and its degree of entitativity (Brewer et al., 1995; Dasgupta, Banaji, & Abelson, 1999; Yzerbyt, Rogier, & Fiske, 1998). Other antecedent factors that may elicit beliefs about entitativity include the level of interdependence, interpersonal bonds, organization, and behavioral influence among group members (Gaertner & Scholper, 1998; Hamilton et al., 1998; Welbourne, 1999).

Recent research has also emphasized the consequences of perceiving groups as cohesive entities. The extent to which groups are perceived to be unified entities strongly influences how people think about those groups, and consequently, has significant implications for a wide variety of judgment processes (Hamilton & Sherman, 1996; Yzerbyt et al., 1998). For instance, the degree of entitativity of a target influences perceptions of threat (Abelson, Dasgupta, Park, & Banaji, 1998), dispositional inferences (Yzerbyt et al., 1998), correspondence bias (Rogier & Yzerbyt, 1999), and the specific processing strategies that are used during impression formation (for a review, see Hamilton et al., 2002). When confronted with an entitative group, social perceivers overestimate the influence of group characteristics on a group member’s behavior and they disregard the impact of situational forces. Moreover, high entitative targets evoke more integrative than memory-based processing, more spontaneous dispositional inferences, faster and more extreme judgments, and greater information recall than do low entitative targets (Hamilton & Sherman, 1996; Hamilton, Sherman, & Maddox, 1999; McConnell, Sherman, & Hamilton, 1994, 1997; Susskind, Maurer, Thakkar, Hamilton, & Sherman, 1999; Wyer, Bodenhausen, & Srull, 1984). Other consequences of entitativity for perceptions of groups, particularly regarding the relation to stereotyping, are the focus of later sections of this chapter.
As illustrated in our earlier examples, people continually encounter a diverse array of groups in the social environment (e.g., families, work groups, ethnic groups, social clubs, business organizations, etc.). There may be real and important systematic differences among the various groups that comprise this rich and complex social world. Therefore it is reasonable to expect that certain stimulus features will weigh more heavily than others as determinants of entitativity, depending, for example, on the type of group in question (Lickel et al., 2000). One fruitful approach to the study of entitativity would be to examine whether distinct perceptual cues are differentially important as predictors of “groupness” for different types of groups. A potentially useful framework for pursuing this question was offered by Brewer et al. (2004).

**Types of Groups**

Although various authors have adopted several different strategies for distinguishing among different types of groups (Deaux, Reid, Mizrahi, & Ethier, 1995; Prentice, Miller, & Lightdale, 1994; Wilder & Simon, 1998), research by Lickel et al. (2000) has been particularly useful in empirically deriving a set of perceived group types and in determining their relation to perceptions of entitativity. Lickel et al. asked participants to rate 40 different groups on a wide range of attributes, including the size, permeability, and duration of the group; the similarity and level of interaction among group members; and the importance of the group to its members. Participants also completed a sorting task whereby they grouped the sample of 40 groups into “types” according to their own intuitive perceptions of the similarities and differences among the groups. Multivariate analyses of these data (factor analysis of ratings, clustering of sortings) identified four primary types of groups: intimacy groups (e.g., families, friends, support groups), task groups (e.g., a work group, a jury, the cast of a play), social categories (e.g., women, Jews, Americans), and loose associations (e.g., people living in the same neighborhood, students at a university, people in line at a bank). Moreover, the group types varied systematically with respect to their characteristic or defining features, based on participants’ ratings of the groups. For instance, intimacy groups are perceived as small, impermeable, highly interactive units of long duration, which are very important to their members. Task-oriented groups are small in size, of relatively short duration, are relatively permeable (ease of joining or leaving the group), and their members share common goals. Social categories are large groups that are long lasting and impermeable, but fairly low in group member interaction. Thus, the participants’ ratings generated distinct profiles or patterns of group features that are associated with each higher order group type.

An important finding in this research was that these group types differed significantly in their average perceived levels of entitativity. Intimacy groups were viewed as more entitative than task groups, which in turn, were regarded as more entitative than social categories. Loose associations were perceived as the least entitative type of group. These differences in entitativity among group types have been replicated by Pickett, Silver, and Brewer (2002). For purposes of this chapter, it is perhaps intriguing—and perhaps puzzling—that social categories—the groups about whom people have stereotypes, and that have been the focus of such an extensive research literature—were rated only moderately in entitativity. We return to this point later in the chapter.

The group typology manifested in Lickel et al.’s (2000) data was based on participants’ ratings and sortings of 40 stimulus groups. Both of these tasks involve quite deliberative, intentional, and analytic cognitive processes. It may be, then, that the distinctions obtained in this study were the product, at least in part, of such processing and may not represent people’s natural perceptions of groups in the social world. It is important, therefore, that Sherman et al. (2002) demonstrated (in a series of four experiments) that social perceivers spontaneously use these group types when encoding, organizing, and processing group-related information. For example, in a spontaneous categorization task (Sherman et al., 2002, Study 1), individuals made more within-type-of-group memory errors (e.g., between two social categories) than between-type-of-group errors (e.g., between a social category and a task group). For example, a face paired with the label “Frenchman” would later
be more likely to be misidentified as “Presbyterian” (a within-type-of-group error) than as a jury member (a between-type-of-group error). Taken together, the Lickel et al. and Sherman et al. studies provide convergent evidence that intimacy groups, task groups, social categories, and loose associations are distinct, naturally occurring, psychologically meaningful, and widely used cognitive structures. These group types appear to reflect cognitive structures that people spontaneously use when processing information about groups and their members.

Given this accumulated evidence, then, entitativity may also be important for other aspects of group perception. We have already referred to work on perceptions of homogeneity in social categories and to the generalizations made about group members. How does entitativity relate to these phenomena? This question is the focus of the next two sections. We then turn specifically to the issue of entitativity’s role in stereotyping.

PERCEPTIONS OF ENTI TATIVITY AND HOMOGENEITY

One of the five cues that Lickel et al. (2000) found to be related to perceived entitativity—and the one cue that has been shown to play an important part in the stereotyping process—is the perception of similarity among group members. In essence, the perception of group members as homogenous facilitates overgeneralizations being made about the group, which contributes directly to stereotyping. Research on the outgroup homogeneity effect has demonstrated just such a relationship between perceived similarity and stereotyping (Park & Hastie, 1987; Ryan, Judd, & Park, 1996).

THE OUTGROUP HOMOGENEITY EFFECT

The literature on the outgroup homogeneity effect has shown that people perceive outgroup members to be more similar to each other than one’s ingroup members (Mullen & Hu, 1989; Ostrom & Sedikides, 1992; Park & Judd, 1990; Quattrone & Jones, 1980). A number of theories have been proposed to explain this finding. For example, according to social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978), ingroup members desire positive distinctiveness from outgroup members. One way they achieve such distinctiveness is by viewing members of the ingroup as unique and differentiated, whereas members of the outgroup are seen as “all the same.” Another theory is that individuals perceive the outgroup to be more homogeneous because of less familiarity with members of the outgroup and greater familiarity with the ingroup (Linville, Fischer, & Salovey, 1989; Quattrone & Jones, 1980). Park and Judd (1990) reviewed the literature and compared the various methods used to assess outgroup homogeneity. Three common measures have assessed the extent to which (a) group members are perceived to possess stereotypic versus counterstereotypic traits, (b) group members are perceived to vary on a particular trait, and (c) ingroup members are perceived to be similar to one another. Evidence for outgroup homogeneity is found when members of the outgroup are perceived to possess more stereotypic traits than ingroup members, when outgroup members are judged to show less variability on various traits, and when outgroup members are rated to be more similar than members of one’s ingroup.

Although the outgroup homogeneity effect has been observed in both minimal groups and naturally occurring groups (for a review see Ostrom & Sedikides, 1992), it does not generalize to every ingroup–outgroup comparison. In fact, as group size and status change, so do perceptions of group homogeneity. Specifically, members of majority groups are most likely to see members of minority groups as homogeneous. In contrast, minority group members tend to see their own ingroup as more homogeneous than the majority outgroup. This ingroup homogeneity effect has been demonstrated in a number of studies (Bartsch & Judd, 1993; Castano & Yzerbyt, 1998; Kelly, 1989; Simon & Pettigrew, 1990).

In more recent research, Guinote (2001) examined perceptions of both ingroup and outgroup homogeneity among minority and nonminority group members. In her study, Portuguese individuals living in Germany (a minority group) and Portuguese living in Portugal (a nonminority group)
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provided open-ended descriptions of both their ingroup and their outgroup. These responses were
coded and the results showed that nonminority group members perceived their outgroup as homo-
genous, whereas members of the minority perceived greater ingroup homogeneity. In addition,
minority group members displayed a more complex and differentiated understanding of their non-
minority outgroup (e.g., they used a greater number of attributes to describe the outgroup, used
fewer redundant attributes, etc.). These results show that perceptions of group homogeneity depend
on whether one is a member of a minority or majority group, and suggest that minority group
members, being dependent on the majority group, are therefore motivated to attend carefully to
information about them.

Finally, Judd, Park, Yzerbyt, Gordijn, and Muller (2005) conducted studies designed to assess
people’s perceptions of the extent to which their own ingroup and an outgroup endorsed outgroup
homogeneity. In three studies examining a variety of ingroups and outgroups, participants were
asked to provide their own perceptions of each group, in addition to predicting outgroup percep-
tions of each group (Study 1), and ingroup perceptions of each group (Studies 2 and 3). Across the
three studies, the results showed that perceivers assumed that both ingroup and outgroup members
perceived outgroups to be more homogeneous than ingroups. In contrast, individuals only showed
evidence of the outgroup homogeneity effect when they were judging different nationalities, not
when rating ethnic or gender outgroups.

In sum, a great deal of research has examined the perceptions of group homogeneity and how
these perceptions are influenced by a variety of factors. Yet, what are some of the consequences of
perceiving a group as homogeneous?

THE RELATION BETWEEN SIMILARITY AND STEREOTYPING

Regardless of its source, the perception that the members of an outgroup are homogeneous can
lead to overgeneralizations about the outgroup members, and as a consequence, to stereotyping.
For example, in a study by Wilder (1984), participants were separated into two groups and asked
to rate the beliefs of members of both the ingroup and the outgroup on a variety of dimensions.
Wilder found that participants tended to attribute a wide range of artistic and political beliefs to
the ingroup, whereas members of the outgroup were thought to share similar artistic and political
beliefs. In addition to the assumption that outgroup members have homogeneous beliefs, research
by Howard and Rothbart (1980) showed that people have better memory for the negative behaviors
of outgroup than of ingroup members. So, in addition to thinking that outgroup members share the
same thoughts, individuals are also biased to remember that outgroup members have behaved in the
same negative manner.

Yet on meeting a group member, do perceivers automatically generalize the characteristics of
that individual to the group as a whole? Rothbart and Lewis (1988) found that perceivers are more
likely to generalize from an individual to the rest of the group when the individual is prototypical
or representative of the group. In their study, they provided participants with information about the
voting behavior of a prototypical or an atypical fraternity member. The authors found that partici-
pants rated the fraternity as a whole as more liberal if a prototypical member voted for a Democrat,
or more conservative if the prototypical candidate voted for a Republican. In contrast, participants
were less likely to make generalizations about the fraternity as a whole when the individual member
was less prototypical. In sum, the more similar an individual is to the rest of the group, the more
likely perceivers will be to make generalizations from that individual to the group as a whole.

The work by Rothbart and Lewis (1988) focused on conditions under which people generalize
from an individual group member to the group as a whole. Fiske and Neuberg (1990) proposed a
model designed to outline conditions under which people move in the opposite direction; that is,
making generalizations from the group to the individual. They theorized that perceivers automati-
cally categorize others in terms of their group memberships, especially when the perceiver has little
motivation or ability to make more accurate impressions. For example, a perceiver may meet a new
person briefly and assume that they have characteristics that are similar to others of the same age, race, occupation, and so on. Those generalizations will be modified only when behavioral information does not fit with categorical preconceptions or when the perceiver is motivated toward accuracy, particularly when there is an interdependent relation with the target person.

More recent research has shown that people’s lay theories influence their perception of group homogeneity and, as a consequence, stereotyping. Levy, Stroessner, and Dweck (1998) analyzed the perceptions of individuals who hold entity versus incremental theories of personality. Individuals who hold entity theories tend to view people’s personalities as fixed and unchanging, whereas those who hold incremental theories of personality are more likely to accept that people’s characteristics and attributes are malleable and may change over time. Given this understanding of people’s lay theories, Levy et al. hypothesized that, in contrast to incremental theorists, entity theorists would perceive group members as all sharing the same traits and therefore view them as more similar. In one study, participants read a series of sentences describing behaviors performed by members of a fictitious group. After reading the sentences, participants provided an open-ended description of the group as a whole and judged the variability of the group. The results supported their hypothesis by showing that, compared to incremental theorists, entity theorists perceived members of the group to be more similar. In later research, Plaks, Stroessner, Dweck, and Sherman (2001) also found that entity theorists were more likely than incremental theorists to selectively attend to information that enhanced the perception of group homogeneity and as a consequence confirmed their stereotypes of the group.

The research reviewed here suggests that the perception of similarity among group members is an important contributor to the development of group stereotypes. Given their close relation, how might perceptions of similarity and entitativity differentially influence the perception of groups?

**The Relation Between Entitativity and Similarity**

Entitativity and homogeneity or similarity are intimately intertwined. The perception that a group is a meaningful, entitative unit is often based on the belief that the members share some form of similarity. Whether it is the appearances shared by members of a racial or ethnic group, the thoughts and beliefs held by members of the same political party, or the similar goals and concerns that unite members of a fundraising committee, the presence of some form of similarity is quite often an integral component of perceiving the entitativity of a group (Brewer et al., 1995; Castano, Yzerbyt, & Bourguignon, 2003; Dasgupta et al., 1999; Yzerbyt et al., 1998).

Research by Pickett (2001; Pickett & Perrott, 2004) has shown that the likelihood of making comparisons among group members depends on the level of group entitativity. When perceiving individual targets, comparisons tend to be made among individuals who are similar on the domain of interest (Festinger, 1954). For example, if a novice tennis player wants an accurate assessment of her ability, she should be more likely to compare her performance to that of another novice rather than to a highly skilled player. A similar comparison process may happen at the group level. Pickett (2001) predicted that comparisons among group members would be more likely when the group is perceived to be high in entitativity. In other words, the perception that a certain group of people is similar, shares common goals and outcomes, and so on, should facilitate comparisons between group members. In contrast, perceivers should make fewer comparisons among members of a group that is perceived to be lower in entitativity.

Pickett (2001) used a variant of the Ebbinghaus illusion to demonstrate that the knowledge that an individual is from a high- or low-entitativity group could influence even the most basic visual perceptions. The classic Ebbinghaus illusion is a demonstration of a perceptual contrast effect. In this illusion, the same-sized circle is perceived to be much larger when it is surrounded by smaller circles than when it is surrounded by larger circles. Pickett extended this illusion to the perception of faces. In two studies, participants were shown two faces. Participants were told that one of the individuals was in a fraternity or sorority and the other individual was born in the month of May. Each face
was then shown surrounded by four other same-sex faces. These other faces shared fraternity membership (high-entitativity group) or birth month (low-entitativity group) with the central face. The participants’ task was to judge the size of the face in the center. The results showed that, when the participants believed that the individual was part of a high-entitativity group, the face was judged to be much larger than when the face was described as a member of a low-entitativity group.

Pickett and Perrott (2004) extended these findings in a later study in which individuals were again described as members of either a high- or low-entitativity group. The participants first made entitativity and similarity ratings of each group. Participants were then given information about two of the members (e.g., “Bill received a C on his English exam” and “Mike received an A on his English exam”) and were asked to make a comparison between the two members (e.g., who got the higher grade). The time taken for participants to make this comparison, as well as their level of accuracy, was assessed. The results showed that participants responded faster when the group was high versus low in entitativity, and there were no differences in accuracy between the conditions. Additionally, regression analyses revealed that both entitativity and similarity were significant predictors of facilitated comparisons among members, but that entitativity remained a predictor even when holding similarity constant. The results of this research suggest that, when a group is perceived to be highly entitative, perceivers will be more likely to make spontaneous comparisons between the members. In addition, similarity among the members is important, but there are additional properties characteristic of entitative groups that actually facilitate the comparison process.

Castano et al. (2003) analyzed the relations among entitativity, similarity, and identification. In one study they drew European participants’ attention to either the similarities or the differences among the states of the European Union (EU). Participants were then asked to rate how entitative the EU was perceived as a group and also how much each participant identified with the EU. Castano et al. found that, among participants who were moderately identified with the EU, perceiving the states of the EU as similar led to increased identification with that group, and this relationship was mediated by perceptions of entitativity. In other words, greater similarity led to perceptions of higher entitativity, and this in turn led to high identification. In contrast, participants who noted differences between the states perceived the EU as less entitative and they were less identified with the EU.

Although entitativity and similarity are clearly related, we believe that they are not identical constructs and that the relationship between them is complex. In the next section we try to tease apart the differences and clarify the relation between them.

**Empirically Distinguishing Entitativity and Similarity**

In their research on entitativity, Lickel et al. (2000) found that perceptions of entitativity are influenced not only by group member similarity but also by how often the members interact, how important the group is to its members, and whether the members share common goals and outcomes. In other words, entitativity is not made up of similarity alone. Although similarity can enhance the perception of entitativity, entitativity may be based on other factors instead.

Because there has been a tendency to blend these two concepts, Crump, Hamilton, Sherman, Lickel, and Thakkar (2008) conducted a series of studies designed to differentiate between entitativity and similarity. In their research, participants made entitativity and similarity ratings of a variety of different groups. It was hypothesized that, regardless of the group in question, participants would rate their ingroup as more entitative than the outgroup and rate members of the outgroup as more similar than those of the ingroup. The second part of our hypothesis is simply a statement of the outgroup homogeneity effect. The first part of our hypothesis—perceived ingroup entitativity—was derived from Sherman et al. (1999), who argued that people derive more social identity value (the psychological benefits of group membership, such as self-esteem, self-concept, and optimal distinctiveness) from membership in highly entitative groups. In other words, because of the value placed on the groups to which one belongs, group members will perceive their ingroups as being higher in entitativity than groups to which they do not belong. In fact, Yzerbyt et al. (2000) showed that
entitativity is seen as a desirable feature of the ingroup and that highly identified group members will often exclude undesirable members in an effort to maintain high entitativity.

In Crump et al.'s (2006) first study, participants made entitativity and similarity ratings of social categories, some of them being groups to which they belonged and others being groups to which they did not belong. As predicted, the results showed that participants rated their gender, religious, and political ingroups as higher in entitativity than the matched outgroup. In contrast, members of these outgroups were rated as more homogeneous than ingroup members. In the second study, participants recalled intimacy or task groups to which they belonged in high school and then rated them on the same measures. Again, participants rated members of both the intimacy and task outgroups as higher in similarity than ingroup members. In addition, participants rated their intimacy ingroups as higher in entitativity than the outgroup, but this difference was not significant for the task groups. Thus, across a variety of groups, individuals rate their ingroups as higher in entitativity and members of their outgroups as sharing greater similarity.

In a third study, participants learned about a fictitious group that was described as either high or low in entitativity, or as either high or low in similarity. Participants then completed entitativity and similarity measures about the group. The entitativity and similarity manipulations had different effects on group perceptions. Specifically, the entitativity manipulation influenced entitativity ratings, such that the high-entitativity group was rated higher in entitativity than the low-entitativity group. However, the entitativity manipulation had no significant effect on perceptions of group similarity. In contrast, when similarity was manipulated, participants rated members of the high-similarity group as more similar than members of the low-similarity group, but this similarity manipulation did not significantly influence perceptions of group entitativity. These findings are important in differentiating between entitativity and similarity. If entitativity and similarity were essentially the same construct, then manipulation of either one would have parallel effects on ratings of both. Their differing effects document the differential role of the two concepts in group perception.

Although perceptions of homogeneity and of entitativity are related, and although each one can serve as a cue to the other, the results of Crump et al.'s (2006) studies show that entitativity and similarity are distinct concepts in the perception of groups. Given this distinction, then, the two concepts may play meaningfully different roles in the stereotyping process.

ENTITATIVITY, STEREOTYPE DEVELOPMENT, GENERALIZATION, AND THE INTERCHANGEABILITY OF GROUP MEMBERS

As we have seen, the perception of entitativity for a group has important consequences, with many of these effects having relevance for stereotyping. In this section we discuss the idea that perceived entitativity leads to the perception of interchangeability among group members. Thus any inferences regarding traits, attributes, or abilities that are made about any group member are then transferred to all other members of a high-entitativity group. This occurs even when the other group members have not engaged in any behaviors that would warrant such trait or ability attributions. Interestingly, as we shall see, this perceived interchangeability of group members has the additional effect of decreasing strong and unique perceptions of the different individual members. All members of the group end up “looking alike,” and the individuality and uniqueness of individuals is relatively diminished.

In this section we first examine how information about different individual members of a group is integrated to form an impression (or stereotype) of the group, and how, once formed, this impression is applied to all group members. We then use these ideas to analyze the phenomenon of collective responsibility.
ENTITATIVITY AND THE PROCESSES OF IMPRESSION FORMATION

Hamilton and Sherman (1996) presented a conceptual analysis of important differences in the way that impressions of individuals, low-entitativity groups, and high-entitativity groups are formed. According to their analysis, impressions of individuals and high-entitativity groups develop during online processing of information (Hastie & Park, 1986). Early information serves as the basis for an initial impression formed as that information is received, and later information is assimilated to and integrated into a coherent mental representation. On the other hand, impressions of low-entitativity groups are not formed online. Information about the group members is processed and stored separately until such time as a judgment of the group as a whole is needed. Thus, information is not integrated immediately into a coherent impression, and judgments are made in a memory-based fashion.

Studies by McConnell et al. (1994, 1997) supported these predictions. For individual targets and high group entitativity targets, there was evidence of good recall, primacy effects, a lack of any illusory correlation effect in judgments, and low recall–judgment correlations. These effects are all indications of online processing. For low-entitativity groups the opposite effects were seen, indicating memory-based judgments. Thus the processing of information about group members and the consequences of such processing are very different, depending on the level of perceived entitativity of the group.

ENTITATIVITY AND STEREOTYPE DEVELOPMENT

Definitions of stereotypes focus heavily on the overgeneralization that occurs in the perception of a group and its members (Allport, 1954; Hamilton & Sherman, 1994; Taylor, 1981). That is, certain traits and attributes are indiscriminately applied to all members of the group, even with little corroborating evidence provided by any particular individual member. Thus, to understand the development of stereotypes, we must understand the factors that foster overgeneralization in the perception of the members of a group. One key factor in this process is the degree to which the group is perceived as entitative. As we shall see, perceived entitativity is a precondition for inducing spontaneous trait inferences on the basis of a group member’s behavior, and then for spontaneous trait transference of the inferred trait to the group as a whole and to all other group members.

The relation between perceived entitativity and stereotypes is strongly implied by some existing evidence in the literature. Research by Brewer and her colleagues (Brewer & Harasty, 1996; Welbourne, Harasty, & Brewer, 1997) indicated that high-entitativity groups were associated with prototypic representations, whereas low-entitativity groups were associated with exemplar-based representations. This work also suggested that perceived entitativity is involved in generalizing from individual members to a global representation of the group as a whole. When the group is perceived as entitative, members are more likely to be evaluated in terms of global expectancies. Thus, perceived entitativity is positively associated with expectancy strength and stereotyping, and perceived entitativity results in the assimilation of individuals to the group stereotype (Hilton & von Hippel, 1990).

Perhaps the strongest evidence for the sequence from perceived entitativity to trait inference to stereotype development to overgeneralization comes from recent work by Crawford, Sherman, and Hamilton (2002). The goal of this research was to provide information about how behavioral information about individual members of a high-entitativity group is integrated into a global representation, and how, once formed, this stereotype impression is applied to all group members as they are perceived as interchangeable parts. The model of this process is shown in Figure 9.1.

To test this model, Crawford et al. (2002) employed the savings-in-relearning inference paradigm (Carlston & Skowronski, 1994; Skowronski, Carlston, Mae, & Crawford, 1998). Participants read about behaviors performed by members of two different groups. For each group, half of the group members were described by behaviors that implied one trait (e.g., a lazy behavior) and half were described by behaviors that implied a different trait (e.g., an intelligent behavior). Thus, the
individual members of each group were described by two traits. In addition, the two groups were characterized in a way that made both of them appear to be highly entitative or both appear to be of low entitativity. In a later phase, each group member was either paired with a trait that was implied by the behavior that was originally paired with that target member (e.g., the trait term lazy) or with a trait that was implied by the behavior of other members of the group, but did not match the behavior of this particular individual (e.g., the trait term intelligent). The key measure was the ease with which participants learned these member–trait pairings. The first case (an individual paired with a behavior-implying trait) was called a *trait inference pairing*, as the trait matched the inference from that individual’s previous behavior. The other case (an individual paired with a trait implied by another group member’s behavior) was referred to as a *trait transference pairing*. In transference pairings the trait did not match the inference from that individual’s previous behavior and therefore learning such pairs would be facilitated if spontaneous transference from the trait inferences about other group members had occurred.

The predictions of the Crawford et al. (2002) research were as follows. For high-entitativity groups, the trait implications of each member’s behavior would be abstracted and transferred to all other group members. Thus, for high-entitativity groups (compared to low-entitativity groups) there should be greater ease of learning for trait transference trials. This transference would lay the groundwork for the interchangeability of group members. In addition, as this interchangeability results in the loss of individuality for members of a high-entitative group, the information for any given member would not be stored uniquely for that member. Thus, the trait inference trials should be more difficult in the case of high-entitativity groups.

Crawford et al.’s (2002) results strongly supported these predictions. For low-entitativity groups, trait inference trials were learned significantly better than were trait transference trials.
For high-entitativity groups, trait inference and trait transference trials were learned equally well, indicating that the members indeed were highly interchangeable and thus confusable.

In addition, these results emerged only when the entitativity information about the groups was received prior to exposure to the behavioral information. Thus, the effects of perceived entitativity are due to encoding rather than retrieval processes. That is, when a group is known to be highly entitative, behavioral information about group members leads to trait inferences and the formation of a group impression. This information is used to develop a stereotype about the group and is transferred to all members of that group. This kind of processing was further evidenced by the fact that, for high- (but not for low-)entitative groups, participants took significantly more time to process early behavioral information as opposed to later behavioral information. This result is important in establishing two points that are central to our interpretation. First, it takes time and resources to integrate the early information into a global impression of the group, but second, once a general impression of a highly entitative group is formed, new information is processed quickly and easily.

The Crawford et al. (2002) results demonstrate that, in the case of high-entitativity groups, the members are interchangeable in the sense that the attributes of any member of the group are spontaneously transferred to all other group members. These findings imply that one important effect of perceiving a high degree of group entitativity is the spontaneous comparison of group members. In fact, Pickett and her colleagues (Pickett, 2001; Pickett & Perrott, 2004) have shown exactly this. As described earlier in the chapter, Pickett has demonstrated that high perceived entitativity fosters the automatic comparison of group members, as indicated by a large perceptual contrast effect for group members during the Ebbinghaus illusion (Pickett, 2001) and by the fast response time in answering questions involving group member comparisons (Pickett & Perrott, 2004).

The findings of Crawford et al. (2002) and of Pickett (2001) have relevance for a more general question concerning the extent to which, and the conditions under which, any member of a group is perceived primarily in terms of his or her individual characteristics or in terms of the group category attributes. This distinction was central to both Brewer’s (1988) dual-process model and to Fiske and Neuberg’s (1990) continuum model. Both models distinguish between category-based and individuated processes, and they identify both individuated information and group categorical information as part of the impressions of individual group members. Work by Brewer et al. (1995) explored the effects of perceived entitativity on the extent to which information about group members is organized at the level of the individual or at the social category level. Participants viewed a videotaped discussion among six people, who were organized into two distinct groups of three members each. The two groups were either both high or both low in entitativity. After viewing the discussion, participants had to identify which particular person had made which comments. Recognition errors showed that participants made significantly more within-group errors (i.e., a different member of the same group was wrongly identified) than between-group errors (i.e., a member of the other group was wrongly identified). However, this difference between within- and between-group errors was significantly greater for high-entitative groups. Thus, the members of high-entitative groups are represented more in a category-based way than in a person-based way.

Putting together the work of Brewer et al. (1995) and Crawford et al. (2002), the evidence indicates that, for both impression formation and memory confusions, the members of highly entitative groups are more interchangeable and more confusable than are members of low-entitativity groups. It might be interesting to speculate about whether these kinds of confusions based on the interchangeability of group members would also apply to the perceptual level. That is, are people more likely to “mix up” or confuse photographs of members of high-entitativity rather than low-entitativity groups? Do people actually perceive the members of high-entitative groups as being physically more similar to each other than members of low-entitativity groups? Such a finding might not be all that surprising. After all, intimacy groups are reliably perceived as higher in entitativity than are task groups or social categories (Lickel et al., 2000). Families are the most frequently encountered intimacy groups, and of course, due to genetic similarity, family members actually do
resemble each other physically more than do members of other groups. Thus, social perceivers may generalize physical similarity principles to all other groups of high perceived entitativity.

In sum, perceptions of high entitativity for a group cause information about individual members to be processed in an online fashion. This information is then integrated to form coherent, global impressions of the group as a whole, and it is then transferred to other group members. This process ensures that stereotypes of high-entitative groups are likely to form, that stereotypic traits and attributes are applied indiscriminately to all group members, and that, as this overgeneralization occurs, members are perceived and mentally represented as interchangeable elements in the group.

These ideas about the relation between entitativity and stereotyping have much in common with self-categorization theory (Haslam, Oakes, Turner, & McGarty, 1996; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Self-categorization theory focuses on the operation of the categorization process as the cognitive basis of group behavior. This categorization process accentuates the similarities among members of an ingroup and the differences between the ingroup and some other outgroup as a contrast category. According to self-categorization theory, the metacontrast principle postulates that a group is most likely to be perceived as a single unit (in our terms, to have high perceived entitativity) to the extent that within-group similarities are high and between-group differences are also high. According to the theory, the end result of this categorization process is perceptual and behavioral depersonalization, or self-stereotyping (Hogg, 1996). Thus, self-categorization theory proposes strong links among the perceived entitativity of a group, the development of a stereotype of the group, and a perception of the interchangeability of the different members of that group. In particular, self-categorization theory suggests that perceived entitativity leads to an increase in the metacontrast ratio by minimizing the perception of intragroup differences and by maximizing the perception of intergroup differences. It is when the metacontrast ratio is high that the perception of the interchangeability of group members is most likely to occur.

Although there is agreement about the general effects of perceived entitativity on stereotype development, it is less clear what the strength of this relation is when we consider different group types (intimacy groups, task groups, and social categories). Research (Lickel et al., 2000; Pickett et al., 2002) has shown that social categories are perceived as having only moderate degrees of entitativity (less than intimacy and task groups), yet social categories such as gender, race, and ethnicity have the strong associated stereotypes (but see Spencer-Rodgers, Hamilton, & Sherman, 2007). Why might this be so? Self-categorization theory suggests that viewing groups as contrast categories is an important stimulus to stereotype development. Social categories are typically represented as competing contrast categories (e.g., men and women; Protestants, Jews, and Catholics; Irish and English). When groups are viewed as contrast categories, the metacontrast ratio is likely to be high and stereotype development becomes inevitable, even if the level of perceived entitativity of the groups is not especially high. It may be that it is the combination of high perceived entitativity and contrast categories that ultimately leads to the highest level of stereotyping.

**ENTITIVITY, STEREOTYPING, AND COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY**

Recently, Lickel, Schmader, and Hamilton (2003) studied another context in which high entitativity results in a reduced level of differentiation among group members, namely, the perception of collective responsibility. Collective responsibility occurs when members of a group are seen as having responsibility for another group member’s negative behavior, even in the absence of any direct involvement in that act. Lickel et al. examined perceptions of collective responsibility in the context of the shootings at Columbine High School. Aside from the two student murderers, would there be collective responsibility assigned to other members of groups to which these two students belonged? In particular, Lickel et al. were concerned with attributions of responsibility to the killers’ parents and to other members of the Trenchcoat Mafia (a school group to which the murderers belonged). Results indicated that the key to attributing collective responsibility to these group members was the perception of high entitativity for that group. Thus, participants who viewed the family or the
Trenchcoat Mafia as especially high in entitativity were more likely to assign responsibility to the parents or other members of the peer group for the murders. In a second study that investigated several other groups relevant to the incident, Lickel et al. found a strong relation between perceptions of entitativity of the various groups and the degree to which members of those groups were held collectively responsible for the murders.

Collective responsibility certainly implies a degree of interchangeability of group members; all members are seen as bearing some of the responsibility. The relation between perceived entitativity and collective responsibility is thus consistent with our idea that perceived entitativity fosters the perception that the members of a group are alike and are interchangeable.

Although Lickel et al. (2003) did not examine the stereotyping of the various groups, it is interesting to speculate about how stereotyping might enter into the relation between perceived entitativity and collective responsibility. Based on the findings of the Crawford et al. (2002) research, we might speculate that stereotyping actually serves as the mediator between perceived entitativity and collective responsibility. That is, perceived entitativity leads to the development of strong stereotypes (e.g., stereotypes of the Trenchcoat Mafia). These stereotypes then lead to the perception that all group members share the same traits, beliefs, values, and so on. Thus, any guilt must be shared because of this interchangeability.

**ENTITATIVITY AND THE USE OF STEREOTYPES**

The preceding sections have developed the argument that entitativity is a key element for some very important factors—perceptions of homogeneity, generalization through spontaneous trait inferences, and perceived interchangeability of group members—that lay the groundwork for the development of stereotypes. In this section we explore the relation between entitativity and the use of those stereotypes.

**Stereotypes** are cognitive structures containing a perceiver’s knowledge and beliefs about a human group, and **stereotyping** involves the ascription of a set of psychological attributes to a group and its members. People are unlikely to have generalized knowledge and beliefs about a group of individuals unless those individuals are perceived as being united together in some type of coherent entity. That is, people may develop and use stereotypic knowledge only after they have come to see a group as a **group**—as a meaningful social unit. Moreover, if this is the case, then it also seems plausible that entitativity judgments may serve an important mediating function between other group properties (e.g., perceptions of homogeneity) and the strength of people's stereotypic beliefs. For example, perceived entitativity might mediate the association between homogeneity and stereotyping. Perceiving a group to be homogenous can foster stereotyping and permit generalizability of traits across group members, but the group must first be regarded as a bona fide entity.

Support for these ideas comes from the person perception literature showing that entity beliefs and judgments about individual targets are associated with greater stereotyping (Levy et al., 1998) and more elaborative information processing (Hamilton & Sherman, 1996; McConnell et al., 1997; Susskind et al., 1999). It seems reasonable to hypothesize that the same argument would hold for group targets. Consistent with this view, Rydell and colleagues (Rydell, Hugenberg, Ray, & Mackie, 2007) assessed people’s implicit theories about groups and found that entity theorists (i.e., people who see group characteristics as fixed) stereotyped more than did incremental theorists (i.e., people who see them as malleable). Moreover, the perception of entitativity mediated the relationship between one’s implicit theories and stereotypic group judgments. Groups that are more entitative also elicit stronger dispositional inferences (Yzerbyt et al., 1998) and greater correspondence bias (Rogier & Yzerbyt, 1999) than do less entitative groups. All of this research suggests that entitativity is a central precursor to stereotyping.
THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF ENTITATIVITY IN STEREOTYPING

To test the central hypothesis that the perception of “groupness” is an important precondition to stereotyping processes, we investigated the relationship of entitativity judgments and four other antecedent variables (i.e., homogeneity, essence, role differentiation, and agency) to people’s generalized perceptions of two different types of groups: social categories and task groups (Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2007, Study 2). As outlined earlier in this chapter, people’s beliefs about social groups are organized according to an intuitive group taxonomy, which includes social categories, task-oriented groups, intimacy groups, and loose associations (Lickel et al., 2000). If lay people hold qualitatively different intuitive theories about social categories, task groups, and so on, then this intuitive group taxonomy may have important implications for both entitativity judgments and stereotyping processes. For example, Sherman et al. (2002) showed that group-relevant information is spontaneously categorized in memory according to these group types. Therefore, to increase the generalizability of our findings, we included two types of groups (social categories, task groups) in our study.

In this research we set out to answer three interrelated questions: (a) What factors underlie stereotyping of different types of groups? (b) Does the perception of entitativity give rise to stereotypic group judgments? and (c) Does the perception of entitativity mediate the relationship between various group properties and stereotypic judgments?

The stereotyping literature has historically emphasized the role of perceived homogeneity and essence in underlying stereotypic judgments of social categories (Rothbart & Taylor, 1992; Yzerbyt et al., 1997). Social categories that are composed of members who are “all the same” are more strongly associated with specific psychological attributes than are those whose members are perceived to be highly dissimilar. Likewise, social groups that are viewed as having a deeply rooted “essential” nature (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, etc.) are more apt to be stereotyped than are those that are based on less intrinsic factors such as occupation or geographical region of residence. A question that remains relatively unexplored in the stereotyping literature, however, is whether the same group properties underlie stereotypic judgments about other group types.

What factors lead social perceivers to form stereotypic beliefs about group types other than social categories? Perhaps for other types of groups, such as task-oriented groups, the extent to which the groups are perceived as possessing distinct psychological attributes depends more on patterns of role differentiation and agency than homogeneity or essence. For instance, the members of a closely knit work group may share many common goals and outcomes, they may be perceived as highly interactive, organized, and interdependent, and yet the group members may be very dissimilar in all other respects (e.g., in terms of race and ethnicity, age, beliefs, etc.). Thus, for task-oriented groups, the generalizability of psychological attributes across group members may depend more on the presence of common goals or fate and coordinated action than on the presence of shared, innate characteristics that are natural and stable.

A central purpose of our research was to explore these intriguing questions. In keeping with Brewer et al.’s (2004) “agency” versus “essence” theories of group perception, we hypothesized that different group properties would be differentially important in the stereotyping of different group types. Specifically, we predicted that agency (i.e., the group’s ability to produce outcomes and achieve its goals) and role differentiation (i.e., the presence of clearly defined roles and tasks among group members) would be more potent predictors of stereotyping for task groups than for social categories. In contrast, perceptions of homogeneity and essence were expected to weigh more heavily for social categories.

In this study participants completed measures of entitativity, the four group property variables, and stereotyping. Perceptions of entitativity were assessed by eight items that indexed the perceived unity and organization of the group, as well as the level of interaction, importance, belongingness, cohesiveness, and interdependence among group members. Four items tapped the perceived homogeneity of the group in terms of overall similarity, physical appearance, behaviors, and personality characteristics. Our measure of agency reflected the extent to which the group and its members...
were perceived as being able to influence others, achieve their goals, act collectively, and produce outcomes. The role differentiation scale indexed the degree to which there were specific roles or functions, predictable behaviors, and tasks or duties associated with group membership. Essentialist beliefs were assessed with a modified seven-item version of Haslam, Rothschild, and Ernst’s (2000) scale. Lastly, stereotyping was indexed as the strength of people’s ratings on group-stereotypic attributes. In a preliminary study, participants generated free-response descriptors for each of the target groups, and the descriptors were used to identify attributes stereotypic of each target group. In the main study participants rated each of the target groups on those common attributes. The participants rated four social categories (Californians, Jews, elderly people, and Hispanics/Latinos) and four task groups (jury, environmental organization, student campus committee, and cast of a play) on all of the measures.

Our initial analyses focused on the mean levels of entitativity, homogeneity, role differentiation, agency, essence, and stereotyping among task groups and social categories. In accordance with prior research (Lickel et al., 2000; Pickett et al., 2002), perceptions of entitativity were significantly greater for task groups than for social categories. As we had expected, perceived role differentiation and agency were significantly higher for task groups than for social categories. In contrast, perceived homogeneity and essentialist beliefs were greater for social categories than for task groups. These findings make intuitive sense given that task groups are smaller social units that are noted for their coordinated action and productive outcomes (O’Laughlin & Malle, 2002), whereas social categories are large classifications of people who simply share a few psychologically meaningful characteristics.

In addition to differences in mean ratings on these four group properties, we found differences among these variables in the correlations between the predictors and stereotypic judgments for task groups and social categories. Although all four group property variables (i.e., role differentiation, agency, homogeneity, and essence) were significantly correlated with group stereotyping (as measured by participants’ ratings on the group-stereotypic attributes), perceptions of homogeneity and essence were more strongly related to the stereotyping of social categories, whereas role differentiation and agency were more pertinent to the stereotyping of task groups. Thus, in answer to our first question, different factors do appear to underlie stereotyping of different types of groups.

In answer to our second question, regarding the relation of entitativity to stereotypic judgments, we determined the extent to which entitativity predicted stereotyping for each of the group types. We found that perceived entitativity was indeed strongly related to stereotypic group judgments for both types of groups. Moreover, the perception of entitativity was equally important to group impressions for social categories and task groups, pointing once again to the central role of entitativity in stereotyping processes. Regardless of group type, a stereotype cannot form and be applied unless and until a collection of individuals is perceived to be a uniform and cohesive social unit.

Our third, and most important, research question concerned whether perceptions of entitativity mediate the relationship between various group properties and stereotyping. To address this question we conducted a series of mediational analyses, following Baron and Kenny’s (1986) procedures. Specifically, we examined whether entitativity mediated the relationship among each of the four group properties (homogeneity, essence, role differentiation, and agency) and group stereotyping. The analyses were conducted separately for social categories and task groups. Hence, altogether we performed eight mediational analyses. In almost all cases (seven of the eight), the observed associations between the four predictor variables and stereotypic group impressions were significantly reduced when entitativity judgments were controlled. That is, for both social categories and task groups, all four predictor variables were significantly related to the strength of participants’ attribute ratings, and perceptions of entitativity played a substantial mediating role in the extent to which all of those variables were related to stereotypic group impressions. Moreover, in half of the cases, there was evidence of full mediation (i.e., the residual correlation between the predictor and stereotyping was no longer significant).

These analyses demonstrate that entitativity plays an important mediating role in the ability of these variables to predict stereotyping. Might it be, however, that these variables also mediate the
prediction of stereotyping from entitativity? That is, one might wonder whether the four group property variables could function equally well as the mediator in a series of analyses in which perceived entitativity represented the predictor and stereotyping the outcome. To examine this possibility, we conducted a parallel set of mediational analyses in which entitativity served as the predictor variable and each of the four group properties (homogeneity, essence, role differentiation, and agency), separately, assumed the role of mediator. Importantly, these analyses yielded much weaker results. In half of the cases, there was no significant drop in the association between the predictor (entitativity) and the criterion (stereotyping) when we controlled for the mediator (e.g., perceptions of homogeneity). Moreover, in all cases the residual correlation between entitativity and stereotyping remained substantial and statistically significant (i.e., we did not obtain full mediation).

In sum, the perception of entitativity appears to play a central role in facilitating group impression formation. Most of the predictor variables in this study were moderately correlated with each other and all of them were significantly related to the outcome variable of stereotyping, suggesting that they are key constructs in stereotyping processes. However, the variables do have different functions in group perception. Homogeneity and essence are more pertinent to people’s conceptions and beliefs about broad social categories, whereas role differentiation and agency are more relevant to dynamic task groups. Regardless of group type, the perception of entitativity is a potent predictor of people’s stereotypic group impressions and it is a crucial mediating factor in group perception: A collection of individuals must be perceived as a unified and cohesive entity before stereotypic attributes will be ascribed to the group as a whole.

CONCLUSIONS

There are several important messages that we have tried to send in this chapter. These messages, we hope, advance our understanding of the concept of entitativity and especially the role of perceived entitativity in the development and use of stereotypes.

People perceive and spontaneously differentiate among types of groups, and these group types differ in their perceived entitativity. Intimacy groups have the highest level of perceived entitativity, task groups have somewhat less, and social categories have only a moderate level of perceived entitativity. We believe that different stimulus factors are likely to carry different weights in determining the level of perceived entitativity for the different group types.

An important consequence of perceived entitativity is the perception of similarity (homogeneity) among group members. This perception in turn facilitates overgeneralizations about the attributes characteristic of group members, leads to the perception that group members are interchangeable parts of the whole, and thus contributes to stereotype formation in highly entitative groups.

Entitativity and similarity, although conceptually related and often correlated, are not equivalent concepts and often function differently in group perceptions.

Entitativity plays a clear and direct role in stereotyping processes. In addition, the factors that are involved in these processes differ for the different types of groups. For social categories, perceived similarity and perceived essentialism of such groups are important for determining the degree to which groups are stereotyped. For task groups, however, agency and role differentiation are important factors for stereotype development and use. Importantly, for both social categories and task groups, perceived entitativity mediates the relations between the group properties (i.e., similarity, essentialism, agency, role differentiation) and stereotyping. Thus the perception of group entitativity functions in a central way in group stereotyping.

Although, in general, higher degrees of perceived entitativity may predict higher degrees of stereotyping, this relation is complex. For example, social categories are perceived as having only moderate levels of entitativity, yet these groups tend to have strongly associated stereotypes. We suggest that, because social categories are often represented as competing
contrast categories (e.g., men and women), the degree of ingroup versus outgroup differences is enhanced and stereotype development becomes more likely. Thus it may be a combination of high perceived entitativity and the representation of groups as contrast categories that most facilitates the development of strong stereotypes.

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