# Chapter 4:  Social Influence

## Gordon Sammut & Martin W Bauer

| | |
|---|---|
| Assimilation | The minority accepts the majority view and joins the mainstream common sense. |
| Accommodation | The majority accepts the minority view. This results in an alteration or innovation of mainstream thinking. |
| Belief | A proposition, statement, or doctrine held by one or more individuals. |
| Compliance | The act of yielding to a normative expectation on the basis of its legitimacy, or to avoid negative consequences. |
| Conformity | An individual's act of changing a perception, opinion, attitude, belief and/or behaviour to align with the mainstream of opinions, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of a dominant group (majority influence). |
| Conversion | A member of a dominant group changing beliefs, opinions, cognitions, behaviours, or customs by aligning with the minority. |
| Deviance | An act or behaviour that violates prevailing group norms. |
| Imitation | The process of copying actions of another in both behaviour and intention. |
| Informational influence | Influence that is brought about by pointing to new information. Informational influence is contrasted with normative influence. |
| Innovation | A belief, opinion, attitude or behaviour introduced within a system of these where it did not previously exist. |
| Leadership | The exercise of authority and direction by an individual or a group of individuals over a social group. |
| Majority | The numerically larger or dominant social group in a social system. |

Minority
: The social group in a social system that is numerically smaller or inferior in status to the majority.

Normalisation
: The process of making a belief, attitude, opinion, behaviour the expected standard. The emergence and fixation of norms constitutes a group with a frame of reference for future action.

Normative influence
: Influence that is brought about by appealing to norms and by threatening sanctions within a certain group. Normative influence is contrasted with informational influence.

Norms
: Standards of conduct including behaviours, opinions, beliefs and attitudes that a group expects from its members under sanctions, by which it is constituted and represented. Norms are expectations of conduct that are relatively stable in the face of factual violation.

Obedience
: An act that is carried out in accordance with the order of a person of higher status and authority.

Persuasion
: The process of inducing an individual to adopt a certain belief, attitude or opinion through any non-violent means. Rhetoric is classically called the art of persuasion.

Social Influence
: An umbrella term for all processes by which a person or a collective enables and constrains the beliefs, values, attitudes, opinions, or behaviours of members and non-members beyond violence, external authority or bribery (i.e. soft power).

Public sphere
: The arena of modern societies where majority and minority positions are projected and mutual influence is exerted and protected under the constitutional 'freedom of expression'.

**Introduction**

Increased travelling and migration within and between regions of the world, and the multiplication of mass media of circulation in print and the digital space, have brought about radical changes and shapes the nature of the modern public sphere. Contemporary public spheres are characterized by a plurality of views that seek expression and legitimacy in public approval. Individuals in modern societies, protected by freedom of speech, are entitled to hold views and opinions outside the dominant tenor, and to express them freely in the public concert. The modern public sphere is thus characterized by tensions of conflicting views and disagreements. Few places in the world, if any, remain Durkheimian in the sense that a dominant world view rules supreme as 'collective representation'. Modern individuals are routinely confronted by others whose views differ radically from their own (Benhabib, 2002; Jovchelovitch, 2007). Conflicting views expressed in public create tension as they undermine the consensus and imply that some ideas, possibly one's own, may be incorrect (Moscovici, 1985a). Communication is at the heart of this tension, that arises whenever individuals project and expose their own ideas and opinions, and others disagree, and the greater their distance, the greater the potential for conflict (see chapter on rhetoric and distance).

There are several universal ways of resolving conflict: by brute force or the threat of it; by appeal to external authority; and by social influence. People may coerce others to adopt a perspective or behaviors by brute force and violence. Non-compliance means the threat of maiming or even death. Within the rule of law 'civilizes' modern states and secures a monopoly of force vested in the police and the military, such that violence is no longer the default form of conflict resolution in society. Within such arrangements, the default conflict resolution arises from appeal to the law through the authority of courts. Conflicts over these rules make appeal to public discussion, where differences between interlocutors are displayed in conversation in an effort to bring people together in communication without redress neither to authority of the law, nor to violence or the threat of it. The appeal is to recognize the authority of informal norms and the relevance of information provided. Truth claims can be tested as to their objective truth, expressive authenticity, and moral rightness, which thus have the power to convince and reconcile opposition (see chapter on communicative action). In this way conflict resolution is negotiated through the exercise of social influence within the public sphere. Aside from coercion and appeal to authority, social influence is a conflict-resolution strategy resulting in consensus. It is a **communicative genre** that is "rooted in conflict and strives for consensus" (Moscovici, 1985a, p. 352).

From a functionalist point of view, social influence is a generalized communication medium to make the improbable more likely, i.e. to make communication successful. Like power and money is replaces the vagueness of language. In politics everything is settled by power, in the economy by money, in the public sphere by social influence (see Parsons, 1963; Luhmann, 1990). However this functional analogy of substituting complex language by a simpler medium does not extend well to social influence. Contrary to money and power, social influence remains tied to the pragmatics of life-world conversations and cannot thus replace, only complement speech acts (Habermas, 1981, p408ff). Social influence cannot be reduced to one dimension, .e.g. ethos, trust or prestige, but remains tied to the triplet of what is true (logos), right (ethos) and sincere (pathos: see chapters on pragmatics, on rhetoric and on communicative action).

The quest for the laws of social influence have concerned social and cultural psychology since the 19th century and guided their inquiries. Two questions preoccupied this quest: (a) how do individuals change in the presence of others, and (b) how this influence determines their behavior. In this chapter we review some major paradigms that offered different answers to these questions. We start by distinguishing two **modes** of social influence: rationality/irrationality and order/change. We then review seven **modalities** of social influence: leadership, imitation, norm-setting, conformity pressure, obedience, persuasion, and conversion. We conclude by exploring a cycle of influence that involves a dynamic interplay of modes and modalities in the dynamics of social norms. The modes and modalities of influence can be classified as per table 4.2.

*Licit and illicit social influence: a grey area of morality*

The greater the disagreement between perspectives, the greater the social influence required to bring conflicting views in line and forge a new consensus. This distance between interlocutors also defines the rhetorical situation (see chapter on rhetoric). In communication, discussants reserve the right to influence each other. Consequently, one of the issues that arise in the course of dialogue is the fuzzy boundary between licit and illicit social influence. Figure 4.1 tries puts this continuum into a schematic picture, both on the left and right end with pure cases. Any real-life context might be a mix of deliberative (towards the left) and the influence of soft power (towards the right), depicted in the graphic as a vertical cut through the rectangle. Social influence covers the hybrid space in the middle of this continuum. Deliberation establishes a common understanding between the interlocutors; soft powers bias this frame of reference in one or the other direction. In practice, interlocutors often join a discussion with pre-established beliefs as to what might be true and right, meaning their own position, and will seek ways to persuade and convince others of the 'facts' through various means. Thus, discussions often entail strategic elements of communication that aim at changing the views of others to match one's own, while the means to achieve this are flexible. Here lies a productive attraction towards 'true

deliberation' (see chapters on communicative action and on dialogue), which through understanding of the perspective of the other brings about a change in one's own views, and thus a new basis from which both continue. Dialogue and deliberation are characteristics of the ideal public sphere, where not only the guns are silenced but all strategic social action is dubious: where power and social influence was, there shall be deliberation. We will revisit this intuitive continuum between ethical and corrupt means of social influence towards the end of this chapter.

*Figure 4.1: The intuitive continuum of social influence*
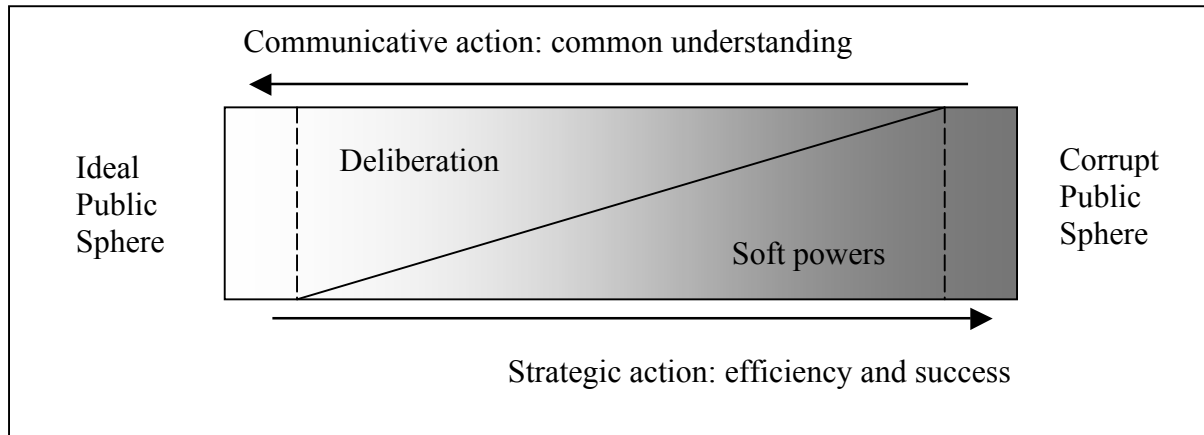


Conflict resulting from divergent perspectives is a crucial fact of human existence. Individuals hold different values and therefore diverging attitudes towards objects in their environment. Additionally, different societies construct different 'world views' while sharing the same universe (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Thus, divergent perspectives may be based on individual preferences or social knowledge. In any case, the conflict of diverging views creates tensions in human relations. A group can prevent conflict by eliminating deviants physically or psychologically. History provides innumerable examples of 'hard power' – where one group of people dictates affairs to another and imposes such affairs through coercive means of crushing dissent. In these cases, consensus is protected by force, fear and fire. An alternative to hard power is 'soft power' – where conflict is resolved through communication, by convincing the other party that one's perspective is right (Nye, 1990, 2004). Not all positions, however, are equal at the start. In many illness prevention programmes, risk communication or science communication efforts, the expertise of professionals is dignified as knowledge and anything else down played as ignorance or superstition from the start (see Jovchelovitch, 2007). Social influence is the communication strategy that underlies soft power. Persuasive communication is the 'silver bullet' that brings about a desired and intended adjustment in the others. The intended outcome is for the recipient of communication to shift their position in line with the source of the communicative act. Conflicting views are not subjected to true dialogue, and consensus is achieved by the elimination of discrepant views without the need for physical coercion of fear, force and fire.

**Modes of Influence**

Two modes of influence are at work anytime a group attempts to change another group's perspective in line with its own. Firstly, a dominant group might concerned with the maintenance of order and the smooth co-ordination of social live, as much as a minority group seek recognition and change towards its own perspective. Secondly, both rational and non-rational means of social influence may serve to achieve intended outcomes.

*Maintaining or changing the order of the group*

Individual behaviour in society is regulated by social norms that permit certain acts and prohibit others. Social norms establish what is normal in a society and what is deviant, in terms of behaviours, attitudes, perceptions and beliefs. Deviance is branded abnormal and antisocial by a dominant group, usually a majority, which seeks the preservation of a normative order that bestow it with legitimacy and righteousness (Paicheler, 1988). Once conflict breaks out because of a minority challenge arises from divergent perspectives. Attempts at social influence follow as dominant groups seek to preserve the status quo in the light of the deviant groups promoting their own views. This conflict is thus characterised by mutual attempts at mobilising social influence with the quest for order on the one side and a quest for change on the other (Moscovici, 1985a).

*Table 4.2: Modes and modalities of social influence*

|  | Order | Change |
|---|---|---|
| **sub-rational** | Obedience | Leadership<br>Imitation<br>Persuasion (peripheral) |
| **Rational** | Norm-setting<br>Conformity | Conversion<br>Persuasion (central)<br>Resistance to change |

A conflict between a dominant group and a subordinate deviant group is a situation of asymmetrical relations, the power of A over B, might be stronger than that of B over A, but power resides on either side, and the imbalance can change in certain circumstances. Dominant groups use social influence to put pressure on dissenting members in an effort to preserve the existing consensus and achieve conformity. Conformity results in overall stability as the local change it brings about aligns the deviant's perspective with the dominant group's perspective. In this way, the dominant group perpetuates the order by securing its own version of reality as the legitimate version. Dominant groups seek to impose their views on deviants unilaterally, achieving uniformity through conformity (Deutsch & Gerrard, 1955). Conformity with rules and expectations is necessary for the co-ordination of collective action; there is no game to be played without sticking to the rules.

The power of a minority, on the other hand, arises from the ability to violate uniformity, challenge the established consensus, and resist conformity pressure. Minorities are not only a target, but also a source of influence (Moscovici, 1985a). Asch (1948) noted that "a little rebellion, now and then, is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms are in the physical". Deviants are a source of social influence through persistence and conversion with leads to *innovation*. Deviants unsettle existing norms, perturb social uniformity, and turn the certain into the uncertain, and make previously familiar appear unfamiliar. When, in the face of conformity pressure, a subordinate group persists in projections it has a chance to succeed in making its own perspective familiar. This dynamic favours the smaller subordinate group (Moscovici, 1985a). The resolution of the conflict is resolved in the direction of overall innovation, and the minority position can also achieve its objective for recognition. Its perspective is accommodated in a social field that has changed by virtue of the arising conflict. An innovative minority sets in motion a process that cannot base itself on established norms–its perspective is labelled deviant *de facto* by the dominant group. Nevertheless, the negotiation of innovation centres on a conflict that is provoked and necessary. Consequently, innovative individuals or groups are able to bring about overall shifts in the social field and this in contrast to the quest for order and uniformity of the dominant tendency. This duality of order or change, tied with majority and minority positions in society, defines the first mode of social influence.

*Rationality and sub-rationality: the doctrine of suggestion*

For any overview of ideas of social influence it is important to recall what Asch (1952) criticised as the **'doctrine of suggestion'** which pandered to a mythical paradox: individual humans are capable of rational reasoning, but in collectives they are irrational. This idea of increased suggestability, somnambulance, reduced faculties as a necessary consequence of sociability, or in other words, the social as a deteriorating influence on the individual, has dominated much speculation in social and cultural psychology. With this presumption, social influence is basically an irrational process. That this is a one-sided view of social influence is clear for some time (see Moscovici, 1985a), however, the signs are that the notion persists and even goes through a revival in recent years with a renewed focus on subliminal influence processes in much research (see below). To identity a possible pendulum of historical focus of research, we use the distinction between rational and non-rational mode of social influence.

Whenever individuals are exposed to symbols of any shape or form, the basic elements of communication, they will necessarily engage in an individual process of evaluation to decide whether to be taken in by them or not. There is this old intuition that this evaluation takes a rational or non-rational, considered or other form. This distinction has often been aligned with other distinctions, such as cognitive versus emotional, conscious versus unconscious, explicit versus implicit processing, and a normative expectation that the one side is generally superior to the other and associated with the notion of 'civilised'. In the light of recent psychological research, it is no longer so clear that emotional, unconscious and implicit

processes are irrational, while the opposites define rationality. Increasingly, it is clear that emotions have a rational core, so have automatic, unconscious and implicit meaning processes. They all have functionality in supporting efficient and effective activity. Rationality is embodied both in explicit reasoning and 'gut feelings' depending on the context (see Gigerenzer, 2007).

Despite this new uncertainty as to what constitutes 'irrationality', we want to keep a contrast to rationality in social influences. Of all the semantic opposites of 'rationality', we use sub-rational to mark the other side. This avoids the loaded term 'irrationality' with clearly negative connotations, which are not helpful for analytical purposes. The pair rational/sub-rational helps us to distinguish modalities of social influence that at the level of individuals involve more cortical brain activity and at the social level more deliberation, in contrast to other processes that involve privately more sub-cortical heuristic reasoning and in public less deliberative elements. We note that there is little human activity that is entirely guided by exclusively cortical or sub-cortical brain patterns; to the contrary, any physical split of these two levels of processes probably constitutes a pathological dysfunction of blind behavioural tendencies and thinking with an action-block. Such a condition results from physical brain damage (see the predicament of the injured war veteran Schneider reported by Gelb and Goldstein, in: Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 103ff).


## Modalities of Social Influence

Studies of social influence have demonstrated that the exercise of influence takes place in different ways. The origins of the study of this phenomenon lie in the analysis of human behaviour in crowds. In pursuing these lines of investigation, scholars have demonstrated various modalities by which social influence is exercised. We distinguish seven such modalities, namely leadership, imitation, norm-setting, conformity, obedience, persuasion and conversion. Modalities of influence can serve both in the establishment of conformity as in the conjecture of an innovation. The exercise of social influence through these modalities can be both rational and non-rational, and can serve an innovation as much as the perpetuation of social norms.

### 1    Leadership of masses

Le Bon's (1896) very successful and widely read work on crowd psychology set a key agenda for the study of social influence. Le Bon's study of crowds outlines how in collectives, individuals are subject to '*the law of mental unity of crowds*', by which a collective mind is forged into clearly defined, lesser characteristics. These are disappearance of conscious personhood, the dominance of feelings and thoughts with fixed direction. Instincts, passions and feelings are the common denominator that binds individuals together. Consequently, in a crowd, the individual, along with his or her intellectual aptitudes, is weakened, becomes a shadow of themselves. According to Le Bon, by the mere fact of being in a crowd, "man descends several rungs in the ladder of civilization. Isolated he may be a cultivated

individual; in a crowd, he is a barbarian" (p. 10).

Crowds are disqualified and can never accomplish intelligent acts, because the primitive emotions bind humans together. The decisions made by an assembly of men and women of distinction are not sensibly superior to those that would be adopted by a gathering of imbeciles. The educated and the ignorant are equalized in a crowd, what constitutes a archaic anxiety to which the speculations of LeBon and others give expression (see Ginneken van, 1992) with the notion of crowds or 'social mass'. The mass is a root metaphor arising from pottery; masses are inert and need an external agent to put them into shape, it is the raw material of a design, and this design is provided by the leader. Le Bon attributes this 'materiality' of crowds to three features of social influence: the sentiment of *invincibility* that arises from *numerosity*; *contagion*, by which sentiments spread amongst crowd members; and *suggestibility*, by which individuals deprived of personhood follow the suggestions of operators in a hypnotic way.

Le Bon's theory of leadership is the natural complement of the notion of crowd. Crowds need and call for leadership. This stream of investigation has been extended to the study of leaders and leadership styles, to identify the features of effective leadership possesses that allure the masses. Moscovici (1985b) distinguishes between totemic leaders and mosaic leaders. The charisma of the former resides in their personality, that of the latter in the doctrines they advocate. The interest in the study of leadership (Chemers, 2001; Lord, Brown & Harvey, 2001; Lord & Hall, 2003; Hogg, 2007) is sustained by the fact that some directing function is basic for groups, even in presumably leaderless ones (Counselman, 1991), and by the fact that leadership has been identified as a significant factor of collective performance (Barrick et al., 1991; Joyce, Nohria & Roberson, 2003). Moreover, bad leadership, as Le Bon argued, remains today a worrying concern (Kellerman, 2004). This concern for leadership as a form of non-rational influence in the service of organizational transformation and innovation competes with the concern for rational design in managerial thinking. The pendulum swings from charisma (and devotion) and doctrine (and design) in long cycles of 40-50 years (see Barley & Kunda, 1992) since the early 19th century.

## 2      *Imitation and contagion*

According to Gabriel Tarde (1890), in any crowd there is a class of individuals that draw the others through their power of suggestion. What these few individuals do, others will imitate. The few, whose actions and beliefs are imitated by others, rule the many. This process creates similarity and differences, and progress in society. Similarity arises from either genetic inheritance or social influence, and the form of social influence is imitation through contact. The many imitate the few because the many are susceptible to contagion, and this arises from a lowered level of awareness, from being only half awake and somnambulant. Imitation makes people similar to each other; but also different lines of imitation create different traditions.

Imitation also achieves Progress because the many adopt the innovations which are invented

by the few: novelties diffuse by contagion at the point of contact. While the first phase of this process, the invention, is unpredictable, the imitation phase is lawful and therefore amenable to systematic investigation, hence Tarde's quest for 'laws of imitation'.

Tarde noted that not all conducts diffuse equally through society and only a limited number of ideal, attitudinal, or behaviour innovations are adopted by others. For example innovations that are 'logically parallel' to a culture spread more readily than ones that do not. Inventions that are either too daring or too traditional do not spread well. The *law of close contact* explains how people have a greater tendency to copy those immediately around them. The *law of imitation of superiors by inferiors* describes how imitation follows the hierarchy of social prestige, the poor and the young imitate the affluent and the more experienced. The *law of insertion* observes how newly adopted behaviours are superimposed on old ones and that they reinforce or discourage existing behaviours. Tarde also observed that changing the 'inner person' precedes changing the 'outer person', in other words attitudinal change anticipates behaviour change.

For Tarde, and here in agreement with LeBon, "society is imitation and imitation is a kind of somnambulism" (1962, p. 87). But Tarde made a far-reaching observation on the difference between the psychology of the crowd and that of public opinion and conversation. Natural crowds are face-to-face with their leadership in a defined location, in a public place or on a street. Artificial crowds or opinions arise from conversations and the distribution of mass media, at that time newspapers, which creates a common focus of attention without any co-presence among people. People read the news at different places, but pay attention to the same topic and this exerts a new form of pressures on authorities which cannot be ignored but maybe dreaded (Tarde, 2006). The influence from a news source to reader is also a process of imitation, a mental contact of inter-spirituality. The doctrine of suggestion applies to opinion formation as it does to crowd behavior. What distinguishes artificial from natural crowds is their psychology. Public opinion, on the basis of attention to news, is characterized by conversation and distributed opinion. Like the numerosity of crowds, what matters is not the merit of opinion, but its numbers, i.e. a quantity before quality. From here the modern enthusiasm for the study of public opinion, mass communication and of diffusion research take their inspiration, whether recognized or not by its protagonists (see Valente & Rogers, 1995).

Public opinion is normative not by merit of content, but through critical mass of circulation. This basic notion has recently been re-popularized by what Gladwell (2000) calls the 'tipping point'. Such an account is rooted in biological analogies of cultural diffusion (see box 4.1). Revising old notions of social contagion, ideas, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours seem to spread like microorganisms through human contact as epidemics and pandemics. In analogy to 'biological warfare', some opinions could be brought about rapidly and with great effect depending on factors like virulence, target susceptability and milieu. The bacteriologist reminds us that the milieu is crucial. The tipping point marks the moment when a minority enthusiasm becomes majority and thus normative without further prospect of containment.

We classify imitation as a non-rational modality of social influence in the service of social change.

---

**Box 4.1: Evolutionary Accounts of Cultural Transmission**

**Memetics**
In 'The Selfish Gene' (1976), Dawkins argued that cultural evolution can be seen as an analogue of biological evolution by natural selection. Dawkins advanced an influential case for using genes as the unit of selection. Analogously, he went on to label the smallest unit of cultural selection a meme. Examples of memes include: theories, fashions, pieces of art, etc. Memes are claimed to meet the conditions for Darwinian selection: heritability (memes like genes replicate, can be copied and transmitted from one mind to another), variability (memes vary within and between individuals) and selection (the success of some ideas are at the expense of others; see Aunger, 2000). Thus, cultural change is process of "memetic" evolution comparable to, while independent of, genetic evolution. Memeticists assume that human capacities for memory, imitation and communication are reliable enough to justify treating cultural items as replicators. However, other scholars argue that mental representations are not copied, but rather built on the basis of cultural input via inferential processes (Wilson & Sperber, 1981). Some scholars abandoned the replication model in favour of a contagion or epidemiological model.

**Epidemiological Perspective**
In the medical sense epidemiology is the ecological study of the distribution of pathological agents such as viruses that cause disease in populations. Similarly, cultural epidemiology studies patterns of cultural phenomena within a human population. Cultural representations are distributions of causally linked mental (e.g. beliefs) and public representations (e.g. pots, tools) throughout a population. Culture comprises mental and public representations that are stabilized through chains of communication. To help explain why some items stabilize as cultural, it is suggested that "mental modules" act as receptors that fix specific kinds of contents (e.g. Atran, 1990, 2002; Boyer, 1994, 2001; Sperber, 1990, 1996).

According to these theorists, it is not merely blind cultural selection that makes some cultural items more successful than others, as memeticists would suggest. Rather, a virus metaphor suggests that, due partly to human cognitive architecture and partly to ecological environments, some items are "easier to think" and communicate, and thus more likely to "infect" other minds (Nisbett & Norenzayan, 2002).

**Gene-Culture Coevolution**
This approach, also known as 'dual inheritance theory', is a branch of population genetics. The field began with Feldman & Cavalli-Sforza (1976) who published the first simple dynamic models which included genetic and cultural inheritance. Conceptually, gene-culture coevolution is a hybrid between memetics and cultural epidemiology. Like memetics, it seeks to account for cultural change via processes of Darwinian evolution. Unlike memetics, it argues that genetic and cultural evolution are interdependent. Like cultural epidemiologists,

they believe that the spread of cultural items depend on psychological factors. Though, these theories do not focus on the role of mental modularity in cultural evolution. Instead, others model how psychological biases stabilize items in cultural transmission – favouring for instance, prestige (copying high-status models) or conformity (copying in-group members).

Kitcher (2003) tests the realism of contagion models when making the epidemiological analogy explicit. He argues that what is transmitted between people are psychological attitudes (y): the object relation y(Ac) is transmitted from A to B, so that after contact we can say y(Bc). The viral analogy assumes that A and B are in the same infected state 'y' after infection. However, considering a multitude of human object relations this seems an unrealistic assumption of 'homogeneity before and after contact'. Take the attitude 'believing that c'. A might hold a strong belief in c, this does not mean that after contact B believes equally strong; B might just 'entertain the proposition c', and not really 'believing that c'. Equally, A might 'know how to do c'; this does not mean that after contact B also knows how; B might only 'know that c'. Another unrealistic assumption is that 'c', the attitude object, remains constant. Furthermore a whole series of standard epidemiological notions remain unspecified for social contagion, such as rates of recovery, rates of re-infection after recovery, resistance and immunity, susceptibility, competition among three-ideas, and length of gestation. To be predictive rather than metaphorical in term of epidemiological models, these parameters would have to be specified.

## 3    *Normalising a frame for future reference*

One of the defining characteristics of groups is that they have developed norms by which their members abide and by which new comers are judged. On their part, individuals gain guidance from a frame of reference that establishes confidence and certainty in conduct. How group norms are established in the first place and come to guide future behaviour of individuals has been demonstrated in experimental studies. Sherif (1935) demonstrated how individuals come to base their judgments on norms established in the presence of others. The effect of these norms, even if counter-factual, guided respondents' judgment without the presence of others once they were recognized and established. Normalisation results from reciprocal influence among social partners who are looking for a reasonable solution to their disagreements as a basis for future action (Moscoivici, 1985a, 375). Sherif's experiments (see box 4.2) demonstrated that norms persists through internalization: individuals continue to judge things according to standard, once established, even in the absence of others. What Deutsch and Gerard (1955) termed normative influence, was demonstrated to be a more powerful social influence than new information per se. Lewin (1947) (see box 4.2) demonstrated that group pressure led to more stable behavior changes than new information. The importance of normalizing is highlighted by theories of group formation. Tuckman (1965) argues that goal-directed groups go through stages of formation: (i) forming – when the people come together; (ii) storming – when the people conflict, struggle, and debate to iron out differences; (iii) norming – establishing the group

parameters for future behaviour, and (iv) performing – where the group starts functioning as a unit to achieve its' goals. In organizational settings, group norms that orient members towards performance lead to increased productivity and job satisfaction (Weldon & Weingart, 1993). A key point of studies of normalization is the demonstration that group formation and sociability is not a process of decadence, as expounded in crowd psychology and its doctrine of suggestion, but a precondition of collective action. Norm-setting is therefore a rational modality of social influence that constitutes order.

## 4    Conformity

The need to belong to a social group is part of an embodied psychology of dependency. Being left out is literally painful (Eisenberger et al, 2003) and makes people feel cold and crave for warm food (Zhong & Leonardelli, 2008). This logic of social dependency is also the basic cultural dimension along which a society can be organized, offering an entire language of self, virtues, anxieties and pathologies (see Doi, 1971 for Japanese culture).

Conformity pressure was the topic of landmark studies conducted by Solomon Asch (1952/1987). He set out to study the behavior of individuals in groups when faced with a dilemma between objective truth and normative rightness and belonging. Asch's intention was to refute the prevailing dogma of a 'doctrine of suggestion', which assumes the paramount irrationality of individuals in groups. His experiment demonstrated that when presented with an unequivocal situation, individuals will resist conformity pressure. Asch hoped to explain conformity was ambiguity of perception rather than irrationality. But Asch significance lies in his failure to achieve his stated aims (Moscovici, 1985a). He needed to explain his findings with a 'pull towards the group'. He noted how errors in estimation were biased towards the majority view, and this led him to conclude: "as soon as a person is in the midst of a group he is no longer indifferent to it" and that "if conditions permit, individuals move toward the group" (1987, p. 483). Conformity is the adaptation of individuals to the group norms, by which they maintain a positive self-esteem and their orientation. Conformity demonstrates the priority of social and self-oriented rationality over objective rationality.

The risks of conformity, on the other hand, have also been documented. Collective actions organized under conformity pressure can end in failure. Janis's work on 'groupthink' describes the constraint thinking process in highly cohesive groups on the example foreign policy decisions in the American invasion of Cuba in 1961 and in the defense of Pearl Harbour in 1941 (Janis, 1972; Janis & Mann, 1977). Conformity pressure leads individual members to adopt group goals and frames of reference unquestioningly and uncritically. Legitimate concerns and alternative options are not considered, all in favour of maintaining an illusion of consensus. Maybe the ancient role of a 'devil's advocate' considers this functional need for contradiction. With regards to public opinion a similar risk of conformity is described in the 'Spiral of Silence' phenomenon (Noelle-Neumann, 1990). People express their opinion in public by considering what other as saying. If the mass media give clues, which puts an individual into a minority position, these individuals will no longer express themselves;

conform in public, while in private continue to dissent. In such conditions, modern opinion polls will report a biased opinion that this leads to failures to anticipate elections results correctly and to the misjudgment of public moods on the basis of easy available indicators. We consider conformity as a rational modality of social influence in the service of social order, rational in so far as the individual makes a trade-off between objective facts and social obligation in favor of the latter.

## 5        Obedience to authority

The question of whether and to what extent individuals yield to morally dubious social demand was the subject of classical inquiries. Stanley Milgram (1974) influenced by Asch's experiments and the concentration camps of the WW2 sought to study social influence in the form of *obedience*. When and how will people obey or defy authority?  His studies have become perhaps the best known modality of social influence. Milgram tested how common people behave when instructed by a legitimate authority to inflict harm on another. He concluded that the 'banality of evil' comes closer to truth than one might dare imagine. Arendt (1963) famously claimed that the great evils of the Nazi regime were not executed by exceptional sociopaths, but by ordinary people who believed their actions were simply normal in the circumstances. Milgram (see box 4.2) demonstrated that with an appeal to obedience to (scientific) authority, ordinary people went on delivering potentially life threatening electric shocks to fellow citizens after abdicating responsibility and claiming, just like war criminals, that they were simply doing their expected duty. After all, the instructor wearing white garment, a symbol of authority, had instructed them to continue the experiment and thus to contribute to the Progress of science, and this was an eminently legitimate undertaking of which they wanted to be part of.

Milgram's experimental demonstrations have been replicated in many countries (e.g. Mantell, 1971; Kilham & Mann, 1974; Meeus & Raaijmakers, 1986), have reported obedience rates between 28% and 91% and an average of around 66% (Blass, 2004, p301ff), and have provided situational explanations of compliance rather than dispositional ones (Benjamin Jr & Simpson, 2009; Blass, 2009). Subjects have been shown to obey authority even when this violated their own moral convictions. Burger (2009) reports how this tendency to submit to authority persists today, and the same situational factors that already explained Milgram's earlier results remain operative in spite of a social trend towards non-conformity in society (Twenge, 2009). All considered, obedience and compliance is a non-rational modality of social influence serving to maintain the order and to co-ordinate social action.

## 6        Persuasion: convincing by elaboration or simple cues

The experiments by Sherif, Lewin, Asch and Milgram not only supported the skepticism of crowds outlined by Tarde and Le Bon, they suggested that social influence is by and large irresistible for individuals. Seemingly, individuals cannot help but conform to social influence and the will of the group. They conform whether they personally agree with the act or not. This conception of human behaviour guided an empirical programme that sought to discover

what sorts of messages would persuade what sorts of people, when individuals were targets of persuasive communication.

For the Yale group (Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953), persuasion studies sought to discover the characteristics of the communicator, the communication itself, and the audience that increases the likelihood of persuasion. As such these studies are part of a renewed interest in propaganda and rhetoric at the time (see chapter on rhetoric). Their findings have provided an extensive list of variables that can enhance the success of targeted influence and that are widely applied in advertising, promotion and marketing communications (Belch & Belch, 2004). More recently, scholars have turned their attention to the processes involved in persuasion to identify more precisely why communication successfully results in attitude change.

Dual-process theories posit two routes by which recipients of a message may be influenced. Petty & Cacioppo (1981, 1986a, 1986b) suggested that cognitive elaboration moderates persuasion, for which they proposed a central and a peripheral route. Their Elaboration-Likelihood Model (ELM) posits that the mental effort invested defines the route that is taken. When depth of processing and elaboration is high, the slower *central route* to persuasion is involved. In this case, persuasion is achieved as a function of argument content and quality. Conversely, when the elaboration is low, i.e. the cognitive effort is also low and persuasion is achieved through the fast *peripheral route,* and as a function of factors other than the argument. Peripheral processes select only cues and mobilize heuristics, attribution biases, affective reactions, conditioned responses, and social identities leading to in-group bias. The ELM expects that persuasion via the central route resists further changes once it is achieved, while persuasion via the peripheral route is more open to further changes. The two routes support slow and lasting and fast and fickle changes of attitudes. Importantly, for any particular message, the type of persuasion afforded is determined by the individual's elaboration likelihood, a personal disposition. Arguments might appeal to the central route, but weather the central or peripheral route is engaged depends on the individual's motivations and abilities. ELM assumes that messages are processed either centrally or peripherally. For practical purpose, many uses of ELM assume humans to be 'cognitive misers', that most people will only engage the peripheral route most of the time.

Eagly & Chaiken (1984 and 1993) propose another dual-process model, the heuristic-systematic model (HSM) to overcome some limitations of ELM. The HSM similarly posits two pathways to persuasion. The *systematic* route, like ELM's central route, is based on deep informational processing. The *heuristic* route, like ELM's peripheral route, involves only shallow processing with heuristics as shortcuts for quick processing. Examples of mental heuristics include 'consent implies correctness', or 'experts can be trusted'. The former heuristic seems to be at work in situations of conformity pressure like in Asch's experiments, whereas the latter heuristic seems involved in obedience to authority like in Milgram's study. Again HSM suggests that persuasion resulting from deep processing is more stable and resistant to change. However, in contrast to ELM, HSM allows for parallel processing, i.e. both routes to persuasion are engaged simultaneously in processing a message. Persuasion

can thus take place through both rational and sub-rational routes at the same time. This seems in line with concerns of classical rhetoric which argued for balance between logos, ethos and pathos to convince an audience (see chapter on rhetoric).

ELM and HSM conceive persuasion as an individual response to some fixed message; little attention is paid to actual conversation and social interaction involved in persuasion. The interlocutor figures only as an externality of the model, as in the prestige or conformity heuristic. Nevertheless, dual-process theories of persuasion are mostly concerned with attitude change and involve rational as well as sub-rational routes.

---

**Box 4.2: Classical experiments of social influence**

Sherif (1935) studied participant's perceptual judgments in estimating the movement of a projected light point on a screen. In reality the projected light was stationary, but to viewers in a dark room a stationary light appears to move erraticly. This is known as the autokinetic effect or phi-phenomenon. Sherif demonstrated how when the study was undertaken in the presence of others, subjects' judgments of the subjectively perceived movement concentrated around a central tendency established as a group norm.

Lewin (1947) studied the influence of group norms in a study on cooking organ meats. In an effort to promote consumption of offal meats in America at a time of economic hardship following the Second World War, Lewin studied social influence under individual or group conditions. In his experiments, participants were placed either in a lecture situation or in a discussion group. The same lecture, outlining the nutritional value of offal and methods for food preparation, was administered to both conditions. Lewin's study demonstrated the power *of normative social influence* compared to *informational social influence* (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955). Subjects that received information alone were much less likely to conform to influence than those where information was supplemented by group norms.

Asch (1952) devised an ingenious experiment in which groups of 7 to 9 were shown three lines differing in length. The task was to match the line presented in isolation to the three presented together on a display. All participant subjects were 'confederates' of the experimenter except one, the critical subject. In the first two rounds each subject called out the matching lines. On the third and subsequent trials, the confederates declared 'matching' a line that was visibly incorrect. In 33% of cases, the critical subjects followed the instructed majority into a false judgment. Less than half remained independent and gave correct answers against the majority. In the debriefing, the subjects reported how puzzled and confused they were when the majority made errors. They struggled with the dilemma of their own judgment and longing to agree with the others. Some, but not all yielded to the conformity press and succumbed to *majority influence*.

Milgram (1974) invited participants for a learning experiment that involved a 'teacher' who punishes the errors of a 'learner' with increasing electric shocks. Subjects always played the

---

teacher who applied shocks between 15 volts to 450 volts. In reality, unbeknown to the subjects, no such shocks were given. The switches ranged from 'Slight Shock' to 'Danger-Severe Shock' and 'XXX'. They could also hear the learner acting out the pain of increasing shocks and pleading for mercy. Whenever, the 'teachers' demonstrated apprehension at going on with the experiment, the experimenter reminded them to continue in the interest of the science of learning. Milgram wanted to know whether obedience had any limits in this situation. All of the participants in his study went on to 'Very Strong' shocks (195-240 volts), and nearly two-thirds went on to the very end. These findings on obedience rates of 60% and above were surprising and shocking. Milgram observed that "many subjects will obey the experimenter no matter how vehement the pleading of the person being shocked, no matter how painful the shocks seem to be, and no matter how much the victim pleads to be let out" (p. 5).

Facheaux and Moscovici (1967) demonstrated the logic of minority influence. In their experiments, subjects were shown geometrical designs varying on various dimensions. They had to decide which one dimension they preferred to describe the object. Participants shifted towards those subjects who were briefed by the experimenters to give consistently one particular response. Another experiment (Moscovici, Lage and Naffrechoux 1969) further demonstrated this minority effect. The authors showed slides and subjects had to identity the color. Reversing Asch, only one or a few of the subjects were briefed to consistently identify blue slides as green (green is the after-image of blue, which makes blue-green perceptually ambiguous). The experiment showed that they swayed the responses of the majority. The more consistent the few were in their 'green' response, the stronger was the shift of the majority. Moreover, in a test of blue-green discrimination after the experiment, participants identified green faster than control subjects; they were primed on green, despite having seen the blue slides. Even more strikingly, subjects tested for green even faster they had not succumbed to influence during the experiment. This suggested that minority influence might have a *latency.* People may still disagree in public when privately they already change their minds. This change will manifest itself in public as a late response.

## 7    *Conversion*

Moscovici (2001) reminds us that the key issue in social influence is the psychology of minorities, as minorities have the mental and emotional capacity to bring about innovation through the power of ideas. The theory of *minority influence* (Moscovici, 1976) took inspiration from a critique of the dominant concern of social influence studies with conformity and deviance. In the light of the minority paradigm (Mugny, 1982), deviance loses its negative connotations and is considered innovative and functional for collective development (Paicheler, 1988). Social influence is not only a matter of social control, but also of potential in contexts of asymmetrical power.

When the minority challenges the majority, the *behavioural style* of the minority is the key factor of success (Faucheux & Moscovici, 1967). A consistent minority appears as credible

and independent and thus is more likely to influence others of a new definition of the social situation, but about itself as an social actor. Minorities seek both recognition and influence. By being consistent a minority can establish a different perspective, thus create instability and challenge established norms. Consistent minorities break the social contract to negotiate a new one. The model of minority influence assumes that the impact is informational. People align with minorities because they are convinced by the ideas and the information provided, not because of some normative pressure. The individual process is one of *conversion*, a deep reorientation, private and public and lasting. This is in contrast to conformity pressure, which leads to changes that are superficial, public but not necessarily private, and only temporary.

There are a number of factors that moderate the success of minorities. Not every minority is equally likely to be successful with their ideas and attitudes simply qua minority status. The consistency of behavior display implies that the minority is organized, which excludes any anomic deviance or any non-conformity from exerting immediate social influence. This also means that successful minorities need conformity and discipline for themselves. Rather than being in contradictions, conformity is a necessary condition of minority success. Furthermore, minorities that remain part of the moral community, i.e. they hold to the majority in part and challenge only some social norms, are more likely exert influence than actors that are total outsiders who are beyond good and evil and challenge the entire norm system (Moscivici, 1985a).

Another irony of minority influence arises from latency of impact and a *'sleeper effect'* (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). Attitude change might set in with a delay. Information might initially be dismissed because it is put forward by a non-prestige and thus non-credible source, the social minority. Later people remember the information and change their minds, but do not remember anymore the source. Ironically, minorities might be the agent of change, but might not get the credit for it. Once a new idea has become common sense, it is all very obvious and nobody in particular deserves any credit for it.


## 8      Resistance to change

One of the paradoxes of social influence is that resistance is a factor of change. Resistance features as a concern of change agents who try to alter attitudes or organizational structures with a strategic plan for doing so. Resistance is defined as attitude strength, i.e. that works against further change, notably inoculation which is achieved by forewarning (McGuire & Papageorgis, 1962), by selective attention to new information, existing knowledge on the topic and cognitive elaboration, and reactance, i.e. the arousal arising from any experience of being pushed (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Struck et al., 2001; Sagarin & Wood, 2007). Resistance renders attitudes consistent across situations and allows it to function as a disposition. Attitude resistance is necessary for social influence to persist once it has been achieved.

Resistance to change features prominently in persuasion and the management of

organizational or social change projects. In project work, resistance is mainly treated as a nuisance, a bad reason to blame others for the failure, and generally the problem to be overcome in order to secure success. In this analysis resistance is the dependent variable, and the purpose of intervention is to reduce resistance and make change less costly (Coch & French, 1947; Knowles & Riner, 2007).

An alternative take on resistance suggests that it functions analogous to pain in relation to goal-directed activity: it is an alarm signal (Bauer, 1991). Considered as such, the action consequences come into focus. The functional analysis suggests that resistance is the 'reality principle' of any strategically planned intervention. The first victim of every strategic action is the plan; things turn out differently than planned. Resistance points the collective attention to where the problem might be; it stimulates a re-evaluation of the course of action, and urges alterations towards a more sustainable project (Bauer, 1997). The change induced by resistance might manifest itself in avoidance learning (we will never do it again this way), or might lead to novel insights of how to do things better (Leavitt & March, 1988). The pain analogy suggests that inadequate responses make things worse. Resistance adds value to social change by correcting unrealistic assumptions arising from projects for the future. Resistance to change makes the difference between the plan and reality; it is a rational modality of social influence, paradoxically leading to change.

**The cycle of common sense: towards an integrative model**

We have so far briefly introduced eight different modalities of social influence, which are focused on maintaining order or bringing about change, and they achieve this in a manner that could contrasted as rational versus sub-rational. Now we ask ourselves, can one say anything more about how these modalities might work together in social processes that goes beyond simply listing them?

One of the key starting points of social influence research is majority or the minority status of the source of influence. What seems to be a choice of paradigms, are in reality two interlocked processes. The two modes of social influence are locked in a dynamic struggle governed by the principle of social impact (Latané & Wolfe, 1981). For example in the tradition of diffusion research, the assumption that the early stages are governed by the minority logic of information and persuasion, while beyond the 'tipping point' the normative influence of the majority kicks in. Similarly, already ambitious minorities need the conformity of members to exhibit that behavioral consistency that makes all the difference. Social influence is characterised by this dynamic interplay between establishing norms, maintaining them in the face of challenge, and changing them in conflict.

Figure 4.2 is an attempt to visualize the cycle of development of collective activity oriented on common sense, where many modalities of social influence find their place. The constitution of collective action and common sense starts with the normalization of what can be expected from everyone. The entry point is to endorse a frame for future reference that can be taken

for granted. This is relatively unproblematic for founding members, men and women of the first hour, but as time goes by, as soon as new members want to join the project, the problem of conformity arises. It might also be the case that some members have moved on and no longer agree with the established terms of reference. In first cycle of conformity pressure is brought to bear to maintain the common sense, but also resistance manifests itself in the mode of an alarm: hold we cannot continue like this. This first cycle we call assimilation, because the influence is dominated by the majority trying to assimilate the minority in terms of the majority. This cycle might also involve the mobilization of authority to secure obedience and compliance to existing norms, as well as persuasion and imitation, i.e. the fast processing of symbolic cues and the contagion with 'sticky' ideas on sub-rational pathways and restricted deliberation.

**Figure 4.2: The Cycle of Normalisation, assimilation and accommodation**
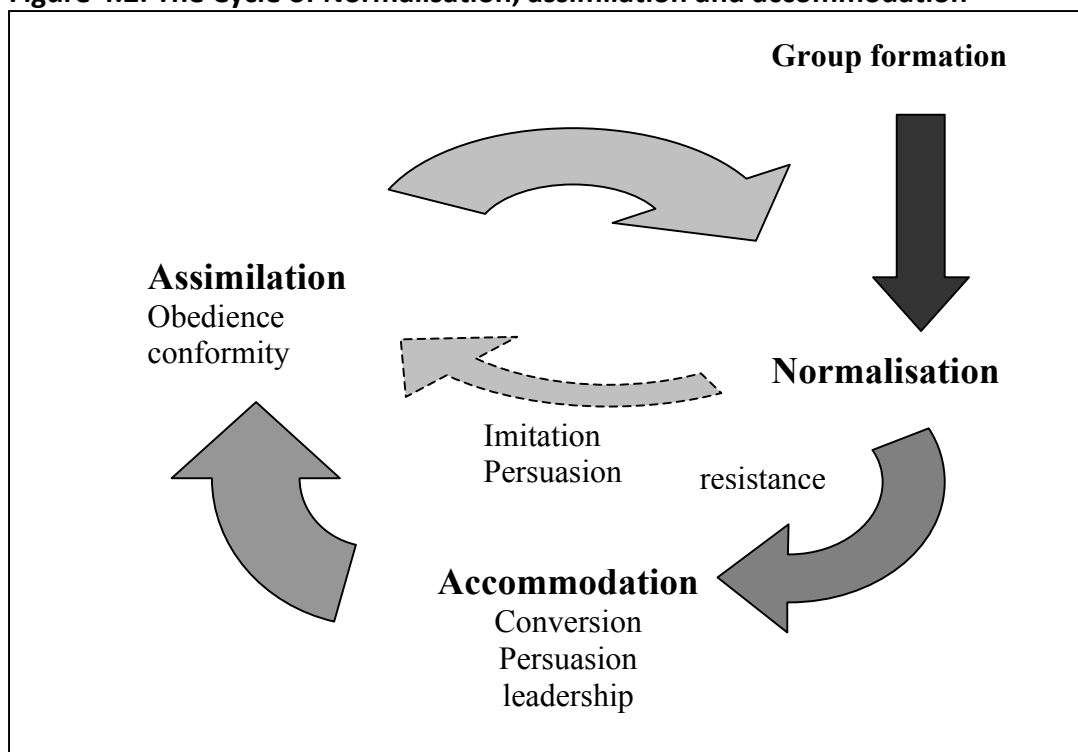


But once the challenge by the non-conforming minority is posed, a conflict is building up and the consensus put in doubt. Slowly by steadily the subordinate minority manages to attract sufficient attention and exert its influence potential. The means adopted to achieve this include leadership and strategic communication to persuade others that the new position is sincere, correct and right. The ideal public sphere requires that no perspective is privileged and excluded from deliberation. Under these conditions the process of conversion can take its course, and accommodation will occur. The majority accommodates the minority by making concessions and by resetting the consensus on a new position. The terms of reference have changed and can go into a new cycle of assimilation of new comers and deviance. This tentative integration of different modalities of social influence therefore postulates a recurring cycle of three processes: the normalization of terms of references, the

assimilation of deviance and accommodation of minority challenges. It would appear that collective action develops identity through several of these cycles and thus increases performance capacity and sustainability (see Bauer, 2008).

**Conclusion**

This chapter assumed that social influence is as process of conflict resolution. Social influence is the communicative act that generates solutions through non-violent and non-coercive means. Normative notions of social influence study how the many accept direction from leaders and how they conform to group pressure. Studies of minority influence provide insights into the processes of resistance, counter-influence, and innovation, how the few can convert the many against all odds. Social influence studies the imitation of behavior and the contagion by powerful ideas. In this context, biological analogies dominate the model building: ideas spread like viruses; more or less virulent, they need a host and strive in certain milieus more than others.

Because social influence models explore the non-violence ways of resolving conflict, they mostly assume a modern societal context, in particular a functioning public sphere where in principle the scene is set for dialogue to take place to cast judgement and make decisions of common concern. However, the public sphere and its communication events straddle the dilemma between communication oriented toward a common understanding and the strategic efforts of interested parties to move the other party toward a particular position. 'Soft power' musters the means of unilateral influence, and despite instrumentally rational from the point of view of a particular interlocutor, still violate the assumption of mutual openness which inspires rational dialogue. The notion of social influence thus remains in a productive tension with ideal notions of public deliberation (see chapter on communicative action and dialogue).

**References**

Arendt, H. (1963). Eichmann in Jerusalem: A report on the banality of evil. New York: Viking.

Asch, S.E. (1952/1987). Social Psychology. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Atran, S. (1990). Cognitive foundations of natural history: Towards an anthropology of science. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Atran, S. (2002). In gods we trust: the evolutionary landscape of religion. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Aunger, R.A. (Ed.) (2000). Darwinizing Culture: The status of memetics as a science. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bauer M (1991) Resistance to change – a monitor of new technology, Systems Practice, 4,3, 181-196.

Bauer M (1997) Towards a functional analysis of resistance; in: Bauer M (eds) Resistance to new technology – nuclear power, information technology, biotechnology, Cambridge, CUP, 393-418.

Bauer, M. W. (2008). Social Influence by Artefacts. Diogenes **55**: 68-83.

Barley, S. and Kunda, G., 1992. Design and devotion: surges of rational and normative ideologies of control in managerial discourse. Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 37(3), pp.363-399.

Barrick, M.R., Day, D.V., Lord, R.G., & Alexander, R.A. (1991). Assessing the utility of executive leadership. The Leadership Quarterly, **2**: 9-22

Belch, G.E., & Belch, M.A. (2004). Advertising and promotion: An integrated marketing communications perspective (6th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.

Benhabib, S. (2002). The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Benjamin Jr., L.T., & Simpson, J.A. (2009). The power of the situation: The impact of Milgram's obedience studies on personality and social psychology. American Psychologist **64**: 12-19.

Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1966). The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge. New York: Anchor Books.

Blass, T. (2009). From New Haven to Santa Clara: A historical perspective on the Milgram obedience experiments. American Psychologist **64**: 37-45.

Blass T (2004) The man who shocked the world. The life and legacy of Stanley Milgram, New York, Basic Books

Boyer, P. (1994). The naturalness of religious ideas: a cognitive theory of religion. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Boyer, P. (2001). Religion explained: The evolutionary origins of religious thought. New York: Basic Books.

Burger, J.M. (2009). Replicating Milgram: Would people still obey today?. American Psychologist **64**: 1-11.

Chemers, M.M. (2001). Leadership effectiveness: An integrative review. In M.A. Hogg & R.S. Tindale (eds), <u>Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Group processes</u> (pp. 283-310). Oxford: Blackwell.

Counselman, E. (1991). Leadership in a long-term leaderless women's group. <u>Small group Research</u>, **22**: 240-257.

Coch L and LRP French (1948) Overcoming resistance to change, Human Relations, 1, 512-32.

Dawkins, R. (1976). <u>The Selfish Gene</u>. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Deutsch, M., & Gerrard, H.B. (1955). A study of normative and informational social influences upon individual judgment. <u>Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology</u> **51**: 629-636.

Doi, T. (1971). <u>The anatomy of dependency – the key analysis of Japanese behavior.</u> Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd.

Eagly, A.H., & Chaiken, S. (1984). Cognitive theories of persuasion. In L. Berkowitz (ed), <u>Advances in experimental social psychology</u> (Vol. 17: 268-359). New York: Academic Press.

Eagly, A.H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). <u>The Psychology of attitudes</u>. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Eisenberger, N.I., Liebermann, M.D., & Williams, K.D. (2003). Does rejection hurt? An fMRI study of social exclusion. <u>Science</u>, 302: 290-292.

Faucheux, C., & Moscovici, S. (1967). Le style de comportement d'une minorité et son influence sur les réponses d'une majorité. <u>Bulletin du C.E.R.P.</u> **16**: 337-360.

Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. <u>Social Text</u> **25/26**: 56-80.

Feldman, M.W., & Cavalli-Sforza, L.L. (1976). Cultural and biological evolutionary processes, selection for a trait under complex transmission. Theoretical Population Biology **9**:238–259.

Gladwell, M. (2000). <u>The tipping point: How little things can make a big difference</u>. Boston: Little Brown.

Gigerenzer G (2007) Gut feelings, New York, Viking.

Ginneken van, J (1992) Crowds, Psychology and Politics, 1871-1899, Cambridge, CUP.

Habermas, J. (1982). Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns (2 Bände). Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, J. (1989). The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hogg, M.A. (2007). Social psychology of leadership. In A.W. Kruglanski & E.T. Higgins (eds), Social psychology: A handbook of basic principles (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford

Hovland, C.I. and Weiss, W. (1951) The Influence of Source Credibility on Communication Effectiveness, Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol.15, No.4, 635-650.

Hovland, C.I., Janis, I.L., & Kelley, H.H. (1953). Communication and persuasion. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Janis, I.L. (1972). Victims of groupthink: A psychological study of foreign policy decisions and fiascoes. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Janis, I.L., & Hovland, C.I. (1959). An overview of persuasibility research. In C.I. Hovland & I.L. Janis (eds), Personality and persuasibility (1-26). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Janis, I.L., & Mann, L. (1977). Decision Making. New York: Free Press.

Jovchelovitch, S. (2007). Knowledge in context: Representations, community and culture. London: Routledge.

Kellerman, B. (2004). Bad leadership: What it is, how it happens, why it matters. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Kilham, W., & Mann, L. (1974). Level of destructive obedience as a function of transmitter and executant roles in the Milgram obedience paradigm. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 29: 696-702.

Kitcher P (2003) Infectious ideas: some preliminary explorations, in: Mendel's Mirror – philosophical reflections on biology, Oxford, OUP, 212-32.

Knowles ES and DD Riner (2007) Omega approaches to persuasion: overcoming resistance, in: Pratkanis AR (ed) The science of social influence, New York, Psychology Press, 83-114.

Latané, B., & Wolfe, S. (1981). The social impact of majorities and minorities. Psychological Review 88: 438-453.

Le Bon, G. (1896/2006). The crowd: A study of the popular mind. West Valley City, UT: Waking Lion Press.

Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in group dynamics. Human Relations 1: 5-42

Levitt B and M G March (1988) Organisational learning, Annual Review of Sociology, 14, 319-40

Lord, R., & Hall, R. (2003). Identity, leadership categorization, and leadership schema. In D. van Knippenberg & M.A. Hogg (eds), Leadership and power: Identity processes in groups and organizations (pp. 48-64). London: Sage.

Lord, R.G., Brown, D.J., & Harvey, J.L. (2001). System constraints on leadership perceptions, behavior and influence: An example of connectionist level processes. In M.A. Hogg & R.S. Tindale (eds), Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Group processes (pp. 283-310). Oxford: Blackwell.

Luhmann N (1990) The improbability of communication, in: Essay on self-reference, New York, Columbia University Press.

Mantell, D.M. (1971). The potential for violence in Germany. Journal of Social Issues, **27**: 101-112.

McGuire WJ and D Papageorgis (1962) The effects of forewarning in developing resistance to persuation, Public Opinion Quarterly, 26, 24-34

Meeus, W., & Raaijmakers, Q. (1986). Administrative obedience as a social phenomenon. In W. Doise & S. Moscovici (eds), Current issues in European social psychology (Vol. 2, pp. 183-230). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Merleau-Ponty M (1962) Phenomenology of Perception, London, Routledge Kegan (French original 1945)

Milgram, S. (1974). Obedience to authority. London: Tavistock.

Moscovici, S. (1976). Social influence and social change. London: Academic Press.

Moscovici, S. (1985a). Social influence and conformity. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (eds), Handbook of social psychology (3$^{rd}$ ed., Vol. 2: 347-412). New York: Random House.

Moscovici, S. (1985b). The age of the crowd. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mugny, G. (1982). The power of minorities. London: Academic Press.

Nisbett, R.E., & Norenzayan, A. (2002). Culture and cognition. In D. Medin & H. Pashler (Eds.), Stevens' Handbook of Experimental Psychology (3$^{rd}$ ed.), Vol. II. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Noelle-Neumann E (1990) The theory of public opinion: the concept of the Spiral of Silence, Communication Yearbook, 14, 256-87.

Nye, J.S. (1990). Bound to lead: The changing nature of American power. New York: Basic Books.

Nye, J.S. (2004). Soft power: The means to success in world politics. New York: Public Affairs.

Parsons, T. (1963). On the concept of social influence. The Public Opinion Quarterly **27**: 37-62.

Paicheler, G. (1988). The psychology of social influence. Cambridge: Cambridge university Press.

Petty, R.E., & Cacioppo, J.T. (1981). Attitudes and persuasion: Classic and contemporary approaches. Dubuque, IA: Brown.

Petty, R.E., & Cacioppo, J.T. (1986a). Communication and persuasion: Central and peripheral routes to attitude change. New York: Springer.

Petty, R.E., & Cacioppo, J.T. (1986b). The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. In L. Berkowitz (ed), Advances in experimental social psychology (Vol. 19: 123-205). New York: Academic Press.

Sagarin BJ and SE Wood (2007) Resistance to influence, in: Pratkanis AR (ed) The science of social influence, New York, Psychology Press, 321-340.

Sherif, M. (1935). A study of some social factors in perception. Archives of Psychology **27**: 1-60.

Sperber, D. (1990). The epidemiology of beliefs. In C. Fraser & G. Gaskell (eds), The social psychology of widespread beliefs (25-44). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Sperber, D. (1996). Explaining culture: A naturalistic approach. Oxford: Blackwell.

Struck et al (2001) Resisting influence, in: Forgas & Williams (eds) Social influence, Routledge

Tarde, G. (1890/1962) The laws of Imitation (trans. from the 2nd French ed. by E.C. Parsons). Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith.

Tarde G (2006 [1901]) L'opinion et la foule, Paris, Edition du Sandre.

Tuckman, B.W. (1965). Developmental sequences in small groups. Psychological Bulletin **63**: 384-399.

Twenge, J.M. (2009). Change over time in obedience: The jury's still out, but it might be decreasing. <u>American Psychologist</u> **64**: 28-31.

Valente TW and EM Rogers (1995) The origins and development of the diffusion of innovation paradigm as an example of scientific growth, Science Communication, 16, 3, 242-73.

Weldon, E., & Weingart, L. (1993). Group goals and group performance. <u>British Journal of Social Psychology,</u> **32**: 307-334.

Wilson, D. and Sperber, D. (1981) On Grice's theory of conversation. In P. Werth (Ed.) *Conversation and Discourse* (pp. 155-178). London: Croom Helm.

Zhong CB and G Leonardelli (2008) Cold and lonely – does social exclusion literally feel cold?, <u>Psychological Science</u> **19**: 838-842.