The interpersonal nature of power and status
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Although social power is typically defined as an interpersonal construct, most empirical studies of power in psychology have not examined interpersonal relationships per se, in contrast to research on social status. This is surprising because both constructs have relational origins. We re-assert the importance of adopting a relational perspective in the study of both power and status and highlight recent research that has implications for this perspective. In our review, we focus on two themes. One involves interpersonal consequences of power and status differences in relationships. The other involves the process of making inferences about others' power and status.

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Social power and social status are distinct properties of the social world. Social power is understood as asymmetric control over valued resources [1]. It emerges from situations based on the distribution of resources across individuals and the value of those resources. As the balance of control tips to the more powerful, the balance of dependence tips to the less powerful, whose outcomes are more influenced by (i.e., more dependent on) the decisions and actions of the powerful. By contrast, social status is conferred by others. It is the extent to which an individual is held in high esteem and respected by others [1,2].

Research has highlighted the distinction between power and status by emphasizing that power depends crucially on what a focal individual has under his or her control, whereas status depends crucially on what others think of that individual [1,2]. However, this perspective frames power as a property of the person and elides its interpersonal nature. By definition, power requires the existence of at least one other person. The situation of that other person determines what value the resources take on, whether dependence is asymmetric, and thus whether there is power in the relationship. We want to re-assert that both power and status are phenomena that emerge from relational dynamics between individuals[1] and that analyses of the psychology of power and status must consider the cognitions, emotions, and behavior of all individuals within the relationship.

In keeping with this approach, we focus here on recent research that takes a relational perspective on power and status, particularly research exploring the consequences of power and status differentials for interpersonal relationships and the interpersonal nature of the conferral of power and status. Our aim is to highlight how a relational perspective enriches our understanding of both power and status and emphasizes the breadth of their effects.

Interpersonal consequences of power and status differentials

With its emphasis on the relational nature of power, the social distance theory of power [3••] offers insight into how power affects interpersonal relationships. The first principle of the theory is that asymmetric dependence leads to asymmetric experiences of social distance: the high-power individual feels more subjective distance than the low-power individual [4]. For example, high-power individuals are less motivated to affiliate with their low-power counterparts than vice versa. As a result, high-power individuals are less prone to the influence of others than are low-power individuals [5,6] and resist comparing themselves to others [7]. High-power individuals also make cynical attributions for favors they receive from low-power counterparts, even when the power differential occurs within a close relationship [8].

One important consequence of high-power individuals' distancing is that they have less insight into others' thoughts and feelings than do their low-power counterparts and thus tend to misperceive others' intentions and plans [9]. Such reduced interpersonal sensitivity has even been demonstrated at the neural level: when high-power

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[1] In this way social power and status may be distinguished from related concepts such as personal power which also pertain to an individual's level of control but do not involve a relational context. Though we acknowledge that such types of power exist, they are outside the scope of our review given our present focus on interpersonal effects.

individuals observed the actions of others, they showed reduced motor resonance relative to low-power observers [10]. This can cause problems for powerholders, as their influence is often based on the strength of their alliances. Individuals with more power are more likely to misperceive who is, and is not, a reliable ally, which affects their ability to maintain influence [11]. Powerholders' inattentiveness to others can also have negative consequences for the groups they lead. The confidence exhibited by a powerful person causes others to speak less in group discussions, in part because they interpret that confidence as a sign of competence [12]. This leads more powerful team leaders to dominate conversations, preventing other team members from communicating and thus diminishing team performance [13].

Powerholders' social distance emerges in other phenomena that reflect a lack of social connection. Power tends to reduce not only empathic *accuracy* [9] but also empathic *concern* [14•]. Relative to low-power individuals, high-power individuals are particularly inspired by their own, but not others', experiences and stories [15]. Power is also associated with more reactance against others' ideas when those ideas impinge on powerholders' sense of freedom, such as when significant others' wish for them to pursue particular goals [16].

By contrast, since status is conferred by others, possessing status orients an individual outward so that high-status individuals are more attentive to others and more likely to take others' perspectives than are low-status individuals [17,18]. This increased focus on others comes in part because high-status individuals are concerned with maintaining their position in the status hierarchy [1] and such hierarchies may be seen as particularly mutable [19••]. For example, because high-status individuals desire to be seen as worthy of others' respect and esteem, higher status is associated with greater fairness and justice toward others [17]. Such concern with how others perceive them appears to be warranted: high-status individuals indeed draw more attention and are better recalled by perceivers than low-status individuals [20,21].

Although our review has painted a relatively bleak portrait of power, especially as compared to status, recent research has also revealed that individual differences moderate the effects of power on interpersonal cognition and behavior. Individual dispositions and tendencies are a more significant determinant of the behavior of high-power individuals than of low-power individuals across situations [1,3••,22]. Thus, among prosocially-oriented individuals, some of the negative interpersonal consequences of power can be eliminated or even reversed.

Individuals' level of prosocial orientation has stronger effects on their empathic accuracy when they are high in power than when they are low in power [23]. In fact, for individuals high in prosocial orientation, more power is associated with better empathic accuracy. Similarly, a higher moral identity (i.e., the extent to which moral values are central to the self-concept) generally makes individuals less likely to engage in actions that benefit the self at others' expense, but this effect is even stronger for individuals with power [24]. Within romantic relationships, partners who are more self-focused display more impoverished perspective-taking only when they are the more powerful partner in the relationship [25]. By contrast, when individuals have a strong goal to maintain a relationship (i.e., are strongly committed to it), having more power makes them more likely to forgive their partner when that person transgresses against them [26•].

Though the distancing nature of power is the root of many of its negative interpersonal consequences, individuals within a hierarchy appear to take this distance for granted and have appropriate expectations for how powerholders will behave. For example, employees are more satisfied and experience more positive outcomes when a powerholder communicates about topics that accurately reflect that person's distance from the employees [27]. In one study at a telecommunications organization, employee job satisfaction was higher when direct supervisors provided specific feedback about day-to-day operations but hierarchically distant leaders shared their broad vision for the organization, compared to vice versa. Thus, high-power individuals need to be aware of their distance from those below them because it affects not only their behavior toward others, but also how these others interpret and react to their behavior.

Taking a relational perspective on power and status reveals that each variable has distinct effects on how people perceive and interact with others around them. In particular, higher power tends to distance individuals from others, whereas higher status orients individuals toward the needs and concerns of others. This basic relational difference underpins the interpersonal effects of power and status and provides an organizing framework through which we can interpret those effects. It also implies potential pathways for interventions to circumvent some of power's negative interpersonal consequences. For example, explicitly making powerholders more other-focused, such as by having them take another's perspective [28] or by conceptualizing power in an other-oriented way [29], has successfully reversed effects.

Inferences of power and status

Among the implications that flow from conceptualizing power and status as phenomena embedded within social relationships, understanding how people interpret others' behavior in terms of power and status becomes as important as understanding what behavior is caused by power and status differences. Relationships and groups tend to suffer when individuals think they have more power or