

## ARE STATUS AND RESPECT DIFFERENT OR TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN?

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People care about the way that other members of their work groups and organizations view them, that is, they care about their *social worth* or social reputation at work. These concerns are the foundation of two distinct lines of scholarly research: one on status and the other on respect. Yet, although the research literatures on people's sense of their own status and respect both explore the same fundamental concerns, they differ in their conceptual origins, theorized assumptions, motivational underpinnings, judgment processes, and in the group dynamics that they ascribe to social worth. Overall, the status and respect literatures provide differing images of the dynamics of individuals' social worth at work. However, these literatures have been largely disconnected from one another, and there have been relatively few systematic efforts to analyze their differences and similarities. We address this gap by reviewing and comparing the status and respect literatures. Our analysis leads us to conclude that, although status research and respect research are highly distinct, the two research areas ultimately investigate the same phenomenon and should be integrated more extensively. Moreover, our analysis highlights several limitations and gaps in prior research on status and respect. We suggest opportunities for integrating status and respect research and for developing a more complete understanding of the dynamics of social worth at work.

### INTRODUCTION

People are profoundly concerned about whether they are valued members of their groups and organizations, and this prompts them to chronically evaluate and react to their sense of where they stand, whether their star is shining bright or fading quickly, if their social capital is growing or waning, and so on. In other words, people care deeply about their own *social worth* or *social reputation* in their groups and organizations (e.g., Emler & Hopkins, 1990; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992), which we conceptualize as people's sense of the respect, inclusion, admiration, and esteem that their group members and coworkers bestow upon them. Although the degree of concern about one's social worth surely varies somewhat across people, contexts, and time, these concerns are rarely dormant and easily stirred. Indeed, social worth is among peoples' most critical and pervasive considerations at work, as well as in most social settings.

Given the importance and prevalence of concerns about social worth or social reputation, it is not surprising that they have been examined in a number of different research literatures. Two prominent examples include the research literatures that

investigate people's sense of a) status and b) respect in the groups to which they belong. These distinct research areas have each received significant scholarly attention in the past, and both continue to generate new insights and theoretical innovations. Yet, despite their common focus on people's concerns about their own social worth in groups and organizations, these research areas originated from distinct theoretical perspectives and developed independent of one another. As a result, status research and respect research differ significantly in their assumptions, approaches, mechanisms, and focus. The extent of these differences suggests, perhaps, that these research areas address fundamentally different issues or phenomena and seek to answer fundamentally different research questions. In other words, although they both focus on people's concerns about their own social worth, perhaps this is where their similarity starts and ends. As such, perhaps these research literatures have relatively little to contribute to one another.

Unfortunately, there have not been systematic efforts to compare or integrate the status and respect research literatures, and the nature and significance of their distinction remains unclear. A few empirical

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efforts have generated valuable insights about the potential linkages between status and respect, yet these efforts also underscore the need for deeper consideration about their relationship. For instance, within the domain of respect research, Huo, Binning, and Molina (2010) present and test a framework that conceptualizes status and liking as dual components that underlie the dynamics of respect. That is, their work regards status as conceptually subordinate to respect (though it does not directly test this proposition, since respect is an unmeasured higher-order construct in their framework). In contrast, within the domain of social hierarchy research, Anderson, Willer, Kilduff, and Brown (2012) compare respect and status rank as distinct conceptualizations of the broader construct of status, which differ in terms of whether they are manifest as ordinal or interval conceptualizations of status. Although both of these prior studies posit that status and respect are distinct, they differ regarding the nature of that distinction. Moreover, there is limited overlap in their underlying theorizing and operationalization of key constructs. While the findings of both studies represent important contributions and are relevant to our analysis, they also highlight the need to bridge the gap that exists between status and respect research. More generally, they highlight the potential value of a comparative review and analysis of prior research on people's sense of their own status and on people's sense of the respect they personally experience within their groups.

We undertake this effort in the current paper, examining the status and respect research literatures with regard to their theoretical origins, assumptions, research questions, and primary findings. By and large, we observe far more differences than similarities between these literatures. Yet, despite these differences, our primary conclusion is that status and respect represent fundamentally equivalent constructs and that their respective research literatures both seek to understand the same phenomenon. Namely, both seek to understand individuals' sense of their own social worth in groups. By reviewing their differences yet highlighting their fundamental commonality, we hope to encourage greater integration of these literatures and, ultimately, a broader understanding of self-perceived social worth. We recognize that some readers may be skeptical of our premise that status and respect are the same fundamental concept, and we hope our analysis addresses that skepticism. That said, we wish to emphasize that the gaps, untested assumptions, and suggestions for future research that we

highlight have value in themselves, independent of our conclusion about the relationship between status and respect. That is, our analysis of the status and respect literatures generates insights that are valuable to each of these research literatures, regardless of any conclusions about their linkages and integration.

We begin by reviewing and comparing the respective origins and conceptual foundations of scholarly research on people's sense of their own status and respect within their groups and organizations. We then review and compare prior status and respect research regarding the respective mechanisms and group processes by which they operate, their respective motivational underpinnings, and the distinct ways in which they are assessed. In considering each of these issues, we highlight gaps in prior research and opportunities for integration and future research.

### **STATUS AND RESPECT: ORIGINS AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS**

The status and respect literatures have distinct theoretical origins and conceptual foundations that provide a critical backdrop for analyzing and understanding the relationship between them. In particular, this background explains the emergence and development of two parallel, yet largely disconnected, literatures on social worth. The status and respect literatures are both products of notable innovations within the respective theoretical traditions from which each developed. Although these innovations were distinct and unrelated, they converge in prompting attention to people's self-perceived social worth within their groups and organizations. Although these innovations ultimately led status and respect research to focus on the same phenomenon, the paths by which these literatures developed are quite different. We argue that many of the differences between the status and respect research literatures are a consequence of their differing paths and, thus, are artifacts of the origins and histories of these literatures rather than substantive conceptual differences between the constructs per se.

#### **Status: Origins and Conceptual Foundations**

Status is conceptualized as the respect and admiration that an individual has in the eyes of others (Magee & Galinsky, 2008); as such, it is an index of the social worth that others confer on a focal individual (Chen, Peterson, Phillips, Podolny, & Ridgeway, 2012). Theorizing and research on individuals' sense

of their status in the groups to which they belong is a distinct subfield within the broader field of research on social hierarchy. This is a notable pedigree, given that hierarchical differentiation among individuals is a ubiquitous and impactful feature of all types of collectives (Bales, Strodtbeck, Mills, & Roseborough, 1951; de Waal, 1982; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001), and, thus, social hierarchy is one of the most prominent research topics across the social sciences.

Over the past 15 years, psychological research on social hierarchy has been particularly focused on understanding the psychological dynamics associated with individuals' sense of their own hierarchical position (which is distinct from the psychology that accounts for individuals' reactions to others' hierarchical positions). This emphasis was largely facilitated by the seminal work of Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson (2003), whose theorizing on the psychology of power (i.e., resource control) inspired a great deal of subsequent research. The key findings of this work indicate that the psychology of high (vs. low) power is characterized by, among other things, heightened egocentric focus and judgment, selfish decision-making, objectification of others, unethical behavior benefitting oneself, and agentic pursuit of self-interested goals (Fiske, 2010; Galinsky, Rucker, & Magee, 2015; Keltner et al., 2003; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Notably, some of this research conceptualizes and operationalizes power as synonymous with, or inclusive of, other bases of hierarchical differentiation such as status, influence, dominance, formal rank. As a result, findings from research on the psychology of power have often been interpreted as reflecting the psychological effects of hierarchical differentiation among individuals more generally.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to work that conflates power and other hierarchical bases, theorists have long argued that individuals are differentiated from one another on a number of different dimensions—including, but not limited to, their power (e.g., Emerson, 1962; Fiske, 2010; Goldhamer & Shils, 1939; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Ridgeway & Walker, 1995). These arguments highlight that social hierarchy is not a unitary concept but, rather, a broad concept and that individuals are hierarchically differentiated

according to a number of different bases or dimensions. Although these bases may covary with one another, they are, nevertheless, conceptually distinguishable. One such dimension is people's social status (Blader & Chen, 2014; Fiske, 2010; Goldhamer & Shils, 1939; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Like other bases of social hierarchy, individuals within a given group or collective vary in the status that others confer on them—some have more, some less—and, thus, status is a basis for vertical differentiation among group members (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Moreover, status conceptually differs from other hierarchical bases—such as power, SES, influence, and dominance—because it is freely conferred by others. Status cannot be taken or achieved but rather requires others to voluntarily bestow it (Berger, Rosenholtz, & Zelditch, 1980; Gould, 2002; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Ridgeway & Erickson, 2000). Yet status is not only distinct from other hierarchical bases, it is also often conceptualized as a particularly fundamental hierarchical basis due to its theorized primacy, prevalence, and impact (Anderson, Hildreth, & Howland, 2015; Blader & Chen, 2014; Blau, 1964; de Waal, 1982; Magee & Galinsky, 2008).

Empirical research on the psychology of social hierarchy is increasingly recognizing and integrating these insights. That is, a key innovation within the psychology of social hierarchy is to build on these conceptual and theoretical insights and to examine the distinct psychology of status. This innovation advances prior research, which has been characterized by a singular emphasis on the psychology of power and a tendency to generalize the findings of power research to other hierarchical bases. Indeed, this emerging subfield of research on the psychology of status confirms that status has a distinct psychological imprint, separate from that of power and other hierarchical bases (Blader & Chen, 2012, 2014; Blader, Shirako, & Chen, 2016; Fast, Halevy, & Galinsky, 2012; Hays & Bendersky, 2015). For instance, a key finding from this emerging research is that high status, in contrast to high power, is often associated with greater other-orientation and enhanced prosociality (Anicich et al., 2016; Blader & Chen, 2012, 2014; Blader et al., 2016; Fast et al., 2012; Flynn, Reagans, Amanatullah, & Ames, 2006; Hays & Blader, 2017; Willer, 2009).

Overall, the burgeoning literature on the psychology of status confirms its distinction from other bases of hierarchical differentiation. This is an important innovation within research on the psychology of

<sup>1</sup> In fact, it is not uncommon to find prior research using the term 'status' to refer to other hierarchical bases or to social hierarchy overall. Thus, it is important to examine the details of prior work in order to determine the actual hierarchical concept or construct under investigation.

social hierarchy because it highlights that hierarchical rank is not a general psychological phenomenon but, rather, needs to be examined in a more granular fashion that distinguishes between different bases of rank. An understanding of the psychology of hierarchy must separately account for differentiation among individuals in terms of their status or social worth, not just in terms of their formal position, power, influence, etc. This is a notable theoretical insight with equally significant practical implications. For example, a prominent finding in prior research on the psychology of power is that a heightened sense of one's power elicits a wide range of egocentric, antisocial consequences that are dysfunctional for interpersonal relations and group functioning. Generalization of this insight to all forms of hierarchical differentiation paints a rather troubling and gloomy picture for groups, particularly since hierarchy is ubiquitous and inevitable. However, evidence that hierarchical differentiation based on status may lead those at the top to be quite other-oriented and prosocial offers a different prognosis about the potential effect of hierarchy on groups. In particular, it highlights that the inherent tendency to differentiate some individuals as superior and others as inferior is not necessarily problematic as long as status is the salient basis for that differentiation.

### Respect: Origins and Conceptual Foundations

A wide range of research literatures have considered the concept of respect (Huo & Binning, 2008), and only recently have scholars made a concerted effort to compare and integrate these various literatures (particularly in relation to organizational scholarship) (e.g., Grover, 2014; Rogers & Ashforth, 2014). An important common denominator of these literatures is the notion that respect reflects the worth and value accorded to an individual (or individuals). Yet this basic notion has been elaborated in various ways, reflecting somewhat differing conceptualizations and investigations of "respect." For instance, one approach focuses on respect as a characteristic of an actor's behavior toward others (i.e., whether one is respectful toward others) (Rogers & Ashforth, 2014), such as research on whether leaders act in considerate ways toward their followers (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). Another approach focuses on respect as a characteristic of a group's or an organization's culture, such as whether the norms and behavioral tendencies within a group or organization reflect respectful or disrespectful (i.e., polite, considerate) interactions and treatment of all members

[e.g., Carmeli, Dutton, & Hardin, 2015; Ramarajan, Barsade, & Burack, 2008; see also, O'Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell (1991)]. This approach examines whether a group or organization's culture endorses the underlying value that all group members are worthy and deserving of respect—termed by some scholars as *generalized respect* (Rogers & Ashforth, 2014). Still another approach conceptualizes respect as a characteristic of an actor's social evaluation of a target (i.e., whether an actor respects someone else) and examines the subsequent effects on that actor's dealings with that target (e.g., Cronin & Weingart, 2007).

A related, but distinct, perspective examines respect from the target's perspective, conceptualizing respect as an individual's sense of the extent to which other group members respect her or him—that is, whether one is accepted, valued, and well regarded by one's group (e.g., DeCremer, 2002; Ellemers, Doosje, & Spears, 2004; Huo et al., 2010; Simon & Stürmer, 2003; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003). In other words, this approach conceptualizes respect as an individual's sense of their own social worth or social reputation (Emler & Hopkins, 1990) within a group. This approach is distinct from the other approaches to respect since judgments of one's social reputation or social worth (of whether one is respected) reflects a meta-judgment of how one is viewed by the group. This differs from the approaches described earlier in two ways: it focuses on targets' perceptions rather than actors' actual impressions and behaviors and it is personalized rather than focused on the broad pattern of experiences that all group members share. As such, research on whether people feel respected tends to focus on the psychology of respect and, specifically, on how people evaluate—and why they care about—the respect that others accord them. Given our emphasis on employees' sense of their own social worth, we focus on research that adopts this latter approach and examines respect from the target's perspective [for a comprehensive review of other approaches to respect, see Grover (2014) and Rogers and Ashforth (2014)]. That is, we examine the prior research that conceptualizes respect in terms of whether individuals feel included, worthy, and valued within their groups.

The respect literature on which we focus has its origins in theorizing on the psychology of group membership and the collective self—that part of people's self-concept that is based on the groups to which they belong (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). In particular, this aspect of prior respect research derives from social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner,

1979) and, indeed, represents a significant innovation on the original theorizing on social identity. Social identity theory originally developed as a model for understanding intergroup dynamics and, in particular, the strength with which individuals differentiate their ingroup from other groups. It explained this phenomenon by emphasizing that people identify with groups in order to fulfill a number of fundamental psychological needs (e.g., self-enhancement, belongingness, and distinctiveness needs). Groups can best address these needs when they have a distinctive identity, which they achieve through development of, and conformity to, a clear prototype that characterizes and distinguishes the group. As a result, shared attitudes and behaviors take precedence over differences among group members; group members' individual characteristics and identity recede as they conform to, and internalize, the group's prototype. Members are motivated to fulfill their identity-related needs by signaling inclusion and belongingness through their prototypicality, becoming exemplars of the group rather than individuals within the group. As a result, social identification prompts dominance of the collective self and identity over group members' individual selves and idiosyncratic concerns (Brewer, 1993; Hogg, 2001; Hogg & Terry, 2000).

These premises of original social identity theorizing are not particularly conducive to highly identified group members evaluating or caring about the extent to which they are personally respected within the group. This is because attention to the respect or social worth that one experiences within a group requires the sense that one is, at least to some extent, an individual within a group—that is, the sense that one is a distinct entity that can be socially evaluated by others. Respect theorizing and research extends prior research by making this assumption (e.g., Bartel, Wrzesniewski, & Wiesenfeld, 2012; Huo et al., 2010; Spears, Ellemers, Doosje, & Branscombe, 2006; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003). Drawing on the key premises of social identity theory, respect research finds that individuals identify with their groups in order to fulfill key psychological needs. However, respect research extends prior theorizing and argues that groups are more likely to fulfill those needs when group members feel that they are personally respected and have high social worth within the group. When group members feel respected by the group, they are more likely to feel that it is safe to invest their identities and themselves in the group (Tyler & Blader, 2002). They will enhance their identification with the group and will experience

greater satisfaction from being a member of the group. In contrast, identification will be weaker and group membership will be less satisfying when members do not feel that they are respected and have high social worth as individuals.

Respect research, therefore, emphasizes that individual self and identity remains salient, at least to the extent that it can serve as a reference point for evaluating one's social worth within a group. From the perspective of research on respect, one's sense of social worth derives from the group's status in relation to other groups and one's status in the eyes of their fellow group members. This differs from social identity theory's argument that the group's identity sublimates the individual self and identity. More generally, respect research reflects an important theoretical innovation on the premises and theorizing of social identity theory, the theory from which it originated. This innovation is based on the view that individual self and identity retain salience and are not entirely supplanted by collective self and identity, even when one is highly identified with a group. That is, group members maintain a sense of being individuals operating within a group and do not simply lose themselves within the group. Notably, this key insight is also reflected in other subsequent innovations and theorizing on social identity and the collective self, work that likewise emphasizes the salience and agency of the individual self even when one is strongly identified with one's group (e.g., Blader, Patil, & Packer, in press; Packer, 2008; Swann, Jetten, Gómez, Whitehouse, & Bastian, 2012; van Veelen, Otten, Cadinu, & Hansen, 2015).

### **Comparison and integration: Origins and conceptual foundations**

The preceding overview of the status and respect literatures provides a critical foundation for our comparison and integration of these literatures. Perhaps the most important and obvious insight to note is the observation that, despite dramatically different theoretical origins, status and respect are highly overlapping constructs and phenomena. Status and respect are both conceptualized as reflecting individuals' sense of their social worth in the groups to which they belong. Both literatures seek to understand the same fundamental phenomenon: the dynamics of group members' attention to, and concerns about, the social worth that others in the group confer on them. This critical insight is the basis for our premise that the two literatures focus on the same fundamental psychological phenomenon.

As the previous sections pointed out, the origins and histories of the two literatures are quite different. As a result, the literatures reflect different perspectives, assumptions, and approaches to the study of social worth. The status literature derives from a broader area of research whose primary aim is to understand stratification and differences among group members. Indeed, the social hierarchy literature is based on the premise that differences among group members are inevitable, salient, and impactful. Moreover, hierarchical differentiation carries strong evaluative connotations; it concerns differentiation among group members on valued dimensions (such as status) that, ultimately, define some individuals as superior to others. In contrast, the respect literature derives from social identity theory and other work on collective self and identity. The primary aim of this literature is to understand cohesion, similarity and convergence among group members. The premise of this work is that group members sublimate their differences and seek strong bonds with one another based on shared attitudes, behaviors, and common fate. Thus, whereas the origins of the respect literature focus on what draws group members together, the origins of the status literature focus on what pulls them apart.

We believe that these differences account for the development of two distinct approaches to the study of social worth. These approaches differ on several dimensions: their perspective regarding the theorized psychological mechanisms and group processes through which social worth operates; the motivations that underlie people's concerns about social worth; and the way in which social worth is evaluated. In the following sections, we consider these differences by reviewing, comparing, and attempting to integrate the insights of the status and respect literatures with regard to each of these dimensions. We draw upon our review to highlight a number of limitations, implicit assumptions, and topics for future research in the status and respect literatures. More generally, we highlight the ways in which these literatures may each contribute to a comprehensive model of the psychology of social worth.

### **STATUS AND RESPECT: MECHANISMS AND GROUP PROCESSES**

The mechanisms and processes that have been conceptualized and examined in relation to status and respect are quite different from one another. Indeed, with regard to theorizing or research on how

status and respect operate or the dynamics through which they unfold, there is relatively little overlap between them. Status theorizing has devoted relatively more attention to the dynamics of how status is conferred in groups and less to the psychological mechanisms that underlie people's reactions to their own status. In contrast, respect theorizing has devoted less attention to how respect is conferred, focusing instead on the psychological processes that underlie group members' respect-related concerns and reactions. As a result, status theorizing has focused primarily on status mechanisms as a group process, whereas respect theorizing has focused on respect mechanisms as a psychological process. It is valuable to consider and evaluate the different emphases of these research areas since doing so can help us better understand the functions of social worth for both individuals and groups; the interpersonal and group dynamics that serve, and are shaped by, social worth; and the relevance of social worth to other literatures and phenomena. Moreover, a comparison of the mechanisms examined in the status and respect literatures highlights a number of gaps in each literature and suggests opportunities for future research.

#### **Status: Mechanisms and Group Processes**

The mechanisms by which status is attained and conferred within groups are a primary focus in the status literature, which has devoted significant effort to understanding the group processes that underlie the allocation of status among group members. In essence, this work addresses how and why group members attain high or low social worth. A primary conclusion regarding this issue is that groups confer status to members based on their perceived value and contributions toward the group's welfare. In other words, greater status is conferred on those who have competencies that are valuable to the group and who are willing to contribute to the group (Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, 1972; Blau, 1964; Ridgeway, 1982, 1984; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; Willer, 2009). By devoting greater attention and influence (i.e., status) to these individuals, groups are more likely to learn from them and to benefit from their expertise. From this view, status or social worth is an index of the extent to which one is perceived as possessing valued characteristics and as willing to leverage those characteristics to facilitate achievement of the group's goals (Barkow, 1975; Benoit-Smullyan, 1944; Berger et al., 1972; Blau, 1964; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001; Homans, 1950; Ridgeway, 1984). This

is a highly instrumental perspective on status conferral, since it argues that social worth is conferred in relation to each member's perceived instrumental value and usefulness vis-à-vis the group's success and performance, broadly defined (Anderson et al., 2015; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). By implication, this posits that social worth is not solely, or even primarily, an overall evaluation of a person but, rather, of his or her usefulness to the group. Based on this perspective, expertise matters to the extent that it is useful rather than impressive; prior contributions matter because they predict future contributions and not because they signal noble self-sacrifice; and trustworthiness matters because it signals reliability in future behavior rather than good character.

A related issue concerns the other side of status conferral—that is, the outcomes that follow from status conferral. What are the consequences of having one's group confer high status upon oneself? Prior research documents the extraordinary benefits and perks of holding a high-status position finding that those with high status enjoy greater resources, autonomy, control, physical health, and psychological well-being than their lower-status counterparts (Anderson et al., 2015; Bales et al., 1951; Barkow, 1975; Berger et al., 1980; Dixson, 1998; Marmot, 2004; Savin-Williams, 1979). These benefits are theorized to motivate group members to attain high status and, once they have attained it, to vigilantly monitor and maintain their high status to avoid losing it and the perks that come with it (Bendersky & Hays, 2012; Marr & Thau, 2014; Pettit, Yong, & Spataro, 2010).

These insights from prior status research support theorizing that conceptualizes status dynamics as a functional social exchange among group members. In this social exchange, contributions of expertise and effort toward group goals by the most instrumentally valuable group members are reciprocated by the conferral of status and deference from those who are less instrumentally valuable (Berger et al., 1980; Gould, 2002; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001). An individual's instrumentality to the group elicits greater attention and deference from others, and this attention and deference are valued by that individual and elicits contributions from them. This social exchange enables groups to overcome the challenge of motivating the most competent group members to commit to and invest in the group, despite other opportunities that may be available to them (Hardin, 1982; Kerr & Tindale, 2004; Latane, Williams, & Harkins, 1979). This mechanism also explains why those lower in the status hierarchy willingly defer and participate in the group, rather than resist and disengage, despite their

lower social worth. Indeed, status theorizing emphasizes the instrumental benefits of social worth to all parties, both those who have or seek it (e.g., employees seeking or enjoying the extrinsic perks of high social worth) and those who do not (i.e., employees who willingly relinquish influence and a range of tangible resources in order to facilitate group interests and performance).

This instrumental perspective of the mechanisms of status and social worth is consistent with, and explains, a range of related findings. For instance, it explains why individuals often pursue—and attain—status by signaling commitment to the group through generous and group-serving behaviors (Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006; Willer, 2009). This stands in contrast to the domineering and self-focused strategies that define the pursuit of high rank in terms of power and other forms of social hierarchical differentiation. These other hierarchical bases differ from status because they do not rely as strongly on voluntary conferral from others. Thus, those so inclined can attempt to grab and seize high rank on these other dimensions. Since one can attain status only when it is voluntarily conferred, the pursuit of status motivates group-orientation and pro-sociality because one must signal willingness to invest energy toward collective goals. To be clear, however, status is not bestowed simply to reciprocate benevolence to the group, *per se*, but rather to motivate and benefit from those who are most likely to enhance the group's performance.

This highlights an important caveat to the impact of signaling commitment and willingness to contribute to the group, as the impact of one's competence and willingness to help the group on status attainment depends on a group's specific needs and values. For instance, Fragale (2006) finds that high communality is a key basis for status conferral when communality is relevant to group goals, such as groups working on interdependent, but not independent, tasks. The value placed on one's competencies will depend not only on task demands, but also on the group's values (either its idiosyncratic values or the values of the broader culture in which the group is embedded). For example, whereas perceived competence tends to be the dominant basis of status conferral in individualistic cultures (e.g., United States), warmth is quite important in collectivistic cultures (e.g., Latin American countries) (Torelli, Leslie, Stoner, & Puente, 2014). As such, the dynamics of status are highly context dependent, and, thus, social worth is not a property of an individual but, rather, of an individual's fit with what the group needs and values.

At the same time, the mechanisms and group processes that allocate status within a group are imperfect, and high social worth is sometimes conferred on those who provide relatively less instrumental value to the group. This occurs because status conferral is based on perceived, rather than actual, competencies and contributions. As such, factors that shape perceived, but not actual, competence can detract from the strategic value of social worth for optimizing group performance. For instance, high extraversion or overconfidence in one's skills and abilities may enhance status attainment, regardless of one's actual competence (Anderson, Brion, Moore, & Kennedy, 2012; DesJardins, Srivastava, Kufner, & Back, 2015). Similarly, certain demographic characteristics that are perceived as implying something about an individual's competence may impact one's status, even though these characteristics are not actual proxies for competence (Berger et al., 1972, 1980). Such characteristics may include race (Webster & Driskell, 1978), gender (Pugh & Wahrman, 1983; Ridgeway, 1991, 2001), age (Freese & Cohen, 1973), social class (Moore, 1968), physical attractiveness (Anderson, John, Keltner, & Kring, 2001), parenthood (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004), and physical size (Blaker & van Vugt, 2014). These effects demonstrate breakdowns in the functionality of status dynamics since they indicate that high social worth is often accorded to individuals who do not necessarily contribute the most and, thus, who do not deserve it.

Overall, the status literature has focused primarily on the mechanisms that relate to status as a group process, emphasizing the broad pattern of dynamics through which status is allocated throughout a group and that subsequently impacts group behavior and performance. The insight that these dynamics are highly functional—addressing instrumental goals for all parties—has important organizational implications. It highlights the strategic value of social worth for organizational functioning: employees' pursuit, attainment, and maintenance of social worth are important to organizational success. Moreover, status mechanisms have a profound impact on both low- and high-social-worth employees' motivation, performance, interpersonal relationships, and intra-group behaviors.

### **Respect: Mechanisms and Group Processes**

As compared to the status literature, the respect literature has focused on a narrower set of issues regarding the underlying mechanisms and group

processes that relate to respect. Perhaps, this is because the respect literature has had less interdisciplinary influence and has been more strongly dominated by social psychological perspectives and approaches. As a result, the respect literature has tended to focus on the psychological mechanisms that shape subjective perceptions and reactions to respect, rather than analyzing the objective group processes that determine whether an individual is respected. This means, therefore, that the respect literature focuses on how individuals subjectively infer whether they are respected but does not focus as much on whether the group actually respects an individual. Thus, while the status literature describes the dynamics of social worth in a group as an objective group process from multiple perspectives, the respect literature describes the dynamics of social worth as a psychological process from the recipient's perspective alone.

The primary effort to understand the mechanisms underlying respect comes from the justice literature. Specifically, respect is a central concept in the relational models of the psychology of justice (Blader & Tyler, 2015; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003; Tyler & Lind, 1992). This work considers the mechanisms of respect in two distinct ways. First, it specifies that individuals infer respect based on their impressions of whether or not the group treats them respectfully, arguing that such impressions shape subjective justice judgments. As such, respectful treatment is a criterion used to evaluate procedural and/or interactional justice (Bies & Moag, 1986; Blader & Tyler, 2003; Colquitt, 2001; Tyler, DeGoey, & Smith, 1996).<sup>2</sup> From this perspective, respect matters because individuals expect and feel deserving of it, and, thus, respect invokes the psychology of justice.

Second, the relational models of justice also theorize that respect is an outcome of procedural justice. Specifically, these models predict that the procedural justice that members experience in the group is a critical antecedent of whether they feel respected by the group and its authorities (Blader & Tyler, 2009; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003; Tyler et al., 1996). That is, process fairness leads group members to infer that they have high social worth. This prediction has been corroborated in a wide

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<sup>2</sup> Notably, scholars use various labels to describe the justice type that encapsulates respectful behavior. This labeling issue is not central to our focus, and, for parsimony, we will refer to respect as a criterion of procedural justice [see Blader & Tyler (2003) for further discussion].

variety of contexts, including organizational contexts (e.g., Blader & Tyler, 2009; Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler et al., 1996). The impact of procedural justice on group members' perceived respect has been termed "treatment-based" respect, as it emphasizes a mechanism in which respect has its roots in the procedural justice that individuals subjectively perceive in their experiences with their group's processes. Subsequent work in this tradition extends this insight to theorize and find that perceived treatment-based respect mediates the effect of procedural justice on individuals' group-oriented attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Blader & Tyler, 2009; Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Olkkonen & Lipponen, 2006; Tyler & Blader, 2002), such as employees' affective commitment, work performance, and extra role behaviors. Notably, this approach has also been extended to consider factors besides justice—such as physical isolation or more broadly, the physical context—that likewise impact the perceived respect of one's social interactions (Bartel et al., 2012).

These positive consequences are attributed to the positive implications of perceived respect and high social worth for the collective self (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). More specifically, perceived respect fulfills the inherent drive to feel positively about one's group memberships and collective self. Respect serves this function and leads to these positive feelings because it signals that one is an included, valued member of the group. Therefore, respect matters because it shapes the evaluative significance of group membership and identification with the group (Blader & Tyler, 2009; Leach et al., 2008; Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, Halevy, & Eidelson, 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), such that respected group members feel positively about their group membership and feel enhanced identification with their group. Individuals value these feelings because they enhance the extent to which the group fulfills the needs that motivate social identification. Therefore, respected group members are intrinsically motivated to hold positive attitudes toward their group, make group-serving decisions, and engage in group-serving behaviors (e.g., Blader & Tyler, 2009; Tyler & Blader, 2000). This is consistent with other research that links respect to identification, group-serving attitudes, and group-serving behaviors (e.g., De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Huo et al., 2010), including innovative, change-oriented group-serving behaviors (Fuller, Hester, Barnett, Frey, Relyea, & Beu, 2006; Ng & Lucianetti, 2016).

Yet, the justice literature is not the only source of work on the mechanisms that underlie respect. For

instance, Spears, Ellemers, and Doosje (2005) examined other antecedents of respect besides fair treatment. Specifically, in investigating the independent and interactive effects of competence and liking as antecedents of perceived respect, they found both are important to perceived respect, but that liking is relatively more important (cf. Huo et al., 2010). This may be because liking is more closely linked to belongingness needs, whereas competence is more strongly tied to one's usefulness to the group. Yet, belongingness may be a relatively more important basis for why people care about respect and social worth (see also, Simon & Stürmer, 2005), reinforcing the notion that the mechanisms of respect are closely tied to the needs and drives of the collective self. Notably, the combination of high competence and low liking from one's ingroup members elicits more negative affect than any other combination of competence and liking, perhaps because it threatens belongingness by creating a sense that one is superior and relatively disconnected from the group [i.e., a "tall poppy" phenomenon (Feather, 1989)].

The mechanisms of respect provide insight regarding its antecedents and consequences of respect. First, these mechanisms characterize social worth as originating in one's judgments about the fairness and treatment they encounter from others, as well as one's judgments about whether other like and value them. Second, the mechanisms of respect show that respect may have profound consequences for intrinsically motivating people to work on behalf of the group, and for encouraging them to internalize the group's rules, norms, and goals. These antecedents and consequences have important organizational implications. By making people employees feel respected, organizations instill a sense of high social worth among employees that, in turn, encourages them to orient their identity around the organization (e.g., Blader & Tyler, 2009; De Cremer, 2002; DeCremer & Tyler, 2005; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003). Respect subsequently operates by motivating employees to regulate their own behavior and to contribute to organizational goals, diminishing the extent to which organizations must motivate and control behavior through extrinsic incentives, monitoring systems, and punishments (Tyler & Blader, 2000).

The benefits of this approach may be especially important when a group or organization is under threat, as this can make highly respected individuals especially likely to withdraw at the very time that the organization is most limited in its ability to elicit

contributions through extrinsic incentives or through high group status. In addition, even the prospect of feeling respected in the future can lead employees who do not currently feel respected to contribute to organizational goals as part of their effort to seek acceptance by demonstrating their potential social worth to the group (Sleebos, Ellemers, & de Gilder, 2006), particularly in the context of high-status groups (Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, & Doosje, 2002).

### **Comparison and Integration: Mechanisms and Group Processes**

As noted at the beginning of the section on mechanisms and group processes, the status and respect literatures have focused on somewhat different issues concerning the underlying mechanisms by which they operate. While the status literature has focused on the group processes through which status is actually allocated among all members of a group, the respect literature has focused on the psychological processes that shape an individual's perception of, and reactions to, the respect she or he personally experiences within a group. Of course, both issues are important and contribute to an understanding of social worth. Yet this difference highlights gaps in each research area, as well as potential avenues for future research.

For instance, the emphasis within status research suggests that respect research should, perhaps, extend its current focus on recipients (i.e., those experiencing respect) and also examine the actual antecedents and drivers of group members' conferral of respect upon the recipient. Do group members confer respect as a means of signaling acceptance and inclusion? If so, what determines whether, when, and to whom those signals are sent? Prior theorizing and research on respect and on social identity theory suggests that respect and social worth is likely to be conferred in proportion to one's perceived fit with the group's prototype (i.e., the extent to which an individual embodies the group) (Bartel et al., 2012). This would corroborate the logic that perceived inclusion is closely related to the conferral of respect, since prototypes represent the standard for establishing inclusion. In contrast, the status literature's instrumental approach to social worth would predict that respect is conferred based on one's competence and usefulness in achieving tangible group goals. Yet one's usefulness toward the achievement of tangible group goals is not necessarily aligned with prototypicality. Prototypes

primarily function to ensure a group's distinctiveness from other groups (Brewer, 1991) and, thus, prototypes may or may not reflect characteristics or behaviors that are most conducive to group performance or success. Indeed, groups often need competencies that are atypical for the group. These considerations should guide future research that seeks to understand respect from the perspective of those who confer, rather than those who receive, respect.

Conversely, the emphasis within respect research suggests that status research might think more deeply about the factors that shape individuals' perceptions of their own status. The status literature implies that individuals perceive their own status by assessing the extent to which they encounter behavioral reactions from others that ostensibly follow from status, that is, by assessing the extent to which they encounter deference, social attention, and influence from other group members. This has parallels to the respect literature's premise that people infer respect based on the treatment they encounter in their social interactions. More specifically, the justice-based criteria that people look to when evaluating the respect signaled by others' treatment have linkages to the very social behaviors that signal status. Key justice criteria such as voice and consideration have inherent linkages to the dynamics of social attention, influence, deference, etc. (i.e., voice and consideration require social attention, while influence and deference require voice and consideration). This suggests that the factors that shape perceptions of one's own respect and one's status may be quite similar (for more detail and empirical evidence, see Blader & Chen, 2011). At the same time, these specific antecedents of respect and status also differ: the antecedents of respect are procedural, whereas the antecedents of status are behavioral outcomes. Respect is shaped by the sense that one's views are considered, whereas status is shaped by whether one's views are adopted. Future research should explore whether this reflects a substantive difference between status or respect, or is simply an artifact of their respective literatures (i.e., does status actually require tangible influence in the form of control, or is it also perhaps shaped by influence in the form of input and consideration?).

Another issue that arises from comparing the mechanisms and group processes that relate to status and respect concerns their perspective regarding accuracy and consensus of social worth judgments. The logic of status theorizing emphasizes that people are quite accurate in evaluating the status that others

confer on them (Anderson, Srivastava, Beer, Spataro, & Chatman, 2006) and, more generally, that there tends to be high consensus among group members regarding the status that they confer on a given individual (Bales et al., 1951). This is because status hierarchies are an objective property of a group rather than an idiosyncratic, subjective judgment of any specific individual. Indeed, this is critical to the premise that status serves an instrumental, strategic function for groups since coordination and deference can be achieved only to the extent that status judgments are accurate and consensual.

This contrasts with the respect literature, which has not considered accuracy or consensus in respect judgments. However, these issues are relevant to the theorized mechanism of respect, which suggests a distinct explanation for consensus. The premises of the respect literature suggest that consensus may be necessary for groups to form and communicate a clear identity, one that their group members can draw upon to fulfill their needs for self-definition, meaning, uncertainty reduction, and optimal distinctiveness. A lack of consensus about who has social worth within a group would threaten fulfillment of the psychological motives that are central to the collective self. As such, consensus about the allocation of social worth in a group is important for the instrumental purpose of facilitating group performance, as well as for the identity-based goal of developing and maintaining a shared sense of the group as a distinct psychological entity in the minds of its members.

Overall, the two literatures articulate different models of the antecedents and bases of social worth. The status literature emphasizes one's instrumentality and strategic value to the group, whereas the respect literature emphasizes relational fit and closeness. Although it is likely that both types of antecedents matter, the status literature has generally failed to consider the impact of similarity, liking, and social closeness, whereas the respect literature has generally neglected an individual's instrumental value to the group (cf. Spears et al., 2005). Therefore, it is quite likely that neither literature considers the full range of antecedents of social worth. This limits the extent to which either literature accurately captures the bases of individuals' sense of their social worth in groups (and, moreover, the bases of whether they confer social worth upon others). This suggests gaps in investigations of subsequent issues, such as the types of strategies and efforts that group members undertake when they seek to enhance their social worth.

More generally, this discussion highlights limitations of the approaches emphasized in both the status and respect literatures. Specifically, it highlights that the respect literature neglects to consider how one's instrumentality factors into the dynamics of respect, and that the status literature neglects to consider how inclusion and prototypicality factor into the dynamics of status. The mechanisms emphasized in the status literature focus almost exclusively on instrumentality and reciprocal benefits—that is, status is sought because of the perks it provides and is conferred based on one's strategic value for tangibly enhancing group success and viability. The mechanisms emphasized in the respect literature focus almost exclusively on inclusion, acceptance, and identification with the group. As a result, the literatures seem to fundamentally differ in whether they conceptualize social worth as a commodity to serve tangible interests or as the glue that binds groups together.

We propose that both perspectives are likely correct and that social worth can fulfill both roles, even though the roles are independent of one another and do not necessarily converge. In other words, we propose that the mechanisms and group processes that underlie social worth reflect, and are shaped by, both instrumental and collective identity goals. Therefore, in our view, differences between the mechanisms of status versus respect are not due to an inherent difference in the phenomena examined. These differences are not the result of the literatures examining or seeking to understand respect and status as entirely separate issues. Rather, we speculate that these differences are an artifact of the theoretical origins of the status and respect literatures. This suggests that distinctions in how these literatures conceptualize and investigate their respective underlying mechanisms reflect a difference in emphasis or perspective rather than of substance. Therefore, it would be fruitful for future research to reflect on these differences and to integrate the differing perspectives. Doing so is likely to facilitate a more comprehensive model of the psychological mechanisms and group processes through which social worth is conferred, perceived, and reacted to.

#### **STATUS AND RESPECT: MOTIVATIONS AND BEHAVIOR**

As the preceding section suggests, the status and respect literatures differ with regard to the underlying individual motivations and subsequent behaviors that they emphasize. Their differing

analyses of why individuals value and react to social worth has significant implications for groups and organizations. In particular, it has implications for the types of behaviors that follow from individuals' sense of their social worth, the conditions under which those behaviors are likely, and the energy and persistence that individuals devote to those behaviors. Of course, these are significant issues in relation to organizational theorizing, since they shape the extent to which social worth facilitates or hinders employee behavior and performance and, ultimately, organizational functioning.

### Status: Motivations and Behavior

Status research emphasizes that the motivational underpinnings of status are highly individualistic and extrinsic in nature. That is, status research largely attributes the value that individuals place on status to the wide range of material, social, and psychological rewards that accrue to those who have status (Bales et al., 1951; Barkow, 1975; Berger et al., 1980; Dixon, 1998; Marmot, 2004; Savin-Williams, 1979). However, although these individualistic, extrinsic motivators are a primary foundation for why people value and pursue status, the status literature emphasizes that these motivators prompt a focus on others and spur group-serving behaviors. This is due to the conferred nature of status: one can reap the rewards associated with status only if other group members confer status upon them. Status or social worth is not a fixed or secure property of an individual but, rather, the property of those who confer it. And to elicit status conferral from others, individuals must demonstrate their instrumental value to the group (Berger et al., 1972; Blau, 1964; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001; Ridgeway, 1984). This motivates individuals to highlight their competence, as well as their commitment and willingness to devote energy toward collective goals and performance (Berger, Fisek, Norman, & Zelditch, 1977; Flynn, 2003; Flynn et al., 2006; Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006; Willer, 2009)—that is, to act in valued, group-oriented ways and to contribute to their group's performance and welfare. Although the goals, concerns, and motivations that underlie status are eminently egocentric, the behaviors that follow from those motivations are group-oriented and prosocial. These behaviors do not reflect an intrinsic motivation to help the group but, rather, acknowledgment that helping the group is the way to serve one's individualistic status-related motives.

This dynamic applies not only to those seeking status attainment, but also those who have already attained status, as high-status individuals are concerned about maintaining their high-status position (e.g., Blader & Chen, 2012, 2014). Status conferral is a dynamic, ongoing process, and high-status individuals rely on others to continually confer status on them in order to maintain their privileged status position. Therefore, even once individuals have attained status, they must continue to focus on others and signal their contributions to the group by acting in group-serving ways in order to avoid the pain of status loss (Marr & Thau, 2014; Pettit et al., 2010) and to maintain a sense that they deserve their high-status position (Anderson et al., 2012). Indeed, because status conferral is a dynamic and ongoing process, status hierarchies are regarded as relatively mutable (Hays & Bendersky, 2015); thus, status maintenance and attainment concerns are chronically active. Therefore, the motivations that underlie status, as well as the group-serving behavioral consequences that they prompt, are likely to be especially robust and persistent across time.

Recent theorizing argues that the motivations that relate to status are, perhaps, not exclusively extrinsic in nature. Rather, individuals are also motivated by an individualistic, fundamental need for status in its own right (Anderson et al., 2015). That is, in addition to the extrinsic benefits of status, individuals may be motivated by an inherent or fundamental need for admiration, prestige, influence, and deference from others—that is, a need to feel positively distinguished from others. The need for status is consistent with the notion that people have a basic desire for prestige, recognition, attention, and appreciation (Maslow, 1943). This fundamental need for status may have evolutionary origins, since high status increases fitness throughout human evolution (Buss, 2008; Ellis, 1995; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001; Kenrick, Griskevicius, Neuberg, & Schaller, 2010; Price, Sloman, Gardner, Gilbert, & Rohde, 1994). Since it is a fundamental need, the drive for status shapes individuals' psychological functioning, goals, and behavior in ways that are distinct from other motives, including the need to belong (Leary, Jongman-Sereno, & Diebels, 2014). Although not an extrinsic motivation, the need for status is, nevertheless, a highly individualistic motive that is linked to individual self and identity (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). And, thus, it remains somewhat of an incongruity that the need for status prompts group-oriented, prosocial behavioral consequences.

These insights about the individualistic motivational underpinnings and effects of status impact individuals' efforts and performance in groups. For instance, situations that provide relatively greater opportunities to gain social worth (e.g., working in the presence of a high-status co-actor) motivate better performance (Flynn & Amanatullah, 2012). High status also motivates individuals to exhibit their value to the group in somewhat riskier ways, such as engaging in voice behaviors (Janssen & Gao, 2015). Moreover, there are intriguing performance implications of status losses, which differ as a function of one's status position (Marr & Thau, 2014). The prospect of losing high status is highly threatening and consequential, as status loss can undermine one's sense of being worthy and valued. As a result, high-status individuals have more difficulty than do low-status individuals performing well after status loss since those with high status face greater self-threat and anxiety from status loss.

Notably, the highly individualistic motives that are attributed to status can also lead to negative consequences for organizations. The pursuit of status can breed unproductive group dynamics. For example, rather than accepting an existing status hierarchy, group members may be motivated to strive for higher status by challenging others' perceptions of them (Kilduff, Willer, & Anderson, 2016) and engaging in status conflict with others (Bendersky & Hays, 2012). These actions can impede the group's welfare and performance. Moreover, these conflicts may lead to individuals seeking, but not attaining, the status that they believe they deserve. This will likely prompt reduced motivation to contribute to the group. Overall, status disagreements and status conflict will hinder group performance (Bendersky & Hays, 2012; Kilduff et al., 2016), diminishing the instrumental value of status dynamics.

### **Respect: Motivations and Behavior**

In contrast, the theorized motivational underpinnings of respect are far less extrinsic or individualistic than those ascribed to status. In particular, respect is linked primarily to motivations related to collective self and identity—that is, motivations to feel included and valued by one's groups (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Huo et al., 2010; Simon & Stürmer, 2003, 2005; Tyler & Blader, 2000). Concerns about inclusion are largely rooted in people's fundamental need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), whereas the motivation to feel valued by one's

group addresses individuals' drive to feel positively about themselves through their group memberships. When concerns about one's inclusion and value within a group are addressed (i.e., when one feels respected by the group), that individual's identification with the group increases and the group becomes a more central aspect of how they think and feel about themselves. As a result, they commit to the group, identify with it, and internalize its norms, standards for behavior, goals, and interests (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dukerich, Golden, & Shortell, 2002; Haslam & Ellemers, 2005; Hogg, 2001; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). In other words, the motivational underpinnings of respect reside in people's concerns about cultivating a positive sense of themselves through their collective self and identity. Respect satisfies these concerns and prompts them to psychologically invest themselves in the group. As a result, they are inherently motivated to contribute to the group and to advance group goals and success.

This logic and research highlight that respect prompts group-serving attitudes and behaviors because it satisfies motives that relate to the collective self and social identification. This premise has been further verified in a number of different ways. For instance, prior research finds that respect must come from ingroup members—either group authorities or fellow group members (Huo et al., 2010; Simon & Stürmer, 2003; Tyler & Blader, 2000)—in order to elicit positive effects on affect and behavior (Ellemers et al., 2004). This is consistent with research demonstrating that the positive effects of perceived justice—a precursor to respect—emerge primarily when justice comes from ingroup, not outgroup, authorities (Smith, Tyler, Huo, Ortiz, & Lind, 1998). Moreover, respect from outgroup members may even prompt negative reactions, since it can be interpreted as a threat to one's belongingness to one's ingroup (Ellemers et al., 2004). The premise that respect relates to motives regarding the collective self is also supported by evidence that respect matters more when one's belongingness is in question (De Cremer, 2002, 2003). Overall, these findings show that reactions to respect depend on activation and relevance of the collective self (which are examined in these studies by varying the source of respect) and corroborate the argument that the motivational underpinnings of respect are linked to the collective self.

Notably, the various bases of respect differ in the extent to which they satisfy group members' drive to

feel included and valued in their groups (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Huo & Binning, 2008; Huo et al., 2010). For example, liking-based respect is more closely linked to concerns about inclusion and belongingness; competence-based respect is more closely linked to feeling valued by the group; and treatment-based respect (i.e., fair treatment) would seem to address both concerns. Huo et al. (2010) predict and corroborate these points, finding that the impact of treatment-based respect is mediated by both inclusion (in the form of liking) and feeling valued. This is because treatment-based respect, in the form of fair process, signals that the procedures that an individual encounters are consistent with the full set of privileges and entitlements extended to all group members, and thus signals inclusion. At the same time, the substance of fair process addresses individuals' concerns about feeling valued since voice, neutrality, explanations, and opportunities for appeal signal to group members that the group values their viewpoints, participation, and contributions. That is, the substance of process fairness consists of procedures that encourage involvement and engagement and, as such, foster a sense of high social worth by making group members feel included and valued.

It is worth noting that not all theorizing and research on respect shares this perspective on its motivational underpinnings. In particular, some organizational theorizing on respect—specifically, theorizing on *particularized respect* (Rogers & Ashforth, 2014) or *ascribed respect* (Grover, 2014), which focus on the respect that individuals experience due to their individual attributes—links respect primarily to the need for status (Anderson et al., 2015). Yet, as noted in the earlier section, the need for status is largely an individualistic motive, which represents a desire to feel that one is positively distinguished from others in the group, with all the benefits and perks that follow from that. The need for status is not concerned about one's inclusion in the group. Moreover, the need for status conceptualizes one's value to the group as important because it distinguishes the individual as superior to others, and not because it reassures the individual about his or her group membership, fosters identification with the group, or enhances the collective self. Therefore, the need for status is not strongly linked to the collective self but, rather, represents a highly individual need that is often fulfilled through one's group. Theorizing that links particularized or ascribed respect to the need for status diverges from other respect research in terms of the underlying motives

that relate to respect. Future research should consider this distinction and reflect the recognition that respect based on one's individual attributes can be either the basis for superiority or for acceptance by the group.

### Comparison and Integration: Motivations and Group Processes

Our review of the motivations emphasized in the status and respect literatures highlights significant differences between these literatures in terms of the psychological motives that relate to social worth. Therefore, although status and respect have been tied to many of the same behavioral outcomes, such as group-serving behavior, the motivations that drive those outcomes are significantly different. Specifically, status theorizing emphasizes psychological motives related to individual self and identity: people are theorized to care about status because it facilitates extrinsic, self-interested goals (e.g., to attain resources, have influence) and because it addresses an individualistic, fundamental need to feel positively distinguished from others (i.e., need for status). Therefore, group-serving behavior is simply a way of fulfilling these motives, given the realities of status conferral. In contrast, respect theorizing emphasizes psychological motives related to collective self and identity: people are theorized to care about respect because it shapes how they view themselves as group members (specifically, whether they feel that their group both includes and values them) and leads them to identify with their group. Group-serving behavior is an outcome of this group identification, reflecting an intrinsic desire to help the group.

These are significantly different models of why people value social worth, with differing implications for the role of groups and group membership in relation to social worth. In the status literature, groups are a forum in which social worth is allocated and, thus, a forum in which one can pursue one's individualistic motives and goals. An implication of this perspective is that membership should be highly substitutable among groups, as long as one can attain the same or greater social worth in other groups as in one's own group. However, according to the respect literature, specific group memberships play a more fundamental role in the psychology of social worth. The reason is that specific group memberships are viewed as an integral part of one's identity and self-concept; thus, individuals' social worth in a group critically shapes their sense of who they are—that is,

their identity. Once people become identified with a specific group, their social worth from that group has psychological significance precisely because it comes from that group. The same degree of social worth from another group would not be as significant and would not address the individual's motives as well. As such, social worth is not easily replaced or substituted elsewhere, and, thus, social worth is a part of the ties that bind individuals to their group.

What can we make of these differences in the motives that are linked to status versus respect? Do such differences suggest that status and respect represent either fundamentally different issues or different approaches to examining the same issue? We favor the latter conclusion, consistent with our premise that the status and respect literatures are two distinct approaches to understanding the psychology of social worth. We regard the motives that have been considered in relation to status as also relevant to understanding respect, and vice versa. Overall, we regard the full range of motives examined in the status and respect literatures as depicting a more complete picture of the motives that relate to social worth, as compared to the set of motives examined in either of these research areas on their own.

This understanding highlights gaps and suggestions for future research for both the status and respect literatures. With regard to the status literature, we draw upon the respect literature to propose that the social worth communicated via one's status is likely to impact an individual's collective self and its related motives. Status conferral is a group process, and a group process that provides social validation in the form of high status is likely to enhance the psychological significance and importance of group membership and, ultimately, to motivate social identification with the group. Indeed, social identity theory emphasizes that people identify with groups that foster a positive sense of self (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), enhancing the group-oriented and group-serving nature of subsequent attitudes, decisions, and behaviors. However, little consideration has been given to the linkages between status and identification [with the exception of Willer (2009), whose findings are consistent with our reasoning]. Investigation of the link between status and social identification may significantly advance status research. For instance, this work may reveal a distinct and unexplored mechanism by which status motivates other-orientation (Blader et al., 2016); consideration toward others (Blader & Chen, 2012; Fast et al., 2009); generosity (Hays & Blader, 2017); and focus on collective interests (Willer, 2009). Prior

status research attributes these findings to status maintenance concerns, a highly instrumental and extrinsically motivated explanation. Our reasoning suggests a far more intrinsically motivated account for these findings which, in turn, suggest that the link between status and prosociality may be more reliable and robust than previously thought. Whereas prior theorizing suggests that status will enhance prosociality only if it is publicly observable by ingroup members (Griskevicius, Tybur, & Van den Bergh, 2010), our alternate prediction suggests that this effect will emerge even for prosociality that is private and unobservable.

In addition, linkages between status and the collective self may reveal novel insights about factors that moderate the dynamics of status. For instance, the impact of status on group-serving behavior may be accentuated when the group is under threat and most in need of valuable members' contributions. Similarly, status conflicts may increase when there is disagreement over how to best serve collective interests (and who can best serve those interests), rather than when opportunities for individual status mobility arise. More generally, status dynamics may be motivated and heightened by concerns about collective welfare and not only about status attainment and maintenance. Linkages between status and social identification would also imply that group norms are likely to moderate the impact of status on prosociality, an effect that would resolve some apparent paradoxes in prior research. For example, Guinote, Cotzia, Sandhu, and Siwa (2015) found that status diminishes prosociality, in contrast to the aforementioned research that finds the precisely opposite effect. These differing findings can be reconciled by recognizing that status is likely to enhance group-normative, prototypical behavior. In most groups, group norms prescribe prosocial behavior toward ingroup members and contributions to the collective welfare. However, in some groups [such as those examined by Guinote et al. (2015)], group norms prescribe domineering and competitive behavior. As a result, by neglecting the potential role of social identification and group norms, Guinote et al.'s (2015) findings may be less informative about status in general and more informative about the impact of group norms in determining the effects of status.

With regard to the respect literature, the focus on collective motives may likewise provide an overly narrow understanding of why people care about respect. Being highly respected in a group is generally associated with tangible benefits (e.g., greater

control, influence, and resources) that likely have some role in shaping the dynamics of respect. Moreover, respect may inflate people's sense of deservingness and entitlement in the same way that status does, with the subsequent effect of decreased contributions to the group (Hays & Blader, 2017). These effects highlight that self-interested, individualistic motives may play some role in the dynamics of status. To the extent that they do, future research should explore the interplay between these motives and the collective motives that have been previously linked to respect.

Our analysis has focused primarily on the psychological motives fulfilled by high status and respect. However, the same analysis could be applied to better understanding the dynamics and reactions of low-social-worth members. For instance, the respect literature suggests that low perceived social worth (i.e., low respect) would prompt disengagement from the group. Yet this prediction contrasts with the reality that group members with low perceived social worth often remain engaged in their groups and, indeed, that groups rely on these individuals' continued affiliation and efforts. The status literature can account for this paradox since it theorizes that low-status group members accept their low-social-worth position and defer to others in order to benefit from the expertise and contributions of their high-status counterparts (Henrich & Gil-White, 2001). In addition, recent status theorizing argues that low-status group members sustain their commitment to the group in order to maintain the appearance of being "reasonable" group members, thus ensuring that they receive at least the minimal benefits of group membership (Ridgeway & Nakagawa, unpublished manuscript). Put otherwise, disengaging from the group's status dynamics and resisting pressures to defer to those with higher status put low-status members at risk of appearing unreasonable and, in turn, of becoming further cut off from the benefits of group membership. Greater recognition of individualistic motives may address a gap in respect theorizing with regard to the continued engagement of relatively less respected group members.

In sum, our premise that status and respect are the same essential phenomenon highlights a range of gaps in prior research, directions for future research, and potential explanations for seemingly inconsistent findings regarding the motivational underpinnings of social worth. It is hard to imagine that the psychology of status is not impacted by—and does not impact—people's inherent drive to define themselves according to their group memberships. Similarly, the very

innovations in social identity theory that gave rise to the study of respect suggest that psychological motives related to the individual self also impact why people care about and react to the respect they feel from their group. Overall, our reasoning suggests that a complete model of the psychology of social worth is one that recognizes that social worth relates to both individual and collective motives. This insight encourages not only a more comprehensive understanding of the motives related to social worth, but also future research on how these sometimes conflicting motives are integrated in relation to the dynamics of social worth. Indeed, understanding the integration of psychological motives linked to the individual and the collective self may provide valuable insights into a wide range of other research areas.

## STATUS AND RESPECT JUDGMENTS

In this final section, we consider how individuals evaluate their status or respect—that is, the judgment processes that shape individuals' perceptions of their status and respect in their groups. It is important to understand status and respect judgments because they are an early and critical determinant of any subsequent process or outcome related to one's status or respect. Indeed, in order to understand the dynamics of social worth, we must understand how individuals evaluate their social worth in the first place. Yet there is a fundamental difference between the status and respect literatures regarding this topic. In particular, the literatures differ as to whether or not they conceptualize social worth judgments as inherently comparative. We consider this fundamental issue in this section.

### Status and Respect Judgments: Prior Research

A prevailing approach in the status literature is to view status judgments as reflecting people's sense of their own status relative to the status of others in their group (e.g., Anderson et al., 2012). High status, therefore, signifies that one is held in higher regard than other group members—that is, high status does not indicate simply that one is viewed positively but, rather, *more* positively than others. By the same token, low status signifies that one is held in lower regard than other group members. This approach is consistent with—and, in many respects, foundational to—the social hierarchy literature and its fundamental perspective on the nature of social relations. Vertical differentiation among individuals (i.e., social hierarchy) is a stratification process that

inherently involves an individual achieving or receiving higher rank than others. Therefore, individuals' rank within their groups' status hierarchies is primarily an issue of their comparative position, not of whether their degree of status is low or high in relation to any absolute standards or even to any standards outside of the group.

In contrast, the respect literature does not conceptualize respect judgments as based on, or requiring, social comparison (Tyler & Blader, 2003). Rather, respect may be assessed via comparison to autonomous standards that shape expectations of what constitutes respectful versus disrespectful treatment. This approach is consistent with the social identity literature from which respect research emerged, as that literature emphasizes group members' convergence around the group prototype. From this viewpoint, the group prototype is the standard that serves as a reference point to which members gravitate and against which they are evaluated. Everyone in a group can be prototypical, and one member's prototypicality has no direct bearing on another member's prototypicality. The standards and expectations used to assess respect can reflect a wide range of factors, including individual, group, and cultural characteristics. For example, a group's norms and prototype will shape members' definitions and expectations of what constitutes respect in a given group. When people are treated in a way that conforms to the group's norms and prototype, they perceive that they are respected and see themselves as included and valued members of the group. In this way, perceived respect is a reflected appraisal from the group that the individual is prototypical and, thus, is included and valued. Other factors—such as national culture, industry norms, and self-esteem—may also impact definitions and expectations of what constitutes respect. The key point to emphasize is that respect is a subjective evaluation involving a comparison between one's encounters and one's expectations and standards regarding respect. As such, respect is an absolute judgment in the “eye of the beholder” and does not require comparison with the perceived respect bestowed on other group members.

### **Status and Respect Judgments: Comparison and Integration**

The status and respect literatures emphasize differing perspectives on how people evaluate status or respect. In particular, they differ in terms of whether or not these judgments are inherently based on social comparisons with other group members. Our premise

that status and respect are the same concept makes this a significant distinction, since it highlights the need to integrate and resolve these differing perspectives (see Tyler & Blader, 2003). If social worth judgments require social comparison, then social worth is an inherently positional resource, a fixed-pie commodity that group members must vie against one another to attain. Thus, other group members are both integral sources for conferral of social worth and adversaries against whom one must compete for its attainment. Moreover, high perceived social worth connotes not only inclusion and worthiness as a group member, but also a sense that one has prevailed over others. Yet this perspective runs directly counter to the collective self and its drive to feel social bonds with one's ingroup members and a sense of belongingness within one's group overall.

Therefore, a key question to consider in reconciling these issues is whether the emphasis on social comparisons in the status literature is inherent to social worth judgments or an artifact of its origins in the social hierarchy literature. In other words, does status research impose an unnecessary assumption when it operationalizes status as a socially comparative judgment, or does it reflect an inherent property of this construct? While status theorizing clearly assumes the latter, theorizing and research on respect suggests the possibility of the former. In particular, it raises the question of whether status research is based on an assumption that is applicable to other forms of hierarchical differentiation but not necessarily to status. Other bases of hierarchical differentiation—such as power, wealth, attention, and influence—involve the allocation of finite resources. Stratification along these bases, therefore, necessitates tradeoffs among the members of a group: for one group member to have more, others must necessarily have less. Yet this is not an inherent property of social worth—the admiration that a group member enjoys from others does not inherently diminish the admiration conferred on other group members.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, in the extreme, members of

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to clarify that a great deal of prior research on status has conflated it with other bases, or consequences, of hierarchical differentiation. For instance, influence is often embedded in the operationalizations of status. However, as noted, there is emerging consensus about the distinctiveness of status based on a conceptualization of it as respect and admiration. Our arguments here relate to this approach and would not apply to definitions of status that conflate it with other factors that are inherently finite and fixed pie.

a group can all have great admiration for one another or, alternately, can think quite poorly of one another. Notably, the notion that status is not a finite resource does not make it any less of a basis for hierarchical differentiation. Differences in the status conferred on each group member are still likely, and members will still be vertically differentiated (i.e., stratified) on the basis of status. However, conceptualizing status as non-zero sum allows for greater latitude in how status is allocated and in the overall levels of self-perceived social worth among group members.

This suggestion contrasts with the approach adopted in a great deal of prior status research. Status is often operationalized—assessed or manipulated—in socially comparative terms, such as asking people to indicate their status rank within their groups (e.g., by noting their position on a picture of a ladder, with the bottom and top of the ladder representing the lowest- and highest-status members, respectively). Of course, if status is operationalized in fixed-pie, competitive terms, then it is more likely that it will map onto competitive, individualistic dynamics and consequences. Yet the insights from the respect literature suggest that it may be worthwhile to consider whether social comparisons are, indeed, an inherent aspect of how people evaluate their social worth in groups. Investigation of this issue may reveal that social worth judgments are not inherently comparative but can become comparative in the presence of certain individual, group, and contextual factors. For instance, certain organizational practices—such as formal performance appraisal systems that necessitate the rank ordering of employees—likely cultivate a view of social worth based on social comparisons. In contrast, when organizations focus on objective standards for evaluating employees and benchmarking performance, they encourage social worth judgments that are not comparative. In sum, rather than focusing on whether or not social worth judgments are comparative, it may be more fruitful to develop a comprehensive understanding of the factors that determine the extent to which they *are* comparative and, moreover, to compare the effects of both types of social worth judgments (Tyler & Blader, 2003).

## CONCLUSION

Are status and respect the same or different? Our review and analysis of these distinct research literatures have highlighted their commonalities and differences, though considerably more of the latter

than of the former. Status research differs from respect research in terms of its theoretical origins, underlying mechanisms, relevant group processes, motivational underpinnings, and judgment processes, to name a few. These distinct research literatures, therefore, depict quite different images of how and why people pursue and assess social worth and of the consequences that follow from their sense of their social worth in their groups. More fundamentally, status research is based on the premise that individuals seek and confer social worth in the service of highly individualistic personal goals and desires. As such, status dynamics are theorized to facilitate and reinforce bonds among individuals and groups based on mutual dependence in order to satisfy personal ends. This is a highly instrumental perspective on social worth, viewing social worth as a means to achieve tangible benefits. In contrast, respect research is based on the premise that individuals inherently crave a sense that they are valued by the groups to which they belong, as this enables them to feel positively about their group memberships and their collective self. From this perspective, respect (and, thus, social worth) is important because it enhances people's sense of themselves not only as included, but also as central, important, and admired members of the specific groups to which they belong. This perspective highlights that respect facilitates and reinforces social bonds that are based on shared identity, which run deeper and are less substitutable than instrumental bonds that facilitate individualistic goals.

Given these fundamental differences, how can status and respect possibly be the same, as we propose? We argue that their primary commonality relates to their fundamental conceptualization—that is, the fundamental psychological phenomenon to which status and respect refer. Status and respect overlap in the conceptual issue or space that they address since both are indices of one's social worth in a group. Therefore, they are essentially the same fundamental concept. However, this does not mean that the status and respect research literatures reflect overlapping, redundant research efforts. The wide-ranging differences between status research and status research are genuine, but we argue that they reflect differences in how status and respect have been studied, rather than differences in their fundamental nature.

This suggests that status research and respect research portray distinct aspects of the dynamics of social worth. Both approaches are valid, but neither approach conveys a complete picture of the

dynamics of social worth on its own. A model of social worth is incomplete if it neglects the affinity, loyalty, solidarity, and deep psychological significance that individuals experience for a specific group in which they feel high social worth. Similarly, a model of social worth that neglects the individualistic concerns, goals, and benefits that individuals fulfill through their groups is also incomplete. The dynamics of social worth surely involve both of these, and, thus, a more comprehensive understanding of these dynamics requires the integration of both approaches. Yet prior work has not addressed such integration. The status and respect literatures have remained largely independent of one another, and when they have been considered in tandem, their differences have not been given adequate or systematic consideration.

In sum, we propose that the assumptions, theorizing, findings, and implications of status and respect research have yet to be integrated to develop broad insights about social worth in groups. Instead, they reflect distinct insights about the dynamics of social worth that relate to individual versus collective selves (respectively). Their integration suggests many novel insights and possibilities for future research. For instance, the status literature implies that interpersonal competition and conflict, egocentric goals, inequality, and personal entitlement are inherent characteristics of the dynamics of social worth. Perhaps, however, social worth is more strongly associated with these characteristics when individual and contextual factors (e.g., individual values, personality, organizational and national culture, reward systems, and performance appraisal processes) give precedence to the individual self over the collective self. And, of course, the respect literature's characterization of social worth as enhancing group identification, group commitment, intrinsic motivation to help the group, and other group-oriented outcomes apply when individual and contextual factors give precedence to the collective self and identity.

Overall, we propose that a comprehensive framework of the antecedents, judgments, mechanisms, motivations, and consequences of social worth should reflect the insights from both the status and the respect literatures. This framework should ideally reflect the premise that the individualistic approach of the status literature and the collectivistic approach of the respect literature reflect two independent bases of social worth. It should also highlight that these bases can be compatible with one another—for example, that the dynamics of social

worth for a particular individual can reflect strong influences of both individualistic and collectivistic bases. In this way, we differentiate the dynamics of social worth from theorizing on related phenomena and constructs that emphasizes an inherent tension between people's drives for belongingness (i.e., inclusion, similarity, and cohesion) and distinctiveness (i.e., uniqueness and individuality) (Baumeister, Ainsworth, & Vohs, 2015; Brewer, 1991; Leonardelli & Pickett, 2009; Leonardelli, Pickett, & Brewer, 2010; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Zuckerman, 2017).

More specifically, we expect that these drives do not necessarily oppose one another when it comes to social worth. This is because the individualistic aspects of social worth—the main dynamics captured in the status literature—are not fundamentally about separation and distance from others but, rather, about being admired and held in high esteem by others. Admiration and esteem do not inherently imply separation and distance; rather, they suggest that one is an embraced, valued member of the group. Admiration and esteem reflect an assessment that an individual's attributes and contributions fare positively in relation to some consensually valued standard for evaluation, such as the competencies admired within a group or a group's overall prototype. Faring well in these evaluations is not a signal that one is excluded or separate, but a signal that one is distinguished for the extent to which one embodies the group. More generally, admiration and high social worth based on consensually valued dimensions within a group are not an inherent basis for feeling separate and distant but, rather, are likely to make one feel central and valued. In other words, high social worth can reflect a sense that one is distinct *and* accepted. This distinguishes social worth—specifically, status—from other bases of hierarchical differentiation, since other bases do inherently involve a tradeoff between high rank and separation or social distance (Magee & Smith, 2013; Piff et al., 2010).

Of course, these points do not exclude the possibility social worth may involve a tension between distinctiveness and belongingness. For instance, this tension may arise when social worth is experienced or interpreted as individual superiority (rather than centrality or prototypicality); as a sense that one is needed, but not relationally valued or embraced, by others (Leary et al., 2014); as a basis for hubris and personal entitlement (rather than relatedness and group-orientation); or as a zero-sum, fixed-pie commodity that can be achieved only through direct

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intragroup competition and evaluated only through social comparisons (rather than as an expandable commodity whose allocation and evaluation are based on comparison against absolute standards) (Hurwitz, Pettit, & Blader, 2016). The tension arises in these instances because they reflect situations that alter the meaning of social worth, shifting it from “an individual’s social worth within his or her specific group” to “an individual’s personal self-worth that happens to derive from other group members’ views.” In other words, we distinguish between conceptualizing social worth as one’s “worthiness as a group member” (i.e., as a member of the social fabric of their specific group) and “self-worth from group members.” The former conceptualization views differentiation and belongingness as compatible with one another, whereas the latter views them as at odds with one another.

Overall, we do not think that the differences between the status and respect literatures reflect opposing perspectives on social worth but, rather, that they reflect independent bases of social worth. These bases may operate independently of, in accordance with, or opposed to one another, similar to the dynamic between other dichotomies such as competence versus warmth (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007) and self- versus other-orientation (De Dreu & Nauta, 2009). In other words, the specific way in which these bases come together to shape overall social worth—whether they combine additively or in some interactive manner—is likely shaped by a range of individual and contextual factors. Future research should explore these factors.

In closing, perhaps the most significant and least controversial insights from our review and comparative analysis of the status and respect literatures relate to the importance and potential value of a) status scholars paying greater attention to the linkages between status and social identity, the collective self, belongingness needs, and relational concerns and b) respect scholars paying greater attention to the instrumental functions and goals that relate to respect, as well as the broader mechanisms and group processes through which respect operates. We highlight these two insights because status is a phenomenon that plays out in group settings and is certain to activate the psychology of group membership, while respect surely serves instrumental functions and shapes group processes. These are important issues for both literatures, irrespective of agreement with our reasoning that status and respect focus on the same fundamental issue. More generally, scholars should be mindful of the extent to

which research reveals inherent differences between status and respect, rather than embracing unquestioned and, perhaps, overly narrow assumptions and approaches.

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