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Intergroup Relations

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

As a social species, humans strive to establish close ties with one another. Yet the same species that seeks out connections with others also metes out enmity when it confronts members of another group. Intergroup relations are more often contentious than harmonious.

- What interpersonal factors disrupt relations between groups?
- What are the psychological foundations of conflict between groups?
- How **can** intergroup relations be improved?

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Intergroup Conflict: Us versus Them

Competition and Conflict

The Discontinuity Effect

Power and Domination

Norms of Engagement

Anger and Scapegoating

Evolutionary Perspectives

Intergroup Bias: Perceiving Us and Them

Conflict and Categorization

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The Rattlers and the Eagles: Group against Group

On two midsummer days in 1954, twenty-two 11-year-old boys from Oklahoma City boarded buses for their trip to summer camp. They were “normal, well-adjusted boys of the same age, educational level, from similar sociocultural backgrounds and with no unusual features in their personal backgrounds” (Sherif et al., 1961, p. 59). Their parents had paid a \$25 fee, signed some consent forms, and packed them off to a camp situated in Robbers Cave State Park, located in the San Bois Mountains of southeast Oklahoma.

Robbers Cave was not your everyday summer camp. All the boys had been handpicked by a research team that included Muzafer Sherif, O. J. Harvey, Jack White, William Hood, and Carolyn Sherif. The team had spent more than 300 hours interviewing the boys’ teachers, studying their academic records, reviewing their family backgrounds, and unobtrusively recording their behavior in school and on the playground. The parents knew that the camp was actually part of a group dynamics research project, but the boys had no idea that they were participants in an experiment. The staff randomly assigned the boys to one of two groups and brought them to camp in two separate trips. Each group spent a week hiking, swimming, and playing sports in their area of the camp, and both groups developed norms, roles, and structure. Some boys emerged as leaders, others became followers, and both groups established territories within the park

(see Figure 14.1). The boys named their groups the Rattlers and the Eagles and stenciled these names on their shirts and painted them onto flags. The staff members, who were also collecting data, noted clear increases in group-oriented behaviors, cohesiveness, and positive group attitudes.

When the groups discovered another group was nearby, they expressed wariness about these outsiders. After some guarded encounters between members, they asked the staff to set up a competition to determine which group was better than the other. Since a series of competitions between the two groups was exactly what the staff had in mind, they held a series of baseball games, tugs-of-war, tent-pitching competitions, cabin inspections, and a (rigged) treasure hunt.

As the competition wore on, tempers flared. When the Eagles lost a game, they retaliated by stealing the Rattlers’ flag and burning it. The Rattlers raided the Eagles’ cabin during the night, tearing out mosquito netting, overturning beds, and carrying off personal belongings. When the Eagles won the overall tournament, the Rattlers absconded with the prizes. When fistfights broke out between the groups, the staff had to intervene to prevent the boys from seriously injuring one another. They moved the two groups to different parts of the camp, amid shouts of “poor losers,” “bums,” “sissies,” “cowards,” and “little babies.”

Groups are everywhere, and so are conflicts between them. *Intergroup conflict* occurs at all levels of social organization—rivalries between gangs, organized disputes in industrial settings, race riots, and international warfare. Groups provide the means to achieve humanity’s most lofty goals, but when groups oppose each other, they are sources of hostility, abuse, and aggression. Although conflict between groups is one of the most complicated phenomena studied by social scientists, the goal of greater understanding and the promise of reduced tension remain enticing. This chapter considers the nature of intergroup relations, with a focus on the sources of intergroup conflict and the ways such conflicts can be resolved (for

reviews, see Bornstein, 2003; Brewer, 2007; Dovidio et al., 2003).

INTERGROUP CONFLICT:

US VERSUS THEM

The researchers’ plans for the Robbers Cave study worked all too well. In just two weeks they created a full-fledged war-in-miniature between the Rattlers and the Eagles, complete with violent schemes, weapons of destruction, hostility, and mistreatment of each side by the other. The Sherifs, by starting with two newly formed groups with no history of

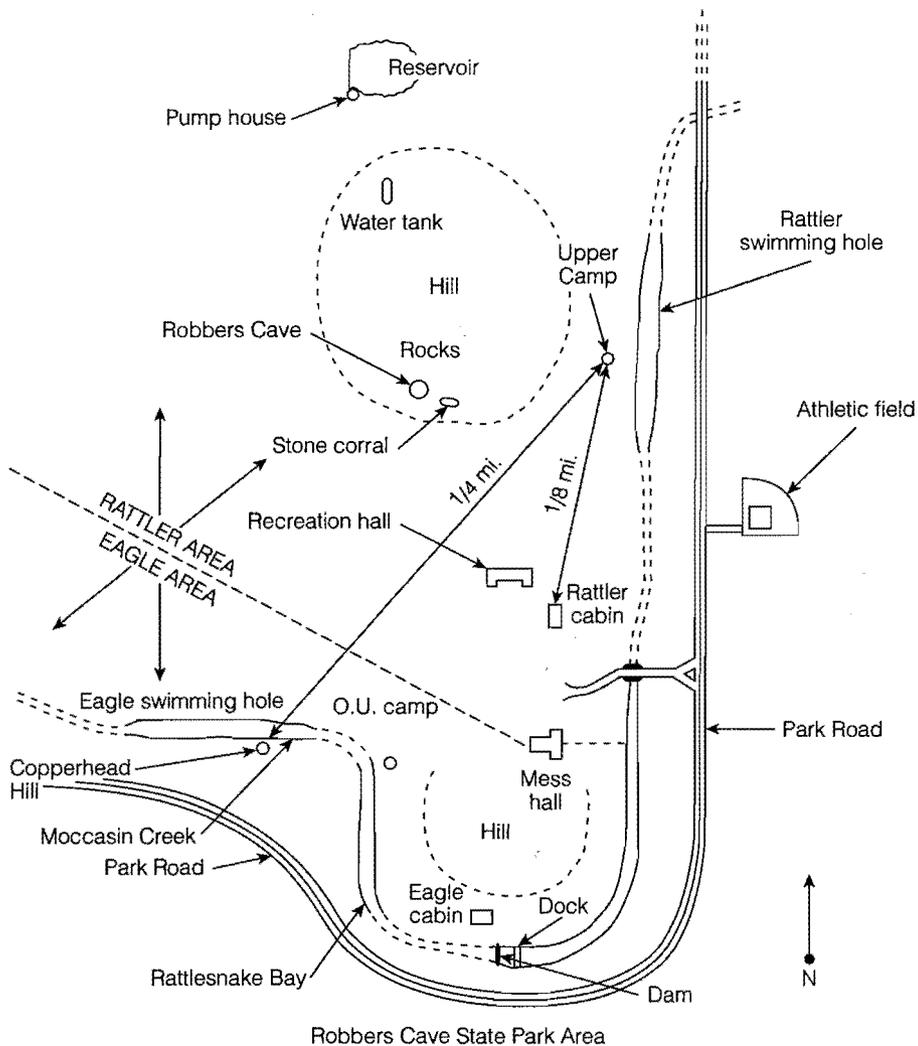


FIGURE 14.1 The layout of the campgrounds in the Robbers Cave Experiment.

rivalry, succeeded in documenting the social and psychological factors that combined to push these two groups into an escalating conflict. Each group at the Robbers Cave viewed the other as a rival to be bested, and these perceptions were soon joined by other antecedents of conflict: norms, struggles for status, and ever-strengthening negative emotional reactions. This section examines these causes of conflict, focusing on the Robbers Cave study but suggesting implications for other intergroup situations as well.

Competition and Conflict

On the ninth day of the **Robbers Cave Experiment**, the Rattlers and the Eagles saw the tournament prizes for the first time: the shining trophy,

Robbers Cave Experiment A field study performed by Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif and their colleagues that examined the causes and consequences of conflict between two groups of boys at Robbers Cave State Park in Oklahoma.

medals for each boy, and—best of all—four-blade camping knives. The boys wanted these prizes, and nothing was going to stand in their way. From then on, all group activities revolved around the ultimate goal of winning the tournament. Unfortunately, although both groups aspired to win the prizes, success for one group meant failure for the other. When groups are pitted against each other in a contest for resources, intergroup relations that were once amicable often become antagonistic.

Many of the things that people want and need are available in limited supply. Should one group acquire and control a scarce commodity—whether it be food, territory, wealth, power, natural resources, energy, or the prizes so desperately desired by the Rattlers and the Eagles—other groups must do without that resource. According to **realistic group conflict theory**, this struggle between groups to acquire resources inevitably leads to conflict (Campbell, 1965; Esses et al., 2005). All groups would prefer to be “haves” rather than “have-nots,” so they take steps to achieve two interrelated outcomes—attaining the desired resources and preventing the other group from reaching its goals. Theorists have traced many negative intergroup dynamics—including struggles between the classes of a society (Marx & Engels, 1947), rebellions (Gurr, 1970), international warfare (Streufert & Streufert, 1986), racism (Gaines & Reed, 1995), religious persecutions (Clark, 1998), tribal rivalries in East Africa (Brewer & Campbell, 1976), police use of lethal force against citizens (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998), interorganizational conflicts (Jehn & Mannix, 2001), and even the development of culture and social structure (Simmel, 1955)—to competition over scarce resources.

Robert Blake and Jane Mouton discovered competition's capacity to create conflict in their work with business executives. They assigned participants in a two-week management training

program to small groups charged with solving a series of problems. Blake and Mouton never explicitly mentioned competition, but the participants knew that a group of experts would decide which group had produced the best solution. Many viewed the project as a contest to see who was best, and they wholeheartedly accepted the importance of winning. Leaders who helped the group beat the opponent became influential, whereas leaders of losing groups were replaced. The groups bonded tightly during work and coffee breaks, and only rarely did any participant show liking for a member of another group. In some cases, hostility between the two groups became so intense that the “experiment had to be discontinued” and special steps taken to restore order, tempers, and “some basis of mutual respect” (Blake & Mouton, 1984, 1986, p. 72). These findings and others suggest that *competition*—even competition that is only anticipated—can spark intergroup hostility (Bornstein, Budescu, & Zamir, 1997; Polzer, 1996; van Oostrum & Rabbie, 1995).

The Discontinuity Effect

Chapter 13 traced conflict between two or more people—intragroup or interindividual—to competition. Correspondingly, when two or more groups compete, intergroup conflict becomes more likely. In fact, the competition–conflict relationship is even more powerful at the group level than at the individual level, resulting in the **discontinuity effect**: the competitiveness of groups is out of proportion to the competitiveness displayed by individuals when interacting with other individuals. Even though individuals in the group may prefer to cooperate, when they join groups, this cooperative orientation tends to be replaced by a competitive one (see Wildschut et al., 2003, for a theoretically rigorous review of this area).

realistic group conflict theory A conceptual framework arguing that conflict between groups stems from competition for scarce resources, including food, territory, wealth, power, natural resources, and energy.

discontinuity effect The markedly greater competitiveness of groups when interacting with other groups, relative to the competitiveness of individuals interacting with other individuals.

Studies of Discontinuity Chet Insko, John Schopler, and their colleagues documented this discontinuity between interindividual conflict and intergroup conflict by asking individuals and groups to play the *prisoner's dilemma game* (PDG). As noted in Chapter 13, this mixed-motive game offers the two participating parties a choice between cooperative responding and competitive responding, and competition yields the highest rewards only if one of the two parties cooperates. The sample PDG matrix in Figure 14.2 illustrates the group's dilemma. Option C is the cooperative choice, and D is the competitive, defecting-from-cooperation, choice. Cooperation (option C) will yield the best outcomes for both groups if they both select C, but if one picks C and the other picks D, then the cooperative group's payoff will be small (20 points) compared to the competitive group's payoff (60 points). If both groups select Option D, then their rewards will be cut in half.

		Rattlers' choice	
		C	D
Eagles' choice	C	Rattlers win 50 Eagles win 50	Rattlers win 60 Eagles win 20
	D	Rattlers win 20 Eagles win 60	Rattlers win 30 Eagles win 30

FIGURE 14.2 The *prisoner's dilemma game* payoff matrix used to study competition and intergroup conflict. Two groups, the Rattlers and the Eagles, must select either option C (cooperation) or option D (defection). These choices are shown along the sides of the matrix. The payoffs for these joint choices are shown within each cell of the matrix. In each cell, Rattlers' outcomes are shown above the diagonal line, and Eagles' outcomes are shown below it. Groups tend to select option D much more frequently than option C.

When two individuals played, they averaged only 6.6% competitive responses over the course of the game. Competition was also rare when three independent, noninteracting individuals played three other independent individuals (7.5%). But when an interacting triad played another interacting triad, 36.2% of their choices were competitive ones, and when triads played triads but communicated their choices through representatives selected from within the group, competition rose to 53.5% (Insko et al., 1987). These findings are remarkably consistent—a meta-analysis of 48 separate studies conducted in 11 different group dynamics laboratories confirmed that groups are disproportionately more competitive than individuals (Wildschut et al., 2003).

This discontinuity between individuals and groups is not confined to laboratory groups playing a structured conflict game. When researchers examined everyday social interactions, they found that group activities were marked by more competition than one-on-one activities. Participants diligently recorded their interpersonal activities for an entire week, classifying them into one of five categories:

- *One-on-one interactions*: playing chess, walking to class with another person, and so on.
- *Within-group interactions*: interactions with members of the same group, such as a club meeting or a classroom discussion.
- *One-on-group interactions*: the individual participant interacting with a group, such as a student meeting with a panel of faculty for career information.
- *Group-on-one interactions*: the individual is part of a group that interacts with a single individual.
- *Group-on-group interactions*: a soccer game, a joint session of two classes, and the like.

As Figure 14.3 indicates, the proportion of competitive interactions within each type of interaction climbed steadily as people moved from one-on-one interactions to group interactions. These effects also emerged when sports activities, which could have exacerbated the competitiveness of groups, were eliminated from the analysis (Pemberton, Insko, & Schopler, 1996).

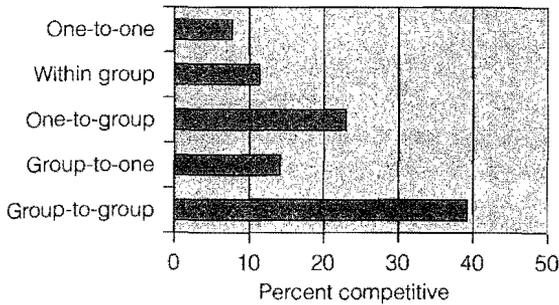


FIGURE 14.3 The level of competitiveness of five everyday situations ranging from one-to-one interactions to group-to-group interactions.

The discontinuity between groups and individuals is also apparently when members plan and strategize. When they expect to bargain with a group they worry more about exploitation and fair play. They often convey their distrust by saying such things as “We don’t trust you” and “You better not cheat us” to their opponents, so communication between groups does little to quell tensions. People are more likely to withdraw from a competitive interaction with a group than an individual (Insko et al., 1990, 1993, 1994; Schopler et al., 1995; Schopler & Insko, 1992).

Causes of Discontinuity The consistency of the discontinuity effect suggests that it springs from a number of causes that combine to exacerbate conflicts between groups, including greed, anonymity, fear, ingroup favoritism, and diffusion of responsibility (Pinter et al., 2007). First, individuals are greedy, but greed is even greater in groups. When people discover that others in the group are also leaning in the direction of maximizing gains by exploiting others, this social support spurs the group members on to greater levels of greed. When researchers changed the PDG matrix payoff so that greed was no longer so lucrative, groups learned how to cooperate with each other to maximize joint gains (Wolf et al., 2008).

Second, people fear groups more than they fear individuals. They describe groups as more abrasive (competitive, aggressive, proud) and less agreeable (cooperative, trustworthy, helpful) than individuals.

This pessimistic outlook also colors their expectations about specific group interactions, for people who were about to play the PDG against a group felt that the experience would be more abrasive than did individuals about to play the game as individuals (Hoyle, Pinkley, & Insko, 1989). This generalized distrust, in the extreme, has been termed *intergroup paranoia*: the belief held by the members of one group that they will be mistreated in some way by the members of a malevolent out-group (Kramer, 2004).

Third, group members may feel that, as part of a group, they should do what they can to maximize the group’s collective outcomes—that part of being good group members or leaders is to do what they can to increase the team’s achievements, even if that comes at a cost to those outside of the group (Pinter et al., 2007). This sense of group duty may also trigger a stronger desire to outdo the other group as well as generate the best possible outcome for the ingroup. Groups playing a game where cooperation would have favored both groups equally seemed to transform, psychologically, the payoff matrix from a cooperation-favoring game into the more competitive PDG game (Wolf et al., 2008).

Fourth, diffusion of responsibility may also contribute to the discontinuity effect (Meier & Hinsz, 2004). In one experiment investigators told individuals and groups they were studying people’s reactions to different foods, but that for the purposes of experimental control the subjects themselves would be selecting the amount of food given to others. All the subjects were led to believe that they had been assigned to the hot sauce condition, which involved giving helpings of painfully hot spiced sauce to others to eat. They were also told that they were paired with either a group or an individual, and that their partner had measured out a substantial portion of hot sauce for them to consume. They were then given the opportunity to select the amount of sauce to send back to their partner in the nearby room.

The study’s results confirmed the discontinuity effect. Groups allocated, and received, more grams of hot sauce than individuals, with the result

that group-to-group aggression was substantially higher than the individual-to-group and group-to-individual pairs. The individual-to-individual pairs yielded the least amount of aggression relative to the group-to-group pairings, replicating the discontinuity effect. The greater aggressiveness did not appear to be due to the more aggressive group members convincing the others to dispense more punishment to their partners. Even though the researchers measured each group member's personal level of aggressiveness, they did not find that groups with more aggressive individuals acted more aggressively as a group. They did find that those in groups reported feeling less responsible for their actions, suggesting that diffusion of responsibility may play a role in producing the shift towards greater hostility.

What can be done to reduce the exaggerated competitiveness of groups relative to individuals? Insko and his associates find that communication does little to reduce the effect, since in many cases the two factions communicate negative information or misinformation. Communication did lower the magnitude of the discontinuity, but not by lowering the level of conflict between groups. Instead, it tended to increase the level of conflict between individuals, to the point that they were as competitive as groups. This unexpected effect of communication was more likely to occur when communication was restricted in some way, as when interactants could only send written messages (Wildschut et al., 2003).

A tolerant, pacifistic appeasement approach to conflict also proved ineffective in reducing discontinuity. As with studies conducted with individuals, when groups respond cooperatively even when the other party competes—hoping to signal their good intentions and inviting a reduction in conflict—the other group responds by exploiting the pacifistic group. A reciprocal strategy, such as *tit for tat* (TFT), was a more effective strategy to counter discontinuity. As noted in Chapter 13, TFT matches competition with competition and cooperation with cooperation. This strategy, Insko suggests, allays groups' fears that they will be exploited, for it reassures them that they can trust the other group. Other methods for reducing

the discontinuity effect include decreasing the rewards of competition (by changing the values in the PDG matrix) and increasing individual identifiability (Wildschut et al., 2003).

Power and Domination

Intergroup conflicts, though initially rooted in competition for scarce resources, can escalate into *intergroup exploitation* as one group tries to dominate the other. Not only do groups wish to monopolize and control scarce resources but they also wish to gain control over the other group's land, resources, peoples, and identity (Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998). As Herbert Spencer wrote in 1897, the first priority of most governments is the identification of "enemies and prey" (p. 547).

Just as groups seek to subdue and exploit other groups, the targets of these attacks struggle to resist this exploitation. In some cases, this competition is purely economic. By manufacturing desirable goods or performing valuable services, one group can come to dominate others in the intergroup trade system (Service, 1975). But domination can also occur through force and coercion (Carneiro, 1970). European countries, during their period of colonialism, established colonies throughout the world and exploited the original inhabitants of these areas both economically and through military force. Europeans seized the lands of Native Americans and used captured Africans as slaves in their workforce. Both Napoleon and Hitler sought to expand their empires through the conquest of other nations. In Russia, the ruling class exploited workers until the workers rose up in revolution and established a communist nation.

Social dominance theory, developed by Jim Sidanius, Felicia Pratto, and their colleagues,

social dominance theory An approach to oppression and domination, developed by Jim Sidanius, Felicia Pratto, and their colleagues, assuming that conflict between groups results from dynamic tensions between hierarchically ranked groups within society.

maintains that these conflict-laden relationships among social groups result from the natural tendency for people to form subgroups within the larger society, and then for these subgroups to vie with one another for power and resources. Some groups come to control more of the resources of the society, including wealth, property, status, and protection. Other groups, in contrast, occupy positions subordinate to these higher status groups, and may even be oppressed by them. They are unable to secure the resources they need, and so experience a range of negative outcomes, including poorer health, inadequate education, higher mortality rates, poverty, and crime. Sidanius and Pratto further suggest that members of the dominant groups tend to believe that this inequitable apportioning of resources is justified by precedent, by custom, or even by law. They may deny that the distribution of resources is actually unfair or claim that the dominance of one group over another is consistent with the natural order (Sidanius et al., 2007; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

This cycle of domination and resistance occurs between nations, classes, ethnic groups, the sexes, and even small groups in controlled experimental situations (Focus 14.1). Chet Insko and his colleagues examined exploitation and conflict by creating a simulated social system in the laboratory. Insko's *microsocieties* included three interdependent groups, multiple generations of members, a communication network, products, and a trading system (Insko et al., 1980, 1983). Insko assigned the microsocieties to one of two experimental conditions. In the *economic power condition*, one group could produce more varied products, so it quickly became the center of all bargaining and trading. In the *coercive power condition*, the group whose members were supposedly better problem solvers was given the right to confiscate any products it desired from the other groups. (Insko referred to these conditions as the *Service condition* and the *Carneiro condition*, respectively.)

These differences in power had a dramatic effect on productivity and intergroup relations. In the economic power condition, all three groups reached very high levels of productivity, with the advantaged group slightly outperforming the others. In

contrast, none of the groups in the coercive power condition were very productive. As the "idle rich" hypothesis suggests, the members of the powerful group spent less time working when they could confiscate others' work. But the other groups reacted very negatively to this exploitation, and as the powerful group continued to steal their work, the members of the other groups held strikes and work slowdowns and sabotaged their products. (Men, in particular, were more likely to strike back against the oppressive group.) Eventually, the groups worked so little that the dominant group could not confiscate enough products to make much profit. These results suggest that as with intragroup conflict, one sure way to create conflict is to give one party more coercive power than the other (Deutsch & Krauss, 1960). Apparently, when it comes to power, more is not always better.

Norms of Engagement

Conflicts between groups—protests between rioters and police, war between nations, gang fights, or even the conflict between the Rattlers and the Eagles—are not out-of-control, atypical interpersonal actions that occur when the social order breaks down. Normatively, competition and hostility between groups are often completely consistent with the standards of conduct in that situation.

Reciprocity Groups, like individuals, tend to obey the norm of *reciprocity*. They answer threats with threats, insults with insults, and aggression with aggression. Consider, for example, the infamous Hatfield–McCoy feud, which involved a dispute between two large families in a rural area of the United States in the late 19th century (Rice, 1978). The conflict originated with the theft of some hogs by Floyd Hatfield. The McCoys countered by stealing hogs from another member of the Hatfield clan, and soon members of the two families began taking potshots at one another. Between 1878 and 1890, more than 10 men and women lost their lives as a direct result of interfamily violence. Likewise, studies of gangs indicate that many street fights stem from some initial negative action that in reality may pose little threat

Focus 14.1 Do You Believe Your Group Should Dominate Other Groups?

One day God came down to Vladimir, a poor peasant, and said: "Vladimir, I will grant you one wish. Anything you want will be yours." However, God added: "There is one condition. Anything I give to you will be granted to your neighbor, Ivan, twice over." Vladimir immediately answered, saying: "OK, take out one of my eyes."

—Eastern European fable (Sidanius et al., 2007, p. 257)

Social dominance theory assumes that all "human societies tend to be structured as systems of *group-based social hierarchies*" (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999, p. 31). The theory also suggests, however, that individuals within a society vary in the extent to which they recognize, and even support, the idea that some groups should be dominant and others oppressed. Do you, for example, agree with these statements?

- If certain groups of people stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems.
- Inferior groups should stay in their place.
- Sometimes other groups must be kept in their place.

Or, are these statements more consistent with your beliefs about groups?

- We should do what we can to equalize conditions for groups.
- Group equality should be our ideal.
- [We should] increase social equality.

These items are drawn from the Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) questionnaire. As noted in Chapter 8, individuals who are high in social dominance tend to be more interested in gaining and using power, whereas

those who are low in social dominance are more likely to seek cooperative ways to handle conflicts. But individuals who are high in SDO are also strongly motivated to maximize their gains relative to other groups. Like Vladimir in the fable who will bear a cost so that his rival will suffer even more, someone who adopts a social dominance orientation will forfeit gross gain in order to maximize relative gain.

Sidanius, Pratto, and their colleagues confirmed this curious tendency by having individuals who varied in SDO play an experimental simulation they called Vladimir's Choice. White college students were led to believe that they were being consulted by the school's administration regarding how student activity funds should be spent. They were given a list of seven options that split the funds between White student interests and minority student interests. These options were contrived so that in order to receive the maximum allocation for their group—19 million dollars—it would mean that minority groups would receive 25 million. In order to lower the amount given to the outgroup, they had to choose an option that yielded less money for their group.

The majority of the students, 56%, chose the option that split the funds equally between the two groups (13 million to each). Many also favored allocations that would raise the amount given to both Whites and minorities, for they apparently were not concerned with getting more than the outgroup. Some, however, preferred receiving less money to ensure that their group received more than the minority group. And who was most likely to base their choice on the ingroup's gain over the outgroup's? Those who were high in social dominance orientation (Sidanius et al., 2007).

to the offended group. The target of the negative action, however, responds to the threat with a counter-threat, and the conflict spirals. Battles resulting in the death of gang members have begun over an ethnic insult, the intrusion of one group into an area controlled by another group, or the theft of one gang's property by another gang (Gannon, 1966; Yablonsky, 1959). Large-scale intergroup conflicts, such as race riots and warfare between countries, have also been caused by gradually escalating hostile exchanges (Myers, 1997; Reicher, 2001).

A *spiral model of conflict intensification* accurately describes the unfolding of violence at Robbers Cave. The conflict began with minor irritations and annoyances but built in intensity. *Exclusion*, a mild form of rejection, occurred as soon as the boys realized that another group was sharing the camp. This antipathy escalated into *verbal abuse* when the groups met for the tournament. Insults were exchanged, members of the opposing team were given demeaning names, and verbal abuse ran high. Next, *intergroup discrimination* developed. The

groups isolated themselves from each other at meals, and the boys expressed the belief that it was wrong for the other team to use the camp facilities or to be given an equal amount of food. Last came the acts of *physical violence*—the raids, thefts, and fistfights. Thus, the conflict at Robbers Cave built in a series of progressively more dangerous stages from exclusion to verbal abuse to discrimination and, finally, to physical assault (Streufert & Streufert, 1986).

Cultural Norms The extent to which groups respond in hostile ways to other groups varies from culture to culture. The Mbuti Pygmies of Africa, !Kung, and many Native American tribes (e.g., the Blackfoot and Zuñi) traditionally avoid conflict by making concessions. The members of these societies live in small groups and, rather than defend their territories when others intrude, they withdraw to more isolated areas. Men are not regarded as brave or strong if they are aggressive, and war with other groups is nonexistent (Bonta, 1997). In contrast, the Yanomanö of South America and the Mundugumor of New Guinea linked aggression to status within the group (Chagnon, 1997; Mead, 1935). The anthropologist Napoleon Chagnon called the Yanomanö the “fierce people,” for during the time he studied them they seemed to choose conflict over peace at every opportunity. Among the Yanomanö, prestige was accorded to those who were most aggressive, with bravery in battle being the most revered personal quality one can have. Villages routinely attacked other villages, and personal conflicts were usually settled through violence. Even among the Yanomanö, however, conflicts were regulated by a relatively stable set of social norms that prevented excessive casualties on either side (Chirot & McCauley, 2006).

Somewhat closer to home, Dov Cohen, Richard Nisbett, and their colleagues have examined the impact of norms pertaining to honor on conflict in the southern region of the United States. Murder, they note, is a tradition down South; nearly three times as many men are murdered each year in the southern states as in other parts of the country. In explanation, they suggest that when Europeans first

occupied this area they forcefully defended their crops and herds against others because they could not rely on the authorities to provide them with protection. Over time, they developed a strong “culture of honor” that rewarded men who responded violently to defend their homes, their property, and their reputations. Southerners are not more positive about aggression in general, but they are more likely to recommend aggressive responses for self-defense and in response to insults (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Vandello & Cohen, 2003).

These norms of the culture of honor are now anachronistic, but they are sustained by misperceptions about the commonness of aggressive behavior. Just as students who drink excessively on college campuses tend to think that many other students drink heavily (see Focus 6.1), so southern men—relative to those in the north—believe that a man is likely to act aggressively when his honor has been threatened. They also judge the neutral actions of others in conflict situations as more threatening than northerners do (Vandello, Cohen, & Ransom, 2008). These group norms leave them ready to respond aggressively when others provoke them.

Group Norms Some groups within the larger society adopt unique norms and values pertaining to intergroup conflict. In the United States, the Mennonites and the Amish avoid interpersonal conflict and strive instead for cooperative, peaceful living. Other types of groups, such as urban youth gangs, sports fans, and cliques in schools, accept norms that emphasize dominance over other groups. Soccer fans show high levels of ingroup loyalty, but equally intense forms of aggression against fans of rival clubs (Foer, 2004). Groups of young girls develop intricate patterns of ingroup favoritism and outgroup rejection (Wiseman, 2002). Even though they rarely engage in physical aggression, their relational aggression can be so pointed and unrelenting that it leads to long-term negative consequences for those they target. Studies of gangs living in urban areas suggest that these groups, although violent, use aggression in instrumental ways to maintain group structures and patterns of authority. Much of the most intense violence is intergroup conflict,

when one gang must defend its area from another, or when the gang decides that it must inflict harm on someone who has acted in ways that undermine the local gang's authority (Venkatesh, 2008).

Anger and Scapegoating

When intergroup competitions end, one side is often branded the *winner* and one the *loser*. Like the victorious Eagles, winners experience a range of positive emotions, including pride, pleasure, happiness, and satisfaction. Losers, in contrast, experience the "agony of defeat"—humiliation, anger, embarrassment, and frustration (Brown & Dutton, 1995). These emotions can contribute to continuing conflict between groups, for negative emotional experiences such as frustration and anger can provoke aggression and retaliation. The Rattlers, for example, were very angry when they lost, and they responded by vandalizing the Eagles' cabin and stealing the prizes (Meier, Hinsz, & Heimerdinger, 2008).

In most cases, if a group interferes with another group, the injured party retaliates against the perpetrator. If, however, the aggressor is extremely powerful, too distant, or difficult to locate, then the injured party may respond by turning its aggression onto another group. This third group, although not involved in the conflict in any way, would nonetheless be blamed and thereby become the target of aggressive actions. The third group, in this case, would be the *scapegoat*—a label derived from the biblical ritual of guilt transference. Anger originally aroused by one group becomes displaced on another, more defenseless group. Attacking the guiltless group provides an outlet for pent-up anger and frustration, and the aggressive group may then feel satisfied that justice has been done. At the Robbers Cave, for example, the cause of the Rattlers' failure was not the Eagles—who beat them in a fair contest. Rather, it was the experimenters, who rigged the contest so that the Rattlers would fail.

The **scapegoat theory** of intergroup conflict explains why frustrating economic conditions often stimulate increases in prejudice and violence (Poppe, 2001). Studies of anti-Black violence in southern

areas of the United States between 1882 and 1930 have indicated that outbreaks of violence tend to occur whenever the economy of that region worsened (Hovland & Sears, 1940). The correlation between the price of cotton (the main product of that area at the time) and the number of lynchings of Black men by Whites ranged from $-.63$ to $-.72$, suggesting that when Whites were frustrated by the economy, they took out these frustrations by attacking Blacks (see also Hepworth & West, 1988, for a more sophisticated analysis of the Hovland-Sears data).

Scapegoating, as a possible cause of intergroup rather than interindividual conflict, requires a degree of consensus among group members. Individuals often blame others for their troubles and take out their frustrations on them, but group-level scapegoating occurs when the group, as a whole, has settled on a specific target group to blame for their problems (Glick, 2005). Scapegoating is also more likely when a group has experienced difficult, prolonged negative experiences—not just petty annoyances or a brief economic downturn, but negative conditions that frustrate their success in meeting their most essential needs (Staub, 2004). In such cases the group may develop a compelling, widely shared ideology that, combined with political and social pressures, leads to the most extreme form of scapegoating: genocide. Scapegoating can also prompt oppressed groups to lash out at other oppressed groups. Even though the minority group is victimized by the majority group, minorities sometimes turn against other minority groups rather than confront the more powerful majority (Harding et al., 1969; Rothgerber & Worchel, 1997).

Evolutionary Perspectives

Evolutionary psychology offers a final set of causes, somewhat more distal than proximate, for conflict

scapegoat theory An explanation of intergroup conflict arguing that hostility caused by frustrating environmental circumstances is released by taking hostile actions against members of other social groups.

between groups. The tendency for conflict to emerge between groups is so pervasive, and so difficult to keep within nonlethal limits, that some experts believe that it may have a genetic basis. As noted in Chapter 3, evolutionary psychologists suggest that, during the longest period of human evolution, individuals lived in small bands of between 50 and 150. These groups provided such an advantage to their members in terms of survival that, over time, humans became a social species—ready to cooperate with other humans in the pursuit of shared goals.

These same evolutionary pressures, however, also left humans ready to respond negatively to any human who was not a member of his or her group or tribe. Each group competed, forcefully, against all other groups to the point that each group plundered the resources of neighboring groups and harmed the members of those groups (the males, in particular). These groups were likely territorial, staking a claim to exclusive use of a geographic area, but if a member strayed too far from the safety of the group then the greatest danger was not from wild animals but from humans who were outsiders. Because the outgroups were a substantial threat, the human mind developed the capacity to recognize others and determine, with unerring accuracy, the other persons' tribal allegiance. Those who failed to distinguish between insiders and outsiders were less likely to survive.

Intergroup conflict was also instrumental in fostering the conditions needed to promote ingroup cooperation. Few experts believe that humans, as a species, could have survived had they not developed the means to cooperate with one another in the pursuit of joint outcomes. The development of this remarkable human capacity required a stable community of members, with care focused first on genetically related individuals and secondarily on group members who would be present on future occasions when the helping could be reciprocated. These conditions, so essential to the survival of these fragile groups, could be maintained only if group members were well-known to one another and normatively bound to reciprocate exchanges without undue levels of selfishness. This capacity for intragroup

cooperation may have been further enhanced by the presence of outgroups. Facing a threat from an outgroup, the ingroup became more unified, producing a level of solidarity that increased each members' likelihood of surviving by linking him or her to the survival of the group as a whole (Van Vugt, De Cremer, & Janssen, 2007).

These aspects of the evolutionary environment, over time, resulted in adaptations that increased the fitness of the individual, but at the price of creating a generalized hostility for members of other groups. The human species developed an extraordinary capacity for altruism, cooperation, and selflessness, but these prosocial behaviors are usually reserved for members of the ingroup and sustained by hostility toward the outgroup.

INTERGROUP BIAS:

PERCEIVING US AND THEM

The boys at Robbers Cave displayed antipathy toward the other group even before the idea of a competitive tournament was mentioned. The Rattlers and Eagles had not even seen each other when they began to refer to "those guys" in a derogatory way:

When the ingroup began to be clearly delineated, there was a tendency to consider all others as outgroup. . . . The Rattlers didn't know another group existed in the camp until they heard the Eagles on the ball diamond; but from that time on the outgroup figured prominently in their lives. Hill (Rattler) said "They better not be in our swimming hole." The next day Simpson heard tourists on the trail just outside of camp and was convinced that "those guys" were down at "our diamond" again. (Sherif et al., 1961, p. 94)

The conflict at the Robbers Cave was fueled by the competitive setting, situational norms, the struggle for power, and the frustrations that followed each loss, but these factors cannot fully account for the almost automatic rejection of members of the

other group. Group members reject members of other groups not because they fear them or because they must compete with them, but simply because they belong to a different group.

Conflict and Categorization

When Mills, a Rattler, met Craig, an Eagle, on the path to the dining hall, he spontaneously classified him as an Eagle rather than a Rattler. This *social categorization* process, although adaptive in the long run, nonetheless provides a cognitive foundation for intergroup conflict. Once Mills realized the boy approaching him was an Eagle and not a Rattler, he considered him to be one of *them*—an outsider who was different from the Rattlers. As Sherif (1966, p. 12) explained, “Whenever individuals belonging to one group interact, collectively or individually, with another group or its members in terms of their group identification, we have an instance of intergroup behavior.”

Does social categorization, in and of itself, cause conflict? Does the mere existence of identifiable groups within society, and the cognitive biases generated by this differentiation, inevitably push groups into conflict? Research by Henri Tajfel, John Turner, and their colleagues, as discussed in Chapter 3, demonstrated the pervasiveness of the intergroup bias in their studies of the minimal group situation. Like the Sherifs, they examined groups that had no prior group history. But, unlike the Sherifs, they took this minimalism to its limit, by creating groups that were hardly groups at all. Formed on the basis of some trivial similarity or situational factor, the group members did not talk to each other, were anonymous throughout the study, and could not personally gain in any way from advantaging one person in the study over another. These were minimal groups, yet participants showed favoritism toward members of their own group. When given the opportunity to award money, they gave more money to members of their own group when they could and withheld money from the outgroup. Tajfel and Turner concluded that the “mere perception of belonging to two distinct groups—that is, social categorization per se—is

sufficient to trigger intergroup discrimination favoring the ingroup” (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, p. 13; see also Hogg & Abrams, 1999).

Categorization sets in motion a number of affective, cognitive, emotional, and interpersonal processes that combine to sustain and encourage conflict between groups. People do not simply segment people into the categories “member of my group” and “member of another group” and then stop. Once people have categorized others according to group, they feel differently about those who are in the ingroup and those who are in the outgroup, and these evaluative biases are further sustained by cognitive and emotional biases that justify the evaluative ones—stereotypic thinking, misjudgment, and intensification of emotions. This section reviews these processes, beginning with the most basic: the tendency to favor one’s own group.

The Ingroup–Outgroup Bias

The sociologist William Graham Sumner (1906) maintained that humans are, by nature, a species that joins together in groups. But he also noted a second, equally powerful, human tendency: favoring one’s own group over all others. “Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities, and looks with contempt on outsiders” (p. 13). At the group level, this bias is called the *ingroup–outgroup bias*. This bias, among such larger groups as tribes, ethnic groups, or nations, is termed **ethnocentrism** (Sumner, 1906).

The magnitude of the bias depends on a host of situational factors, including the group’s outcomes, the way perceptions are measured, ambiguity about each group’s characteristics, and members’ identification with the group. Overall, however, the ingroup–outgroup bias is robust. A rock band knows its music is very good and that a rival band’s music is inferior. One

ethnocentrism The belief that one’s own tribe, region, or country is superior to other tribes, regions, or countries.

ethnic group prides itself on its traditions and also views other groups' traditions with disdain. One team of researchers thinks that its theory explains intergroup conflict and criticizes other researchers' theories as inadequate. After a bean-collecting game, the Rattlers overestimated the number of beans collected by Rattlers and slightly underestimated the number of beans supposedly collected by Eagles. Across a range of group and organizational settings, members rate their own group as superior to other groups (Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002; Hinkle & Schopler, 1986).

Ingroup Positivity and Outgroup Negativity The ingroup-outgroup bias is really two biases combined: (1) the selective favoring of the ingroup, its members, and its products, and (2) the derogation of the outgroup, its members, and its products. But at Robbers Cave, the pro-ingroup tendency went hand in hand with the anti-outgroup tendency. When they were asked to name their friends, 92.5% of the Eagles' choices were Eagles, and 93.6% of the Rattlers' choices were fellow Rattlers. When asked to pick the one person they disliked the most, 95% of the Eagles selected a Rattler, and 75% of the Rattlers identified an Eagle. In many intergroup conflicts, however, ingroup favoritism is stronger than outgroup rejection. For example, during a conflict between the United States and Iraq, U.S. citizens may feel very positive about the United States and its people, but they may not condemn Iraqis. Marilyn Brewer, after surveying a number of studies of intergroup conflict, concluded that the expression of hostility against the outgroup depends on the similarity of ingroup and outgroup members, anticipated future interactions, the type of evaluation being made, and the competitive or cooperative nature of the intergroup situation (see Brewer, 1979; Brewer & Brown, 1998; Hewstone et al., 2002).

Implicit Intergroup Biases Group members often express their preferences openly. Sports fans cheer on their own team and boo their opponents. The Rattlers expressed pride in their own group's accomplishments and ridiculed the Eagles. Racists express support for members of their own group

and speak harshly of people with racial backgrounds different from their own.

But in many cases, the ingroup-outgroup bias is an implicit one—subtle, unintentional, and even unconscious, operating below the level of awareness (Fiske, 2004). Even though people may, when asked, claim that they are not biased against outgroup members and do not favor their own group, their biases emerge when their implicit attitudes are measured. One such measure, the Implicit Association Test (IAT) developed by Anthony Greenwald and his colleagues, assesses the extent to which people associate one concept—such as the ingroup—with another concept—such as goodness. When individuals are shown pairs of words or images that match their intuitive associations of these two concepts, such as ingroup/kind, outgroup/evil, they respond more quickly and without error. When, however, they respond to pairings of concepts that they do not associate with one another, such as ingroup/bad and outgroup/friendly, then they respond more slowly (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 2008).

The IAT has revealed robust ingroup-outgroup biases in dozens of studies using all types of social categories, including race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, age, and sex. These biases occur even when people are striving to suppress their biases or when they claim that they are free of such tendencies (Nosek, Greenwald, & Banaji, 2007). The IAT has also revealed biases in the most minimal of intergroup situations. In one study, participants were categorized on the basis of their supposed preference for one of two artists; one named Quan and the second Xanthie (Ashburn-Nardo, Voils, & Monteith, 2001). The participants then completed the IAT, which asked them to classify people into one of two categories, fan of Quan or fan of Xanthie. To help them, they were told that if a person's name included a letter Q somewhere in the name they preferred Quan, whereas those who preferred Xanthie would be indicated by an X in their name. The time it took them to classify people into the Quan and Xanthie categories was recorded by the computer, which paired various Q and X names with positive adjectives (e.g., joyous,

loving, glorious, happy) or negative adjectives (e.g., terrible, horrible, nasty, evil). As expected, people responded more quickly when the name they were shown was from their ingroup and it was associated with a positive adjective. If, for example, they had been told they preferred Xanthie, when shown a name with an X paired with a positive adjective (e.g., Merxes/glorious) they classified that person as a lover of Xanthie more quickly than if the X name had been paired with a negative word (e.g., Merxes/evil).

Double-Standard Thinking The ingroup-outgroup bias often fuels **double-standard thinking**. Members rationalize their own group's actions as fair and just and condemn the actions of the outgroup as unfair and unjust. Our warnings are *requests*, but the other side calls them *threats*. We are *courageous*, though they consider us *stubborn*. Pride in our own group is *nationalism*, but the other group takes it as evidence of *ethnocentrism*. We offer them *concessions*, but they interpret them as *ploys* (De Dreu, Nauta, & Van de Vliert, 1995).

Ralph White found that both sides in the major Middle East wars of 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973 believed the other side to have been the aggressor in all four wars. In two of these wars (1956, 1967), the Palestinians believed that Israel had simply attacked without provocation. In the remaining two (1948, 1973), the Palestinians admitted that they had initiated hostilities, but believed that they had been forced to do so by the expansionistic policies of Israel. Conversely, the Israelis felt that the 1948 and 1973 wars were examples of blatant, unmitigated Palestinian aggression and that the 1956 and 1967 wars had been indirectly caused by the threats and malevolent intentions of the Palestinians (White, 1965, 1966, 1969, 1977, 1998). Similar biases have been found when students in the

United States are asked to evaluate actions performed by their country and by the Soviet Union (Oskamp & Hartry, 1968) and when Whites' and Blacks' judgments of ambiguously aggressive actions committed by either a Black or a White person are compared (Sagar & Schofield, 1980). People judge actions that their own group performs positively, but they negatively evaluate these same actions when they are performed by outsiders. People also attribute other nations' hostile actions to internal factors—things about that country—but their nation's actions to external factors (Doosje & Branscombe, 2003).

Cognitive Bias

When Hill saw Craig he did not merely judge him more negatively than he would one of his fellow Rattlers (the ingroup-outgroup bias). He probably made inferences about Craig—his physical strength, his athletic skill, even his morality—solely on the basis of one piece of information: Craig was an Eagle. When people categorize others, their perceptions of these individuals are influenced more by their category-based expectations than by the evidence of their senses.

Outgroup Homogeneity Bias Most group members are quick to point out the many characteristics that distinguish them from the other members of their own group (“Why, I’m not like them at all!”), but when they evaluate members of outgroups, they underestimate their variability (“They all look the same to me”). If you were an Eagle, for example, you would describe the Rattlers as poor sports who cheated whenever possible. When describing the Eagles, in contrast, you might admit that a few of the members were sissies and that maybe one Eagle liked to bend the rules, but you would probably argue that the Eagles were so heterogeneous that sweeping statements about their typical qualities could not be formulated. Studies of a variety of ingroups and outgroups—women versus men, physics majors versus dance majors, Sorority A versus Sorority B, Princeton students versus Rutgers students, Canadians versus Native Americans, and

double-standard thinking The tendency to consider the actions and attributes of one's own group as positive, fair, and appropriate, but to consider these very same behaviors or displays to be negative, unfair, and inappropriate when the outgroup performs them.

Blacks versus Whites—have documented this **outgroup homogeneity bias**. Group members' conceptualizations of other groups are simplistic and undifferentiated, but when they turn their eye to their own group, they note its diversity and complexity (see Boldry, Gaertner, & Quinn, 2007, and Linville & Fischer, 1998, for reviews).

The outgroup homogeneity bias does not emerge across all intergroup settings. The group that is disadvantaged in some way is usually viewed as more homogeneous, whereas the more powerful group is viewed as more variable (Guinote, Judd, & Brauer, 2002). The bias can also reverse entirely, resulting in *ingroup homogeneity bias* (Haslam & Oakes, 1995; Simon, Pantaleo, & Mummendey, 1995). Under conditions of extreme conflict, both tendencies may emerge, prompting group members to assume that “none of us deserve this treatment,” and “they have harmed us; they must all be punished” (Rothgerber, 1997).

Group Attribution Error Group members tend to make sweeping statements about the entire outgroup after observing one or two of the outgroup's members. If an African American employee is victimized by a European American boss, the victim may assume that all European Americans are racists. Similarly, a visitor to another country who is treated rudely by a passerby may leap to the conclusion that everyone who lives in that country is discourteous. Individuals in intergroup situations tend to fall prey to the **law of small numbers**: They assume that the behavior of a large number of people can be accurately inferred from the behavior of a few people (Quattrone & Jones, 1980).

The opposite process—assuming that the characteristics of a single individual in a group can be

outgroup homogeneity bias The perceptual tendency to assume that the members of other groups are very similar to each other, whereas the membership of one's own group is more heterogeneous.

law of small numbers The tendency for people to base sweeping generalizations about an entire group on observations of a small number of individuals from that group.

inferred from the general characteristics of the whole group—can also bias perceptions. If we know our group's position on an issue, we are reluctant to assume that any one of us agrees with that position. When we know another group's position, however, we are much more willing to assume that each and every person in that group agrees with that position. Researchers studied this **group attribution error** by telling students that an election had recently been held either at their college or at another college to determine how much funding should be given to the college's athletics programs. They then told the students the results of the vote and asked them to estimate the opinion of the “typical student” at the college where the vote was taken. When the students thought that the vote had been taken at their own college, they did not want to assume that the individual's opinion would match the group's opinion. But when they thought that the vote was taken at another college, they were much more confident that the individual's opinions would match the group's opinions (Allison & Messick, 1985b; Allison, Worth, & King, 1990).

Ultimate Attribution Error When individuals form impressions of other individuals, the *fundamental attribution error* (FAE) prompts them to attribute the actions of others to their personal qualities rather than to the constraints of the situation. But when group members form impressions of outgroup members, the **ultimate attribution error** (UAE) prompts them to attribute only negative actions to outgroup members' dispositional qualities

group attribution error The tendency for perceivers to assume that specific group members' personal characteristics and preferences, including their beliefs, attitudes, and decisions, are similar to the preferences of the group to which they belong; for example, observers may assume that each member of a group that votes to reelect the president supports the president, even though the group's decision was not a unanimous one.

ultimate attribution error The tendency for perceivers to attribute negative actions performed by members of the outgroup to dispositional qualities and positive actions to situational, fluctuating circumstances.

(Hewstone, 1990; Pettigrew, 2001). If outgroup members rob a bank or cheat on a test, then their actions are explained by reference to their personality, genetics, or fundamental lack of morality. But should an outgroup member perform a positive behavior, that action is attributed to a situational factor—perhaps good luck or a special advantage afforded the outgroup member. In any case, the perceiver will conclude that the good act, and the outgroup member who performed it, is just a special case. Because of the UAE, the perceiver concludes that there is no need to reappraise the group because the outgroup member is not responsible for the positive act.

The **linguistic intergroup bias** is a more subtle form of the UAE. Instead of attributing the behavior to dispositional factors or to the situation, group members describe the action differently depending on who performs it. If an ingroup member engages in a negative behavior, such as crying during a game, then members would describe that behavior very concretely—Elliott “shed some tears.” If an outgroup member performed the same behavior, they would describe the action more abstractly—Elliott “acted like a baby.” Positive behaviors, in contrast, are described in abstract terms when attributed to an ingroup member but in very concrete terms when performed by an outgroup member (Camaghi et al., 2008; Maass, 1999).

Stereotypes When an Eagle met another Eagle on the trail, he probably expected the boy to be friendly, helpful, and brave. But if he encountered a Rattler, he expected the boy to be unfriendly, aggressive, and deceitful. These expectations are based on **stereotypes**—cognitive generalizations about the qualities and characteristics of the members of a particular group or social category. In many ways, stereotypes function as cognitive labor-saving devices by helping perceivers make rapid judgments

about people based on their category memberships (Schneider, 2004). Because they are widely adopted by most of the ingroup, stereotypes are group-level perceptions; shared social beliefs rather than individualistic expectations (Bar-Tal, 2000). But stereotypes tend to be exaggerated rather than accurate, negative rather than positive, and resistant to revision even when directly disconfirmed. People tend to cling to stereotypes so resolutely that they become unreasonable beliefs rather than honest misconceptions. As Gordon Allport (1954) wrote, “Prejudgments become prejudices only if they are not reversible when exposed to new knowledge” (p. 8).

If stereotypes have all these perceptual and cognitive limitations, why do they persist? Walter Lippmann (1922), who first used the word *stereotype* to describe mental images of people, argued that the stereotype resists disconfirmation because “it stamps itself upon the evidence in the very act of securing the evidence.” When group members see through eyes clouded by stereotypes, they misperceive and misremember people and events. Because individuals tend to interpret ambiguous information so that it confirms their expectations, stereotypes can act as self-fulfilling prophecies (Allport & Postman, 1947). Stereotypes also influence memory, so that recall of information that is consistent with stereotypes is superior to recall of stereotype-inconsistent information (Howard & Rothbart, 1980; Rothbart, Sriram, & Davis-Stitt, 1996). Because members expect outgroup members to engage in negative behavior and can more easily remember the times that they acted negatively rather than positively, they feel vindicated in thinking that membership in the outgroup and negative behaviors are correlated (Hamilton & Sherman, 1989).

The stereotypes about any given group include unique information pertaining to that group, but

linguistic intergroup bias The tendency to describe positive ingroup and negative outgroup behaviors more abstractly and negative ingroup and positive outgroup behaviors more concretely.

stereotype A socially shared set of cognitive generalizations (e.g., beliefs, expectations) about the qualities and characteristics of the members of a particular group or social category.

the **stereotype content model** suggests that most stereotypes are based on two general qualities: warmth and competence. Some groups (including the ingroup, in most cases) are viewed as warm, nice, friendly, and sincere, whereas other groups are considered to be filled with unpleasant, unfriendly, and even immoral people. The second dimension is competence: Some groups are thought to include competent, confident, skillful, able individuals, whereas others are viewed as incompetent or unintelligent. The Rattlers, for example, may have adopted a stereotypic view of the Eagles that rated them as neutral on the warm dimension but more negatively on the competence dimension (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2007, 2008; see Figure 14.4).

Intergroup Emotions

People do not just categorize and judge the outgroup. They also respond emotionally to the outgroup, usually leaning in a negative direction. This negativity may be relatively mild, amounting to little more than mild discomfort when interacting with outgroup members or a general preference to be with someone from the ingroup rather than the outgroup, but this negativity bias can reach the emotional extreme of hatred and loathing. In some cases, people may not even admit their negativity towards members of the other group, yet they display it through their nonverbal actions, social awkwardness, and nervousness when in the presence of the outgroup (Dovidio et al., 2004).

In addition to these more general negative and positive reactions to the outgroup and ingroup, respectively, people may also display specific emotions, depending on the nature of the intergroup context. Intergroup emotions theory suggests that when individuals are members of a group that has lower social status than other groups, its members will experience a different set of intergroup

emotions than will members of higher status groups (Smith & Mackie, 2005). Fear and jealousy, for example, are more common emotions in members of the lower status groups, whereas contempt or anger are characteristic of those who are members of higher status groups. Similarly, as Figure 14.4 indicates, the stereotype content model links intergroup emotions to expectations about the warmth and competence of the outgroup.

- *Envy* is most likely when the outgroup, although judged negatively, is nonetheless higher in status than the ingroup and this status difference is thought to be due to the competence of the outgroup. The Eagles, when they lost a game to the Rattlers, were likely to be envious of the Rattlers' athleticism. They did not trust the Rattlers, however, and may have suspected that they gained their advantage unfairly. Groups who are envious of other groups covet what the outgroup has achieved and view the outgroup as a competitor.
- *Contempt* is one of the most common of intergroup emotions, occurring when the outgroup is the most negatively stereotyped, that is, viewed as low in terms of both competence and warmth. The members of such an outgroup are viewed as responsible for their failings, and there is little consideration given to the idea that the division between the two groups can ever be lessened.
- *Pity*, as an intergroup emotion, is directed at outgroups that are viewed negatively in terms of competence, but are thought to also have positive, endearing qualities. Pity is usually directed downward, to outgroups that are low in the overall status ranking. Outgroups that evoke pity are not blamed for their plight, unlike outgroups that are held in contempt.
- *Admiration* is rare in intergroup contexts, for it is experienced when the outgroup is perceived as being both high in warmth and high in competence, an unusual occurrence. Intergroup admiration occurs when the

stereotype content model A theory of group perception positing that people's stereotyped views about social groups reflect their beliefs about the warmth and competence of the stereotyped group.

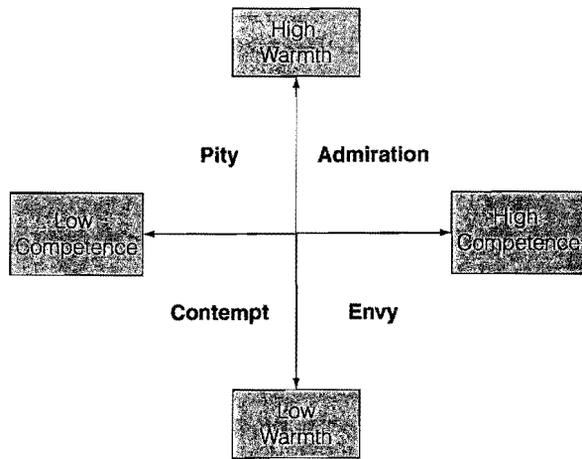


FIGURE 14.4 The stereotype content model of intergroup emotions.

SOURCE: *The BIAS Map: Behaviors from intergroup affect and stereotypes*, by Cuddy, Amy J.C.; Fiske, Susan T.; Glick, Peter from *JOURNAL OF PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY*, April 1, 2007. The use of APA information does not imply endorsement by APA.

outgroup is thought to be completely deserving of its accomplishments, when the outgroup's gains do not come at a cost to the ingroup, and when the outgroup members are generally judged positively. Such an emotion is most likely when individuals can take some pride in association with the outgroup, even though they are not an actual member of the group.

Group Hate Hatred, as Allport (1954) explained in *The Nature of Prejudice*, is usually a group-level emotion. Drawing on ideas discussed by Aristotle, Allport observed that “anger is customarily felt toward individuals only, whereas hatred may be felt toward whole classes of people” (1954, p. 363). And while individuals often regret giving way to anger directed at another person, they feel no such remorse about their group-level hatred. “Hatred is more deep-rooted, and constantly desires the extinction of the object of hate” (1954, p. 363).

Hate causes a more violently negative reaction to the outgroup than such emotions as fear or anger. Often, group members fear the other group, for example, when outgroup members are viewed as competitors who may take harmful action towards the ingroup. Anger is also a dominant emotion in intergroup conflict settings, when previous negative exchanges between groups are a cause for

irritation, annoyance, and hostility. Hate, however, is the feeling associated with many of the most negative consequences of intergroup conflict. Hate is expressed primarily when group members believe that previously harmful acts done by members of the outgroup were intentional ones that purposely harmed the ingroup, and that the actions were caused by the intrinsically evil nature of the outgroup. In one study of people's reactions to terrorist attacks, fear was associated with avoiding the outgroup and anger with support for improved education to improve intergroup relations. Those who felt hatred for the other group, in contrast, advocated their destruction, expressed a desire to do evil against them, and called for physical violence against them (Halperin, 2008; Sternberg, 2003).

Moral Exclusion and Dehumanization Throughout history, the members of one group have done great harm to the members of other groups. When intergroup conflict reaches extreme levels, with members of one group attacking, harming, and killing members of other groups, the ingroup-outgroup bias becomes equally extreme. During extreme intergroup conflicts, group members view their own group as morally superior and members of the outgroup as less than human (Bandura, 1999; Leyens et al., 2003; Reicher, Haslam, & Rath, 2008).

Such **moral exclusion** is more likely to occur in cases of extreme violence perpetrated by one group against another—European Americans enslaving Africans; Nazi Germany's attempted genocide of Jews; "ethnic cleansing" in Croatia and Serbia; and the continuing warfare between Israelis and Palestinians (Staub, 2004). Those who subjugate others tend to rationalize their violence by attributing it to the actions, intentions, or character of their victims. As their aggression intensifies, however, their rationalizations prompt them to increasingly devalue their victims. Eventually, the aggressors denigrate the outgroup so completely that the outsiders are excluded from moral concern, for it is difficult to savagely harm people whom one evaluates positively or strongly identifies with (Staub, 1990, p. 53). Groups that have a history of devaluing segments of their society are more likely to engage in moral exclusion, as are groups whose norms stress respect for authority and obedience. These groups, when they anticipate conflict with other groups, rapidly revise their opinions of their opponents so that they can take hostile actions against them (Opatow, 2000).

Moral exclusion places the outgroup outside the *moral* realm. **Dehumanization** moves the outgroup outside the *human* realm. Dehumanization occurs when the ingroup denies the outgroup those qualities thought to define the essence of human nature. Some of these qualities may be ones thought to be uniquely human: culture, refinement, high moral standards, and the capacity to think rationally. Others are qualities that the ingroup associates with humanity's strengths, such as emotional responsiveness, warmth, openness, self-control, and depth (Haslam, 2006). The ingroup may also come to believe that the outgroup experiences raw,

primary emotions such as anger or happiness, but not the more refined emotions that make humans truly human: affection, admiration, pride, conceit, remorse, guilt, and envy (Leyens et al., 2003). People describe dehumanized outgroup members as disgusting or revolting because they are thought to be sources of contamination and impurity (Chirot & McCauley, 2006; Maoz & McCauley, 2008).

This concept of dehumanization is no hyperbole. When researchers used an fMRI scanner to track perceivers' reactions to images of people from various groups, their results suggested that dehumanized outgroup members are no longer perceived to be humans. When individuals viewed general images of people, the areas of the brain that typically respond when people process social information (the medial prefrontal cortices) showed increased activity. However, when they were shown images of people from an extreme outgroup—homeless individuals and drug addicts—those same areas did not rise above their resting state of neuronal activity. The insula and amygdala were activated, however; these portions of the brain are most active when people are experiencing strong emotions, such as disgust and contempt (Harris & Fiske, 2006).

Dehumanization also increases the likelihood that the ingroup will aggress against the outgroup. Albert Bandura and his associates tested this possibility experimentally by giving groups the opportunity to deliver painful electric shocks to a second group each time it performed poorly. In reality, there was no other group, but participants nonetheless believed that they could control both the intensity and duration of the shocks they gave the group. In one condition, the experimenter mentioned that the outgroup members—who were similar to one another in background but different from the subjects—seemed like nice people. But in the other condition the experimenter mentioned, in an offhand remark, that they were an "animalistic, rotten bunch." As expected, when dehumanized by the experimenter the groups increased their hostility and aggression, delivering more intense shocks (Bandura, Underwood, & Fromson, 1975).

moral exclusion A psychological process whereby opponents in a conflict come to view each other as undeserving of morally mandated rights and protections.

dehumanization Believing that other individuals or entire groups of individuals lack the qualities thought to distinguish human beings from other animals; such dehumanization serves to rationalize the extremely negative treatment often afforded to members of other groups.

Categorization and Identity

Social identity theory offers a compelling explanation for the robust relationship between categorization and conflict. This theory, as noted in Chapter 3, assumes that membership in groups can substantially influence members' sense of self. When the boys joined the Robbers Cave Experiment and became firmly embedded in their groups, their identities changed. They came to think of themselves as Rattlers or Eagles, and they accepted the group's characteristics as their own. The theory also suggests that as the boys came to identify with their group, their own self-worth became more closely tied to the worth of the group. If a Rattler dedicated himself to the group and the Rattlers failed, the boy would likely experience a distressing reduction in his own self-esteem. Group members, therefore, stress the value of their own groups relative to other groups as a means of indirectly enhancing their own personal worth (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

The basic premise of social identity theory is supported by evidence that people favor their group, even in minimal group conditions, and by the fact that the biasing effects of group membership are even more substantial when (a) individuals identify with their group rather than simply belong to it and (b) the relative status of existing groups is salient (Kenworthy et al., 2008). Black Africans' attitudes toward an outgroup (Afrikaans Whites) were negatively associated with the strength of their ingroup identification (Duckitt & Mphuthing, 1998). British people's attitudes toward the French were negatively correlated with the strength of their British identities (Brown et al., 2001). When individuals feel that the value of their group is being questioned, they respond by underscoring the distinctiveness of their own group and by derogating others (Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Dietz-Uhler & Murrell, 1998).

Social identity theory's suggestion that ingroup favoritism is in the service of ingroup members' self-esteem is also consistent with findings that individuals who most need reassurance of their worth tend to be the most negative towards other groups. Individuals who experience a threat to

their self-esteem tend to discriminate more against outgroups, and low-status, peripheral members of the group are often the most zealous in their defense of their group and in the rejection of the outgroup (Noel, Wann, & Branscombe, 1995). Individuals are also more likely to draw comparisons between their group and other groups in areas where the comparison favors the ingroup. The Rattlers, for example, lost the tournament, so they admitted that the Eagles were better than the Rattlers at sports. But the Rattlers could stress their superiority in other spheres unrelated to the games, such as toughness or endurance (Reichl, 1997). Group members also display group-level *schadenfreude*. They take pleasure when other groups fail, particularly when the failure is in a domain that is self-relevant and when the ingroup's superiority in this domain is uncertain (Leach et al., 2003).

But does condemning other groups raise one's self-esteem? The effectiveness of this technique for sustaining self-esteem has not been confirmed consistently by researchers. In some cases, derogating outgroup members raises certain forms of self-esteem, but praising the ingroup tends to bolster self-esteem more than condemning the outgroup (Brown & Zagefka, 2005). Also, though people are quick to praise their ingroup, they still think that they are superior to most people—including all the members of their own group (Lindeman, 1997).

INTERGROUP CONFLICT RESOLUTION: UNITING US AND THEM

The Robbers Cave researchers were left with a problem. The manipulations of the first two phases of the experiment had worked very well, for the Rattlers–Eagles war yielded a gold mine of data about intergroup conflict. Unfortunately, the situation had degenerated into a summer camp version of William Golding's (1954) *Lord of the Flies*. The two groups now despised each other. As conscientious

social scientists, the Sherifs and their colleagues felt compelled to try to undo some of the negative effects of the study—to seek a method through which harmony and friendship could be restored at the Robbers Cave campsite.

Intergroup Contact

The Robbers Cave researchers first tried to reduce the conflict by uniting the groups in shared activities. They based their intervention on the **contact hypothesis**, which assumes that ingroup–outgroup biases will fade if people interact regularly with members of the outgroup. So the Sherifs arranged for the Rattlers and the Eagles to join in seven pleasant activities, such as eating, playing games, viewing films, and shooting off firecrackers. Unfortunately, this contact had little impact on the hostilities. During all these events, the lines between the two groups never broke, and antilocution, discrimination, and physical assault continued unabated. When contact occurred during meals, “food fights” were particularly prevalent:

After eating for a while, someone threw something, and the fight was on. The fight consisted of throwing rolls, napkins rolled in a ball, mashed potatoes, etc. accompanied by yelling the standardized, unflattering words at each other. The throwing continued for about 8–10 minutes, then the cook announced that cake and ice cream were ready for them. Some members of each group went after their dessert, but most of them continued throwing things a while longer. As soon as each gobbled his dessert, he resumed throwing. (Sherif et al., 1961, p. 158)

Creating Positive Contact Contact lies at the heart of such social policies as school integration,

contact hypothesis The prediction that contact between the members of different groups will reduce intergroup conflict.

foreign student exchange programs, and the Olympics, but simply throwing two groups together in an unregulated situation is a risky way to reduce intergroup tensions. Contact between racial groups at desegregated schools does not consistently lower levels of prejudice (Gerard, 1983; Schofield, 1978). When units of an organization that clash on a regular basis are relocated in neighboring offices, the conflicts remain (Brown et al., 1986). In some cases students experience so much tumult during their semesters spent studying abroad that they become more negative toward their host countries rather than more positive (Stangor et al., 1996). Competing groups in laboratory studies remain adversaries if the only step taken to unite them is mere contact (Stephan, 1987). Even before they initiated the contact, the Sherifs predicted that a “contact phase in itself will not produce marked decreases in the existing state of tension between groups” (Sherif et al., 1961, p. 51).

Why does contact sometimes fail to cure conflict? Contact situations can create anxiety for those who take part, so the contact must be of sufficient duration to allow this anxiety to decrease and for individuals to feel comfortable interacting with one another (Kenworthy et al., 2005). Moreover, if members of the two groups use the contact situation as one more opportunity to insult, argue with, physically attack, or discriminate against one another, then certainly such contact should not be expected to yield beneficial effects (Riordan & Riggiero, 1980). The setting must, instead, create *positive contact* between groups by including such ingredients as:

- *Equal status.* The members of the groups should have the same background, qualities, and characteristics that define status levels in the situation. Differences in academic backgrounds, wealth, skill, or experiences should be minimized if these qualities will influence perceptions of prestige and rank in the group (Schwarzwald, Amir, & Crain, 1992).
- *Personal interaction.* The contact should involve informal, personal interaction with outgroup members rather than superficial, role-based

contacts. If the members of the groups do not mingle with one another, they learn very little about the other group, and cross-group friendships do not develop (Cook, 1985; Schofield, 1978).

- *Supportive norms.* The contact should encourage friendly, helpful, egalitarian attitudes and condemn ingroup-outgroup comparisons. These norms must be endorsed explicitly by authorities and by the groups themselves (Stephan & Rosenfield, 1982).
- *Cooperation.* Groups should work together in the pursuit of common goals (Gaertner, Dovidio, Rust, et al., 1999).

These ingredients were identified by a team of researchers led by Kenneth Clark and including Isidor Chein, Gerhart Saenger, and Stuart Cook. This group developed the social science statement filed in the U.S. Supreme Court case of *Brown vs. Board of Education*, which ruled that segregation of schools was unconstitutional (Benjamin & Crouse, 2002).

The Effects of Contact Does contact, across various types of situations and between various kinds of groups, stimulate conflict reduction? Thomas Pettigrew and Linda Tropp (2000, 2006) examined this question in a meta-analysis of 515 separate studies of contact and conflict. This massive pool of studies examined the responses of nearly a half a million people from around the world. It included studies with tightly controlled methods as well as those with less stringent controls. Some studies measured contact directly, whereas others based measures of contact on participants' own self-reports. Some studies were experimental, with treatment and control conditions, but others were correlational or quasi-experimental. The studies examined a variety of intergroup conflicts, including those based on race, sexual orientation, age, and ethnicity.

Their careful meta-analysis (which took the researchers eight years to complete) confirmed the utility of the contact method in reducing conflict. They found that face-to-face contact between group

members reduced prejudice in 94% of these studies, and that the basic correlation between contact and conflict was $-.21$; the more contact, the less prejudice between groups. They also noted, however, that contact had a stronger impact on conflict when researchers studied high-quality contact situations that included equal status, cooperation between groups, and so on. In such studies, the correlation between contact and conflict climbed to $-.29$.

The effects of contact also varied across situations. Contact in recreational and work settings had the strongest impact on conflict, whereas contact that occurred when group members visited another group's country (i.e., as tourists) had the least impact (see Figure 14.5). The impact of contact on conflict also varied across countries. For example, it was greatest in Australia and New Zealand, followed by the United States and Europe. Contact worked to reduce conflict in all other countries, but its strength was less in some parts of the world (e.g., Africa, Asia, Israel). Some types of intergroup conflicts were also more resistant to the curative power of contact than others. Heterosexuals' attitudes toward gay men and lesbians improved the most after contact, followed by attitudes related to race and ethnicity. Contact lost some of its strength in studies of contact between people of different ages. Also, contact had less effect on the attitudes of members of minority groups relative to

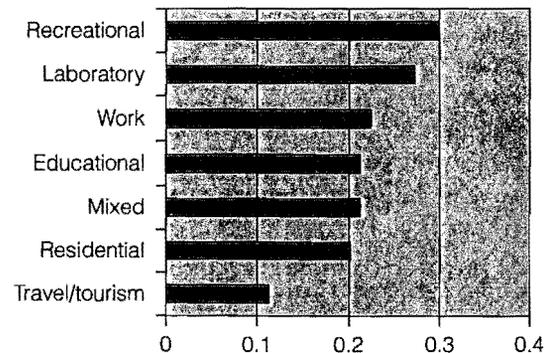


FIGURE 14.5 Degree of conflict reduction between groups across seven contact situations.

SOURCE: Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006.

members of majority groups (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000).

Pettigrew and Tropp conclude that contact works best in situations that conform to researchers' recommendations for positive contact, but they were also heartened by the positive effects obtained in less-than-ideal situations. Drawing on both their findings and social identity theory, they suggest that contact works most effectively when it helps reduce the anxiety associated with conflict between the groups and when membership in the two groups is salient to their members. They suspect that contact fails when members feel threatened by the outgroup, and that the level of contact is not enough to assuage that anxiety (Brown & Hewstone, 2005). This suggestion is also consistent with research that finds that stress, as measured by levels of cortisol reactivity, decreases with each additional contact between people in a situation that encourages the formation of friendships (Page-Gould, Mendoza-Denton, & Tropp, 2008).

Contact and Superordinate Goals Contact also reduced the conflict at the Robbers Cave site once the Sherifs improved the quality of the contact between the Rattlers and Eagles. Following the failure of simple contact, they arranged for the groups to work together in the pursuit of **superordinate goals**—that is, goals that can be achieved only if two groups work together. The staff created these superordinate goals by staging a series of crises. They secretly sabotaged the water supply and then asked the boys to find the source of the problem by tracing the water pipe from the camp back to the main water tank, located about three-quarters of a mile away. The boys became quite thirsty during their search and worked together to try to correct the problem. Eventually, they discovered that the main water valve had been turned off by “vandals,” and they cheered when the problem was repaired. Later in this stage, the boys pooled their monetary

resources to rent a movie that they all wanted to see, worked together to pull a broken-down truck, prepared meals together, exchanged tent materials, and took a rather hot and dusty truck ride together. Like feuding neighbors who unite when a severe thunderstorm threatens to flood their homes, or warring nations that pool their technological skills (in a recurring science fiction theme) to prevent the imagined collision of Earth with an asteroid, the Rattlers and the Eagles were reunited when they sought goals that could not be achieved by a single group working alone.

Other factors that enhance the impact of contact are friendship, success, and time. Stephen Wright and his colleagues, for example, have tested what they called the *extended contact hypothesis*: When group members learn that one or more members of their group have a friend in the outgroup, they express more positive intergroup attitudes (Wright et al., 1997; See Focus 14.2). Intergroup experiences that lead to successes, too, are more effective than intergroup experiences that lead to negative outcomes (Worchel, 1986). A disastrous performance during cooperation will only serve to further alienate groups (Blanchard, Adelman, & Cook, 1975). Contact is also more effective when groups share a common fate and when cues that signal status differences between the groups are minimized (Gaertner, Dovidio, Rust, et al., 1999; Gardham & Brown, 2001).

Contact also takes *time* to work its cure. In the Robbers Cave research, a whole series of superordinate goals was required to reduce animosity. Similarly, when students from two different colleges worked together on problems, students who worked with the outgroup just once or not at all rated the members of the outgroup more negatively than students who worked with the outgroup twice (Wilder & Thompson, 1980). Similar findings have been obtained in studies of desegregated schools. A long period of favorable intergroup contact may reduce prejudice, but if this favorable contact is followed by an equally long period in which contact is not encouraged, the groups inevitably drift apart once again (Schofield & Sagar, 1977).

superordinate goal A goal that can only be attained if the members of two or more groups work together by pooling their efforts and resources.

Focus 14.2 Is Friendship Stronger Than Hate?

*Tis but thy name that is my enemy:
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? It is nor hand nor foot
Nor arm nor face nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O be some other name.
What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other word would smell as sweet.*

—Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 2, Scene 2

The Robbers Cave Experiment was Sherif's third field study of intergroup conflict. One of the earlier studies, in which the Panthers battled the Pythons, had to be aborted when the two groups realized that the camp administration was creating the intergroup friction (Sherif, White, & Harvey, 1955). The other, conducted in 1949 in a camp in northern Connecticut, pitted friendship against intergroup bias (Sherif & Sherif, 1953). As noted in Chapter 5, these boys were not separated into groups until a full week of campwide activities had been held. During that time, strong patterns of friendship developed between the boys, but the researchers deliberately separated friends when they segregated the two groups during the second week. Many of the Red Devils had friends on the Bull Dogs team and many Bull Dogs had Red Devil friends.

Categorization, however, virtually obliterated these original friendships. Boys who continued to interact with members of the outgroup were branded traitors and threatened with bodily harm unless they broke off their friendships. One member of the Bull Dogs who did not completely identify with the group was partially ostracized, and eventually his parents had to remove him from the camp. A Red Devil who suggested that the two groups get together for a party was punished by the Red Devil's leader. This observational evidence was buttressed by the sociometric choice data collected before and after the groups were formed. Before the intergroup conflict, more than 60% of the boys reported that their best friends were members of what would eventually become the

outgroup. Later, after the groups were separated, cross-group friendships dwindled down to 10%.

Other studies, however, have suggested that friendship can sometimes cure intergroup conflict. Thomas Pettigrew (1997), in a study of 3,806 people living in four countries in Europe, discovered that people who reported having friends who were members of an outgroup (another race, nationality, culture, religion, or social class) were less prejudiced than those who had no outgroup friends. Other investigations have confirmed this tendency (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). For example, Stephen Wright and his colleagues conceptually replicated the Robbers Cave Experiment with college students who spent an entire day working in one of two groups on a variety of tasks. Groups first developed a sense of cohesiveness by designing a logo for their team and sharing personal information. The groups then competed against each other, and during lunch, they watched as each group was given prizes and awards for defeating the other group. Later in the day, the groups worked on solitary tasks, except for two individuals who met together—supposedly to take part in an unrelated study. This meeting, however, was designed to create a friendly relationship between these two individuals, who then returned to their groups just before a final competition.

Wright discovered that the two group members who were turned into friends were more positive toward the outgroup. More importantly, however, this positivity generalized throughout the rest of the group. Even though the other group members had not themselves developed friendships with members of the outgroup, the knowledge that someone in their group considered an outgroup member to be likable moderated the ingroup-outgroup bias. Wright concluded that intergroup conflict sometimes prevents friendships from forming, but that friendships that cut across groups can undo some of the pernicious effects of the ingroup-outgroup bias (Wright et al., 1997).

Cognitive Cures for Conflict

Intergroup contact does more than just promote positive interactions between people who were once antagonists. When individuals cooperate with the outgroup, their “us versus them” thinking fades, along with ingroup favoritism, outgroup

rejection, and stereotyping (Brewer & Brown, 1998; Brewer & Miller, 1984; Crisp & Hewstone, 2007).

Decategorization During the waning days at the Robbers Cave, the boys began to abandon their collective identities. Some boys became less likely

to think of themselves as Rattlers, but instead viewed themselves as individuals with specific interests, skills, and abilities. This **decategorization**, or *personalization*, of group members reduces intergroup conflict by reminding group members to think of outgroup members as individuals rather than as typical group members (Brewer, 2007). In one study, researchers personalized the outgroup by merging two distinct groups and giving them problems to solve. Some of the groups were urged to focus on the task, but others were encouraged to get to know one another. This latter manipulation decreased the magnitude of the ingroup–outgroup bias, although it did not eliminate it completely (Bettencourt et al., 1992). Individuation can also be increased by reducing the perceived homogeneity of the outgroup. When group members were told that one member of the outgroup strongly disagreed with his or her own group during an episode of intergroup conflict, ingroup–outgroup biases were muted (Wilder, 1986b). The participants looked at the outgroup and saw a collection of individuals rather than a unified group (Wilder, Simon, & Faith, 1996).

Recategorization The **common ingroup identity model**, developed by Samuel Gaertner, John Dovidio, and their colleagues, recommends reducing bias by shifting group members' representations of themselves away from two separate groups into one common ingroup category. This **recategorization** will undo the conflict–exacerbating cognitive factors that are rooted in the ingroup–outgroup

decategorization Reducing social categorization tendencies by minimizing the salience of group memberships and stressing the individuality of each person in the group.
common ingroup identity model An analysis of recategorization processes and conflict, developed by Samuel Gaertner, John Dovidio, and their colleagues, predicting that intergroup conflict can be reduced by emphasizing membership in inclusive social categories and the interdependence of the individuals in the groups.
recategorization A reduction of social categorization tendencies by collapsing groups in conflict into a single group or category.

bias, but will also permit members to retain their original identities (so long as they do not conflict with the recategorized groups). Because people belong to multiple groups, they may be able to conceive of themselves as members of different groups who are currently members of one, more superordinate group. Recategorization can also be achieved by systematically manipulating the perceptual cues that people use to define “groupness.” When the members of competing groups were urged to adopt a single name, space was minimized between the members, and their outcomes were linked, these cues increased the perceived unity (*entitativity*) of the group members, and ingroup–outgroup biases diminished (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Gaertner, Dovidio, Nier, et al., 1999; Gaertner, Dovidio, Rust, et al., 1999; Gaertner et al., 2000).

Jason Nier and his colleagues (2001) confirmed this shifting of identities at a football game between the University of Delaware and Westchester State University. They arranged for European and African American interviewers to approach European American fans and ask them if they would answer a few questions about their food preferences. The interviewers manipulated shared social identity by wearing different hats. For example, when interviewers approached a Delaware fan, they wore a Delaware hat to signal their shared identity, but a Westchester hat to indicate they were members of the outgroup. Ingroup–outgroup identity did not influence European Americans' compliance with a European American interviewer's request. However, the participants were more likely to agree to be interviewed by an African American if the interviewer and interviewee apparently shared a common university affiliation.

The Sherifs made use of recategorization in their 1949 study by pitting a softball team made up of members from both groups against an outside camp (Sherif & Sherif, 1953). This *common-enemy approach* was partially successful. During the game, the boys cheered one another on and, when the home team won, congratulated themselves without paying heed to group loyalties. By introducing the third party, the common-enemy approach forced the boys to redefine themselves in terms of a single

shared group identity. The Sherifs pointed out, however, that combining groups in opposition to a common enemy “enlarges” the conflict as new factions are drawn into the fray (Kessler & Mummendey, 2001). The old conflicts can also return once the common enemy is dispatched.

Cross-Categorization Ingroup–outgroup biases are also minimized when group members’ other classifications—in addition to their group identity that is the focus of the conflict—are made salient to them (Crisp & Hewstone, 2007). **Cross-categorization**, or multiple social categorization, instead of uniting all individuals in a single group or breaking down groups altogether, decreases the power of the problematic group identity by shifting attention to alternative memberships that are less likely to provoke ingroup–outgroup tensions. The Sherifs, if they had implemented this strategy at the Robbers Cave, would have introduced at least one other category and split the Rattlers and the Eagles into two new groups. The boys, for example, were drawn from both the north and the south side of Oklahoma City, so the Sherifs could have separated them into these two groups and introduced activities that would have made these identities salient.

When others are viewed as belonging to multiple categories rather than just one, intergroup differentiation decreases, and with it goes intergroup bias. Cross-categorization also prompts individuals to develop a more complex conceptualization of the outgroup, which leads in some cases to decategorization. The effectiveness of cross-categorization depends, however, on individuals’ willingness to do the cognitive work needed to rethink their conceptualization of the outgroup and their mood. If pressured by time constraints that placed demands on their ability to process information or a

cross-categorization A reduction of the impact of social categorization on individuals’ perceptions by making salient their memberships in two or more social groups or categories that are not related to the categories that are generating ingroup–outgroup tensions.

mood-souring situation, the boys at Robbers Cave may have fallen back on the older, better-known Eagles–Rattlers distinction (Brewer, 2000; Crisp & Hewstone, 2007; Urban & Miller, 1998).

Controlling Stereotyped Thinking Rather than attacking the categorization process, Patricia Devine (1989, 2005) recommended controlling the impact of stereotypes on perceptions. Although people may not be able to avoid the activation of stereotypes, they can control their subsequent thoughts to inhibit ingroup–outgroup biases. Devine found that the European Americans she studied could easily list the contents of their culture’s stereotype about African Americans. She also found that European Americans who were low in prejudice could describe the stereotype as accurately as those who were high in prejudice. The unprejudiced European Americans, however, could control their thoughts after the stereotypes were activated. When asked to list their thoughts about African Americans, the unprejudiced participants wrote such things as “Blacks and Whites are equal” and “It’s unfair to judge people by their color—they are individuals.” Prejudiced people, in contrast, listed negative, stereotypical thoughts. Devine and her colleagues have also found that unprejudiced European Americans feel guilty when they respond to African Americans in stereotypical ways, whereas prejudiced European Americans do not (see Devine, 2005, for a review).

Conflict Management

Many practical approaches to dealing with conflict build on both the contact and cognitive approaches while adding elements designed to fit the given situation. These approaches include cultural awareness training, self-esteem workshops, roundtable discussions with peers, structured training programs, and cooperative learning interventions (for a comprehensive review see Paluck & Green, 2009). These programs, when applied with diligence, often yield substantial reductions in conflict, although their success depends on their duration, their design, and their fidelity to the intervention strategy (Stephan & Stephan, 2005).

Jigsaw Learning Groups Studies of public schools in the United States suggest that desegregation often fails to eliminate racial and ethnic prejudices. Although integrated schools bring students from various groups into contact, they do not always promote cooperation between these groups. Instead of including the necessary ingredients for positive intergroup interaction, many school systems fail to encourage interaction among the members of various subgroups, and staff openly express hostile attitudes toward outgroup members. Some schools, too, group students on the basis of prior academic experiences; as a result, educationally deprived students are segregated from students with stronger academic backgrounds (Amir, 1969; Brewer & Miller, 1984; Cook, 1985; Schofield, 1978).

Desegregation will reduce prejudice only when supplemented by educational programs that encourage cooperation among members of different racial and ethnic groups. One technique that has yielded promising results involves forming racially mixed teams within the classroom. In the **jigsaw method**, for example, students from different racial or ethnic groups are assigned to a single learning group. These groups are then given an assignment that can be completed only if each individual member contributes his or her share. Study units are broken down into various subareas, and each member of a group must become an expert on one subject and teach that subject to other members of the group. In a class studying government, for example, the teacher might separate the pupils into three-person groups, with each member of the group being assigned one of the following topics: the judiciary system (the Supreme Court of the United States), the duties and powers of the executive branch (the office of the President), and the functions of the legislative branch (Congress). Students can, however, leave their three-person groups and

meet with their counterparts from other groups. Thus, everyone assigned to study one particular topic, such as the Supreme Court, would meet to discuss it, answer questions, and decide how to teach the material to others. Once they have learned their material, these students rejoin their original groups and teach the other members of their group what they had learned. Thus, the jigsaw class uses both group learning and student teaching techniques (Aronson, 2000; Aronson & Patnoe, 1997; Aronson et al., 1978).

Learning to Cooperate Intergroup conflicts resist resolution, despite the best intentions of those involved to settle the problem amicably. In one of the Sherifs' studies, for example, an informal attempt by one of the Bull Dogs' leaders to negotiate with the Red Devils ended in increased antagonism:

Hall ... was chosen to make a peace mission. He joined into the spirit, shouting to the Bull Dogs, "Keep your big mouths shut. I'm going to see if we can make peace. We want peace." Hall went to the Red Devil cabin. The door was shut in his face. He called up that the Bull Dogs had only taken their own [belongings] ... and they wanted peace. His explanation was rejected, and his peaceful intentions were derided. He ran from the bunkhouse in a hail of green apples. (Sherif & Sherif, 1953, p. 283)

Conflict experts, such as Herbert Kelman (1992), recommend training people to be more effective managers of intergroup conflict. Kelman and his colleagues have met repeatedly with high-ranking representatives from countries in the Middle East to solve problems in that region of the world. Kelman has carefully structured the workshops so that participants can speak freely, and he intervenes only as necessary to facilitate the communication process. The workshops are completely confidential, discussion is open but focused on the conflict, and expectations are realistic. The workshops are not designed to resolve the conflict, but to give participants the behavioral skills needed to solve conflicts themselves (Rouhana & Kelman, 1994).

jigsaw method A team-learning technique developed by Elliot Aronson and his colleagues that involves assigning topics to each student, allowing students with the same topics to study together, and then requiring these students to teach their topics to the other members of their groups.

David and Roger Johnson have applied these principles in their school-based cooperative learning program. They designed their program to achieve three major goals: to decrease the amount of tension between groups in schools and colleges; to increase students' ability to solve problems without turning to authorities; and to give students skills they can use when they become adults. The program teaches students a five-step approach to resolving conflicts: (1) define the conflict; (2) exchange information about the nature of the conflict; (3) view the situation from multiple perspectives; (4) generate solutions to the conflict; (5) select a solution that benefits all parties.

Johnson and Johnson, in evaluations of the program, reported substantial reductions in discipline problems after training, as well as increases in academic achievement (Roseth, Johnson, & Johnson, 2008). These programs can be made even more effective by structuring the task so that each group member makes a contribution, randomly assigning students to roles within the group, and making certain that all groups contain an equal number of representatives from the groups being merged. Too much of an emphasis on individual performance—created by assigning grades based on relative performance or degree of preparation—can undermine the effectiveness of the program, but research suggests that the intervention yields positive gains even in less-than-ideal settings (Miller & Davidson-Podgorny, 1987).

Resolving Conflict: Conclusions

In his classic treatise *The Nature of Prejudice*, Allport (1954) wrote that “conflict is like a note on an organ. It sets all prejudices that are attuned to it into simultaneous vibration. The listener can scarcely distinguish the pure note from the surrounding jangle” (p. 996).

The Sherifs and their colleagues created just such a “jangle” at the Robbers Cave. The Rattlers and the Eagles were only young boys camping, but their conflict followed patterns seen in disputes between races, between regions, and between countries. But just as the Robbers Cave Experiment is a sobering commentary on the pervasiveness of conflict, so the resolution of that conflict is cause for optimism. The Sherifs created conflict, but they also resolved it. When it came time to return to Oklahoma City, several of the group members asked if everyone could go in the same bus:

When they asked if this might be done and received an affirmative answer from the staff, some of them actually cheered. When the bus pulled out, the seating arrangement did not follow group lines. Many boys looked back at the camp, and Wilson (E) cried because camp was over. (Sherif et al., 1961, p. 182)

If the Robbers Cave conflict can end peacefully, perhaps others can as well.

SUMMARY IN OUTLINE

What interpersonal factors disrupt relations between groups?

1. Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif and their colleagues' carried out the *Robbers Cave Experiment* to identify the causes of intergroup conflict.
2. *Realistic group conflict theory* assumes conflict occurs because groups must compete with one another for scarce resources.

- The heightened competitiveness of groups is known as the *discontinuity effect*.
- Research by Insko and his colleagues suggests the effect is due to individuals' desire to maximize profit (greed), distrust of groups (fear), group loyalty, and the lack of identifiability. Limiting these tendencies can work to reduce the aggressiveness of groups.

3. Conflict increases when one group attempts to dominate and exploit another group, and the target group resists exploitation.

- *Social dominance theory*, developed by Sidanius and Pratto, examines tensions between hierarchically ranked groups in society. Individuals who are high in social dominance orientation are more likely to prefer allocations that benefit their group relative to other groups.
- Groups exploit other groups both economically and coercively, but Insko's generational studies suggest that coercive influence is associated with greater increases in conflict.

4. Normative processes instigate and sustain conflict.

- Intergroup conflict, like intragroup conflict, tends to escalate over time. Both the norm of reciprocity and the use of contentious influence tactics stimulate conflict spirals.
- The extent to which groups respond in hostile ways to other groups varies from culture to culture, with some cultures eschewing intergroup conflict and others (such as the "fierce" Yanomanö studied by Chagnon) accepting it routinely.
- Subgroups within the large cultural context may adopt unique norms pertaining to violence. Work by Nisbett, Cohen, and their colleagues suggests that in the South of the United States men tend to respond more aggressively to threat.

5. Negative emotional reactions can trigger anti-outgroup reactions. *Scapegoat theory* explains why groups that experience setbacks sometimes fight other, more defenseless groups.

6. Intergroup conflict may be instinctive—the result of evolutionary pressures that favored individuals who preferred ingroup members over outgroup members.

What are the psychological foundations of conflict between groups?

1. Social categorization leads perceivers to classify people into two mutually exclusive groups—the ingroup and the outgroup. Individuals in Tajfel and Turner's minimal intergroup situation displayed the ingroup–outgroup bias, leading them to conclude that social categorization may be sufficient to create conflict.
2. Members tend to favor the ingroup over the outgroup (the ingroup–outgroup bias). This bias, when applied to larger groups such as tribes or nations, was labeled *ethnocentrism* by Sumner.
 - Ingroup favoritism tends to be stronger than outgroup rejection, but both forms of ingroup–outgroup bias emerged at Robbers Cave.
 - Implicit measures of bias, such as the Implicit Association Test (IAT) developed by Greenwald and his colleagues, can detect subtle, unconscious forms of bias.
 - *Double-standard thinking*, as described by White, occurs when group members frame the behaviors and characteristics of the ingroup in more positively than these same behaviors and characteristics displayed by the outgroup.
3. During intergroup conflict, group members' judgments are often distorted by a number of cognitive biases:
 - *Outgroup homogeneity bias*: The outgroup is assumed to be much more homogeneous than the ingroup. Members assume that their own group is diverse and heterogeneous, although when the group is threatened, members may exaggerate the similarity of everyone in their group.
 - *Law of small numbers*: The behaviors and characteristics exhibited by a small number of outgroup members are generalized to all members of the outgroup.

- *Group attribution error*: Group decisions are assumed to reflect individual group members' attitudes, irrespective of the particular procedures used in making the decisions.
 - *Ultimate attribution error*: Group members attribute the negative behaviors performed by outgroup members to internal dispositions, but their positive behaviors are explained away as situationally caused aberrations.
 - *Linguistic intergroup bias*: Actions performed by the ingroup are described differently than actions performed by the outgroup.
 - *Stereotypes*: Lippmann coined the word stereotypes to describe cognitive generalizations about the qualities and characteristics of the members of a particular group or social category. The *stereotype content model* suggests that the contents of most stereotypes reflect judgments of the outgroup's competence and warmth.
4. When conflicts become more intense, members may display more extreme emotional reactions to outgroups.
- In addition to a generalized negative reaction to the outgroup, individuals may also experience specific emotions, such as envy, contempt, pity, and admiration, depending on their stereotypes about the outgroup.
 - As Allport observed, hatred tends to be directed at groups rather than individuals.
 - Extreme conflict can result in both *moral exclusion* and *dehumanization* of members of the outgroup. Dehumanized individuals evoke a different reaction, at the neurological level, than those who are not dehumanized, and Bandura's research indicates that a group is likely to be treated more negatively when described as "animalistic."
5. Social identity theory suggests that individuals, by championing the ingroup, maintain and even raise their self-esteem.
- How can intergroup relations be improved?*
1. The Sherifs' first, relatively unsuccessful attempt to reduce conflict was based on the *contact hypothesis*.
 2. Pettigrew and Tropp, using meta-analysis, concluded that contact is an effective means of reducing conflict.
 - The effectiveness of contact increases in more positive contexts; ones that include the elements identified by Clark and his colleagues. Contact is more effective when it creates cooperation between the groups, when participants are equal in status, when interaction is intimate enough to sustain the development of friendships across the groups, and when norms encourage cooperation.
 - Contact is more effective when it creates extensive opportunities for interaction, as in sports and work settings rather than tourist settings.
 - The Sherifs successfully reduced conflict in the Robbers Cave camp by prompting the boys to work toward *superordinate goals*.
 - Studies of the *extended contact hypothesis* posited by Wright and others suggest that encouraging the development of cross-group friendship relations reduces prejudice.
 3. Cognitive approaches to conflict reduction seek to reverse the negative biases that follow from parsing individuals into ingroups and outgroups.
 - *Decategorization* encourages members to recognize the individuality of the outgroup members.
 - The *common ingroup identity model* developed by Gaertner and Dovidio suggests

that *recategorization*—collapsing the boundaries between groups—reduces conflict yet can promote the retention of identities. The common-enemy approach is an example of recategorization.

- *Cross-categorization* involves making salient multiple group memberships.
- Devine's studies of stereotypic thinking indicate that even though individuals may be aware of the contents of stereotypes pertaining to outgroups, they can learn to control the impact of this biased cognitive response on their judgments.

4. Conflict experts such as Kelman suggest managing conflict by teaching group members the skills they need to resolve interpersonal disputes.
 - Aronson's *jigsaw method* is an educational intervention that reduces prejudice by assigning students from different racial or ethnic groups to a single learning group.
 - School-based conflict management programs liked those developed by Johnson and Johnson are designed to reduce conflict between groups by teaching students to recognize conflict, communicate about the source of the conflict, and identify mutually acceptable solutions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Chapter Case: The Robbers Cave Experiment

Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation: The Robbers Cave Experiment, by Muzafer Sherif, O. J. Harvey, B. Jack White, William R. Hood, and Carolyn W. Sherif (1961), describes in detail the well-known study of conflict between two groups of boys at a summer camp.

Causes of Intergroup Conflict

"Intergroup Relations," by Marilyn B. Brewer and Rupert J. Brown (1998), is a theoretically sophisticated review of the theory and research pertaining to intergroup processes.

"Beyond the Group Mind: A Quantitative Review of the Interindividual-Intergroup Discontinuity Effect," by Tim Wildschut, Brad Pinter, Jack L. Vevea, Chester A. Insko, and John Schopler (2003), examines prior scholarly analyses of the transformation that occurs when conflict erupts between groups rather than individuals and provides a summary of work on the discontinuity effect.

Intergroup Relations

"The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations," by Marilyn B. Brewer (2007),

provides a comprehensive but efficient review of research dealing with cognitive factors that cause and sustain intergroup bias.

- *On the Nature of Prejudice: Fifty Years after Allport*, edited by John F. Dovidio, Peter Glick, and Laurie A. Rudman (2005), draws together papers on Allport's insights into the nature of intergroup conflict, with sections pertaining to preferential thinking, sociocultural factors, and prejudice reduction.
- *The Psychology of Stereotyping*, by David J. Schneider (2004), examines issues of stereotype and bias, as well as a wide variety of cognitive processes that pertain to groups, including perceptions of entitativity, categorization, and ingroup-outgroup bias.

Resolving Intergroup Conflict

- "Prejudice Reduction: What Works? A Review and Assessment of Research and Practice," by Elizabeth Levy Paluck and Donald P. Green (2009), reviews a wide variety of methods used to reduce conflict between groups, with a focus on the rigor of the methods used to evaluate their efficacy.