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Social Identity Performance: Extending the Strategic Side of SIDE

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This article extends the social identity model of deindividuation effects (SIDE) by considering the various ways in which relations of visibility to an audience can affect the public expression of identity-relevant norms (identity performance). It is suggested that social identity performance can fulfill two general functions: Affirming, conforming, or strengthening individual or group identities (the identity consolidation function) and persuading audiences into adopting specific behaviors (the mobilization function). The authors report evidence supporting these two functions of identity performance both in intragroup and intergroup contexts. They argue that through these functions, social identity performance plays a major role in the elaboration and coordination of social action. Finally, and building on this framework, the authors consider the ways through which social identity performance can be used in the very construction of social identity.

Keywords: *social identity; selfidentity; norms/social roles*

IDENTITY IN PRACTICE: THE STRATEGIC SIDE

During the past half century and more, social psychologists have generally explained group behavior—whether a matter of demonstrating against globalization, cheering a football team, or using violence in support of national independence—in terms of a variety of motivations and needs (e.g., increasing self-esteem, fulfilling the

need to belong, obtaining material resources) that are themselves influenced by cognitive processes (such as social categorization, self-definition, and stereotyping). In this article, we argue that understanding group behavior demands that we pay attention to not only internal processes but also external constraints on actors and the ways in which they seek to deal with such constraints.

Group behavior is generally expressed against actual or potential resistance by other groups who might express disapproval or even repress the actor. Thus, antiglobalization demonstrators, soccer fans, and national separatists are all aware that some of the actions that they view as acceptable in terms of in-group standards—such as attacking a McDonald's restaurant, invading a soccer field, or planting a bomb in a supermarket—face potential resistance and severe sanction from powerful outgroups who view such actions as illegitimate. Group behavior is a matter of the practical ability to act as well as the motivational and/or cognitive instigation to act. It is this ability, and its relation to the social constraints bearing on it, that are of central interest to us here.

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We accept social identity theory's well-documented claim that group behavior serves to respond to motivations related to the maintenance and enhancement of social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). However, it is crucial to stress that the definition and content of these identities is also dependent on their practical expression through group behavior. An identity is sustainable only to the extent that it can be expressed in practice (Haslam & Reicher, in press). Besides, the actual shape of this identity is to a large extent an outcome of others' reactions to it. Often, identities cannot be sustained unless they are acknowledged by others (e.g., Emler & Reicher, 1995). The first attempts to empirically explore this practical dimension of group behavior were conducted in the context of the social identity model of deindividuation effects (SIDE; Reicher, Spears, & Postmes, 1995; Spears & Lea, 1992, 1994), which was originally developed to make sense of a range of "deindividuation effects"¹ deriving from situational factors such as group immersion, anonymity, reduced identifiability, and so forth. SIDE's preferred explanation for the effects of these manipulations in the group is in terms of self-categorization theory's (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) concept of depersonalization: The increased salience of a group identity that can result from the manipulation of such factors (i.e., in contrast to deindividuation explanations involving the reduced impact of self; e.g., Postmes & Spears, 1998; Reicher, 1987; Reicher et al., 1995). We have labeled this impact of deindividuation manipulations on the salience of self-categorizations the "cognitive component" of SIDE.

More important for the purpose of this article, we suggested that deindividuation manipulations can also affect the ability to express identity-relevant behavior once an identity is salient. In earlier statements of the SIDE model, we have referred to this as the "strategic" dimension (Reicher et al., 1995; Spears & Lea, 1994), although as shown below, this label may be limited and even misleading in some ways. In short, deindividuation manipulations affect norm endorsement through not only their impact on self-definition but also their influence on power relations between group members and their audience.

For example, Reicher and Levine (1994a, Study 2) observed that when identifiable rather than anonymous, with respect to a powerful out-group (their lecturers), science students were less likely to publicly endorse in-group normative behaviors (such as giving false excuses for handing assignments in late) that would elicit punishment from staff. This finding extends to neither the expression of behaviors that would elicit punishment from staff but were not in-group normative nor the expression of in-group normative behaviors that would not elicit punishment from staff. Hence, this study suggests that the effect of identifiability on the endorsement

of punishable in-group norms can be because of its impact on possible repression by the out-group.

An important assumption of the SIDE model is that the effect of relations of visibility on group behavior is contingent on the audience to whom one is identifiable. Although identifiability to an out-group may facilitate repression of in-group by out-group, identifiability within the in-group enables group members to join and coordinate their actions to resist such a powerful out-group (Reicher, Levine, & Gordijn, 1998, Study 3).

The purpose of the current article is to elaborate this strategic side of SIDE. More specific, we consider (a) instances where the expression of social identity in behavior is affected by considerations relating to the nature of available audiences (what we call social identity performance or identity performance for short), and (b) how these performances may ultimately feed back into the nature of social identity itself. In contrast to the cognitive SIDE, which may implicate automatic processes of identity salience (see Spears, 2001), what we have previously termed the strategic dimension generally refers to intentional (performative) behavior calculated to affect the audience in certain ways. Hence, in this article, we use the term *identity performance* rather than referring to the *strategic dimension*.

The present analysis goes beyond earlier formulations of the SIDE model in much more than terminology. It considers aspects of identity performance that are not necessarily confined to formal power relations (as in Reicher and Levine's studies) and includes a wide range of influence attempts and audience effects. We also explicitly consider the reciprocal relation between identity and its behavioral expression. Finally, many studies examine a range of strategic goals that can be achieved through the expression of group norms and that can be affected by relations of visibility to an audience. However, these attempts, whether they were inspired by the SIDE model or not, have been rather dispersed. As a result, the inventory of strategic effects on the performance of group norms demands an integration. It is our purpose in this article to respond to most of these current limitations of the SIDE model and show how the model can be extended and elaborated, as well as integrating many established effects in the process. Although the early focus of the SIDE model was on traditional deindividuation effects, the focus of this article is much broader and encompasses multiple dimensions of identity performance.

We start by delineating the range of group behaviors addressed, by specifying more closely the concept of identity performance and the two main functions it may fulfill. Then we consider two broad situations in which these two functions of identity performance can be implemented, depending on the audience's group membership

(in-group or out-group). Next, we analyze the conditions under which identity performance of different types takes place. Finally, we build on this framework to consider the role identity performance can play in the very construction of group members' social identities.

DEFINING IDENTITY PERFORMANCE

As we have already stressed, the present article is concerned with social identities that are "performed" with a particular audience in mind or literally, in view. Identity performance can take a variety of forms, such as physical action and the manipulation of physical appearance (including displays, symbols, signs) as well as the verbal expression of representations and attitudes viewed as normative of the in-group (e.g., stereotypes and prejudice). By *identity performance*, we mean the purposeful expression (or suppression) of behaviors relevant to those norms conventionally associated with a salient social identity. Four aspects of this definition deserve some elaboration.

First, the use of the word *purposeful* means that we do not consider as identity performance behaviors that are not deliberately performed with the intention of manifesting one's relation to a group identity. For example, for a bilingual Fleming, speaking Flemish to a Francophone who asks for directions in French is a form of identity performance to the extent that it involves an active "advertisement" of one's Flemish identity to the audience (if not indeed an ironic or recalcitrant rebuke at the presumption behind choice of language). Generally, in ordinary intragroup (and even intergroup) contexts, speaking one's mother tongue would not be considered a form of identity performance because it is done thoughtlessly and almost naturally. Automatic or habitual group behavior (e.g., Spears, Gordijn, Dijksterhuis, & Stapel, 2004), therefore, would not normally count as performance.

Second, the use of the phrase *relevant to* means behaviors that are antinormative with respect to a salient social identity would also be considered a form of identity performance. Consider, for example, a Muslim woman who decides to relinquish her traditional Muslim clothes and to opt for Western clothes instead, even when in the presence of other Muslims. In doing so, she may be performing a Western identity or even choosing a distinctive personal identity to express individual self as distinct from group identity. This does not necessarily mean that she defines herself as Western or dissociates herself from her group. She may view herself as inherently Muslim but, for example, claim this Western identity as a way of shifting her Muslim audience's definitions of what it means to be Muslim (see

also Barreto, Spears, Ellemers, & Shahinper, 2003). Conversely, wearing a headscarf in front of a Western audience can be seen as a way of signaling resistance to the in-group's definition of what it means to be a woman, whereas wearing it in front of a Muslim audience might be considered a sign of submission.

Third, the association between the behavior and the social identity are thought to be "conventional" (that is, in relation to a group and its norms rather than idiosyncratic). This means that when performing such norm-relevant behavior, the communicator expects the audience to recognize the association between the behavior and the relevant social identity. It also means that this behavior makes explicit and salient the normative status of the behavior for the relevant identity. For example, in 1892, when Keir Hardie, one of the founders of the Labour Party, entered the British House of Commons wearing a cap, he was deliberately displaying this particular headwear as symbolic of a working-class identity (Hobsbawm, 1983). Until then, the cap had been worn by workers but not reflected on as such. The fact that it was paraded before the representatives of class privilege in the seat of power also makes clear that this was a conscious and strategic choice.

Fourth, it is important to stress the point that identity performance pertains specifically to social identities. This is the key distinction between the position advanced here and the concept of self-presentation (cf. Baumeister, 1982; Jones & Pittman, 1982; Leary & Kowalsky, 1990; Schlenker & Weigold, 1992). We have certainly drawn much inspiration from this body of work and make reference to it at various points in this article. However, the work on self-presentation generally takes the notion of "self" for granted and concentrates on the ways in which it is presented. Implicitly, it tends to be assumed that the motivation behind self-presentation is accruing benefit and achieving recognition for the personal self: Actors are trying to be seen favorably by others, as distinct individuals, to get rewards from them (see Emler & Reicher, 1995). By contrast, we are concerned with those cases where performances are governed by interests that attach to the actor as a group member. This has implications both for the functions that underlie performance (which we address in the next section) and for the types of performance that interest us. To reiterate, the term *identity performance* concerns phenomena involving social, not personal, identity.

As with any distinction, however, there will be ambiguous and hybrid cases. It is notable that there are instances where people will present themselves as group members and claim social identities to benefit themselves as individuals (Hornsey & Jetten, 2003; Postmes, Branscombe, Spears, & Young, 1999). For example, Spears, Postmes, Lea, and Wolbert (2002) found that

people in a computer-mediated communication paradigm were willing to “edit” their identity to obtain symbolic or material rewards: In their study, men and women participants discussed stereotypically “female,” gender-neutral, or “male” topics through the Internet. They could use an “avatar” to identify themselves to their codiscussants. Although women chose female-gendered avatars for the female topics (e.g., relationships), they switched to neutral or male avatars for the male topics (e.g., cars, investment), probably to enhance their credibility. It is not surprising that in intergroup contexts, such actions are more common among individuals who do not identify with their group (Klein, 2004; Postmes et al., 1999).

Hence, as self-presentation theorists have long argued (e.g., Cheek & Hogan, 1983; Schlenker & Weigold, 1992), there may be a mismatch between the self that motivates what is expressed and the self that is expressed to others. For the sake of clarity, and of brevity, we prioritize the former—that is, our coverage will be restricted to cases where performance is motivated by concerns relating to social identity. Thus, although in these foregoing examples, communicators use their self-presentations as group members to establish positive interpersonal relationships (even if this involves ignoring, or downgrading, the interests of their group), in all the ensuing sections, we concentrate on instances where communicators use identity performance to enhance their interests as group members or the interest of the group as a whole.

TWO FUNCTIONS OF IDENTITY PERFORMANCE

Scheepers, Spears, Doosje, and Manstead (2002, 2003, 2006) have made a conceptual distinction between two functions of in-group bias. The identity confirmation function is designed to express the in-group’s norms—to value or affirm the group symbolically in some way. The instrumental function consists in engaging group members to preserve or enhance the standing of their group. In support of this framework, Scheepers et al. (2003) observed that the soccer fans’ choice of songs could fulfill either of these functions: motivating their team (i.e., an instrumental function) or expressing its worth (i.e., an identity confirmation function). In this article, we build on this distinction in two ways. First, endorsing the notion that the same behavior may sometimes serve to bolster group identity and sometimes to promote group success, we believe it is misleading to call only one of these functions instrumental, as if the other is entirely separate from practical outcomes. If, as a number of authors have suggested recently, a coherent shared social identity is the basis for group coordination, group organization, and, hence, group power (e.g., Haslam,

2001; Haslam & Reicher, in press; Reicher, Haslam, & Hopkins, 2005; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001b; Turner, 2005), then establishing a social identity creates the conditions for effective social action. Or to put it another way, behaviors that help consolidate social identities are not any less instrumental than behaviors that enlist group members to act toward a given collective goal. The only difference is that the former create the general potential for collective success (or defending and maintaining it), whereas the latter direct group members toward a specific instrumental outcome. For these reasons, therefore, we prefer the terms *identity consolidation* and *identity mobilization* to the terms *identity confirmation* and *instrumental* functions.

Second, we argue that these different functions are applicable to not only in-group bias but also any form of identity performance. Furthermore, we propose that the identity consolidation function can operate on social identity at two different levels. On one hand, individuals may act to secure their social identity as members of a particular group. For instance, a person who was born in Wales of English parents may learn the Welsh language and speak it conspicuously to be recognized by others as Welsh. On the other hand, members of a group may act together to secure the recognition of their shared social identity. Thus, the Welsh, the Flemings, or the Basques may emphasize language rights to ensure that they are not absorbed into a superordinate group—the British, Belgians, Spanish, or French.

We are now in a position to revisit the relationship between identity performance and self-presentation. On one hand, there are again clear similarities between the two. Our analysis of the “consolidation” and “mobilization” functions of identity performance has affinities with the distinction between “self-construction” and “pleasing the audience” as two functions of self-presentation (Baumeister, 1982)—and also with similar distinctions in the wider social psychological literature, such as the “value expressive” versus “instrumental” functions of attitudes (Katz, 1960) or their “object appraisal” versus “social adjustment” functions (M. B. Smith, Bruner, & White, 1956).

On the other hand, our emphasis on social as opposed to personal identity leads to a different kind of application between the functions we are describing and those described by others. It is notable that self-presentation research assumes people are motivated by their personal welfare and that the interests of the actor are pitted against those of other actors. However, when social identity is salient, a benefit to the group counts as a benefit to the self (Tajfel, 1978), at least for high identifiers. Hence, it is not necessary to consider the operation of altruistic or prosocial motives to look after the welfare of other group members and the standing of the group

as a whole (see Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005; Reicher, Cassidy, Wolpert, Hopkins, & Levine, 2006).

As illustration of this general difference, consider the relationship between Baumeister's (1982) notion of pleasing the audience and our identity mobilization function. For Baumeister, the underlying aim of actors is to seduce others to obtain plaudits and/or avoid punishments accruing to the personal self. For us, actors are maneuvering with the aim of achieving group goals. Sometimes this may indeed involve pleasing the audience to prevent them from acting to impede one's group. However, sometimes members actively antagonize the out-group to spur the in-group to take action (Reicher & Levine, 1994b). In some cases, individuals may willingly incur severe injury or even death in the process. Indeed, the more violence meted out against their persons, the more the out-group is revealed to be illegitimate and the more the in-group is likely to react. Ghandi's salt marches under British colonialism and the "freedom rides" of the civil rights movement are cases in point.

Now that we have laid the theoretical "bricks" on which our analysis of the strategic aspects of identity performance rests, we are ready to analyze the various ways in which such performance serves to enhance the social identity and interests of group members. We start by looking at performances oriented at in-group members and consider how they serve (a) the identity consolidation function and (b) the identity mobilization function. We then look at performances oriented at out-group members and again consider how they respectively serve the consolidation and mobilization functions.

IDENTITY PERFORMANCE IN THE PRESENCE OF IN-GROUP AUDIENCES

The Identity Consolidation Function

It is impossible to be a group member without the collective recognition that allows one to act as such. As early pragmatists and symbolic interactionists (Blumer, 1969; Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1967) have noted, identity depends on the way one is defined and treated by others, especially in-group members (Barreto & Ellemers, 2002; Deaux & Ethier, 1998; Deaux & Major, 1987; Swann, 1983, 1987). Indeed, a group can hardly exist if its members fail to mutually treat each other as such (Tajfel, 1978). E. R. Smith, Murphy, and Coats (1999) have actually revealed that attachment to a group was explained by two independent factors: The first explains group members' perception that they are well accepted by other group members, and the second explains intimacy within the group more traditionally associated with identification. Recent work on "respect" from the in-group also

addresses this important sense of acceptance and group belonging (e.g., Ellemers, Doosje, & Spears, 2004; H. J. Smith & Tyler, 1997; see also Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

To secure their identities, people therefore may be motivated to influence others' views to align them with their own. A long tradition of research on interpersonal relations testifies to the existence of this motivation for "self-verification" (Swann, 1983, 1987), which seems to generalize to collective aspects of identity as well (Chen, Chen, & Shaw, 2004). Conversely, it has long been shown that people strategically use their self-presentations to establish positive interpersonal relationships. Typically, people behave in ways that conform to their audience's norms to be socially accepted (see, e.g., Baumeister, 1982; Jones & Pittman, 1982), and this is particularly true for certain types of people, such as high self-monitors (Klein, Livingston, & Snyder, 2005; Klein, Snyder, & Livingston, 2004; Snyder, 1987). Beyond this immediate strategic goal, feedback from the audience following these self-presentations may actually help individuals consolidate their self-concept (Gergen, 1965).

Building on these perspectives, we present a range of findings that suggest people act to secure acceptance as an in-group member and, thereby, to fulfill this function of social identity consolidation. The constraint of mutual recognition is particularly important for individuals who have an insecure social identity, such as those who wish to move from one group to another group or who view themselves as possessing several conflicting identities (Barreto et al., 2003; Jetten, Branscombe, & Spears, 2002; Jetten, Branscombe, Spears, & McKimmie, 2003; Noel, Wann, & Branscombe, 1995). When in the presence of others, these individuals are faced with a set of opportunities. By performing their desired identity, they may be accepted as possessing it and, thereby, come to be viewed by others in a manner consistent with their own self-view. However, these interactions carry with them a set of constraints. Some identities may not be affirmed without costs to oneself or to one's group, whereas others may be considered by audiences as illegitimate (for examples in the self-presentation literature, see Baumeister & Jones, 1978; Schlenker, 1986). Below we consider several cases in which the identity consolidation function can be fulfilled through identity performance. However, it may manifest itself differently as a function of whether the individuals define themselves in terms of a single or a multiple identity. We therefore address these two situations independently.

Identity Consolidation in the Context of a Single Identity

When individuals have a negative social identity, and feel that the boundaries between their group and higher

status groups are permeable, they may attempt to relinquish this identity, cross these boundaries, and become a member of the more prestigious out-group (Ellemers & Van Rijswijk, 1997; Tajfel, 1975; Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). However, defining oneself as a member of an erstwhile out-group is often much easier than being accepted as such, especially if one does not conform to the prototypical in-group member (Jetten et al., 2002, 2003).

Illustrations of these difficulties abound. For example, Fitzpatrick (2005) told, as one of many such stories, the tale of a young engineer who wrote to Nikolai Ezhov (who headed Stalin's NKVD during the great purges of the 1930s) denouncing the director of the Red Flag factory in Leningrad as being of alien social origin: the son of a rich merchant under the old regime.

Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje (1999) considered the failure to be accepted, and the possible exclusion from the in-group by other group members, as a form of identity threat. The issue of acceptance is complicated by the representations and stereotypes held by the out-group. These stereotypes may portray members of the low-status group as possessing undesirable traits that distinguish them from the high-status group (Fiske, Xu, & Cuddy, 1999). Moreover, these traits may be "essentialized" and viewed as inherently rooted in their identity and, therefore, immutable (Yzerbyt, Rocher, & Schadron, 1997). In such a context, being accepted as a member of the more prestigious out-group will often demand demonstrations that one is not a typical, essentialized member of the low-status group but one of those few exceptions deserving membership in the high-status group.

How can individuals respond to such predicaments? Although it may not be a panacea, enacting or expressing the group's norm in front of members of the group to which one aspires to belong is often a precondition for being accepted in this group. Indeed "overconformity" may result if aspiring and peripheral group members want to make their credentials and commitment clear. One may therefore expect individuals to conform to their group's norm, especially if they wish to be accepted as a member of a prestigious group. Two studies by Noel et al. (1995) support this contention. In their second study, for example, Noel et al. asked members of several student fraternities to express their view of another fraternity or sorority. They expected their responses to be made public to other in-group members or to remain private. Some of the participants in this experiment were "pledges" (i.e., group members who were not fully initiated in the fraternity or sorority), whereas others who were "active" had been totally accepted within the group. Noel et al. observed that active in-group members were relatively unaffected by

the manipulation of publicity of responses. Like actives, pledges tended to describe out-group members more negatively than in-group members. However, this tendency was stronger when their responses were public to the in-group rather than private. Thus, participants seem to manifest an important norm for the in-group when they are identifiable to its members as a way of being better accepted in the group (see also Douglas & McGarty, 2001; Jetten et al., 2003).

Noel et al. (1995) interpreted the pledge behavior as purely motivated by the desire to gain acceptance in the new in-group. Obviously, such an acceptance could be considered as fulfilling only personal rather than collective needs (e.g., prestige, personal enjoyment, career opportunities) rather than needs associated with social identity. However, such an acceptance can also be seen as necessary for consolidating their still shaky social identity. Indeed, individuals cannot maintain their social identity if this identity is not confirmed by important audiences belonging to the in-group (Barreto & Ellemers, 2002; Simon & Stürmer, 2003). Group identification is an important moderator variable that can also determine whether such ingratiating behavior is more motivated by individual interests or by genuine group-level acceptance (Jetten et al., 2003; Postmes & Jetten, 2006; Spears, 2001).

Identity Consolidation in the Context of a Double Identity

To the extent that norms are viewed as differentiating groups, then expressing or enacting them can be viewed as a form of commitment to an identity. Yet individuals may not wish to be categorized in terms of a single identity but may truly view themselves as simultaneously possessing several identities. This is often true of migrants, some of whom consider themselves to be, say, simultaneously American and Mexican or Dutch and Turkish and not just a hybrid Mexican American or Turkish Dutch (for a review, see Chrysochoou, 2003). Such migrants may perceive that other group members do not respect this dual or hybrid self-definition and, therefore, may be particularly motivated to manifest such a double identity to these audiences (Deaux & Ethier, 1998).

Results from studies by Barreto et al. (2003) support this view: These authors had Turkish and Iranian migrants in the Netherlands report their level of identification with the host and native society to an audience belonging either to the native or to the host society. This audience manipulation was achieved by varying the language in which the questionnaire was written. Barreto et al. observed that Turks were more likely to stress their double identity to a Dutch than to a native audience,

whereas this was not observed for Iranians (with a weaker reserved pattern). They interpreted these findings as reflecting the different positions of Turkish and Iranian migrants within Dutch society. The former are often viewed by the Dutch as refusing to integrate within their host society. To dispel this suspicion, they therefore may be particularly motivated to stress their double identity: not only their loyalty to Dutch society but also their right to be seen as ethnically Turkish without assimilating or losing their cultural roots. By contrast, Iranians are well integrated, but given their status as political refugees, they may fear being viewed as disloyal to their native group. This may explain why they stress more their double identity to an Iranian than to a Dutch audience.

Another instance of “dual identity” negotiation may occur when tensions arise between subordinate group membership and inclusion in a superordinate group. Indeed, the values and norms of the superordinate group may sometimes be different from those of the subordinate group (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000; Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999). Such differences may be particularly salient if the subordinate group is at the periphery of the superordinate group in terms of status, norms, and values. For example, this was the case of Greece within the EU, at least before the recent inclusion of 10 new member states. Geographically, Greece is on the periphery of the EU, and its citizens often have a very strong national identity. Some of their norms are antagonistic to those of the EU—such as their friendly attitudes toward Serbia and Yugoslavia during the Kosovo war and the widespread prejudice toward the Turks (which is inconsistent with the norms of tolerance supposed to govern the EU). Klein, Licata, Azzi, and Durala (2003) conducted a study to understand how Greeks would adjust their expressed attitude toward the Turks, a potential source of conflict between the two allegiances, as a function of whether they addressed an audience of prototypical EU members or of Greeks. Klein et al. hypothesized that participants’ response to this situation would depend on their level of identification with Europe. Only those who identify themselves as Europeans should wish this identity to be acknowledged by fellow Europeans. That is what the authors found: High identifiers, but not low identifiers, expressed lower levels of anti-Turkish prejudice to a prototypically European audience than to a prototypically Greek audience. This example illustrates how individuals who identify with a superordinate group can strategically manage their self-presentations to appear consistent with those of this group. This study further shows that the level of group identification is a crucial determinant of the form identity performance takes as it affects (perhaps even determines) the motivation to fulfill the different functions associated with identity performance.

Audiences as Constraints on Identity Consolidation

So far, we have seen that successfully defining oneself as a member of a social group generally requires confirmation of this identity by other in-group members. But if group membership depends on in-group validation, it is particularly hard to maintain multiple identities if those who sustain them (a) would see the identities as incompatible and (b) are socially visible to each other. For example, Emler and Reicher (1995) have shown in their research on adolescent delinquency that delinquent girls face two difficulties: First, parents tend to show greater surveillance of girls than boys and, hence, it is difficult to be both a “good” daughter and a delinquent. Second, on the whole, the groups to which they want to show that they are both “hard delinquents” and “feminine” are the same audience of boys, and these boys see a “proper” girl as nondelinquent and a delinquent as not a proper girl. These findings suggest that it is not so easy to flit from identity to identity as a simplistic interpretation of social identity models may suggest. This is because the incompatibility between these identities does not stem from the individuals’ internal cognitions and emotions (which are private and perhaps easily resolved or at least managed). Rather, this inertia is an outcome of important audiences’ possible reactions to the individual’s claim for a particular social identity. Altogether, these findings show that incorporating a strategic perspective helps deal with a potential problem of these models of identity: The possibility to maintain multiple identities is to a large extent a function of the social relations of visibility between the audiences who sustain these different identities.

The Identity Mobilization Function

Having considered how identity performance toward in-group audiences can be used to consolidate identities, we now consider evidence suggesting that identity performance can be used to mobilize in-group members into supporting specific political projects.

According to self-categorization theory, social identification entails a process of self-stereotyping whereby group members learn and seek to conform to the “criterial attributes” that define their social category (Turner, 1982, 1991). Insofar as the nature of these attributes is not self-evident, this implies a process of social influence (termed *referent informational influence*). Specifically, those who share a common social identity will likely be persuaded by information pertaining to this identity from sources who are in a position to know about the identity—notably, prototypical in-group members. Thus, the act of expressing group

norms can be sufficient to enjoin group members to act together in a way that is socially potent and capable of bringing proposals to fruition.

Sometimes such expression may be verbal and involve an explicit argument concerning how a particular proposal relates to the group identity. But as Reicher (1982, 1987) has argued in the case of crowd action, such groups rarely have the time or opportunity to sit down and deduce what they should do from a discussion of group identity. In such circumstances, the inductive aspect of categorization comes into play. People infer the group norm from the behavior of typical group members. Thus, Reicher (1984) described how uncertainty about how the people of St. Paul's should respond to a police raid of their community was resolved when an old man walked up to a police car and smashed its headlights. This led to a concerted attack on the police that drove them out of the area.

Thus far, our examples take identity as a given and assume that identity performance is limited to making the implicit explicit. Yet one of the major ways in which identity performance relates to collective mobilization is through the definition of *social identity* itself. As Reicher and Hopkins (1996, 2001b; Reicher et al., 2005) have argued, it is precisely because social identity shapes collective action and thereby provides a source of social power for shaping the social world that those who are interested in shaping society will be interested in defining identities. Indeed, effective activists and leaders need to be skilled "entrepreneurs of identity" (Besson, 1990). Another way of putting this is that as self-categorization theorists insist (Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994; Spears & Haslam, 1997), social categories relate to social reality, but it is important to stress not only how reality shapes categories but also how categories mobilize collectivities to (re)produce social reality. In a phrase, self-categories are as much about "becoming" as being (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001b; Reicher, Hopkins, & Condor, 1997; Spears, Jetten, & Doojse, 2001).

As an example, Klein and Licata (2003) have studied the speeches of the Congolese nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba. Lumumba's objective was to create an independent Congo as a prelude to Pan-African independence from colonial rule. To this end, it was necessary for the Congolese to construe themselves as a common group who were oppressed by the Belgians. Thus, when Lumumba spoke to Congolese audiences before 1958, he stressed the way that he and they suffered at the hands of the ruthless colonialists who pursued their self-interest without any concern for the local population. In this way, Lumumba played an important role in creating a nationalist consciousness and mobilizing the Congolese, as a national group, into opposing the Belgians. Rather than the use of national self-categories

reflecting the preexistence of national structures, national categories created the collective force that eventually created a nation-state (for other examples of the way in which nationalist mobilizations have forged the modern world of nations, see Anderson, 1991; Breuille, 1982; Hobsbawm, 1990).

Lumumba's construction of self-categories involved several dimensions, which are commensurate with the assumptions of self-categorization theory concerning the relationship between self-stereotyping and social influence. That is, if people who share a common identity are liable to follow prescriptions about that identity from those who represent the identity, then the task of successful entrepreneurs of identity is threefold: first, to define the audience they seek to mobilize as part of a common category; second, to construe their proposals as consonant with the meaning of that identity; and third, to construe themselves as prototypical category members. Thus, Lumumba talked to his audience, whatever their cleavages, as Congolese; he defined them as an oppressed group to validate resistance, and he defined himself as sharing their oppression.

More systematic, Reicher and Hopkins (2001b) have analyzed the constructions of Scottish identity used by politicians of different parties when addressing the Scottish electorate. The first point they made is that all parties—whether passionately in favor of independence or equally passionately opposed to it—stress their Scottishness to an equal extent. That is because they are all appealing for the votes of the same constituency in Scotland. Thus, the use of a category has to do with the audience one seeks to address, not the proposals one seeks to advocate. The second point is parties define the content of Scottish identity differently to present their policies as a reflection of the identity. For the political right, Scots are an essentially entrepreneurial people as evidenced by the likes of Andrew Carnegie and those who built the American railroads in the 19th century. For the political Left, Scots are an essentially communal people who favor social provision, as evidenced by the words of Robert Burns, the national poet. The third point Reicher and Hopkins made is that speakers represent their own personal history and character as exemplifying the Scottish condition—including, in the case of one very distant relative of a very famous Scottish ling, producing an election leaflet of himself wearing a kilt and holding the broadsword of Robert the Bruce.

There is a fourth point, however, which is presupposed in all these analyses. That is, the construction of an identity through such rhetorical means is performative (Bayart, 1996; Bourdieu, 1982; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001a). The identity exists by being enunciated. Sometimes accounts draw on, rework, and reinterpret elements that are consensually recognized as central to the

category story—in the case of nations, the history learnt in schoolbooks, the long-gone battles still commemorated in the present, and the heroes immortalized in statues. But often, such constructions rely on the objectification of a dimension that united a set of people but that until then had not been used for purposes of self-definition. Features such as a common territory, a common language, a common occupation, or even common bodily features can be used for these purposes (Klein, Azzi, Brito, & Berckmans, 2000).

In sum, we argue that it is impossible to understand group behavior in general and social identification processes in particular without including a discursive dimension to the analysis. However, it is equally important to integrate this discursive dimension with other levels of analysis rather than counterpose them. We want to raise three caveats in this regard.

First of all, language is not the only way of constructing category definitions. This is often done through rituals and ceremonies that enact and display a particular vision of what the category is like (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983; Ozouf, 1988). It equally can be done with material artifacts such as postage stamps, coins, museums, and the design of buildings (see Reicher & Hopkins, 2001b). Moreover, the reason why category constructions have social significance derives from the ways in which they shape the self-categorizations and self-stereotypes that people have of themselves and others and the ways in which these internal representations affect behavior (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001a, 2001b).

Finally, it may not be necessary for category definitions to reflect the existing organization of the social world. However, if they do not, they must at least enable people to reorganize the social world to reestablish consonance between social categories and social realities. Identities that neither reflect reality nor can guide people to create reality are quite literally “useless” and liable to be discarded for other identities organized on different definitions of society (Reicher et al., 2005; Reicher & Haslam, 2006; see also Baumeister & Jones, 1978; Leary & Kowalsky, 1990; Schlenker & Weigold, 1992, for similar points about social reality constraints within the perspective of self-presentation theory).

With these critical caveats in mind, it is worth stressing not only that one of the central aspects of identity performance to in-group members is mobilization but also that one of the key ways in which large social categories of people can be mobilized to create social change is through the strategic performance of social identities. Because categories are world-making things, the construction of category definitions becomes a matter of societal as well as individual significance.

IDENTITY PERFORMANCE IN THE PRESENCE OF OUT-GROUP AUDIENCES

In the previous section, we considered how identity performance can be used in the presence of in-group members. Naturally, identifiability to an out-group audience may also affect the occurrence of identity performance. As in the case of in-group audiences, we start by looking at the role of performances in the consolidation of identity and then address how they affect the mobilization of group members, from both in-group and out-group.

Out-Group Audiences and the Consolidation Function: Celebrating a Distinct Identity

In this section, we consider how, when directed to out-group members, communication and identity performance can consolidate social identities. The very existence of a group, and the social identity attached to it, is highly dependent on relevant out-groups' treatment of this group. Social identity theory, for example, proposes that a positive social identity needs to be grounded on a consensual status system (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), and van Knippenberg (1984) conceptualized “consensual” dimensions as ones in which there was agreement between groups about which groups were better, socially validating such judgments (see also Mummendey & Schreiber, 1983; Spears & Manstead, 1989). Hence, it is difficult to maintain such an identity, in the long term at least, unless it is acknowledged by relevant out-groups. In line with this assumption, criticism of the in-group by out-groupers can constitute a major threat to social identity. Compared to criticism from in-groups, which can be viewed as constructive, it arouses defensive reactions and out-group derogation, a phenomenon known as the intergroup sensitivity effect (Hornsey & Imani, 2004; Hornsey, Oppes, & Svensson, 2002). When negative stereotypes of the in-group are endorsed or simply implied by out-group members, they can even induce a state known as stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002), which impairs performance on dimensions associated with the stereotype (e.g., African Americans' performing more poorly on intelligence tests), thereby becoming self-fulfilling.

Given the potential threat posed by negative views of the in-groups among out-groupers, group members may engage in identity performance to change the out-group's stereotypes and treatment of the in-group. For example, in a study by Klein and Azzi (2001), anonymous Belgian participants were asked to express their view of their national group to a French or Belgian audience by selecting positive and negative traits belonging either to the metastereotype (i.e., the stereotype the French are perceived to hold

about the Belgians) or not. Participants tended to choose more positive traits and fewer negative traits belonging to the metastereotype when addressing a French than Belgian audience. The fact that this tendency was not observed on traits not belonging to the metastereotype suggests that they were specifically attempting to change their French audience's beliefs regarding the Belgians in a more positive direction.

When in the presence of a powerful out-group, such a celebration of the in-group's identity can be construed as an attempt to display the in-group's imperviousness to repression (Reicher & Levine, 1994a, 1994b). Spears et al. (2001) have argued that for low-status groups, in-group bias was an avenue for expressing resistance to the constraints imposed by the present reality. By displaying in-group bias, they are contesting the existing social order and suggesting that it could change. Thus, in-group bias serves as another example of the ways in which categories relate to becoming as well as being.

We have seen that celebrating the in-group's identity in front of an out-group could be harmful for the in-group. Expressing valued in-group norms can also be dangerous for individual group members when they are identifiable, as the out-group may identify those who act in ways that are considered unacceptable (Reicher & Levine, 1994a, 1994b). Group members, therefore, may refrain from displaying their adherence to aspects of the in-group stereotype that are considered illegitimate and/or punishable by the out-group. By the same token, however, these risks may encourage them to display even more ardently their adherence to norms that are not punishable by the out-group audience. When identifiable, these behaviors become the only available channel through which they can express their distinct identity as a member of the group (i.e., the identity consolidation function).

In line with this view, Reicher and Levine (1994b) have observed that when their student identity was salient, students were more likely to differentiate their group from the norms of the staff out-group on dimensions that were not likely to be punished by the staff (e.g., prioritizing social activities over academic excellence) when they were individually identifiable rather than nonidentifiable. As expected, the reverse held for punishable items (e.g., cheating at exams). Reicher et al. (1998, Study 3) found that the expression of "punishable" norms in front of an out-group audience may yet take place, depending on conditions of visibility within the in-group. Being mutually visible within the less powerful group may create a sense of empowerment, by providing a channel to perceive or even communicate social support, and help resist the out-group. According to this view, it is not so much visibility but the presence and communication of support from the in-group to resist

the out-group that is crucial. However, in this study by Reicher et al., visibility, the possibility to communicate support, and physical copresence were all confounded (as they typically are in face-to-face groups); thus, it was not clear which contributed to empowerment.

The importance of in-group audiences in the coordination of in-group action toward a powerful out-group is more precisely illustrated in a study by Spears, Lea, Corneliussen, Postmes, and Ter Haar (2002). In their first study, students were visible to each other or separated by screens (the visibility factor) and they either had or did not have e-mail contact with their fellow students. Because all students were copresent in this study, this factor was kept constant, as was the copresence of the staff members running the study (the powerful out-group). There was an effect of the communication factor (availability of e-mail) on the punishable student norms: Students were more willing to endorse these norms in defiance of the out-group when they had this communication medium available. Presumably students could gauge the degree of social support allowing them to resist the opprobrium of the powerful out-group when using e-mail, whereas the mere visibility and copresence of the in-group did not allow for this. A second study shows that it is the communication of willingness to resist the out-group (action support), and not simply the support for the in-group norm (opinion support), that is a crucial ingredient predicting in-group normative behavior that goes against out-group wishes (i.e., is punishable; see also van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004). This set of studies illustrates the interplay between the two functions of identity performance: Indeed, consolidating the group's identity in front of an out-group audience seems possible only if in-group mobilization is made possible by the availability of communication channels.

Out-Group Audiences and the Mobilization Function: (De)mobilizing Out-Group Members

Although the achievement of a project aimed at upgrading the position of the in-group generally requires support from in-group members, the success of such projects also often demands collaboration or at least the lack of opposition by out-group members. The possibility of collaboration is generally conditioned by the existence of shared representations held by an audience regarding the nature of the in-group and its relations with the out-group. Depending on the actions expected from the audiences, different forms of identity performance may be used. One of their main functions may be to modify these representations in such a way that they become more compatible with the actions expected from the audience.

For example, obtaining their support may require the in-group (or its leader) to alleviate fears regarding the potential actions of in-groups. Downplaying some aspects of in-group identity may in these cases serve to gain the trust of the out-group. An illustration of this function is provided by the computerized content analysis of Patrice Lumumba's speeches during the decolonization of Congo (Klein & Licata, 2003). At the end of the 1950s, when Lumumba was seeking the independence of Congo, the Belgians had complete control of the administration and the economy. To make an independent Congo viable, Lumumba needed the collaboration of the very people he stigmatized when addressing Congolese audiences (see discussion above). This may explain why Lumumba tried to reassure the Belgians about his and his country's citizens' friendly intentions toward them as a way of discouraging them from fleeing the country. The analysis suggests that to do so, he relied on representations of Congolese as harmless "infants" in need of help from Belgium. As Belgians were very familiar with such paternalistic representations, he deliberately used these metastereotypes as a rhetorical device to obtain their collaboration.

This example shows that group members may refrain from displaying ethnocentric behavior in front of an out-group out of fear that the out-group's reaction to such a disparagement may harm the in-group's position. A minimal group laboratory study by Scheepers et al. (2006) supports this argument. Scheepers et al. observed that participants classified in a low-status group were more likely to display in-group bias (allocating more material rewards to the in-group) when expecting to justify their ratings to in-groupers than out-groupers. According to Scheepers et al., in the latter condition, in-groupers were afraid of antagonizing the out-group by openly challenging their unstable position (see also Scheepers et al., 2003). High-status group members were not sensitive to the audience and the stability of the status relation in this way. They were more geared to consolidating their superior status rather than mobilizing for change and displayed more "symbolic" in-group bias (i.e., in terms of in-group evaluations rather than reward allocations) irrespective of the (in-group vs. out-group) audience.

PREDICTING IDENTITY PERFORMANCE

General Conditions

Having analyzed the various types of identity performance that can occur, we now turn to the question of when they occur. We first deal with the general conditions that influence whether people perform their social

identities before turning to the issue of when different types of performance are more or less likely.

However, these analyses need to be prefaced with a caveat. Identity performance, like self-presentation, is by its very nature a creative act by purposive agents. It is as much a function of the way in which these agents imagine—and seek to create—the future as of the nature of the present. Nonetheless, even if they are at least in part a function of the actors' perceptions and priorities, it is nonetheless possible to identify some general conditions that determine whether and when identity performance emerges. Four in particular derive from our general definition:

1. The individual must identify with a social category.
2. The social identity must be salient in the present context.
3. An audience must be psychologically present.
4. Actors must believe themselves to be visible to the audience.

The factors determining the fulfillment of the first two conditions have been extensively studied both in the context of social identity in general (see, e.g., Ellemers, 1993; Ellemers & Van Rijswijk, 1997; Oakes, 1987; Turner et al. 1987) and in the context of SIDE itself (Postmes & Spears, 1998; Reicher et al., 1995; Spears & Lea, 1994). They therefore will not be reviewed here.

The third and fourth conditions have been dealt with less extensively. Starting with the third, the first point to be made is that an audience that is physically present need not be psychologically present. As many Black writers have illustrated (e.g. Angelou, 1978; Ellison, 2001), one of the marks of extreme power differentials is that the powerful group can act in front of the powerless group as if they were invisible or not there. Conversely, an audience need not be physically present to be psychologically present. All that is necessary is that people imagine that their behaviors may become visible to an audience at some point in time. This is notably the case when people consider themselves to be under surveillance (the extreme case being the panopticon; Spears & Lea, 1994) and, therefore, increased prominence of surveillance will make it more likely that our third condition for identity performance is met.

The surveillance can be a matter of others who are physically present talking to other audiences at different times (for instance, your friends telling their parents who then tell your parents about delinquent acts you may have committed; Emler & Reicher, 1995). It can also be—and increasingly is—a matter of surveillance technology making one's behavior available to others (Lyon, 1994; Spears & Lea, 1994). This surveillance may take the form of a camera but could also be mobile phones revealing your location, supermarket computers revealing your patterns of consumption, or automated

teller machines revealing your financial activities (Gandy, 1993).

However, and this is the fourth condition, it is not enough for the actor to have an audience in mind; it is also necessary for the actor to believe that the audience has the actor in mind (a group-level theory of mind, so to speak). That is to say, people need to be aware of the surveillance they are under. After all, if identity performance is meant to affect the actions and beliefs of the audience, then it is necessary for the audience to be aware of what the actor is doing. Together, increased surveillance and increased awareness of surveillance means that the world is becoming more and more of a stage with an audience. More and more, people in one context need to imagine how others at other times and places will react to behavior and purposefully use their behavior to influence those distributed audiences.

What is more, surveillance often makes us visible to multiple audiences at the same time. Although 50 years ago a politician may have been able to address a party meeting in one way and a meeting of the general public in another, now the prevalence of media attention means that they characteristically have to address in-group and out-group at the same time. For this reason, we may be able to make analytic distinctions between in-group and out-group audiences and their effects, but substantively the distinction is less and less relevant (or increasingly complex). This means that identity performance often depends on the use of ambivalent messages that will be read in different ways by different audiences. Billig (1978), for instance, provided an analysis of the rhetoric of the National Front—Britain's largest far right group in the 1970s. He showed how they used a language that appeared not to violate democratic principles for an uninitiated public. However, for initiated in-group members, terms such as *cosmopolitan* and references to lesser known ideologues led directly to a classic fascist worldview based on racial purity and anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. The strategic uses of ambiguity to manipulate multiple audiences is a critical area for further research.

We return presently to the issue of visibility to make additional concrete predictions concerning the way in which it affects different types of identity performance. Before that, however, we need to consider the conditions that invoke the different functions of identity performance: respectively, identity consolidation and identity mobilization.

Specific Conditions

Conditions for Identity Performance Oriented to Identity Consolidation

Once the three basic conditions for identity performance are met, our analysis suggests that there is a further

key condition making it more likely that people will perform their social identities for the purposes of identity consolidation. Namely, either because

- (a) the individual has insecure status in the group, or
- (b) the group has insecure status in the intergroup system.

At the individual level, what we are suggesting is akin to “attachment anxiety” (using the terminology of E. R. Smith et al., 1999). Thus, under conditions where people wish to gain acceptance to a group but are not yet accepted by other group members, they will make special efforts to demonstrate their conformity to group standards and beliefs (e.g., Barreto et al., 2003; Jetten et al., 2002, 2003; Noel et al., 1995). In his participant observation study of Glasgow gangs, Patrick (1973) provided a particularly graphic illustration of this. He recounted the story of one boy who had a Polish surname and, hence, was seen as somewhat marginal by fellow gang members. The boy responded by being particularly violent to establish his gang credentials.

At the collective level, consolidation is most likely where a group either is not seen as existing by others or is not perceived by others as it wishes to be (e.g., Greeks in the EU; see Klein et al., 2003, described above). Ringmar (1996) provided a historical example of the former. His concern was to explain why Sweden went to war in 1630. He argued that this cannot be understood as a simple matter of pursuing material interests or responding to insults. Rather, he concluded, Gustav II Adolf was acting to have Sweden recognized as a nation by other nations. Indeed we can have an interest only if we have an identity, Ringmar argued—or to use his own terms, “it is only *as someone* that we can have interest *in something*” (p. 3).

On a much smaller scale, there are several experimental illustrations of the latter process. Thus, Scheepers et al. (2006) showed how high-status groups perform their identities to advertise (and bask in) their own glory, whereas other studies (e.g. Reicher & Levine, 1994a; Spears et al., 2001) show how low-status groups emphasize their distinctiveness and their agentic qualities in the hope that they will be acknowledged by the out-group.

When will group members engage in behavior fulfilling the identity consolidation rather than the mobilization function? This seems to be particularly likely to arise when the in-group is powerless or has a stable low status and wants to draw attention to the injustice of its disadvantaged position (Reicher & Levine, 1994a, 1994b; Spears et al., 2001). However, if the situation provides no hope of change, the low-status group may have “nothing to lose” by challenging the out-group more openly and aggressively (Scheepers et al., 2006). Consolidation may occur more consistently when the group has a stable high status and does not need to actively change the situation so much as to bask in its

own glory (Scheepers et al., 2006). In this case of stable high status and power, open gloating is possible (Leach, Snider, & Iyer, 2002).

*Conditions for Identity Performance
Oriented to Identity Mobilization*

In many ways, this is the hardest area in which to define conditions of occurrence. This is because any group action requires members to be mobilized, and there will always be different ideas as to how the group should act. Therefore, anyone who seeks to guide group action will need to be skilled at performing identity to be effective (Reicher et al., 2005; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001b). That said, there will be some conditions that render the need for mobilization more acute:

1. The realization of group projects requires a change in group activity and a change either in the understanding of group identity or else in the understanding of its relevance for group action.
2. Coordinated collective action is needed to bring group projects to fruition.

Taking these two conditions in turn, where group activity is habitual and routinized, there is little need to define and perform the identity to maintain that action. However, where one attempts to change the actions and the realities of the group, then it is necessary to be explicit in defining the group identity accordingly. Thus, Lumumba's strategies of defining the Congolese as oppressed to an in-group audience and denying that they were either "brutal" or "thieves" to an out-group audience were a function of his attempt to bring about social change, both by mobilizing in-group action and demobilizing out-group opposition (Klein & Licata, 2003).

Of course, once change is proposed, then even those who defend the status quo need to participate in strategic identity definitions, for what was previously taken for granted has now been rendered contingent and, hence, needs to be reasserted. To take the Scottish example (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001b; see also Marr, 1992), once the issue of independence had been raised by the Scottish National Party, other parties had to attend to the issue of Scottish identity and to defend the proposition that continued union with Britain was consonant with Scottishness.

The reason all politicians had to act in this way was their dependence on the electorate within a liberal democratic system; that is, any projects they had depended on winning office, which in turn depended on the widest measure of collective support from the Scottish electorate. In other contexts, however, powerless groups are more likely than powerful groups to require collective solidarity to achieve their aims—in the

words of the old Trades Union saying, the power of the powerless lies in their combination (see Drury & Reicher, 2005; Fantasia, 1988; Fantasia & Stepan-Norris, 2004). Bearing in mind our second condition, therefore, we would expect that identity performance would be more common among powerless groups. At present, this is a hypothesis in search of systematic research evidence. However, it may not be coincidental that when one thinks of inspiring political rhetoric, it tends to be associated with leaders of social movements and oppressed groups. As Morris and Staggenborg (2004) argued, the ability of leaders to create new frames for understanding self and social reality is fundamental to the success of such movements.

On the role of visibility. Let us now return to the issue of visibility. Given its pivotal role (in contrast to anonymity) in originating the SIDE perspective, and given the fact, noted above, that perceived visibility to an audience is a condition of any form of identity performance, it is appropriate to consider more closely how different forms of visibility affect the different ways in which (and for which) identity is performed.

In overall terms, the message is that the effects of visibility on identity performance are not straightforward but rather involve a complex relationship with other key variables. First, there is an interaction between the effects of different types of visibility. That is, as we have seen, the effects of identifiability to an out-group depend on visibility to the in-group. Where in-group members are not visible to each other, they are liable to conform to out-group norms when in front of them. However, when in-group members are mutually visible and copresent and communication channels are available within the group, then the possibility of coordination should create a sense of empowerment within the in-group, and this in turn will lead to an accentuation of distinctive in-group norms (Reicher et al., 1998).

Second, there is an interaction between visibility and the extent to which behaviors would be punished by others. Thus, in-group norms that are punishable in terms of out-group norms are more likely to be expressed when in-group members are anonymous to the out-group. Conversely, in-group norms that are not punishable in terms of out-group norms are more likely to be expressed when in-group members are identifiable to the out-group (Reicher & Levine, 1994a, 1994b).

Third, on a somewhat different level, the effects of visibility on identity performance in general and identity consolidation in particular cannot be separated from their effects on the cognitive salience of different levels of self-definition. Thus, when group members are not individually identifiable to the out-group, but their group membership is itself identifiable, audiences cannot make

distinctions between individual group members. Therefore, only the identity of their group as a whole can be consolidated. By contrast, when they are individually identifiable, identity performance can help the social identity of specific individuals to be recognized and acknowledged by the out-group.

CONCLUSION: FROM IDENTITY PERFORMANCE TO IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

In the foregoing sections, we have considered the performance of identity before in-group and out-group audiences and for the purpose of consolidating identities and mobilizing people on the basis of them. We have covered a variety of effects and shown how there is a performative dimension to an equally wide variety of phenomena that tend to be treated exclusively in terms of intrapsychic cognitive processes. Before finishing, however, we want to raise two important provisos about the existing work and, hence, point the way to future research in this area.

First, the distinctions we have made in our analysis should be seen as analytic rather than substantive: Identity performance may simultaneously have to address in-group and out-group audiences, and it may orient to both identity consolidation and identity mobilization. Consider, for example, public order decision making among senior police commanders (Cronin & Reicher, 2006): When making decisions about public order, these officers respond to a multiplicity of accountability pressures from both internal sources (e.g., other officers) and external sources (politicians, media, and local communities) and the balance between these different sources varies during the course of an event. Moreover, the ways in which police actions are affected by their several audiences involve both issues of consolidation (at the most severe, the danger of going before an enquiry and losing their jobs as police officers) and mobilization (such as ensuring that officers on the ground will carry out rather than subvert their plans).

Second, a long tradition of research in social identity suggests that social action emanates from social identity. In its initial formulation, self-categorization theory, for example, argues that when the social context is such that individuals in a set define themselves in terms of the same social category, they are motivated to agree with each other as to which norms characterize this social identity and to coordinate their actions in line with these norms (Turner, 1991). The flow of causality is therefore from context to identity to performance. This flow can be visualized as Paths 1 and 2 in Figure 1.

We agree that social context does influence social identity, and in turn collective behavior, but a central argument of this article is that the relation between

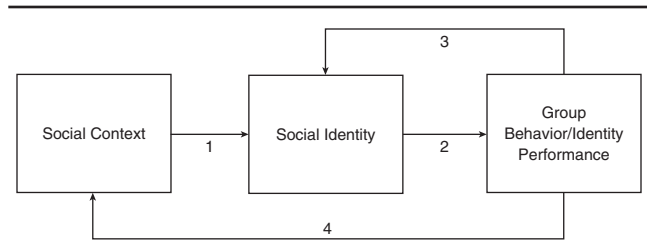


Figure 1 Reciprocal flow of influence from social context to identity performance.

context, identity, and identity performance is bidirectional. Thus, causality can flow back from performance to identity and to context. If people's identities are influenced by the social context (the cognitive SIDE), identities can also be selected and constructed performatively to induce people to act together to change the social world (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001a). How can we address this reciprocal relationship between context, identity, and performance? Let us first consider Path 3 in Figure 1, from performance to identity. We shall consider three routes through which identity performance can flow back on identity.

The first route is intraindividual and involves self-perception (Bem, 1972): By performing behaviors associated with specific traits, individuals may come to see these aspects as self-defining simply because aspects of social identity that are in line with these behaviors may become cognitively salient. In line with this assumption, self-presentation has been found to direct attention toward certain aspects of the self-concept that are consistent with these self-presentations, a phenomenon known as biased scanning (Fazio, Effrein, & Falender, 1981; Jones, Rhodewalt, Berglas, & Skelton, 1981). These forms of internalization seem particularly likely in public settings (Baumeister, 1982; Baumeister & Jones, 1978; Baumeister & Tice, 1984; Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 1985; Tice, 1992). Tice (1992), for example, has argued that the impact of biased scanning on self-perception should be greater in public settings because the behavioral traits that are presented become magnified in importance as they will become central in the (previously unknown) audience's view of the self. Transposed to group settings, this analysis suggests that identity performance may play a crucial role in the definition of social identity.

The second route involves reactions from others. Research repeatedly shows that individuals' self-concepts are influenced by audiences' behaviors and feedback (Baumeister, 1982; Baumeister & Jones, 1978; Fazio et al., 1981; Snyder & Swann, 1978) and that they can be successfully maintained only if they are confirmed by others (Swann, 1983, 1987, 2005). We have noted that these findings apply to collective aspects of the self

(social identity) as well. At an intragroup level, our review suggests that being treated as a proper member of the in-group by in-groupers seems to be necessary to maintain one's identity (see e.g., Chen et al., 2004; Klein et al., 2005; Noel et al., 1995). Identity performance indeed seems to be used to generate such confirmatory reactions from audiences. Finally, at an intergroup level, identity performance seems to be often geared at influencing out-groupers' views and treatment of the in-group (e.g., Klein & Azzi, 2001; Klein & Licata, 2003). Again, maintaining the identity of the in-group seems to require recognition and acceptance from the out-group (van Knippenberg, 1984). These reactions may in turn establish or consolidate group members' social identities (Klein & Snyder, 2003).

The third route is through influence from leaders and activists' behaviors. Leaders construct identities in particular ways. By performing these identities, they can influence others into endorsing them as part of their self-definition. Their role can also be indirect and channeled by the two other routes: When groups behave in accordance with leaders' prescriptions, their actions may come to be rationalized as identity defining through self-perception, and others' reactions may come to shape these group members' identity in line with leaders' constructions.

We have shown that identity performance can flow back to identity. Now the last step involves considering how identity performance can also flow back to social context (Path 4 in Figure 1). Our analysis proposes that the social context can be viewed, inter alia, as being constituted by others' practices (Reicher, 1996a; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001b). As our framework makes clear, the social context is not static. It is made up of other individuals' practices. These practices (e.g., acceptance, repression, rejection) are themselves informed in part by the audience's interpretation of group members' behaviors. For example, consider crowd members who take part in what they view predominantly as a nonviolent protest. On observing that a few individual crowd members behave violently, the police may treat all crowd members homogeneously and repress the whole crowd (e.g., through the use of water cannons, random arrest, barriers). In turn, this repression may shape these crowd members' identity as "opposed to the police" (for evidence of such dynamics, see Drury & Reicher, 1999, 2000; Reicher, 1996b; Stott & Reicher, 1998). Thus, identity performance, by the reaction it induces from audiences (e.g., as a function of whether it generates resistance or collaboration), shapes the context in particular ways that will in turn determine which types of identities are endorsed (and sustainable) and which type of group behavior is possible.

There is, thus, a dynamic relationship between practice (identity performance), social context (constituted

by others' practices), and social identity. In view of this analysis, it appears simplistic to artificially separate the cognitive from the strategic SIDE: The definition of *social identity* is also a function of audiences' reaction to one's choices of identity performance. In this article, we have considered how individuals could strategically present their identities in particular ways to influence audiences. The question of how audiences' reactions to identity performance may actually shape individuals' identities has received less attention. This feedback between performance and identity must be a focus for a new wave of SIDE studies.

NOTE

1. The quotes signify that classical and contemporary deindividuation theories were not used to explain these effects. It is essential to note here that the social identity model of deindividuation effects theorists contest the concept and explanation power of "deindividuation" (qua loss of self or reduced self-awareness in the group) but concede that there are a number of important effects of deindividuation manipulations (e.g., anonymity and group immersion) that still need to be explained, hence, the reference to "deindividuation effects."

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