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Being Seen As Individuals Versus As Group Members: Extending Research on Metaperception to Intergroup Contexts

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Recent research has begun to examine people's expectations for how they are viewed in intergroup contexts, yet little work has considered how these metaperceptions relate to those that emerge in interpersonal contexts. As we extend research on metaperceptions into the intergroup realm, we must address several important conceptual issues. In this article, we provide a general overview of research on interpersonal metaperceptions, along with many factors that are likely to affect whether people think they are viewed as individuals or as group members. We also consider how metaperceptions are likely to be formed differently in interpersonal and intergroup contexts, and depending on the group membership of the perceiver. We then explore the consequences of different kinds of metaperceptions for intergroup relations, and how they relate to strategies we might use to improve intergroup relations, to suggest future directions for research on metaperceptions in intergroup contexts.

Interest in what people think others think of them (i.e., metaperceptions) has a long history in the social sciences (see Laing, Phillipson, & Lee, 1966). Still, research on metaperceptions has typically focused on how they function in interpersonal contexts, and only recently has work begun to examine how metaperceptions operate in intergroup contexts. A growing body of research suggests that intergroup metaperceptions exist across a variety of intergroup contexts (Best et al., 1977; Bond, 1986; Casas, Ponterotto, & Sweeney, 1987; Harris, Waschull, & Walters, 1990; Horenczyk & Bekerman, 1997; Klein & Azzi, 2001; Sigelman & Tuch, 1997; Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998), yet our understanding of how they develop and function remains limited.

As we extend research on metaperceptions into the intergroup realm, we must address several important conceptual issues. Specifically, we must consider when people are likely to think they are being perceived as individuals versus when they are likely to think they are being perceived as group members. We must also examine whether metaperceptions might be formed differently in intergroup contexts than in interpersonal contexts, and depending on whether the person by whom one is being perceived is an ingroup or outgroup member. Moreover, we need to explore the consequences of these different kinds of metaperceptions and how these tendencies correspond to strategies we might use to improve intergroup relations.

In this article, we first provide a brief overview of prior research on metaperceptions, and we consider a range of factors that can affect whether people are likely to think they are viewed as individuals or as group members. Next, we examine closely the processes involved in metaperception formation and offer suggestions regarding how metaperceptions may be formed differently in interpersonal and intergroup contexts. We then review research showing the many important effects that intergroup metaperceptions can have on relations between groups, and we suggest directions for future research on metaperceptions in intergroup contexts.

Metaperception Formation

To date, most of the theorizing and research on metaperception formation has involved interpersonal contexts, in which group membership is not salient and people appear to be forming metaperceptions regarding what others think of them as individuals. Thus, to develop an understanding of how metaperceptions are

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formed in intergroup contexts, we must first review the existing literature on interpersonal metaperceptions, and then proceed to discuss how metaperception formation in intergroup contexts may differ from metaperception formation in interpersonal settings.

General Model of Metaperception Formation

Recent research on projection has yielded a model that can serve as a springboard for understanding the processes involved in metaperception formation (see Ames, 2004a, 2004b; Robbins & Krueger, 2005). In particular, Ames (2004a) presents a "mind reader's tool kit," in which he proposes a number of tools that people use in their attempts to read others' minds. Specifically, Ames suggests that perceivers generally rely on observing others' verbal and nonverbal behaviors, projecting their own views onto others, and stereotyping others.

The model of metaperception formation we propose is complementary to Ames's (2004a) model of mind reading, yet our approach differs in two important respects. First, our model is not concerned with mind reading in terms of general cognitions, but in terms of how one's self is viewed as an object. This distinction is important because there are a variety of psychological concerns associated with perceptions of the self that may not be associated with predictions about what others think more generally (see Dweck, Higgins, & Grant-Pillow, 2003; Leary & Tangney, 2003; Pinel, 1999; Schlenker & Leary, 1982). Second, we expand our discussion of the range of tools that might be used for mind reading in light of other research concerning how people form metaperceptions (see DePaulo, Kenny, Hoover, Webb, & Oliver, 1987; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993). Thus, in the remainder of this section, we examine how strategies suggested by Ames (2004a) and others apply to an understanding of how people read others' minds when trying to determine how they are likely to be viewed.

Observing others' behaviors. It makes intuitive sense that people would observe others' verbal and nonverbal behavior to determine how they are viewed. Indeed, several researchers have addressed the observation of others' behavior in their models of metaperception formation (e.g., DePaulo et al., 1987; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993; Shechtman & Kenny, 1994), and they concur that observing people's behavior is one strategy that people often use to form metaperceptions. Nonetheless, although observing others' behavior may be useful, an abundance of research suggests that this strategy does not necessarily lead to accurate metaperceptions, nor is it the primary or sole strategy. Generally, people tend to think that different kinds of perceivers view them similarly (Anderson, 1984; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993; Shechtman & Kenny, 1994). Moreover, although people have a relatively accurate understanding of how they are viewed generally (e.g., Anderson, 1984; Feil, 2001; Funder, 1980), they are not as good at perceiving how different people view them differently (DePaulo et al., 1987; Kenny & Albright, 1987; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993; Levesque, 1997; Malloy & Janowski, 1992; Shechtman & Kenny, 1994). These findings beg the question, why do people appear to be limited in using feedback from others when forming metaperceptions?

One answer to this question is that direct and honest feedback from others is not always available (Herbert & Vorauer, 2003; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993; Shrauger & Schoeneman, 1979); thus, even when people try to use feedback from others, they may not necessarily have much honest feedback to go on. People tend not to evaluate others openly, such that even good friends are unlikely to tell others what they really think of them (Blumberg, 1972). Additionally, there is evidence that people learn to withhold honest feedback from very early ages. Indeed, children between fourth and eighth grades have been shown to withhold direct evaluations from one another, regardless of whether those evaluations are positive or negative (Felson, 1980). Thus, to be accurate at determining how one is really viewed by others, one needs to know when to take a message at face value and when to look for a more covert meaning (DePaulo et al., 1987; Shechtman & Kenny, 1994).

Projecting one's view of oneself. Another strategy that people might use to form metaperceptions involves the tendency to assume that others see them as they see themselves (see Kenny & DePaulo, 1993). There is considerable research to support this view. For example, people high in need for approval who try to present consistent images of themselves across partners also assume they are viewed consistently across partners (Oliver, 1988). Conversely, people who rate themselves differently in interactions with different partners also think their partners from those different interactions view them differently (Feil, 2001; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993). Additionally, people who have positive self-views generally think they are viewed positively by others, whereas people with negative self-views generally think they are viewed negatively by others (Campbell & Fehr, 1990; Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 2000; Murray, Holmes, Griffin, Bellavia, & Rose, 2001; Murray, Holmes, MacDonald, & Ellsworth, 1998). Finally, people tend to think that members of different social groups to which they belong (e.g., family, friends, coworkers) all perceive them far more similarly than they actually do (Malloy, Albright, Kenny, & Agatstein, 1997). In short, although people tend to be seen differently by different individuals and social groups, they as-

sume that these different entities view them largely as they view themselves.

In part, the tendency for people to think that they are viewed as they see themselves may involve a general tendency to overestimate the degree to which others think and act in the same manner as the self. This bias, known as the false consensus effect, has been documented in many domains other than metaperception (see Fenigstein & Abrams, 1993; Krueger & Clement, 1994; Marks & Miller, 1987). Central to projection-based approaches to metaperception formation is the suggestion that people assume substantial correspondence (i.e., false consensus) between their own perceptions and the perceptions of others (DePaulo et al., 1987; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993), and a recent meta-analysis provides substantial support for this suggestion (Robbins & Krueger, 2005).

Additionally, people's beliefs about others' views of them might be colored by their wealth of self-knowledge (Vorauer & Miller, 1997). Consistent with this view, research has found that the more salient or accessible one's self-knowledge, the more likely it is to be experienced as readily apparent to others, even when it is not (Vorauer & Ross, 1999). This assumption is part of a more general bias known as transparency overestimation, whereby people assume that their thoughts, goals, and emotions are more accessible to others than they really are (e.g., Barr & Kleck, 1995; Garcia, 2002; Gilovich & Savitsky, 1999; Gilovich, Savitsky, & Medvec, 1998; Vorauer & Cameron, 2002; Vorauer & Claude, 1998). Although people may understand that their inner experience is not fully accessible to others, transparency overestimation is thought to occur because they do not sufficiently adjust their estimations of the information to which others have access (Gilovich, Medveck, & Savitsky, 2000; Gilovich et al., 1998; see also Pronin, Puccio, & Ross, 2002).

Attempting to take others' perspectives. In addition to the means suggested by Ames (2004a), another possible means of forming metaperceptions involves attempts to take others' perspectives to determine how one might be viewed by others (see DePaulo et al., 1987; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993; Shechtman & Kenny, 1994). The suggestion that people might try to take others' perspectives when forming metaperceptions has an interesting implication. Specifically, research on perspective taking indicates that when trying to take someone else's perspective, people start with their own perspective, and then adjust until they feel like they have reached a plausible estimate of the other's perspective (Epley & Gilovich, 2004; Epley, Keysar, Van Boven, & Gilovich, 2004). However, people's adjustments are rarely sufficient, which results in their thinking that others' perspectives are far more similar to their own than they actually are (Epley & Gilovich, 2004; Epley et al., 2004; Nickerson, 1999; Pronin et al., 2002). In the context of metaperceptions, this work suggests that when trying to take others' perspectives people are likely to expect (inaccurately) to be viewed as they view themselves. Thus, even when trying to take others' perspectives, people may form metaperceptions that are not very different from the perceptions they would have formed by simply projecting their views of themselves onto others.

Relying on stereotypes. At the same time, people may also rely on stereotypes when attempting to predict others' thoughts (Ames, 2004a), and more specifically, when forming metaperceptions regarding how they are viewed by others (see Vorauer et al., 1998). Using stereotypes to form metaperceptions has been discussed much more heavily in the intergroup literature than in the interpersonal literature; yet even in the intergroup literature, relatively little attention has been given to this means of forming metaperceptions. Although a growing body of research suggests that group members are aware of the stereotypes others hold regarding their group (e.g., Bond, 1986; Casas et al., 1987; Frey & Tropp, 2004; Horenczyk & Bekerman, 1997; Klein & Azzi, 2001; Lee, 1994; Sigelman & Tuch, 1997; Vorauer et al., 1998), little work has examined the conditions under which people use these stereotypes to form metaperceptions regarding how they are perceived by others. However, the research that has been done suggests that people do expect to be viewed in terms of stereotypes of their groups, especially when they anticipate being perceived by outgroup members (Vorauer, Hunter, Main, & Roy, 2000; Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001; Vorauer et al., 1998; see also Pinel, 1999).

Determinants of Whether Interpersonal or Intergroup Metaperceptions Are Formed

Thus far, we have reviewed those strategies that people generally use to form metaperceptions, based largely on findings from recent work on mind reading, projection, and perception at the interpersonal level (Ames, 2004a; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993; Robbins & Krueger, 2005). But in considering these processes, we must recognize that people could expect others to perceive them either as individuals or as group members. It is also conceivable that people would rely on different mind reading strategies when they think they will be viewed as individuals, as compared to when they think they will be viewed as group members. Before we explore this possibility, we must first examine the kinds of situational and individual factors that might influence whether people expect to be viewed as individuals versus as group members. Although little research of which we are aware has explicitly addressed

this issue, a substantial body of research on social identity and self-categorization offers hints from which we can formulate a response (see Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1982; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987).

Social identity theory suggests that there are two general levels of identity: personal identity, which is based on one's individuating attributes, and social identity, which is based on one's group memberships (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; see also Hogg, 2003 for a recent review). Self-categorization theory (e.g., Turner et al., 1987) expands on social identity theory by providing a useful framework for understanding how and why different levels of self-categorization might emerge in different social situations. Although virtually any attributes can serve to define group memberships or to distinguish oneself from others (see Onorato & Turner, 2001; Simon, 1997), self-categorization theory proposes that (a) certain self-concepts can be "switched on" depending on features of the social context, and (b) there is "a *functional antagonism* between the salience of one level of self-categorization and other levels" (Turner et al., 1987, p. 49). In other words, when people think of themselves as individuals, they become less inclined to think of themselves in terms of their group memberships; conversely, when people think of themselves as group members, they are less likely to regard themselves as unique individuals. Self-categorization theory further suggests that the salience of either level of self-categorization is determined by a person's frame of reference in the social context. Specifically, when group membership is salient, people are more likely to think of themselves and others as group members, whereas when group membership is not salient, people are more likely think of themselves and others as individuals.

The research on self-categorization and salience of group membership is important for considering whether interpersonal or intergroup metaperceptions are likely to be formed. In particular, this work suggests that the factors that are likely to influence whether people expect to be viewed as individuals or as group members function by affecting the degree to which group membership is salient within a given situation. In the following section, we explore situational factors that generally influence whether people think they are viewed as individuals or as group members, along with discussing individual factors that may enhance the degree to which people would perceive group membership to be relevant in any given situation.

Situational Factors Affecting Group Membership Salience

The research literature has identified a number of situational factors that can enhance the salience of group membership; for this discussion, we wish to highlight four situational factors that seem to us to be especially relevant to processes of metaperception.

Intergroup conflict. In some of their original theorizing, Tajfel and Turner (1979, 1986) reasoned that intergroup conflict can act as a powerful determinant of how strongly people are viewed in terms of group membership. Conflicts between groups may exist on either psychological or material levels (see Tajfel & Turner, 1979), but as intergroup conflicts intensify, people should become more likely to respond to one another on the basis of group membership rather than on the basis of individual characteristics (see also Hewstone & Cairns, 2001; Hewstone & Greenland, 2000). Thus, just as intergroup conflicts increase the tendency to view others in terms of group membership, such conflicts should also enhance the tendency for people to expect to be viewed by others in terms of group membership.

Mere presence of outgroup member. Even in the absence of long-standing conflicts between groups, the mere presence of an outgroup member can also promote comparisons between groups and thereby lead people to perceive themselves and others in terms of group membership (see Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In line with this view, Wilder (1984) found that the mere presence of an outgroup increased people's tendency to categorize themselves and others in terms of group membership, such that they assumed greater similarities between themselves and other ingroup members and perceived greater differences between themselves and outgroup members. Similarly, we expect that the mere presence of an outgroup would not only encourage people to perceive others in terms of group membership but also increase the tendency for people to expect to be viewed by others in terms of their group membership.

Numerical representation. Although the mere presence of an outgroup member can make group membership salient for members of all groups, the relative representation of different groups can lead those in the minority to perceive more strongly that group membership is salient. By virtue of being in the numerical minority, people sense that they are subjected to greater scrutiny as representatives of their groups (Saenz & Lord, 1989; Sekaquaptewa & Thompson, 2002), which contributes to a heightened awareness of group membership (see Bettencourt, Miller, & Hume, 1999; Crocker & McGraw, 1984; McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujioka, 1978). Thus, we expect that people will be more likely to anticipate being viewed in terms of their group membership, and therefore to be more likely to form group-level metaperceptions, in situations in which their group is a numerical minority.

Stigmatization. Similarly, research suggests that stigmatization can make group membership more salient, to the extent that stigmatizing characteristics correspond with those that define one's group (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Goffman, 1963; Jones et al., 1984). The recognition that one's group is stigmatized often leads to a focus on how others view one's group (Pinel, 1999) in an attempt to predict how one will be viewed and treated. As such, contexts in which people's group identities are stigmatized (e.g., women in mathematics) can become threatening due to the possibility that their behavior will be interpreted in terms of negative stereotypes associated with their group (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002). Thus, stigmatized group identities can lead people to expect to be viewed in terms of their group membership rather than to be perceived on the basis of their individual characteristics.

Individual Factors Affecting Group Membership Salience

Research has also identified some individual factors associated with varying degrees of group membership salience, some of which involve people's own feelings toward their groups, and some which involve the anticipated responses of others.

Group identification. Generally, as people identify more strongly with their groups, group membership becomes increasingly important for how they see themselves and others and how they view their social worlds (see Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Tropp & Wright, 2001). For example, people who identify strongly with their groups are more likely to think of themselves as group members (Spears, Doosje, & Ellemers, 1997) and to feel close and similar to other ingroup members (Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995). Stronger identification also corresponds with greater attraction to other ingroup members (Hogg & Hardie, 1992; Hogg, Hardie & Reynolds, 1995), and particularly those who excel in representing their group's values (Turner et al., 1987). Moreover, people who identify strongly with their groups tend to be more dissatisfied with their group's position relative to other groups (Tropp & Wright, 1999) and more prepared to promote the interests of their group in the larger society (Tropp & Brown, 2004; Wright & Tropp, 2002). Thus, corresponding to these trends, greater levels of identification should lead people to not only see themselves as group members but also expect to be seen by others in terms of their group membership.

Awareness of group membership and sensitivity to group-based rejection. At the same time, people also vary in the extent to which they are aware of group membership (Pinel, 1999) and in the extent to which they expect to be rejected by others on the basis of their group membership (Mendoza-Denton, Downey, Purdie, Davis, & Pietrzak, 2002). Early formulations indicated that group-based identities involve both an awareness of group membership and a sense of emotional significance attached to that membership (e.g., Tajfel, 1981). Nonetheless, although they may be related (see Tropp & Wright, 2001), recent work suggests that an awareness of group membership may not always correspond with feelings of group identification. For example, group members low in identification may acknowledge their categorization as group members while at the same time they resist the categorization by attempting to distance themselves from the group (see Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997 for an extended discussion). Thus, independent of the degree to which they identify with their groups, people may still recognize that others are likely to view them in terms of their group membership (see Branscombe & Ellemers, 1998).

Additionally, people who experience greater concern about being perceived as group members are more likely to interpret ambiguous situations in terms of group membership and to anticipate being rejected by the outgroup (Mendoza-Denton et al., 2002; Pinel 2002). Such concerns are therefore likely to enhance people's general awareness of group membership, along with their expectation that others will view them as group members.

Processes of Metaperception Formation When Group Memberships Are Salient

In the previous section, we discussed a number of situational and individual factors that affect the salience of group membership and are thereby likely to influence whether people think they are seen as individuals or as group members. With this background, we can now focus our attention on the processes associated with metaperception formation and how these processes might differ depending on whether people think they are being seen as individuals versus as group members.

Consistent with prior work on metaperception (e.g., Anderson, 1984; Campbell & Fehr, 1990; Feil, 2001; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993; Malloy et al., 1997; Norman, 1969; Shechtman & Kenny, 1994), we expect that where there is an absence of cues to make group membership salient in the social context, people should generally tend to project their own views of themselves onto others. However, as group memberships become increasingly salient, we believe the bases of people's metaperceptions should shift, such that they begin to make predictions about others' views in terms of the

perceived values, characteristics, and attributes that define their groups.

In particular, the group membership of the perceiver—and whether that group membership is shared with or different from the perceived—is likely to have a profound impact on how metaperception strategies are utilized and on the metaperceptions that result from their use. Generally, we propose that the basic strategies involved in metaperception are likely to be the same irrespective of whether people think they are being viewed by ingroup members or outgroup members. However, what varies depending on these variables, in our view, is how much weight will be given to different metaperception formation strategies. Thus, although we expect that metaperception will always involve some combination of the strategies described previously, we also expect that certain strategies will be regarded as more or less useful depending on the degree to which the context is perceived to be intragroup or intergroup in nature.

Research on the role of group membership has, for the most part, been unrelated to studies of metaperceptions (but see Vorauer et al., 1998, 2000; Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001 for some notable exceptions). Nonetheless, work from several branches of the social psychological literature strongly suggests that metaperceptions should differ qualitatively when people anticipate being perceived by ingroup members and outgroup members. For example, people tend to view their ingroups more positively than they view outgroups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), and they assume reciprocity in this ingroup favoritism among members of their own groups (Fiske & Ruscher, 1993; Gonzales, Davis, Loney, LuKens, & Junghans, 1983; Horenczyk & Bekerman, 1997; Stephan, Stephan, Wenzel, & Cornelius, 1991; Vivian & Berkowitz, 1992; Vorauer et al., 1998). By contrast, people tend to be distrustful of outgroup members (Insko & Schopler, 1998; Worchel, 1979), expect to be evaluated negatively by them (Krueger, 1996), and construe their intentions as negative (Hornsey, Trembath, & Gunthorpe, 2004; Kramer & Messick, 1998; Tropp & Bianchi, in press).

Beyond these qualitative differences, people should also rely more or less heavily on different metaperception strategies when they anticipate being perceived by ingroup members and outgroup members, due to the varying assumptions underlying their use. People typically see members of their own group as more similar to themselves than members of outgroups (see Hogg & Abrams, 1988); correspondingly, they tend to assume that ingroup members hold opinions and beliefs similar to their own, whereas they assume that outgroup members have less similar opinions and beliefs (Allen & Wilder, 1979; Clement & Krueger, 2002; Holtz & Miller, 1985; Wilder, 1984). Such assumptions of ingroup similarity and outgroup dissimilarity have been found both in naturally occurring groups (e.g., Holtz & Miller, 1985) and in minimal groups (e.g., Allen & Wilder, 1979; Wilder, 1984). Moreover, assumptions of ingroup similarity and outgroup dissimilarity may also lead one to expect that one's true characteristics will be less transparent to outgroup members than to ingroup members (see Vorauer, 2001).

Thus, we propose that metaperceptions formed in relation to ingroup members and outgroup members are likely to vary not only in terms of their valence but also in terms of the assumptions that guide their formation. In his recent discussion of mind-reading strategies, Ames (2004a) has suggested that people are generally more likely to rely on projection when they feel similar to others, whereas they are more likely to engage in stereotyping when they feel dissimilar to others. We apply this distinction to the contexts of intragroup and intergroup metaperception in the paragraphs that follow to consider how use of such strategies as projection and stereotyping may function when people anticipate being viewed by ingroup members or outgroup members.

Metaperception Formation in Intragroup Contexts

Generally, we suspect that the most crucial strategy for metaperception formation in intragroup contexts is projection. In their recent meta-analysis, Robbins and Krueger (2005) found that projection of mental states to ingroup members is quite robust, most likely because people are comfortable assuming that ingroup members are similar to them and have similar points of view (see also Allen & Wilder, 1979; Clement & Krueger, 2002; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Holtz & Miller, 1985; Wilder, 1984).

But in thinking about how projection functions in metaperception formation with ingroup members, we should specify that people are likely to project images of themselves *as group members*. Thus, we agree with Ames (2004a) that people will generally rely on projection as a mind-reading strategy to the extent that people perceive similarity between themselves and others. But our perspective also diverges from Ames's in that we stress how assessments of similarity can occur at either the individual level or the group level. For example, we can consider a particular group membership (e.g., scientists) and the kinds of characteristics that might be associated with that group (e.g., intelligent, dull, focused, detail oriented). We can also imagine an individual member of this group who may possess these characteristics to some degree, along with a number of other, more individuating characteristics (e.g., gregarious, emotional, spontaneous). We propose that when group memberships are salient and people anticipate being perceived by members of their own groups, their metaperceptions should be based

largely on those characteristics that serve to represent and define their groups (e.g., intelligent, detail oriented) rather than those that reflect who they are as individuals (e.g., gregarious, spontaneous).

Very little research of which we are aware has examined people's expectations for how they will be viewed by ingroup members. However, our analysis is consistent with work on self-stereotyping from the social identity perspective. This work suggests that greater salience of group membership leads people to see themselves in terms of the positively distinguishing characteristics of their group (Spears et al., 1997; Turner et al., 1987) and to accentuate perceived similarities between themselves and other ingroup members on those prototypical characteristics (Hogg, Cooper-Shaw, & Holzworth, 1993). Moreover, research from this perspective suggests that people strive to represent the group prototype when group membership is salient (see Hogg, 2003), and that those perceived to be prototypical of the group are liked more than those who are less prototypical (see Hogg & Hains, 1996; Hogg et al., 1995). Thus, when people anticipate being perceived by other members of their group, they should be likely to project positive views of themselves as group members, such that they would be perceived to possess characteristics that are prototypical of their group.

At the same time, it is important to note that intragroup metaperceptions may also vary somewhat, depending on the degree to which people generally see themselves as representing the prototypical characteristics of their group. As self-representations often reflect people's lived experiences as group members (see Deaux, 1993), there may be constraints on the types of images that people will have of themselves and that can be projected onto others (see Ellemers, Barreto, & Spears, 1999). To extend our prior example, a scientist who recognizes that she is spontaneous (and perhaps even easily distracted) may be unlikely to expect that other scientists would see her as focused. Thus, although group members low in prototypicality might anticipate being perceived in terms of their group membership, they may expect to be perceived as deviating from the characteristics that define their group, which could provoke a sense of marginalization from the group (see Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998).

In sum, we propose that intragroup metaperceptions should be based principally on projection, and that people's tendency to engage in projection rests on their assumption of similarity with other ingroup members. Specifically, the more they see themselves as similar to other ingroup members, the greater their tendency to project views of themselves as group members onto other group members, such that they would anticipate being perceived in terms of the positively defining (i.e., prototypical) characteristics of their groups.

Metaperception Formation in Intergroup Contexts

By contrast, when people form metaperceptions across group boundaries, their metaperceptions should rest on assumptions of dissimilarity from outgroup members. Indeed, a great deal of research from the social identity perspective suggests that when group memberships become salient, people not only enhance perceived similarities between themselves and members of their own groups but also tend to accentuate differences between their own groups and other groups (see Hogg, 2003; Hogg & Abrams, 2004a) we propose that greater assumptions of dissimilarity would lead people to rely more heavily on stereotyping in their attempts to read others' minds. Indeed, a recent meta-analysis suggests that projection is far weaker with outgroup members than with ingroup members (Robbins & Krueger, 2005), so people must rely on other strategies when determining what outgroup members think. Moreover, Ames (2004a) found that projection and stereotyping are negatively correlated with each other, such that when people perceive others as dissimilar to themselves, they rely on stereotypes of those others to determine what they were likely to think. Similarly, we expect that stereotyping constitutes a primary strategy by which metaperceptions will be formed in relation to outgroup members.

However, as we apply this framework to the context of metaperception, we must also recognize the dual role that stereotypes can play in how people anticipate being viewed by outgroup members. Coexisting within the same intergroup context, members of different groups tend to have a consensual understanding of the characteristics that are commonly associated with their own group and other social groups (see Jost & Banaji, 1994). As such, members of one group should recognize both those characteristics that are regarded as typical of their own group (e.g., scientists: focused, detailed oriented, dull) and those of a specified outgroup (e.g., artists: free spirited, creative, lax). On the one hand, then, people should rely on outgroup stereotypes to gain insights regarding what outgroup members are likely to be thinking, just as they would in cases in which other objects are the focus of outgroup members' thoughts (see Ames, 2004a). But when people themselves become the focus of outgroup members' thoughts, as in the case of metaperception, stereotypes of their own groups also become relevant to their predictions about how they will be viewed by members of the outgroup.

Moreover, we propose that people will attend primarily to negative stereotypes of their group in their attempts to predict how they will be perceived by outgroup members. We adopt this view given that intergroup relations are commonly construed in terms of distrust (see Insko & Schopler, 1998; Worchel, 1979),

such that people presume negativity on the part of outgroup members (Kramer & Messick, 1998; Kramer & Wei, 1999). Consistent with this perspective, recent work suggests that people generally expect outgroup members to evaluate them negatively (Krueger, 1996) and to perceive them in terms of the negative stereotypes that surround their groups (Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001; Vorauer et al., 1998). Moreover, other findings suggest that people think outgroup members see them as more stereotypical of their groups than they see themselves (Frey & Tropp, 2004). Thus, whereas people typically expect to be viewed in terms of the positively defining characteristics of their group among ingroup members (e.g., as "focused" among scientists), we propose that people should generally expect to be viewed in terms of the negatively defining characteristics of their groups among outgroup members (e.g., as "dull" among artists).

Still, the extent to which people expect outgroup members to perceive them in terms of their group's negative stereotypes is also likely to depend on the degree to which they see those negative stereotypical characteristics of their groups as applicable to themselves. For example, a scientist who sees himself as gregarious and spontaneous may be unlikely to expect that a group of artists would see him as dull, and he may even expect to get along with the artists' presumed "free-spirited" nature. Paralleling this example, Vorauer et al. (1998) found that White Canadian participants low in prejudice did not expect to be perceived by native, Aboriginal Canadians in terms of the negative stereotypes of their group (e.g., prejudiced and privileged), whereas those high in prejudice were more likely to expect to be viewed more negatively and stereotypically by Aboriginal Canadians (see also Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001). The authors suggest that, relative to those high in prejudice, participants low in prejudice were more likely to see themselves as similar to the outgroup toward which they had little prejudice, and this perception allowed them to expect not to be viewed in terms of the negative stereotypical characteristics of their group. A complementary extension of this interpretation grows from our discussion of presumed prototypicality in metaperception: It could be that participants low in prejudice did not expect to be perceived in terms of the negative stereotypes of their group not only because they saw themselves as similar to outgroup members but also because they did not see themselves as conforming to the negative stereotype of White Canadians as being prejudiced.

In sum, we propose that, although certain strategies are generally likely to be used in metaperception formation, the processes involved in intragroup and intergroup metaperception are likely to vary in several ways. First, intragroup and intergroup metaperceptions are likely to differ in terms of the assumptions of similarity that guide their formation, such that ingroup members are likely to be seen as more similar to the self. Second, these varying assumptions of similarity are likely to produce differences in the extent to which strategies such as projection and stereotyping are used when forming metaperceptions with ingroup and outgroup members. Third, the valences of intragroup and intergroup metaperceptions are likely to vary, such that the positively defining characteristics of people's groups should be the bases of intragroup metaperceptions, whereas negative characteristics associated with their groups should be the bases of intergroup metaperceptions. Finally, the extent to which people do or do not see themselves as prototypical members of their groups should be associated with shifts in how strongly they see those positive and negative characteristics applying to them as they attempt to predict how they will be seen by ingroup and outgroup members.

Effects of Intergroup Metaperceptions on Intergroup Relations

Given the distinct assumptions and processes that guide metaperceptions between groups, we must also consider the ways in which metaperceptions are likely to affect relations with members of other groups. We propose that in people's initial interactions with members of other groups, they attempt to discern whether they are being seen as individuals or as group members. We also propose that these determinations will depend largely on the degree to which people perceive group membership to be salient in the social context. At the same time, we recognize that some contexts may be more ambiguous (see Crocker & Major, 1989), such that people perceive group membership is salient to some degree yet are unsure about whether others are responding to them in terms of that group membership (see Crocker, Cornwell, & Major, 1993; Crocker et al., 1998; Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991; Major, Quinton, & McCoy, 2002). But generally, when people sense that outgroup members are perceiving them in terms of group membership, they expect to be viewed negatively and stereotypically, and these tendencies should have important ramifications for how they relate to members of the outgroup.

On the one hand, expecting to be viewed negatively can lead people to dislike their supposed evaluators (Devine, Evett, & Vasquez-Suson, 1996; Livingston, Brewer, & Alexander, 2004; Vorauer, 2003). Research on interpersonal relations has shown that when people think they are being evaluated negatively, they tend to regard their evaluator more negatively (Harvey, Kelley, & Shapiro, 1957; Murray et al., 2001). So too, it seems likely that people will evaluate outgroup members negatively if they feel they are being evaluated negatively by them (see Hollbach & Otten, 2003). Indeed, recent

work suggests that African Americans' perceptions of prejudice from White Americans contribute to their own prejudiced attitudes toward White Americans (Livingston et al., 2004). Similarly, when White Canadians perceive that they are evaluated negatively by native, Aboriginal Canadians, they tend to evaluate Aboriginal Canadians more negatively (see Vorauer, 2003; Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001). Thus, intergroup metaperceptions may strain relations between groups by contributing to the perpetuation of prejudices across group boundaries.

At the same time, expecting to be viewed negatively and stereotypically by outgroup members can also contribute to feelings of intergroup anxiety (see Devine et al., 1996; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). People tend to feel threatened and uncomfortable in cross-group interactions (see Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, & Lickel, 2000; Stephan & Stephan, 1985), as they are unsure of how they will be received by, and how they should interact with, members of other groups (Devine et al., 1996; Shelton & Richeson, 2005; see also Schlenker & Leary, 1982). In turn, anxieties about cross-group interactions can motivate people to avoid them, thereby making intergroup contact less likely to occur (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kawakami, 2003; Fiske & Ruscher, 1993; Goffman, 1963; Plant & Devine, 2003; Stephan & Stephan, 1985) and precluding the potential for positive outcomes to emerge from intergroup contact (see Blair, Park, & Bachelor, 2003; Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, & Hodson, 2002).

Additionally, when avoidance of cross-group interaction is not possible, anxieties associated with metaperceptual concerns can have a negative impact on cross-group interactions and hinder the potential for achieving positive relations between groups. As group members feel anxious in intergroup contexts, they tend to act in less spontaneous and relaxed ways (Devine et al., 1996; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986). As such, people may unwittingly display nonverbal behaviors that denote negative responses to the interaction, such as decreased eye contact, greater social distance, and increased fidgeting and hesitant speech (see Dovidio, 2001; Fiske & Ruscher, 1993; Goffman, 1963; Kleck, 1968; Kleck et al., 1968; Meleshko & Alden, 1993; Word, Zanna, & Cooper, 1974). Such negative behaviors may, in turn, make cross-group interactions unpleasant, and this unpleasantness can perpetuate a self-fulfilling cycle by negatively affecting people's willingness to interact with outgroup members in the future (Blair et al., 2003; Dovidio et al., 2002; Fiske & Ruscher, 1993; Goffman, 1963; Jones et al., 1984; Plant & Devine, 2003; Stephan & Stephan, 1985).

Moreover, in addition to hindering the course of cross-group interactions, experiencing anxiety can also affect the ways in which people attend to information about outgroup members. Overall, experiencing anxiety can reduce attentional capacity and impair information processing (Wilder & Shapiro, 1989); these impairments, in turn, can increase the tendency for people to perceive outgroup members in terms of stereotypical characteristics and decrease their ability to use counterstereotypic information (Wilder, 1993a, 1993b). Similarly, research has shown that feelings of threat can often motivate people to apply negative stereotypes to outgroup members, whereas they may be less likely to do so when they are not feeling threatened (see Fein & Spencer, 1997; Kunda & Sinclair, 1999). Thus, concerns with how one is viewed by the outgroup can not only make cross-group interactions awkward and difficult but also perpetuate our tendency to perceive outgroup members in stereotypical terms.

Strategies for Reducing the Negative Effects of Intergroup Metaperceptions

Given that intergroup metaperceptions can pose such difficulties for cross-group interactions, we must consider how metaperceptual concerns and their concomitant anxieties correspond with the strategies we pursue to improve relations between groups. A growing body of research suggests that anxiety mediates the relationship between intergroup contact and intergroup attitudes, such that contact helps to promote positive intergroup attitudes to the extent that it reduces anxiety (see Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Pettigrew & Tropp, in preparation; Stephan et al., 2002). Although intergroup anxiety has sometimes been attributed to a general lack of familiarity with outgroup members (Dijker, 1987; Stephan & Stephan, 1985), more recent work suggests that much of the anxiety experienced in cross-group interactions involves uncertainty regarding how one will be viewed by members of other groups (Devine et al., 1996; Plant & Devine, 2003). As such, the effectiveness of strategies designed to improve intergroup relations may ultimately hinge on their ability to alleviate metaperceptual concerns in intergroup contexts, thereby setting the stage for more positive intergroup attitudes to develop.

Intergroup researchers have yet to integrate these emerging perspectives on metaperceptions with more traditional approaches to intergroup contact theory and research. We believe that the time has come for us to consider the strategies used to enhance intergroup outcomes in relation to recent work on metaperceptions, to explore why certain strategies are likely to be effective, and to examine the processes that may underlie their effects. In this section of the article, we consider a number of possible approaches in light of the research we have reviewed on metaperceptions. In so doing, we highlight the important role metaperceptions play in intergroup relationships, and how assumptions and processes associated with intergroup metaperceptions

point toward certain strategies that should be especially effective in promoting positive relations between groups. Although the strategies we discuss are not new, our analysis of these strategies is novel in that we focus specifically on ways in which they are likely to affect people's expectations for how they are viewed by outgroup members, rather than on how they might be used to improve people's intergroup attitudes.

Improving metaperceptions by minimizing the salience of group membership. In this review, we have proposed that intergroup metaperceptions tend to be negatively valenced and based on assumptions of dissimilarity from outgroup members; moreover, we have proposed that metaperceptions become increasingly "intergroup" in nature to the extent that group memberships are perceived to be salient. Thus, one possible strategy for improving metaperceptions across group boundaries would be to minimize the salience of group membership during cross-group interactions.

Some perspectives in the intergroup contact literature have proposed that group membership salience should be minimized during cross-group interactions to facilitate positive relations between groups (Brewer & Miller, 1984; Miller, 2002; Miller, Brewer, & Edwards, 1985). Applied to the context of metaperception, we might predict that reducing group membership salience should lead people to anticipate that outgroup members will perceive them as individuals, which might encourage presumptions of similarity and projections of self-views when forming metaperceptions in relation to them (see Kenny & DePaulo, 1993). Expecting to be seen as individuals rather than as group members would also likely reduce the anxieties that group members experience as they form metaperceptions in intergroup contexts (see Devine et al., 1996). Future studies might therefore examine the extent to which reducing group membership salience leads people to expect to be viewed by outgroup members less as group members and more as individuals, and whether these tendencies mediate the effects of salience on anxiety.

Nonetheless, the broader effectiveness of this strategy for achieving positive intergroup metaperceptions may be limited for several reasons. On the one hand, when interactions involve contact between members of visibly distinguishable groups (e.g., racial groups), people will likely continue to be aware of differences between their groups and expect to be perceived as group members, even when attempts are made to reduce the salience of group membership (see Frable, Blackstone, & Scherbaum, 1990; Miller, 2002). At the same time, even when reductions in group membership salience are possible and achieved, such reductions could potentially improve metaperceptions among individual members of different groups, but this approach may do little to change how group members will generally expect to be perceived by other outgroup members in future intergroup contexts (see Brown & Hewstone, 2005).

Improving metaperceptions by shifting assessments of prototypicality. Alternatively, people may attempt to shift the degree to which they will be perceived as prototypical representatives of their groups out of a motivation to form more positive metaperceptions regarding how they are likely to be viewed by outgroup members. Research on typicality suggests that positive contact experiences with a typical outgroup member should lead to more favorable attitudes toward the outgroup as a whole (see Desforges, Lord, Pugh, & Sia, 1997; Ensari & Miller, 2002; Rothbart & John, 1985; Wilder, 1984). But as we relate this work to research on intergroup metaperceptions, we must recognize that during the initial stages of contact, expecting to be viewed as a typical member of one's group could exacerbate the anxiety people experience in cross-group interactions (see Wilder, 1984, for a related argument).

Consequently, people may be motivated to try to shift outgroup members' perceptions of them so they would be less likely to be seen as typical of their groups and more likely to be perceived in a positive light. For example, group members may attempt to distance themselves from the negative stereotypes of their groups (e.g., Klein & Azzi, 2001) or to convince outgroup members that the negative assumptions and characteristics associated with their groups do not apply to them (e.g., Vorauer, 2003). To the extent that such changes are possible, these kinds of strategies could be effective in relieving some of the anxieties group members have about cross-group interactions, and in turn, enhancing their sense that they will be accepted by outgroup members.

However, attempts to diminish the extent to which they are perceived as prototypical group members could be limited due to many factors. Elements of the social context can often constrain the ways in which people attempt to represent themselves to others (Ellemers et al., 1999), which might undermine feelings that outgroup members' views of them can be changed. More generally, given that intergroup metaperceptions tend to be based in presumptions of dissimilarity from outgroup members (Clement & Krueger, 2002; Holtz & Miller, 1985), people may not feel capable of conveying their desired impression, which can contribute to feelings of anxiety in intergroup contexts (see Blascovich et al., 2000; Devine et al., 1996; Shelton, 2003; see also Schlenker & Leary, 1982). Thus, even when group members are motivated to attempt to change outgroup members' views of them, such attempts may not be sufficient to alleviate their metaperceptual concerns and anxieties associated with cross-group interactions.

Improving metaperceptions by restructuring the intergroup relationship. Instead, what may be needed to address these metaperceptual concerns are more fundamental changes in how people understand the nature of relations between the groups. The research we have reviewed in this article suggests that people generally expect to be rejected and viewed negatively by outgroup members; however, they expect to be accepted and viewed favorably by members of their own groups (e.g., Kramer & Messick, 1998; Krueger, 1996; Vivian & Berkowitz, 1992). Thus, strategies that encourage people to feel that they will be seen by outgroup members as they are seen by ingroup members should be especially effective in allaying metaperceptual concerns, thereby setting the stage for positive relations between members of different groups.

Moreover, such changes in the intergroup relationship should encourage positive shifts in metaperceptions not only in relation to individual outgroup members with whom one comes into contact but also in relation to outgroup members in general. Changes in views of the intergroup relationship should also allow more positive metaperceptions to persist when group membership is salient and when people are seen as prototypical representatives of their groups because distinctions between the groups would be less closely tied to a perception of the groups as being in opposition with one another.

Some recent branches of the intergroup research literature offer perspectives that complement this analysis. For example, research on the common ingroup identity model indicates that positive intergroup outcomes can be achieved when members of different groups view one another as part of a superordinate category that includes both groups (see Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Gaertner, Mann, Murrell, & Dovidio, 1989; Gaertner, Rust, Dovidio, Anastasio, & Bachman, 1996). At the same time, other recent work suggests that such positive effects should be especially likely to occur when people see themselves and others in terms of both the superordinate group and their subordinate group memberships (González & Brown, 2003; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000).

Although they suggest somewhat different approaches, what these perspectives share is the view that positive intergroup relations can be achieved when people shift their understanding of relationships between the ingroup and the outgroup. Applied to the context of metaperception, shared membership in the superordinate group should also lead people to expect that outgroup members will perceive them in much the same way as they are perceived by fellow ingroup members, which should correspond with more positive metaperceptions and less anxiety about how they will be perceived by outgroup members. Consistent with this view, some work suggests that perceiving a common ingroup can reduce feelings of intergroup anxiety (e.g., Gaertner, Dovidio, & Bachman, 1996). Still, more work is needed to clarify the extent to which the reductions in anxiety achieved through superordinate group memberships relate to metaperceptual concerns, and whether alleviating these metaperceptual concerns is in fact a necessary step toward achieving positive changes in intergroup attitudes.

Another possible approach to easing metaperceptual concerns grows from the psychological connectedness that emerges when people forge close relationships across group boundaries (see Herek & Capitanio, 1996; Levin, van Laar, & Sidanius, 2003; Paolini, Hewstone, Cairns, & Voci, 2004; Pettigrew, 1997; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). One mechanism that has been proposed to account for these effects is the inclusion of outgroup in the self. When this occurs, outgroup members are granted the same kinds of benefits typically granted to the self and ingroup members (see Aron & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2001; Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997; Wright, Aron, & Tropp, 2002), and group boundaries become partially dissolved as a sense of interconnectedness emerges between the ingroup and the outgroup (see Aron & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2001, for an extended discussion).

It is our view that the benefits of such changes in the structure of the intergroup relationship should extend far beyond the stated goals of improving intergroup attitudes. Establishing a sense of connectedness between the ingroup and outgroup should propel positive expectations for how one is likely to be viewed by outgroup members, and these positive expectations should in turn encourage the development of positive intergroup attitudes. Supporting this view, the intergroup connectedness that grows from friendships with outgroup members has been regarded as a critical factor for minimizing anxieties about future cross-group interactions (see Wright et al., 2002). Moreover, some work has shown that both direct and indirect friendships with outgroup members contribute to reducing intergroup anxiety (see Islam & Hewstone, 1993; Tropp, 2003; Wright et al., 1997), and that anxiety mediates the relations between cross-group friendships and more positive intergroup attitudes (Paolini et al., 2004). Nonetheless, research has yet to test directly whether anxieties reduced through cross-group friendships involve metaperceptual concerns, and how alleviating these concerns might allow for the development of positive intergroup attitudes. More research is needed to examine the processes by which closeness to outgroup members, achieved through direct and indirect cross-group friendships, can diminish metaperceptual concerns and set the stage for achieving positive changes in intergroup attitudes.

Conclusion

Now at the forefront of intergroup research, recent work has begun to examine metaperceptions in intergroup contexts, how intergroup metaperceptions are formed, and the effects that these metaperceptions can have on relations between groups. In this article, we have explored how the assumptions and processes that contribute to forming metaperceptions are likely to vary depending on the degree to which group memberships are salient, how likely members are to be seen as typical of their groups, and whether they expect to be viewed by members of their own group or the outgroup. We have also considered the detrimental effects that intergroup metaperceptions can have on relations with outgroup members, and we have proposed that greater attention to the nature of intergroup metaperceptions can inform our understanding of the strategies used to improve intergroup relations. With continued examination of metaperceptual processes in intergroup contexts, we believe future research will bring us a crucial step closer to identifying those strategies that are likely to be most effective in promoting positive relations between groups.

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