It’s About Time: Intergroup Emotions as Time-Dependent Phenomena

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One of the most immediately obvious facts about intergroup relations is that they often involve emotions, particularly in terms of people’s negative reactions to outgroups. People often feel angry, resentful, frustrated, disgusted, or afraid when they think about or encounter members of rival or challenging groups. Yet, as many of the chapters in this volume note, the role of emotions has received relatively little attention from researchers and theorists in this area until recently.

Specifically, there have been two major conceptual approaches to understanding stereotyping, prejudice, and intergroup behavior in general. One is based in the social cognition tradition, emphasizing the role of stereotypes, attitudes, and other mental representations of the perceiver’s beliefs and evaluations concerning social groups. Research in this tradition has led to great advances in our understanding of how such beliefs are acquired, activated, applied, and
(sometimes) altered. Yet in its focus on beliefs and evaluations, the approach has given relatively little attention to emotions. The same is true of the other major conceptual approach, based in the social identity theory/self-categorization theory tradition. This tradition has produced tremendous insights into the ways that group membership shapes perceptions and actions toward other people, but despite Tajfel’s (1981) acknowledgement that ingroups have affective significance for their members, again emotions have received relatively little emphasis in the actual research literature.

In our own recent work we have developed a new theoretical model that puts emotions very much in the picture. In this chapter, we first briefly review this model and some recent evidence that supports it. We then turn to a question that we have not emphasized in our previous writings, the implications of our model for thinking about emotions and other intergroup phenomena as time-dependent phenomena – that is, as unfolding across time in a way that may differ from one moment to the next.

**Intergroup Emotions Theory**

Intergroup Emotions Theory (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Smith, 1993, 1999) takes the notion of a socially extended self as its starting point, borrowing directly from the social identity approach. When a group membership is salient, people think of themselves as interchangeable members of the ingroup, rather than in terms of their unique personal identities. As group membership becomes part of the self in this way, it functions in all the ways that the psychological self does, as several studies have demonstrated (Smith & Henry, 1996). Importantly, this includes the regulation of emotional responses.

In our original conceptualization of Intergroup Emotions Theory we adopted the assumptions of popular appraisal theories of emotions (later in this chapter we will discuss a
newer model of emotion that makes somewhat different basic assumptions). We postulated that events, objects, and groups are appraised in terms of their implications for the ingroup (not just the individual self). Intergroup Emotions Theory holds that group-based emotions are generated by this appraisal process, just as individual emotions are generated by appraisals of objects or events that impinge on the individual self (Frijda, 1986; Roseman, 1984). For example, if someone thinking of himself as a member of a group perceives that his ingroup is threatened by an outgroup’s goals or actions, and believes that the ingroup is weak, he may experience group-based anxiety or fear. Among the consequences may be a desire or impulse to avoid or escape from the outgroup. Group-based emotions may be directed at the ingroup as well. For example, someone may feel collective pride if they believe that their group has produced some worthwhile accomplishment. Or feelings of collective guilt may result if someone appraises their group as having violated important moral principles (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998).

In summary, Intergroup Emotions Theory postulates that when people identify with a group, they will appraise social objects or events in terms of their implications for the group. These appraisals produce group-based emotions and in turn collective action tendencies. The emotions are predicted to mediate the effects of the appraisals on the action tendencies, demonstrating their functional role in the overall process.

**Evidence Supporting Intergroup Emotions Theory**

Our research and that of others has already provided several types of evidence supporting the hypotheses of Intergroup Emotions Theory. Space limitations do not allow a complete review of that evidence here, but fuller summaries are available elsewhere (Devos, Silver, Mackie, & Smith, 2002).
Studies by Yzerbyt, Dumont, Gordijn, and Wigboldus (2002) demonstrated the role of self-categorization in producing emotional reactions to events that affect ingroup members – even though they do not affect the perceiver personally. In these studies participants read about an action that negatively affected another person, who shared one group membership with the participants (i.e., psychology student) but differed in terms of another group membership (i.e., was a student at a rival university). The researchers subtly manipulated the salience of one or another of these group memberships, and asked about the participants’ emotional reactions to the described event. Notably, although the event had absolutely no personal implications for the participants, when their common group membership with the victim was salient they had corresponding emotions (such as anger and unhappiness). This result suggests that the reaction was based on the collective self elicited by the currently salient ingroup membership.

Initial evidence also exists for the role of identification with the group in producing intergroup emotions. Shortly after the September, 2001 attacks on the U.S., for example, we (Mackie, Silver, Maitner, & Smith, 2002) measured UCSB students’ identification with the group “Americans” and assessed the extent to which they felt a series of emotions in reaction to a hypothetical terrorist attack on their country (not the 9-11 events in particular, although we can be sure that these were most salient). The more strongly participants identified as Americans, the more anger and the more fear they reported about terrorist attacks on their country. As suggested by Intergroup Emotions Theory, then, the more central the group membership to the self, the more intensely emotions are experienced on behalf of the group.

Other studies (Mackie et al., 2000) provided evidence for the nature and impact of intergroup appraisals, as well as the distinctiveness of specific intergroup emotions and their action tendency consequences. Once participants had identified themselves as members of one
of two opposing groups, we manipulated the perception of in-group or out-group strength. We did so by exposing participants to a series of alleged newspaper headlines, which appeared to reflect popular and political support either for their own group or for the out-group. We then assessed emotions felt toward the out-group. Analyses of responses to these questions revealed clearly differentiated negative emotions. Factor analyses revealed that responses to items related to fear (fearful, anxious, worried, frightened) were closely related to one another but quite different from the closely related responses to items tapping anger (annoyed, irritated, angry, mad) or contempt (disgusted, contemptuous, repulsed). Those perceiving the in-group to be strong reported considerable anger at the other group, whereas those in the weak condition reported little. Moreover, these emotions were associated with distinct action tendencies. Those who experienced anger reported increased desires to take action against the outgroup (“I want to confront/oppose/argue with/attack them”). Importantly, mediational analyses indicated that the relation between appraisals and action tendency was significantly mediated by the experienced emotion.

**Time as a Key Parameter in Intergroup Emotions Theory**

**Emotion Episodes**

In comparing Intergroup Emotions Theory with other conceptions of intergroup relations, one fundamental difference emerges clearly. In traditional conceptions, both stereotypes and prejudice are typically viewed as highly stable over time. Indeed, entire literatures have arisen as researchers and theorists have attempted to explain this stability in the face of encounters with non-stereotypic group members, even when people desire to rid themselves of deep-seated prejudices (e.g., Devine, 1989).
In contrast, emotions are *episodic states*. That is, an emotion is an experience that occurs at a specific point in time, although its duration may vary (perhaps from less than a second up to moods lasting for hours or days). The proximal causes of emotions are occurrent events, whether actual events in the real world or recalled, imagined, or otherwise mentally constructed events (Russell, 2003; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

For a specific description of the time course and nature of emotional episodes, we draw on a recent integrative theory of emotion by James Russell (2003). This model is related to appraisal theories, but alters some basic assumptions, as we will describe shortly. In this model, core affect states, which fit within a 2-dimensional space whose axes are pleasantness and arousal, are fundamental components of all emotions (as well as moods). Core affect can change in response to many types of external stimuli, such as pleasant or unpleasant environmental states or positive or negative events, as well as internal physiological processes (such as ingestion of caffeine or diurnal rhythms). Core affect is assumed to be readily subjectively perceptible (leading to the sense of feeling good, bad, energized, tired, etc.).

A change of core affect that is consciously noted and attributed to some cause constitutes the beginning of an emotional episode. This attribution marks the transition between just feeling negatively aroused and feeling negatively aroused *because* of a threatening-looking stranger, or between feeling good and feeling good *about* America’s military strength. Making an attribution is adaptively important, because it allows the person to direct attention and behavior appropriately with regard to the object that is responsible for the feeling. Of course, because the true causes of affective states are not always obvious, people may misattribute the emotion. Someone feeling unpleasantly aroused for irrelevant reasons (such as unpleasantly hot
temperatures) may misattribute this affective state to another person’s provocative behavior, experience anger, and potentially commit aggression (Berkowitz, 1998).

The next stage in the core affect model is that various factors, including the core affect and its perceived cause, as well as the situational context, one’s overt behaviors, and bodily experiences (such as physiological changes), are input to a perceptual categorization process in which the person consciously decides that he or she is angry, sad, guilty, etc. The emotion is categorized and verbally labeled based on the extent of resemblance between these factors and a mental representation of a given emotion’s prototype. Now the person could say that he or she feels afraid of the threatening stranger, or proud of America’s strength. This labeling process produces what Russell (2003) terms “emotional meta-experience” or the conscious awareness of having an emotion.

The core affect model incorporates the essential predictions of appraisal theories, by postulating that appraisals (interpretations of various aspects of the situation) are among the inputs that lead to the categorization and self-perception of a specific emotion. That is, people are likely to conclude that they are feeling anger when they perceive themselves as having been harmed or attacked unjustly by another person or group, see themselves as strong and able to cope with the situation, etc. But the core affect model identifies these appraisals as contributing to the emotion labeling process (the emotional “meta-experience”) rather than to the changes in core affect that may kick off the attributional and interpretive process. In other words, the core affect model reverses the causal ordering assumed in appraisal theories of emotion. Appraisal theories hold that appraisals of some event cause a specific emotion (such as fear), which in turn has multiple observable effects including subjective feelings (being afraid), nonverbal expressions, autonomic changes, and instrumental actions. The problem with this view is that it
predicts that feelings, expressions, autonomic changes, and actions, as multiple effects of a single internal event, should all strongly covary, which Russell (2003) argues is not empirically the case.

Applying the core affect model to intergroup emotions, we suggest the following. An event occurs, which people see as having implications for their group memberships. Or they recall such an event that has happened in the past. Consideration of the event may lead to core affect changes that are attributed to the event itself or might be misattributed, because there are other potential influences on core affect. Finally, the person may draw on his or her feelings and attributions to label the emotion, as an instance of feeling frustrated, angry, disgusted, proud, guilty, sympathetic, etc. These reactions to events are the fundamental starting point for Intergroup Emotions Theory. Example group emotional events might include:

- Witnessing an African American mother using food stamps at the supermarket, and reflecting that the taxpayers help “those people” with their grocery costs, while “we” have to work hard to buy food for our families, resulting in feelings of anger and resentment.
- Seeing a sign for a store in a local shopping center in an Asian language, and feeling anxious that “they” are coming in and taking over more and more of “our” country.
- Learning of bombings or attacks carried out by Arab Muslims on Americans or on institutions associated with America, and feeling fearful.
- Encountering a non-native English speaker as a retail clerk, restaurant server, or telephone receptionist, and feeling annoyed that the person is hard to understand or does not readily understand a request.
• Hearing that inhabitants of a distant Third World country are victimized by civil war or natural disaster, and feeling distress and sympathy about their plight (intergroup emotions are not always negative).

These examples illustrate several important points. First, we suggest that the reaction is virtually immediately experienced as an emotional reaction to “them” – to an entire outgroup – rather than to a specific individual. This illustrates the idea, at the core of social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981) and self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), that in intergroup situations the self and others are experienced as interchangeable members of groups rather than as unique individuals. The attribution process seems to identify the group rather than a specific individual as the cause of the emotional reaction.

Second, according to (Frijda, 1993), often emotional reactions are not to singular or unique events, but involve an ongoing, recurrent series of events with a single underlying theme. The same applies to emotional reactions to group-relevant events. The theme may be “undeserved government benefits” (in the food-stamp case), “invasion of our territory” (in the foreign-language store sign case), etc. Indeed, a single event hardly constitutes an important or noteworthy threat to an ingroup, but a recurrent series of similarly themed events may rise to that level of threat. In addition, if several similar events occur, excitation transfer (Zillman, 1979) may intensify emotional reactions to the later events.

Third, a group stereotype (i.e., a set of attributes culturally associated with the group) frequently feeds into interpretations of the event. For example, a cultural stereotype of African Americans as lazy, or of immigrants as unwilling to assimilate to our culture, no doubt is an important contributing factor to the emotions experienced in some of the example episodes just described. Thus, stereotypes are far from irrelevant to emotional reactions to groups, in our
view. However, the connection between stereotypes and emotions may be indirect. In particular, their valence may not match. A positive stereotype – for example, a view of a rival group as intelligent, hard-working, and ambitious – may make the rival group a stronger threat and therefore feed into negative emotions such as fear or resentment. Similarly, a negative stereotype of a group (e.g., as weak and incompetent) may lead to positive emotions of pity and sympathy, assuming the group is not seen as a competitor (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2002).

Fourth, at the time an emotion is aroused, it may produce an immediate action tendency. Feeling annoyed with the woman in the supermarket, the observer may want to lash out at her verbally. People may or may not carry out such actions, but the potential for specific emotion-driven behaviors to occur during the time course of an emotion episode is an important prediction. An individual may suppress the desire to make a negative remark at the woman making food stamps, but if he or she is still feeling frustrated and resentful, on the way out of the supermarket the person may be particularly willing to sign a petition for a political candidate promising a crackdown on welfare abuse.

**Sources Of Over-Time Variability In Emotional Reactions**

We emphasize the importance of time in the conceptualization of intergroup processes as involving emotion, for emotion is intrinsically a time-dependent state. This approach invites us to consider some of the reasons why emotional reactions, even to the same or similar events, may differ from one time to another.

One major reason is that appraisals are subjective interpretations, not objective perceptions of events as they exist in reality. Therefore the perceiver’s own state, including crucially the availability and accessibility of interpretive schemas (knowledge representations in memory), will affect them. In the realm of person perception it is well recognized that the same behavior,
say sharing test answers with a classmate, may be interpreted in one way (as helpful) by one perceiver but in a different way (as dishonest) by another (Higgins, 1996). Similarly, an intergroup event (the woman using food stamps at the supermarket) may be interpreted as freeload- ing or irresponsible behavior by one perceiver, giving rise to irritation and anger. But another perceiver – or the same one at a different time, depending on knowledge accessibility – may see it as evidence of how the public generously helps people who are out of work so that their children do not suffer unduly, and may feel emotions of pity or sympathy for the person or even pride because of the generosity of the public.

Another major reason for variability in emotional reactions is that some (perhaps most) intergroup events are complex and afford appraisals that are linked to more than one emotion. When enemies of America attacked on Sept. 11, 2001, those events gave rise to many emotions among Americans. Anger would be a natural reaction to being attacked. Fear would be reasonable because of the salient possibility of additional attacks. Sadness at the tragic loss of life is another potential reaction. Even positive emotions, such as feelings of collective pride at the heroism of rescue workers, could be felt. In fact, we found evidence for co-existing emotions in the study designed to measure emotional reactions to hypothetical acts of terrorism, run approximately two weeks after the September 11th attacks on the United States. When asked how they would feel if a terrorist group from another country attacked their country, participants reported high levels of both anger and fear as well as moderate levels of guilt. In citing reasons for their emotions, participants often referred to different aspects of the events as the antecedents of their different emotions.

A third reason for variability in emotional reactions is variability in group identification. People sometimes think of themselves as individuals, and at other times in terms of group
membership (Turner et al., 1987). Further, they have many group memberships simultaneously and first one and then another may be salient. For example, an American may read about an attack conducted by U.S. troops in a foreign country such as Afghanistan or Iraq (cf. Maitner et al., 2003). The perceiver may identify as American and feel satisfaction if the attack’s outcome is seen as positive (or guilt if it is negative). Or the person may identify as a Democrat and thereby dissociate him or herself from the action, choosing to identify it as the act of a Republican outgroup. As this example suggests, shifts in group identification may even be motivated by the resulting emotions, as when people downplay a group identification that would result in feeling collective guilt (Doosje et al., 1998).

A fourth reason for variability is that people are not limited to being passive observers of their emotions. Instead, they actively seek to regulate them. Emotion regulation is a complex story, but it is important to note that it is not driven simply by valence. That is, people do not simply try to reinforce positive emotions and damp down negative ones (Erber, 1996). People adopt emotions that are socially appropriate, for example feeling grief at a funeral (which may involve suppressing positive emotions such as laughter at a remembered funny incident involving the deceased). Importantly, they may try to feel or at least express emotions like anger when involved in a conflict, because anger is socially appropriate in that setting or because feeling anger makes one feel strong (which may be better than experiencing fear and feeling oneself to be weak). Whatever its underlying motives, emotion regulation contributes to emotional variability over time, as people seek to reinforce or suppress emotions depending on a variety of factors and with varying degrees of success.
**Implications of Emotional Variability**

Whatever the source of variability in emotions – shifting interpretations of events or appraisals, multiple appraisal possibilities linked to distinct emotions, shifting group identifications, emotion regulation processes – the result seems likely to be a subjective feeling that different emotions are being experienced somewhat simultaneously. It is not clear whether such emotions are perceived as rapidly changing from one to the next and perhaps back, or whether people feel that they hold multiple, perhaps even conflicting, emotions entirely simultaneously. Alternatively, emotions may be experienced as blending, such as a feeling of guilt tinged with sadness when one reflects on the tragic consequences of past wrongdoings of one’s group. Future research effort might well be directed at disentangling these possibilities, or perhaps demonstrating that each kind of experience can exist and under what conditions.

Regardless of the exact nature of the emotions, the experience of multiple emotions itself has several possible implications for intergroup relations. First, feeling several different emotions, or a blend of emotions, especially if they conflict in valence, may reasonably be expected to produce feelings of uncertainty and confusion, with their attendant motivational and capacity consequences for the processing of social information. Such a state will likely also be characterized by conflicting approach and avoidance tendencies, as well as perhaps the specific desire to resolve the confusion. Second, rapidly changing or conflicting emotional reactions might also contribute to intergroup anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Although most work on intergroup anxiety has focused on the awkwardness of interaction with unfamiliar groups, multiple emotions might be either a mediator of this effect (as interactions progress from moments of smooth coordination through awkward mismatching and then to positive resolution.
or negative dissolution), or an independent source of anxiety in interaction with outgroups (even familiar ones).

The recognition that intergroup events might trigger multiple emotions recalls the classic literature on ambivalent prejudice. Both an inability to form or report a clear evaluation, and the presence of both positive and negative components in group evaluations, have been usefully characterized as ambivalent. Katz and his colleagues (I. Katz, 1981; see also Kinder & Sears, 1981; Sears, 1988) focused on the presence of incompatibility among precursors to an ambivalent evaluation. For example, they suggested that adherence to some values (such as egalitarianism) gave White Americans positive reactions to stigmatized groups, while adherence to other values (such as belief in a meritocracy) simultaneously triggered negative reactions (I. Katz & Hass, 1988). In the Intergroup Emotions Theory framework, positive emotional reactions are likely to be triggered by an event or some aspect of an event that activates appraisal precursors to pride, satisfaction, contentment, or gratitude, for example. Other aspects of the same event (perhaps because of changing value accessibility) may equally activate appraisal precursors of anger or fear. Imagine a White American reading about the high percentage of first generation Asian-American students accepted at the country’s most prestigious universities. On the one hand, the event might confirm the belief that anyone can get ahead in a true democracy, an event that reflects well on the ingroup, making feelings of pride and contentment likely. At the same time, the event may lower the probability of white students being accepted at the same institutions, and thus constitutes a threat to the ingroup. Ambivalent prejudice may well be described as ambivalence of emotional reactions triggered simultaneously or in rapid succession by intergroup events. Pending research on the issue, we speculate that emotional ambivalence
may be experienced if different emotions of the same valence (such as fear and anger) are combined, as well as when the emotions have opposite valences.

What might be the consequences of intergroup emotional ambivalence? Katz and Glass (1979) postulate response amplification as one outcome. Thus, under conditions of ambivalence reactions to groups could be extremitized in either a positive or negative direction. That is, when the actions of a threatening outgroup produce both anger and fear, ambivalence may intensify negative reactions and produce excessive retaliation. Interestingly, then, generalization of the ambivalence-amplification hypothesis to the domain of intergroup emotion suggests the counter-intuitive hypothesis that anger-related action tendencies in the presence of anger and fear might be more extreme than anger-related action tendencies in the presence of anger alone.

Other potential consequences of intergroup emotional ambivalence can also be hypothesized on the basis of the attitude ambivalence literature. Ambivalent attitudes are reported more slowly and show greater instability. Objects about which people hold ambivalent attitudes are responded to more slowly (Bargh, Chaiken, Govender, & Pratto, 1992; I. Katz, 1981) and behavior toward them is not as clearly dictated by current attitudes (Erber, Hodges, & Wilson, 1995; Moore, 1980). Thus intergroup targets that elicit multiple or ambivalent emotions may elicit action tendencies more slowly than other targets, and the action tendencies they elicit may not be as closely associated to the currently triggered emotion as appraisal theories might postulate. The direction in which action tendencies might deviate is suggested by the fact that negative reactions might dominate positive ones, as avoidance tendencies typically produce stronger effects than approach tendencies (Cacioppo & Berntson, 1994). These possibilities await empirical assessment, but illustrate some of the potential benefits of considering the consequences of over-time variability in emotional reactions to outgroups.
Longer-Term Effects of Emotion Episodes

As we have described, a fundamental postulate of Intergroup Emotion Theory is that emotional reactions are episodic, varying across time and occurring in response to specific events. Still, the theory does have implications for longer-term, more stable reactions to groups. Most obviously, if a specific emotion is experienced repeatedly over time in response to a particular group, this feeling will become associated with the mental representation of the group, through the process of classical conditioning. The emotion is then likely to be reactivated when group members are encountered or thought about, even in neutral contexts that do not involve any specific emotional events. Action tendencies may become chronically accessible in the same way, so that the perceiver may feel impulses to attack or harm the group every time he or she thinks about them. Our hypothetical perceiver may feel annoyance upon seeing a Black using food stamps, anger at reading about Black welfare recipients in the newspaper, and other similar negative responses many times over months and years. As a result, he or she may feel flooded with angry feelings when a Black candidate runs for mayor of the city, and decide to work or vote for an opposing candidate, even if the Black candidate has no specific connection to the original emotion-inspiring events. The idea that negative affect directed at specific groups is a powerful contributor to political attitudes and behaviors has been well-developed and empirically tested by researchers in the “symbolic politics” tradition (Kinder & Sears, 1981; Sears, 1988).

Empirical evidence for the long-lasting effects of immediate emotional reactions comes from a study by Skitka, Bauman, and Mullen (in press) of reactions to the Sept. 11 attacks. The researchers surveyed a national sample in the U.S. by telephone just days after the attack and asked to what extent they felt the emotions of fear and anger. A follow-up survey 3-4 months later asked a variety of questions regarding the American responses to the attacks, such as
support for restrictions on civil liberties in the name of “fighting terrorism,” and also asked about the respondent’s own actions (such as flying the American flag, spending more time with family, trying to be nicer to people, etc.). The key finding is that many longer-term effects were strongly and directly predicted by the respondent’s emotions immediately after the attack. Moreover, fear and anger predicted systematically different responses – for example, fear was more strongly related to value-affirming thoughts and behaviors, while anger was more related to outgroup derogation. This study shows, then, that distinct emotional reactions immediately after the attack were associated with meaningfully different reactions in the longer term, over several months.

**Implications and Conclusion**

Thinking of intergroup relations as involving emotions, and particularly of their time-dependent nature, has implications for both methodology and theory in social psychology.

The most obvious methodological implication is that researchers should look at emotions over time, with multiple measurements, rather than assuming that prejudice (conceptualized as an attitude) is stable and independent of the time of measurement. Multiple waves of questionnaires, or experience-sampling methodology, suggest themselves as appropriate measurement techniques. The use of several measurement occasions obviously can contribute to reliability and validity, by allowing the researcher to average over unsystematic effects that vary over time. Equally important, it may allow examination of other parameters (such as the degree of variability of emotions toward a particular group, or the maximum emotion experienced rather than the average), to test the possibility that they may improve prediction and understanding of important aspects of intergroup behavior. But most important of all is the goal of relating emotions at specific points in time to their potential causes (events that occur or are thought
about at those times) and effects (behaviors that are performed at those specific times). Ultimately over-time variation in emotion should not be just averaged across, but predicted.

One substantive implication of thinking about emotions as having an intrinsic time course is that they may have effects either during a specific emotion episode, or at a later time after many emotion episodes have occurred. During an episode (i.e., while an emotion is being experienced), many behaviors or judgments may be affected by the emotion. For example, Dovidio, Esses, Beach, and Gaertner (2002) have shown that willingness to interact with outgroup members is affected by emotional reactions to the outgroup, so such intergroup contact may be specifically affected during an emotion episode. Similarly, emotions have been shown to influence on-line processing, both by altering cognitive capacity and motivation, and also in more specific ways depending on the specific dimensions being considered or judged (Lerner & Keltner, 2000; Niedenthal, Halberstadt, & Innes-Ker, 1999; Tiedens & Linton, 2001). Incidental emotions have been shown to have these kinds of predictable effects on intergroup-relevant judgments (Bodenhausen, 1993; Mackie, Queller, Stroessner, & Hamilton, 1996). However, investigation of such effects from intergroup emotions specifically have not even begun.

In addition to immediate effects on on-line processing, emotional episodes should have further, and perhaps different, effects as they accumulate over time. As noted above, emotions felt repeatedly about a particular group or situation will become associated with the mental representation of the object and become able to be elicited by simple cues. Thus, the emotions will become part of the perceiver’s intrinsic and perhaps automatic reaction to the object, and will be available to affect evaluations, judgments, or behaviors.

In summary, thinking of prejudice and intergroup behavior as involving emotions, following our Intergroup Emotion Theory, leads to important new predictions and research
questions based on the fundamental observation that emotions are time-dependent phenomena that unfold over seconds, minutes, and hours. We have described some ideas about the time course of individual emotion episodes, and speculated on potentially different short-term and long-term effects of experiencing intergroup emotions. By drawing on the attitudinal ambivalence literature, we also described some hypotheses regarding effects of conflicting or mixed emotions in intergroup contexts. Many of the ideas presented here have yet to be empirically tested. But our goal is not to advance them as firm conclusions, as much as to illustrate the conceptual and empirical advances that can stem from thinking about the role of emotion in intergroup behavior.
References


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