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How Power Affects People: Activating, Wanting, and Goal Seeking

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Keywords

social power, dominance, approach motivation, goal seeking, self-regulation, corruption

Abstract

Sociocognitive research has demonstrated that power affects how people feel, think, and act. In this article, I review literature from social psychology, neuroscience, management, and animal research and propose an integrated framework of power as an intensifier of goal-related approach motivation. A growing literature shows that power energizes thought, speech, and action and orients individuals toward salient goals linked to power roles, predispositions, tasks, and opportunities. Power magnifies self-expression linked to active parts of the self (the active self), enhancing confidence, self-regulation, and prioritization of efforts toward advancing focal goals. The effects of power on cognitive processes, goal preferences, performance, and corruption are discussed, and its potentially detrimental effects on social attention, perspective taking, and objectification of subordinates are examined. Several inconsistencies in the literature are explained by viewing power holders as more flexible and dynamic than is usually assumed.

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"The fundamental concept in social science is power, in the same sense in which energy is the fundamental concept in physics." —Bertrand Russell (1938, p. 10)

INTRODUCTION

Power is admired and fought over by those who desire it and often feared by those who lack it. It is ubiquitous and affects the fate of many. Unsurprisingly, power has attracted the attention of ancient and modern philosophers, policy makers, and scholars from various disciplines. In psychology, there has been a substantial increase in research on social power since Keltner et al.'s (2003) review proposing that power activates the behavioral approach system (BAS; see Gray 1990, Gray & McNaughton 2000). This activation may have a wide range of consequences for the thoughts, feelings, and actions of power holders, giving this theory great explanatory power.

Social power: the ability to control or influence another's thoughts, feelings, or behaviors

This article discusses research published since Keltner et al. (2003) examining how power affects people. In so doing, it revisits this and other theories of power [e.g., Fiske's (1993) theory of power as control; Guinote's (2007a–c) situated focus theory of power] and proposes an integrated

framework, according to which power energizes thought, speech, and action and intensifies wanting and goal seeking. Power triggers a readiness to think, speak, and act, increasing the vigor and frequency of output (i.e., energizing or activating people) in domains that individuals deem important. Power also brings clarity of focus and eagerness of desire (wanting), as well as drive to work toward desires and aims (goal seeking). In this framework, activating, wanting, and goal seeking among the powerful reflect a stimulated BAS associated with the pursuit of goals. BAS activation among power holders is associated with their desire to have a prompt impact on the social environment and advance their work-role priorities or personal inclinations.

Goals: mental representations of desired end states that a person seeks to attain

Approach motivation: the energization of behavior oriented toward positive or desired objects, events, and possibilities

Power-related approach motivation is accompanied by prioritization of important goals and enhanced self-regulation rather than, as has been suggested, hedonic tone or reward seeking and consumption (see Berridge 2007, Salamone & Correa 2002). The perspective taken in this article differs from approach motivation conceptions that associate power with positive affect and reward seeking (Keltner et al. 2003). Instead, this review suggests that people in power typically have strong agendas and more readily act upon their goals. Furthermore, power affects cognitive processes in ways that facilitate self-expression, action, and goal pursuit (Galinsky et al. 2003; Guinote 2007a,b; Overbeck & Park 2006). Enhanced activation, wanting, and goal seeking among power holders have downstream consequences for performance, corruption, and social behavior.

This review is informed by research in the fields of social psychology, cognitive neuroscience, leadership, and management, as well as animal behavior. The focus is on the powerful, although some of the consequences of being powerless are also considered. Although this review primarily discusses the ways in which power affects people, it also addresses the question of who rises to power. Individuals who rise to power often exercise influence in a goal-oriented manner similar to that of individuals who have power. Therefore, their behavior is also approach motivated.

This article begins with conceptual definitions, methods, and theories of power. It revisits Keltner et al.'s (2003) approach motivation theory of power, considering recent developments in the neuroscience of appetitive behavior. Subsequently, it discusses empirical evidence for the framework of power as activating, wanting, and seeking, as well as the effects of having power on cognitive processes. Literature concerning the links between power and the self demonstrates that power potentiates the development of a positive self-concept, independent self-construal, and expression of the active self. This discussion is followed by a section dedicated to goal pursuit and the types of desires and aims sought by people in power. The question of whether power corrupts is also discussed. A subsequent section analyzes how power affects social behavior. This section is followed by concluding considerations.

CONCEPTS, METHODS, AND THEORIES OF POWER

What Is Power?

The word power derives from the Latin word *potere*, meaning to be able. Although the etymology of the word locates it in the person, power is a relational concept and is dependent upon a person's perceptions of his or her levels of control relative to another's [Dahl 1957 (2007), Parsons 1963]. Power results from a negotiation of a shared reality and often involves the creation of shared meanings, ideologies, and identities (Haslam et al. 2010, Hogg 2001, Parsons 1963).

Consistent with Russell's (1938) analogy of energy in the natural sciences, power cannot be reduced to a single form. At a macro level, organizations may generate economic, religious, political, or military power, phenomena described in the elite theories of political science and sociology (e.g., Mills 1999). At a middle level, membership in social groups, such as ethnicity, gender, and social class, also affects control over resources and the attainment of influential social positions

(Keltner et al. 2003). For example, only 4% of CEOs at S&P 500 companies are women (Catalyst 2016). Power also emerges at a group level, often in association with leadership roles (i.e., roles that involve influence geared toward the attainment of group goals; Northouse 2015). Finally, power asymmetries occur at the micro level, such as in families and intimate relationships (e.g., Laurin et al. 2016).

Social power has most frequently been conceptualized in terms of the ability to control or influence another's thoughts, feelings, or behaviors in meaningful ways (Fiske 1993, French & Raven 1959, Thibaut & Kelley 1959, Vescio et al. 2003). However, given the multiple levels of the social structure at which power occurs, and the complexity of power relations, there are various definitions of power. Conceptions of power may be categorized according to three major types: asymmetric interdependence, control over outcomes, and sociofunctional relations in groups.

Some scholars have defined power on the basis of the first category, asymmetric interdependence, or the actual or potential ability to influence another. For instance, Weber [1914 (1978), p. 152] defined power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance." Dahl [1957 (2007), p. 202] considered that "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do." This potential to influence others derives from the possession of valued resources.

The diversity of factors contributing to power processes led French & Raven (1959) to develop an encompassing classification of tactics used to assert power, which they called power bases: coercive (e.g., punishment), reward (e.g., support), legitimate (e.g., shared beliefs about obedience), expert (e.g., knowledge), referent (e.g., religious identification), and informational (e.g., persuasion). In informal, medical, and organizational contexts, soft means, such as reward or expertise, are more effective and trigger greater adherence than harsh means. Harsh means are seen more often in formal structures and are typically used by people in the higher echelons of power. Recently, power bases have been reclassified into social control (harsh bases) and influence (soft bases) (Fiske & Berdahl 2007). Influence is commonly seen in prestige- or status-based hierarchies and is marked by deference and appreciation.

Conceptions of power based on influence rely on observed or inferred potential behavior. However, this conflates structural aspects of tangible control with the targets' psychological reactions and desire to comply (Fiske & Dépret 1996). To solve this issue, some scholars have defined power in terms of the second category, control over valued outcomes (Emerson 1962, Fiske & Dépret 1996, Keltner et al. 2003), which implies that one person, the power holder, has a resource that is valued by another person, who is therefore dependent on the power holder (Emerson 1962). Power holders can affect the thoughts, feelings, or behavior of subordinates (Keltner et al. 2003, Vescio et al. 2003).

Conceptions of the third category, sociofunctional relations, are concerned with the origins and functions of power. From an evolutionary perspective, power emerged to help advance the needs of groups (Maner & Case 2016, Van Vugt et al. 2008). A review of ethnographic accounts of the past 150 years (Boehm 2009) revealed that power structures had already emerged in small hunting and gathering societies to facilitate peacekeeping and performance of religious rituals and to deal with problems of group movement and intergroup rivalries in ancestral environments (Van Vugt et al. 2008).

Functional perspectives draw on legitimized power structures that contribute to collective goals (Parsons 1963). In this conception, people have power only if others recognize (i.e., consent to) it. Social identity perspectives (Ellemers et al. 2004, Haslam et al. 2010, Hogg 2001) claim that power arises from group processes. The effectiveness of leaders depends on their ability to stimulate a shared group identity (Haslam et al. 2010), and groups create power through coordination and social influence. In spite of the ubiquity of legitimized power in society, being powerless is tolerated

rather than desired. It conflicts with the basic human need for control and autonomy (Fiske & Berdahl 2007, Lammers et al. 2016, Pratto 2015). Therefore, subordinates generally attempt upward mobility.

Dominance: motivated behavior aimed at increasing power in relation to others, often through assertive and confident actions

Methods and Measures in Power Research

Sociocognitive research on social power has been carried out via experimental, quasi-experimental, and correlational methodologies. Manipulations involving roles that control another's outcomes have been common since Kipnis' (1972, 1976) studies. For example, Fiske & Dépret (1996) asked participants to make decisions about internship applicants. The powerful group was told that their decisions would have a 30% impact on final decisions, and the control group was told they would have no impact. Other procedures have asked participants to enact manager and subordinate roles in the laboratory; managers were paid a fixed amount and subordinates were paid according to the managers' evaluations of their outputs (e.g., Guinote 2007c). Studies have also used episodic recall of a past event in which the participant was powerful, powerless, or in a neutral (control) position (e.g., Galinsky et al. 2003).

Economic games that create resource inequalities (e.g., ultimatum and dictator) and negotiation tasks have contributed to the understanding of power (De Dreu & Van Kleef 2004, Kim et al. 2005, Magee et al. 2007, Schilke et al. 2015). The various manipulations of power generally have similar effects. In addition, studies have used testosterone administration (Mehta & Josephs 2010) as a way to manipulate power-related states.

Researchers have widely examined individual differences in dominance using questionnaire measures such as the California Personality Inventory (Gough 1987) and the Personal Sense of Power Scale (Anderson et al. 2012). Studies have also relied on employee participants who occupy managerial or subordinate positions within organizations (e.g., Guinote & Phillips 2010). Finally, the implicit need for power has been assessed with projective measures (Schultheiss et al. 2005).

Theories of Power

Scientists, philosophers, and political analysts have long associated power with free will, volition, and agency. In short, it is argued that power gives people the ability to act at will [e.g., Weber 1914 (1978)]. This ability derives from reduced resistance and constraint. This article reviews literature demonstrating a different perspective: that power changes people. It affects motivation, cognition, and self-regulation in ways that facilitate carrying out one's aims and desires. In the next sections, prior theories of power are discussed, then an integrated framework is presented.

Fiske's functionalist theory of power. A systematic investigation of the motivational and cognitive underpinnings of power holders emerged after developments in social cognition, with work done by Fiske and colleagues on the links between social attention and motivation (e.g., Fiske & Neuberg 1990). According to the continuum model of impression formation (Fiske & Neuberg 1990), humans are tacticians who deploy their limited cognitive resources in line with their motivations. Interpersonal (or outcome) dependency triggers deliberative processes and raises social attention to predict another's actions. The power as control model (Fiske 1993) proposes that power decreases social attention because power holders are overloaded with other priorities, are not dependent on others, or have a dominant personality and do not want to pay attention.

The proposed framework of power as activation, wanting, and seeking draws on Fiske's central assumption that the role of cognition is to serve action (Fiske 1992) and that attention follows motivation (Fiske & Neuberg 1990). As is discussed below, the present framework

provides a broader examination of how power affects the person, including their cognition, affect, and behavior.

Approach motivation theory of power. The dominant paradigm in power research of the past decade has been the approach–inhibition theory of power proposed by Keltner et al. (2003). Based on the notion that people in power live in reward-rich environments and have more opportunities, Keltner et al. (2003) proposed that power activates the BAS (e.g., Gray 1990). The BAS triggers preferential attention to rewards, positive affect, automatic cognition, and disinhibited behavior. In contrast, lack of power is associated with punishment, constraint, and threats, and it activates the behavioral inhibition system (Gray & McNaughton 2000). This system functions as an alarm that inhibits ongoing behavior, triggers vigilance, and produces negative affect.

Expanding on Keltner et al.'s (2003) theory, the model developed in this article relies on one specific part of the BAS: wanting and seeking of salient goals. Goals can be, but are most frequently not, hedonic. Goals linked to power roles or personal dispositions tend to have priority over seeking pleasurable experiences through sex, food, and other positive stimuli.

Situated focus theory of power. The situated focus theory of power (Guinote 2007a) argues that power leads to situated behavior driven by the prioritization of salient goals and constructs. At the cognitive level, power affords flexibility and the use of selective processing strategies that focus on the desires, affordances, and aims deemed relevant in a given context while neglecting irrelevant ones. This processing style enables prompt decisions and actions on a moment-to-moment basis.

The framework developed in this article retains the notions of situated behavior, prioritization, selective processing, and flexibility from the situated focus theory of power, expanding them to encompass the BAS as an intensifier that facilitates thought, speech, and action and assists sustained effort during the pursuit of goals. Although the situated focus theory of power is primarily a cognitive approach with proximal motivational units (e.g., goals), the framework of power as activation, wanting, and seeking encompasses a more general motivational system linked to the energization of behavior consistent with neuroscientific developments on appetitive behavior, as well as to developments in motivational science (Kruglanski et al. 2012).

Other theories. Smith & Trope (2006) argued that power increases social distance, triggering abstract thinking, which allows individuals to focus on primary information and extract the gist from information (see below). Others have theorized the existence of intermediate mechanisms, suggesting that power elevates self-esteem (De Cremer & Van Dijk 2005, Hofstede et al. 2002, Wang 2015, Wojciszke & Struzynska-Kujalowicz 2007) and confidence in one's judgments (Briñol et al. 2007, Fast et al. 2012, Tost et al. 2012). These factors act as proximal mechanisms that are consistent with most conceptual perspectives on social power and contribute to the increased decisiveness and agency of people in positions of authority.

UNDERSTANDING POWER THROUGH THE LENSES OF ACTIVATING, WANTING, AND GOAL SEEKING

The BAS has most frequently been conceptualized as a system that is activated in the presence of positive stimuli (e.g., food, sex; Gray 1990). People with an active BAS experience positive affect in the presence of positive possibilities and events, and they eagerly pursue these rewarding opportunities (Carver & White 1994, Gray & McNaughton 2000). The BAS is implicated in reinforcement learning and in various forms of addiction (Alcaro et al. 2007).

The first premise of the framework in this article is that power leads to activation, energizing thought, speech, and action in ways that are consistent with the BAS. Activation is a neurobiological mechanism that facilitates responses and is common to all types of approach-oriented states (Alcaro et al. 2007, Berridge 2007).

Power Triggers a Generalized Approach

A great deal of evidence supports the claim that power triggers a generalized approach orientation. Power sparks optimism and confidence (Fast et al. 2009), authentic self-expression (Anderson & Berdahl 2002, Guinote et al. 2002, Kraus et al. 2011), action (Galinsky et al. 2003), and disinhibited behavior (Gonzaga et al. 2008) while decreasing vigilance (Willis et al. 2011) and worries about threats or losses (Inesi 2010, Keltner et al. 2003). Power holders and dominant people often experience positive affective states, such as happiness and interest (Anderson & Berdahl 2002, Berdahl & Martorana 2006, Langner & Keltner 2008, Schmid Mast et al. 2009). However, evidence regarding the links between power and affect is mixed (Galinsky et al. 2003, Smith & Bargh 2008, Weick & Guinote 2008). Elevated positive affect could occur primarily in the context of interactions (see Petkanopoulou et al. 2016).

Direct measures of approach, which do not conflate psychological states correlated with approach motivation (e.g., positive affect, optimism) with the underlying motivation itself, also show enhanced generalized approach motivation among the powerful. Support for this theory stems from studies of motor responses (Maner et al. 2010, Smith & Bargh 2008), self-report (Lammers et al. 2010, Smith & Bargh 2008), and left hemispheric brain dominance (Boksem et al. 2012, Wilkinson et al. 2010). For example, in one study (Maner et al. 2010), power-primed participants responded to auditory signals by pressing keys that implied approach movements toward the body or avoidance movements away from the body. High levels of power facilitated approach movements. Similarly, a large survey of employees revealed enhanced approach motivation among the powerful (Lammers et al. 2010). This evidence suggests that power holders have a readiness to move forward toward desired ends, even when the direction of behavior is unspecified.

Neuropsychological Developments in Approach Motivation Research

Most research on appetitive behavior has been conducted in relation to rewards (see Alcaro et al. 2007, Hamid et al. 2016). Therefore, the motivational system underlying appetitive behavior has been linked to reward processing and hedonic tone (Berridge 2007). Power research is no exception (Anderson & Berdahl 2002, Galinsky et al. 2003, Keltner et al. 2003, Magee et al. 2007). However, the overuse of the term reward has recently been criticized. Salamone & Correa (2012, p. 473) pointed out that "the word 'reward' seems to be used as a general term that refers to all aspects of appetitive learning, motivation and emotion, including both conditioned and unconditioned aspects; this usage is so broad as to be essentially meaningless." It has become apparent that approach motivation is not monolithic (Alcaro et al. 2007, Carver & White 1994). For instance, Corr & Cooper (2016) identified four BAS factors: reward interest, goal-drive persistence, reward reactivity, and impulsivity.

Examinations of the neural correlates of appetitive behavior have propelled new insights. Pathways of the brain associated with reward processing (involving a cortico–basal ganglia–thalamic loop) are also responsive to prediction errors, salient nonrewards, and a variety of positive objects, possibilities, and events (e.g., music or shopping; Alcaro et al. 2007, Salamone & Correa 2002). To explain this diversity, Salamone & Correa (2002, 2012) developed a model of facilitation of responses. This model considers two classes of incentive motivation: liking (reward pleasure) and

wanting. Wanting involves "appetite to consume" and "working to obtain" motivational stimuli and to "overcome response constraints, activation for engaging in vigorous instrumental actions" (Salamone & Correa 2002, p. 17). Wanting occurs through the release of the neurotransmitter dopamine, which is produced in the basal ganglia of the brain (Hamid et al. 2016). Dopamine is said to signal the value of work, balance energy levels, and sustain behavior directed at desired end states.

Similarly, Berridge (2007) associated wanting with incentive salience and activation (effort, arousal, and vigor), and Alcaro et al. (2007) posited an instinctual emotional appetitive state seeking system that drives exploratory and approach behavior. In this conception, seeking is rewarding per se without the need for consummatory activity and sensory reward. Together, this work shows that approach motivation entails activation and seeking of a variety of desired experiences and is stronger during expectation than consumption. In the model proposed in this article, the term activation is used to denote increased energy, vigor, and effort, which facilitate responses and sustain goal-directed behavior (see also Kruglanski et al. 2012). Wanting refers to focus and the desire to achieve, and seeking refers to the implementation of courses of action geared toward attaining one's aims and desires.

Critics of the dominant reward-seeking models of approach motivation also focus on the role of positive affect. New evidence has cast doubt on the proposed links between approach motivation and positive affect (e.g., anger involves approach; Carver & Harmon-Jones 2009). Compared to others, approach-motivated individuals can become more frustrated, angry, or depressed if their aims are thwarted (Carver 2004).

Given these advances, two questions arise. First, are power holders primarily concerned with seeking pleasure and reward (hedonic tone) or with wanting and seeking desires and aims? Second, is power associated with indulgence and poor self-regulation or with volition and effective goal striving? Evidence regarding these questions is discussed below.

POWER AS ACTIVATING, WANTING, AND GOAL SEEKING: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

Most research on social power has been behavioral. However, animal studies have found that the creation of hierarchies affects activity in dopaminergic pathways of the brain associated with motivation (e.g., Kaplan et al. 2002, Morgan et al. 2002). For instance, Morgan et al. (2002) first housed monkeys individually and found that they had similar dopamine levels. Later, the monkeys were housed in groups and hierarchies emerged. Dominant monkeys had increased levels of dopamine. When given the opportunity, subordinates self-administered more cocaine (i.e., a reward) than dominant monkeys. These findings support the links between power and approach motivation. However, they do not support the hypothesis that high rank triggers reward seeking.

In this section, I propose that power increases activation levels and wanting and seeking of desired ends. Furthermore, similar tendencies are already observed in individuals, particularly dominant people, seeking power. A framework based on activation, wanting, and seeking therefore helps us understand the acquisition of emerging and appointed power, as well as the effects of power on people.

Who Rises to Power? Energized Wanting and Seeking Power

The trait that most predicts upward mobility is dominance. Dominance refers to motivated behavior aimed at increasing power in relation to others, and it is associated with forceful, assertive,

and confident actions (Gough 1987, Guinote & Chen 2016). Dominant individuals have strong agendas, particularly in seeking power. They deploy a great deal of effort and energy to prevail over and influence others.

In social encounters, dominant people are energized. They are assertive and decisive, and they speak and interrupt others more often (Anderson & Kilduff 2009, Mast 2002). The assertiveness of dominant people creates the impression of competence, even when they are not necessarily more competent than others. This, in turn, affords power to the dominant person (see Anderson & Kilduff 2009, Guinote et al. 2015).

At the hormonal level, testosterone, a steroid hormone, has long been associated with trait dominance. People with high baseline levels of testosterone eagerly and effortfully seek power (Josephs et al. 2006, Mazur & Booth 1998). High levels of testosterone predict features associated with the model of power as activation and seeking, such as longer stare duration, greater amount of talking, and use of expansive postures. However, the relationship between testosterone and dominant behavior depends on the presence of psychological stress and the hormone cortisol (Mehta & Josephs 2010). When cortisol is high, the links between testosterone and power-seeking behavior are blocked. Moreover, the relationship between testosterone and dominance is reciprocal, such that the acquisition of status or power increases testosterone levels (Mazur & Booth 1998), whereas a decrease of status and power diminishes testosterone (Josephs et al. 2006, Schultheiss et al. 2005).

Within the Big Five model of personality (a model that describes personality along the dimensions of extraversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, neuroticism, and agreeableness; see Costa & McCrae 1995), extroversion is the trait that most contributes to power emergence (Ellemers et al. 2004, Judge et al. 2002). Extraversion refers to the tendency to be sociable, assertive, and active and to experience positive emotions (Costa & McCrae 1995). Extroverts are influential in spontaneous interactions (e.g., Guinote & Chen 2016) and in organizations (see Judge et al. 2002). The extroversion trait has two facets, increased activity level and assertiveness, related to approach-related activation and wanting (Costa & McCrae 1995). As is the case for dominance, the high frequency of output (activation) and conviction in one's desires and opinions (wanting) in extroversion affords power, though extroverts do not necessarily seek power.

Being competent and skilled also affords power. In particular, intelligence was initially considered a good predictor of power emergence. However, a meta-analysis revealed that this relationship is weak ($r = 0.27$; Judge et al. 2004). Instead, people who appear intelligent attain power more easily ($r = 0.60$; Judge et al. 2004). Judge et al. (2004, p. 548) concluded that "it is possible [...] that leadership status is afforded to those who effectively manage a reputation for intelligence." Finally, being empathetic and being a good listener increase leadership potential (Guinote & Chen 2016, Keltner et al. 2010). Importantly, power emergence is often dependent on having a combination of skills (e.g., intelligence and extroversion) and being able to respond to situational demands (Dinh & Lord 2012).

The literature suggests, therefore, that power is most frequently gained through implicit social influence and the creation of a shared reality. Power is readily conferred to individuals who have visible skills or attributes that contribute (or appear to contribute) to the solution of group problems. Power is also conferred to people with dominant or extroverted personalities who spend a great deal of time and effort on presenting ideas and persuading and influencing others. Dominance is frequently associated with energized behavior, conviction, and persuasion rather than with the use of force and threat traditionally associated with dominance (see Mazur & Booth 1998). Under these circumstances, power is consented to, at least in part, because dominant individuals are perceived to add value to groups (see Keltner et al. 2010, Van Vugt et al. 2008). Dominant

individuals thus tend to be popular and emerge as leaders because they appear competent, though they are less liked than people with high status, who are socially prominent because they command respect and admiration. The emergence of power is a relational phenomenon often involving skill, effort, strategy, and inference processes among actors. This contrasts with static conceptions concerning the impact of personality traits, styles, and situations on the emergence of power and leadership.

Power Energizes Thought, Speech, and Action

Although the efforts of dominant people are, at first, directed toward the goal of acquiring power, once people have power, they can direct their efforts toward the pursuit of other goals. Thus, power becomes a means to the pursuit of goals, typically those associated with organizational roles and personal inclinations. To effectively pursue these goals, power holders deploy high levels of activation, wanting, and seeking.

Power holders are expected to be energetic and decisive (Allen et al. 2015). For instance, three quarters of British Members of Parliament considered decisiveness the most important attribute of a Prime Minister (for comparison, 32% considered honesty important; Allen et al. 2015). Although decisiveness is often seen as a skill of the particular individuals who emerge as leaders, psychological research shows that the mere fact of having power increases decisiveness. This is demonstrated in elevated verbal production, fast decision making and action, and perseverance (Guinote 2007c). These attributes derive from increased activation levels, which facilitate spontaneous responses and sustain effort during goal-directed action.

Verbal production. Reid & Ng (1999, p. 119) explain that "Language is a communication medium for turning a power base into influence." In organizations, people with power spend up to two thirds of their time in communication with subordinates. Powerful people speak their minds, speak first, and speak more than others (e.g., Guinote et al. 2002, Hall et al. 2005). They also speak more loudly and interrupt others more often. In competitive debates, power holders tend to make the opening arguments (Magee et al. 2007).

In addition to increasing response speed and output, possession of power engages cognitive processes that aid social influence. People in power seek to influence others through linguistic and paralinguistic means that convey confidence, decisiveness, and competence (Kacewicz et al. 2013). Observations of communication in teaching contexts and organizations, eyewitness testimony, and experimental conditions found that, compared to the powerless, powerful people use more plural (we) than singular (I) pronouns (Kacewicz et al. 2013) and tend to use fewer disclaimers (e.g., "I don't really know"), hesitations, hedges ("sort of," "maybe"), tag questions ("it is very cold out today, isn't it"), and intensifiers (e.g., "so;" Reid & Ng 1999, Thomas et al. 2004). Together, these means of verbal communication effectively affect perceptions of status and power in observers, increasing persuasion and ability to attain desired ends (wanting and seeking).

Energized thought and action. Power holders make fast decisions and act promptly. This quick decision making is accompanied by increased cardiovascular efficiency in challenging situations, which provides physical resources for action (Scheepers et al. 2012, Schmid & Schmid Mast 2013). Galinsky et al. (2003) demonstrated that power leads to action regardless of the type of action. For instance, participants with power more readily moved an annoying object (a fan) compared to subordinates (see also Fast et al. 2009). Power holders make faster decisions regarding courses of action and are faster at initiating goal pursuit (Guinote 2007c). In negotiations, power holders generally make the first offers (Magee et al. 2007). Altogether, this research shows an increased

readiness to decide and act among the powerful, consistent with the perspective of power as activation.

Power Intensifies Wanting and Goal Seeking

One premise of the framework developed in this article is that power intensifies the wanting and seeking of desired end states. Power gives people clarity of focus and single-mindedness, which help them approach goals without distraction. This focused state is triggered by the desires and aims of people in power, fueled by an overactive BAS. Power holders utilize effortful strategies involving self-regulation (i.e., managing their responses) to attain their aims, even in domains unrelated to power (Galinsky et al. 2003, Guinote, 2007c). A power advantage can be seen across all phases of goal-oriented activity, from setting goals, to initiating goal pursuit, to striving until successful completion (Guinote 2007c).

When they encounter difficulties, people often disengage from goal pursuit. This is not the case for powerful people (DeWall et al. 2011, Guinote 2007c). DeWall et al. (2011) found that participants in power were less depleted after a demanding task compared to others. Power holders also resort to more means to reach their goals compared to subordinates (Guinote 2007c). Organizational literature, including a meta-analysis of 142 studies (Seibert et al. 2011), has long documented that having control at work, one ingredient of power, increases proactive engagement and productivity. Together, this research indicates that people in power eagerly want desired outcomes and engage in self-regulatory processes that help these desires materialize.

Does power enhance performance? The enhanced goal orientation of people in power begs the question of whether power increases effectiveness outside the domain of influence. Power is often beneficial for individual task performance; however, findings are nuanced. With fewer concerns about the ways others evaluate them, high-power people perform better in social contexts, such as in interviews and self-presentations (Guinote et al. 2002, Lammers et al. 2013, Schmid & Schmid Mast 2013). They more frequently express their needs and desires and persuade others to adopt their goals, which helps advance their agendas (Guinote et al. 2002, Laurin et al. 2016, Magee et al. 2007).

Power holders gain important advantages by being quick to act, being the first to intervene, and persevering. For instance, power holders in negotiations often make the first offer, which serves as an anchor that affords them better deals (Magee et al. 2007). Powerful people also perform better on a range of complex tasks. Experimental studies have shown that they generate better arguments (Weick & Guinote 2008) and complete a higher proportion of anagrams correctly (DeWall et al. 2011). Women assigned to a power condition (compared to control) perform math calculations better, showing less interference and better working memory, as seen in the related neural activity (Harada et al. 2012, Van Loo & Rydell 2013). Women who are given power also perform better on visual rotation tasks than powerless women (Nissan et al. 2015).

However, power does not always improve performance. Power is more beneficial under pressure and when stakes are higher (Kang et al. 2015). Power does not facilitate action and performance when power holders dislike tasks (DeWall et al. 2011). Furthermore, power can decrease judgment accuracy when power holders are overconfident or not motivated, which has been documented in the social domain (Fiske & Berdahl 2007, Nissan et al. 2015). Finally, when people in power work together in panels and committees, they often have conflicts and their individual (as well as the group's) performance deteriorates (Hildreth & Anderson 2016). To conclude, there is a power advantage in performance across many contexts and tasks, but the links between power and performance are nuanced and depend on the task and the motivation to complete it.

POWER AND COGNITION

Studies of the traits leading to leadership and power have been common and popular; however, they have not satisfactorily explained the behavior of powerful people, giving way to process approaches in organizational research (Dinh & Lord 2012, Lord & Maher 2002). Simultaneously, sociocognitive experimental research has helped explain how power affects the mind (Guinote 2007b, Smith et al. 2008).

People in power eagerly seek desired outcomes and are facilitated in this seeking by enhanced beliefs about the self and the use of cognitive strategies that optimize important goals. However, to be decisive and ready to intervene, people in positions of authority often compromise accuracy, engaging in quick decision making based on gut feelings and other shortcuts (see Fiske 1993, Keltner et al. 2003, Weick & Guinote 2008). Thus, an examination of power and cognition must consider the specific situation in which power is exercised.

Power and the Self: Positive Self-Concept, Independence, and Magnified Active Self

Having power affects how individuals perceive their attributes, how they evaluate themselves, and how they see themselves independently in relation to others. These effects of power on the self facilitate prompt decision making and agency, allowing individuals to respond in ways that are self-sufficient.

Positive and independent self-concept. Power affects the beliefs people have about themselves. It boosts confidence or conviction about their abilities and opinions, as well as other self-enhancing beliefs, which are middle-level mechanisms that facilitate prompt decision making and exercise of influence. Both field and experimental studies have found increased confidence among the powerful (Briñol et al. 2007, Fast et al. 2012, Scholl & Sassenberg 2014). Power holders take less advice from others (See et al. 2011, Tost et al. 2012) and conform less to others' opinions (Galinsky et al. 2008). Greater confidence leads power holders to validate prior experiences or salient thoughts that they have in mind (Briñol et al. 2007, Guinote et al. 2012), enabling them to make swift decisions and take rapid action.

Power holders have a high sense of control, even in domains unrelated to their power roles (Scholl & Sassenberg 2014). Van Dijke & Poppe (2006) and Lammers et al. (2016) found that people seek power mainly to increase control over their own lives. This increased sense of control plays a causal role in power holders' optimism and action orientation (Fast et al. 2009). Furthermore, with enhanced perceived control, powerful people perceive the self as an independent, self-sufficient entity (independent self-construal). In contrast, powerless people resort to relationships as a means to enhance control, are more communal, and have an interdependent self-construal (see Fiske & Dépret 1996, Guinote et al. 2015, Guinote & Chen 2016).

Power also elevates self-esteem (Fast et al. 2009, Hofstede et al. 2002, Wojciszke & Struzynska-Kujalowicz 2007). For instance, an investigation involving 1,814 participants in managerial positions across 15 countries found that managers rated themselves higher on positive managerial traits compared to the average of managers in their countries (Hofstede et al. 2002). People in power have a sense of superiority in various other domains. For instance, they overestimate their own height (Duguid & Goncalo 2012) while perceiving others as smaller than they really are (Yap et al. 2013; see also Schubert 2005).

Magnified active self. Power changes the person holding it in multiple ways. In addition to affecting the self-concept by enhancing confidence, perceived control, and self-esteem, the framework

developed in this article proposes that increased activation and wanting intensify the expression of the active self (Guinote & Chen 2016). This proposal is based on the notion that the self is not monolithic (Markus & Nurius 1986, Wheeler et al. 2007). The active or working self is the part of the overall self-knowledge that is currently accessible and active in a person's working memory (Markus & Nurius 1986). Power holders' increased activation, wanting, and seeking magnify the behavior expression of the active self. This contributes to a frequent expression of predispositions, which are chronically accessible and active in many contexts, as well as other temporarily accessible subsets of the self (see Guinote & Chen 2016, Guinote et al. 2012).

A great deal of evidence shows that people in power promptly express their desires, thoughts, or emotions (Berdahl & Martorana 2006, Chen et al. 2001, Guinote et al. 2002). For instance, Guinote et al. (2002) assigned participants to powerful or powerless groups and videotaped them while they introduced themselves and worked together. Observers, who were unaware of power relations, rated the members of the powerful group as more variable along several personality traits compared to the members of the powerless group because participants in power manifested more fully their idiosyncratic nature. Other studies found that powerful people are more authentic and that they connect more and act more in line with their true desires (Berdahl & Martorana 2006, Kraus et al. 2011, Wang 2015).

Does this mean that power liberates people from constraints, so that they consistently behave in trait-consistent ways? Put differently, does power increase trait–behavior consistency? Decades of research seeking to understand how the traits of leaders affect behavior in organizational contexts have not produced satisfactory answers (for a summary, see Lord & Maher 2002). Therefore, researchers have performed investigations of self-expression across different situations (Chen et al. 2009, Dinh & Lord 2012, Guinote 2008).

Network and process models of personality (see Dinh & Lord 2012), the active self model (Markus & Nurius 1986, Wheeler et al. 2007), and dynamic views of personality have pointed out that people often exhibit second-nature traits that are situationally relevant and help advance goals (known as free traits; Little 2008). These conceptions have led to a new understanding of the ways power affects the self. This understanding explains both stability and variability in the behavior of people in authority positions. Consistent with the situated focus theory of power (see Guinote 2007a), power enhances the expression of any traits, states, or desires that emerge as individuals interact with the environment. Therefore, power holders often act in more expressive and variable ways across different situations. Consistent with this notion, Dinh & Lord (2012, p. 654) stressed that "intrapersonal variability across situations has important consequences for understanding leadership processes, which implies that leadership might be best understood at the *event*, rather than at the *person*-level of analysis."

Because dispositions, values, and power roles are chronically accessible, they often guide the behavior of people in power, contributing to stability. However, temporarily activated aims and desires also readily guide the behavior of people in power, contributing to variability. In the following sections, the chronically accessible recurrent goals of people in power are described, followed by a discussion of situational, temporary influences on self-expression.

Wanting Is Linked to Prioritization and Selective Attention

Power holders prioritize their effort toward salient desires and aims while neglecting secondary ones (Guinote 2007a, Overbeck & Park 2006, Smith & Trope 2006). To illustrate this, a study led participants in the high power condition to make decisions about regulations that would allegedly affect other students (versus the control condition, in which decisions would not affect other students); they were then asked to predict when they would submit coursework due two

weeks later (Weick & Guinote 2010). Those in power (versus the control) were more likely to underestimate the time needed to complete the coursework (demonstrating planning fallacy). This result was driven by an overly narrow focus of attention on the focal goal and neglect of other interfering goals and events. Enhanced prioritization of salient goals among power holders involves focus and ranking of action plans. However, power does not necessarily affect the importance of one's goals (Schmid & Schmid Mast 2013).

Selective attention and thought. Power holders allocate their attentional resources selectively according to their motivations and active goals (Guinote 2007b, Overbeck & Park 2006, Smith & Trope 2006, Vescio et al. 2003, Whitson et al. 2013). This idea is consistent with the "motivational tunnel vision" associated with approach states (McGregor et al. 2010, p. 134), with Fiske's (1993; Fiske & Neuberg 1990) motivational account of social attention, and with the situated focus perspective of power and selective attention (Guinote 2007a,b). For instance, in one study (Guinote 2008), participants were asked to describe either a social or a work day and to read work and social information. Powerful (compared to powerless) participants paid more attention to work (versus social) information on a work day and to social (versus work) information on a leisure day. Their attention and behavior were more variable across situations associated with different goals.

Power holders often use rules of thumb to make decisions; however, this tendency is less pronounced when the task at hand is important (Min & Kim 2013). They balance their effort depending on their motivation and the task. In contrast, powerless people more consistently deliberate (Fiske & Dépret 1996). Scholl & Sassenberg (2014, 2015) found that power diminishes forethought (e.g., "What would happen if") before solving a task or making a decision, unless forethought is beneficial for the upcoming task. In contrast, after failure on a project, power increases self-focused counterfactuals (e.g., "If only I had done things differently"). This, in turn, contributes to better future planning. Overall, these findings reconcile contradictory claims arguing that power holders are cognitive misers (Keltner et al. 2003) or that they are competent information processors (Guinote 2007b, Smith & Trope 2006). Power holders are generally competent and efficient information processors who flexibly apply more or fewer cognitive resources depending on the task at hand and their motivation.

Cognitive control. Several studies have examined whether power affects distractibility and the ability to ignore task-irrelevant information, and they have found an advantage for powerful compared to powerless participants (DeWall et al. 2011, Guinote 2007b, Schmid et al. 2015, Smith et al. 2008). Being powerless impairs central executive functions, although power does not enhance these functions (Smith et al. 2008). Nevertheless, power heightens some forms of cognitive control (DeWall et al. 2011, Harada et al. 2012, Schmid et al. 2015). Using event-related potentials and process dissociation analyses, Schmid et al. (2015) found that power increases cognitive control by facilitating the link between conflict detection and the regulative processes that implement actions. The authors concluded that power facilitates goal pursuit through enhanced controlled processing (see also Guinote 2007b). This research shows that power promotes some cognitive processes facilitative of the pursuit of one's aims and desires and also enables strategies for quick decision making and action.

Flexibility, Creativity, and Reliance on Gut Feelings

To thrive in the long term, groups and organizations must innovate and respond to a constantly changing environment. Those in power control innovation and vision. When facing organizational or environmental changes, they must make quick decisions and intervene rapidly (Dane & Pratt

2007). Therefore, power holders often rely on gut feelings and tend to be attuned to environmental inputs.

Power holders also need to think flexibly. In organizational contexts, this attribute has been praised in times of change and uncertainty and has been considered the mark of a good leader. However, experimental work has shown that power changes people and that the mere fact of having power enhances flexibility, reliance on experiential information, and ability to think abstractly into the future.

Situational tuning and flexibility. Organizational studies show that emergent leaders have greater behavioral flexibility and ability to respond to environmental inputs compared to other individuals. For instance, using a rotation paradigm, Zaccaro et al. (1991) found that emergent leaders were more likely than other people to recognize and act upon different situational demands, an attribute that the researchers called response flexibility.

According to the situated focus theory of power (Guinote 2007a), power enhances the ability to discern and respond to environmental inputs in a flexible manner, given opportunities for action or for the advancement of power holders' goals. Experimental work shows that power increases situational tuning and cognitive flexibility. For example, people in power are more likely than powerless people to vary their social attentional strategies depending on the task at hand and the context (Guinote 2007a, 2008; Overbeck & Park 2006; Vescio et al. 2003).

Creativity. Creativity is a skill associated with cognitive flexibility. Organizational studies reveal that feeling empowered is important to creative process engagement (Zhang & Bartol 2010). Similarly, induced power increases creativity (Duguid & Goncalo 2015, Galinsky et al. 2008, Gervais et al. 2013). For example, participants with power generated more novel product names compared to control participants (Galinsky et al. 2008, Gervais et al. 2013). However, Gervais et al. (2013) found that power holders utilize their creative potential only when creativity aids the task at hand, a finding that is consistent with the situated focus perspective.

Reliance on experiential information. Gut feelings and cognitive experiences can inform judgments and contribute to quick decision making. Reliance on these experiential sources of information is associated with insight (Kounios & Beeman 2009) and is an asset for managers under time pressure and in unstable environments (Dane & Pratt 2007). Unsurprisingly, managers often rely on intuitive processes in corporate decision making, especially if they are senior (Dane & Pratt 2007).

Reliance on experiential information could result solely from the managers' predispositions and experience. However, induced power, as well as organizational power and trait dominance, all increase reliance on subjective experiences. For example, studies have shown that power holders are more likely to use the ease or difficulty of retrieving information as a cue to help them make judgments (known as ease of retrieval; Weick & Guinote 2008) and that powerful female participants rely more on their perceived levels of arousal (e.g., heart rate) when making judgments about the attractiveness of male models. When people have expertise, such reliance is not necessarily inaccurate, and power seems to license individuals to use experiential information.

Power also increases the use of motor experiences in the construction of aesthetic judgments (motor fluency; Woltin & Guinote 2015). For instance, Woltin & Guinote (2015) found that after training extraocular muscles to perform certain eye movements used to scan the environment, high-power participants reported liking more moving stimuli that engaged the trained muscles (versus other stimuli) compared to control and powerless participants.

Abstraction. People in positions of authority must provide vision and think abstractly. Consequently, power triggers abstract representations of events, plans, and concepts (Smith & Trope 2006, Nissan et al. 2015). For example, participants in a powerful (versus control) condition focused more on the gist of words presented in a memory task (Smith & Trope 2006), and power holders used more abstract language when describing events (Guinote et al. 2002, Magee et al. 2010). In the framework developed in this review, abstract thinking helps balance between power holders' tendency for prompt responses to salient goals and more abstract, long-term desires and aspirations.

THE GOALS OF POWERFUL PEOPLE

People in power focus their attention clearly on goal priorities. What goals, then, do powerful people seek to accomplish? Since the Greek philosophers Antisthenes and Plato in the fourth–fifth centuries BC, power has been associated with abuse and selfish behavior. According to Lord Acton's [1887 (1997), pp. 335–36] aphorism, "power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Yet others argue that power can be used for good or evil depending on the person (Chen et al. 2001, Clegg et al. 2006). How can these views be reconciled? A consideration of the active self helps address this question. Goals linked to power holders' predispositions, roles, and tasks at hand are linked to the parts of the self that are active and so explain variability. This section discusses research showing that power magnifies the active self, increasing the focus on salient goals. Within this framework, power holders' common goals and the links between power and corruption are also addressed.

Goals Linked to Power Roles, Tasks, and Predispositions

Power energizes people during the pursuit of salient activities, projects, and aims linked to their roles, tasks, affordances, and predispositions. Among the various goals held by people in power, those related to their roles tend to have priority. An investigation of 21 groups in 15 countries asked business managers to list important goals (Hofstede et al. 2002). Growth of the business was consistently ranked first, followed by continuity of business. In Yukl et al.'s (2002) taxonomy of leaders' goals, task goals concerning the efficiency of the use of resources, people, and product operations appear as the primary concerns. The prioritization of goals related to power roles is found also in experimental research showing that the more power people have, the more they identify with their roles (Joshi & Fast 2013a). These findings are consistent with the notion that power often triggers a sense of responsibility (see Chen et al. 2001, Sassenberg et al. 2014).

Experimental research shows that people in power are more agentic and more readily act in ways that are called for by the task at hand. For example, compared to other people, power holders act in more benevolent ways in prosocial tasks and in more selfish ways in tasks that highlight the opportunity for personal gains (Galinsky et al. 2003). Temporarily accessible goals associated with the active self are pursued energetically by power holders.

The preexisting inclinations of powerful actors are chronically accessible and often guide their behavior (Chen et al. 2001, Guinote et al. 2012). Chen et al. (2001) showed that people who adhere to tit-for-tat rules act in more self-interested ways when in power, whereas communally oriented individuals become more prosocial. A similar tendency was found for attributes associated with social responsibility, such as moral identity (DeCelles et al. 2012), and a variety of other predispositions (e.g., Côté et al. 2011, Guinote et al. 2012, Schmid Mast et al. 2009). For example, a study conducted in 73 organizations found that CEOs who scored high on social responsibility (e.g., a preference for moral and legal conduct and a concern for others and for obligations) engaged in ethical leadership, which was then related to increased effectiveness of management and followers' optimism (De Hoogh & Den Hartog 2008).

Exercising and Maintaining Power

People in positions of authority are oriented toward causing an impact in the social environment and maintaining appropriate levels of power. These power goals are necessary for role effectiveness and lead, for example, to increased communication and strategic language use, as discussed in the section Verbal Production.

The motivation on the part of power holders to maintain hierarchical differences becomes particularly visible when power is threatened. For example, when power is perceived as unfair (i.e., illegitimate) or is unstable, powerful people feel threatened, are less efficient (Lammers et al. 2008, Rodriguez-Bailon et al. 2000), and become more vigilant toward others' emotions (Stamkou et al. 2016). Subjective lack of power among the powerful has similar effects (Bugental & Happaney 2004, Fast & Chen 2009, Stamkou et al. 2016). Correlational and experimental evidence shows that subjectively powerless caregivers (e.g., teachers) exhibit high arousal and less effectiveness and use more punishment (see Bugental 2010). That is, perceived losses of power trigger the threat reactivity seen in inefficient and authoritarian power use.

Power enhances personal control and resources (Fast et al. 2009, Van Dijke & Poppe 2006), which motivates some people to seek power and to avoid relinquishing it once they have gained it (Ratcliff & Vescio 2013). Together, this work shows that maintaining power is important for power holders, who monitor their relative power and respond to threats with harsh power assertion.

State-Dependent Reward Seeking

As Salamena & Correa (2002) pointed out in the field of neuroscience, in research on power the usage of the word reward has become so broad as to be essentially meaningless. However, some evidence suggests that power can intensify reward seeking (e.g., seeking food, sex, and other pleasures). Consistent with the framework of power as salient goal seeking, this occurs especially when basic needs are thwarted, during hedonic consumption, and for hedonistic people. For example, powerful participants who were hungry ate more food in a tasting task compared to their powerless counterparts (Guinote 2010). In another study, power holders ate more appetizing food (chocolates) and less distasteful food (radishes) than those who lacked power. Similarly, power can be associated with infidelity and heightened sexual perceptions (Kunstman & Maner 2011, Lammers et al. 2011). Crucially, some evidence suggests that, when given a choice between immediate smaller rewards, such as money, and larger, later rewards, people in power prefer to delay gratification (Joshi & Fast 2013b). This contrasts with the choices of people with hyperactive reward systems, who tend to prefer immediate rewards (McClure et al. 2004).

Does Power Corrupt?

Power holders can use their advantaged positions to satisfy their needs (Pratto 2015). In politics, corporations, and public service, people in the higher echelons often seek to accumulate resources and personal prestige (Ashforth & Anand 2003). These individuals frequently focus on increasing their payouts while neglecting others' payouts. These tendencies can be observed early in ontogeny: Compared to their low-rank counterparts, five-year-old children who were in a high-rank position gave fewer stickers to a child in need (Guinote et al. 2015). This was true regardless of whether rank was determined by dominance or was experimentally induced.

Similarly, power holders often enforce personal values. For instance, the more power CEOs have, the more they implement corporate actions linked to personal political ideologies (Chin et al. 2013). Power holders may also use deceptive tactics, such as making promises and breaking them later.

The self-serving behavior of power holders is linked to feelings of legitimacy and self-entitlement (e.g., Ashforth & Anand 2003, De Cremer & Van Dijk 2005). People in power contribute more to groups; therefore, they feel deserving and are not always aware of their own violation of fairness principles. Self-serving biases and impulses are automatic and common (Ross et al. 1977). To override them, one needs self-control. However, people in power do not always have the resources or desire to exercise self-control to overcome these biases (Fiske & Berdahl 2007).

Nevertheless, the links between power and corruption are moderated by a number of factors and can be reversed depending on predispositions and context (Guinote & Chen 2016). These moderating factors include power stability, intergroup conflict (Maner & Case 2016), national culture (Kopelman 2009, Torelli & Shavitt 2010), organizational culture (Ashforth & Anand 2003), moral identity (DeCelles et al. 2012), the task (Galinsky et al. 2003), and the predispositions of people in power (Sassenberg et al. 2014). In many situations, people in authority positions sacrifice their interests to serve their groups (Hoogervorst et al. 2012, Ratcliff & Vescio 2013). This is more pronounced in collectivistic cultures, which associate power with social responsibility (socialized power), whereas in individualistic cultures power is seen in terms of self-interested opportunities (personalized power; Torelli & Shavitt 2010; see also Sassenberg et al. 2014). These findings are consistent with the notion that power facilitates the pursuit of salient goals, which can be linked to the predispositions of the person, cultural influences, or the situation.

In summary, the behavior of people in power is best understood through the lens of the active self and salient goals, taking the person and the situation into consideration. Typically, power holders are guided by their roles, predispositions, the task at hand, and their cultural inclinations. They also express themselves more, making common self-serving biases more easily noticed. In addition, these biases can be amplified by a sense of entitlement, a desire to maintain the hierarchy, and greater exposure to self-serving opportunities. When responsible uses of power are more likely due to individual predispositions or to organizational or national culture, self-serving behavior is less common.

POWER IN THE SOCIAL WORLD

The prioritized pursuit of institutional or personal goals that is typical for people in power has downstream consequences for the ways they attend and relate to others. In organizations, managers often focus too narrowly on organizational targets, in particular profit, at the expense of relational goals and the employees' needs (Hofstede et al. 2002, Pfeffer 2007). Consequently, up to two-thirds of employees in any organization consider their immediate supervisor the strongest source of stress at work (Hogan et al. 2010). Ironically, neglecting employees markedly reduces organizational profit and the commitment and well-being of subordinates (Pfeffer 2007).

The following section discusses common social inclinations of powerful people, boundary conditions, and how a perspective centering on goal seeking and the active self can incorporate different findings in power research. These findings are linked to social attention, judgment and decision making, perspective taking, and objectification of subordinates.

Social Attention, Perspective Taking, and Objectification of Subordinates

Since Fiske's 1993 article, it has become apparent that power holders are often socially inattentive. Fiske and colleagues (e.g., Fiske 1993, Goodwin et al. 2000) have reasoned that people in power are generally not motivated to or cannot pay attention to the personal attributes of subordinates. This is consistent with the notion proposed in this review that the attention of powerful people is geared primarily toward their salient goals, often the task at hand. Thus, they are more prone to neglect other people (Fiske & Berdahl 2007).

Fiske and colleagues found that, compared to control participants, participants in power seek less diagnostic and personal information about subordinates. In one study (Fiske & Dépret 1996), powerful and control participants judged the suitability of White and Latino internship applicants who were described with stereotypic and nonstereotypic attributes. Power increased attention (reading time) to stereotypic attributes (see Goodwin et al. 2000, Schmid & Amodio 2016).

Other studies have shown that power decreases the ability to recognize the emotions of other people (Galinsky et al. 2006, Gonzaga et al. 2008, Nissan et al. 2015; for contrasting results, see Schmid Mast et al. 2009). Negotiators with power are less motivated to be accurate than their partners, asking more leading questions and fewer diagnostic questions (De Dreu & Van Kleef 2004). This is associated with decreased trust in others (Inesi et al. 2012, Schilke et al. 2015). Power also decreases the ability to take another's vantage point (Galinsky et al. 2006). For example, in one study, participants were first primed with either power or lack of power. They were then invited to draw the letter E on their forehead. Compared to powerless participants, power-primed participants were more likely to draw the letter from their own vantage point rather than from that of the observer. Nevertheless, this does not mean that powerful people are less accurate in their social judgments than other people. Evidence regarding the accuracy of power holders' judgments and recall is mixed. A power disadvantage is more pronounced in studies involving life interactions than in other types of studies (Hall et al. 2015). In addition, power holders are often more accurate than powerless individuals about task-relevant attributes of the targets.

Power holders often rely on socially shared stereotypes and negative attitudes toward disadvantaged groups. When unsupervised, negative attitudes can automatically influence judgments, and power holders may not deploy the resources to or may not want to correct for their automatic biases. Guinote et al. (2010) found that having power increases implicit prejudice against disadvantaged groups. Schmid & Amodio (2016) corroborated these findings. Similarly, powerful participants deny the humanness of others more often, attributing fewer unique human attributes to them (e.g., Gwinn et al. 2013). Finally, elevated power diminishes concern for others and empathy for their suffering (Van Kleef et al. 2008).

In spite of the evidence discussed above, the judgments of people in power are influenced by their salient goals and are therefore malleable. If concentrating on organizational or self-focused goals can be detrimental to social attention, the activation of person-centered goals can neutralize or reverse this tendency. Power holders are socially attentive when predispositions (e.g., Chen et al. 2001, Schmid Mast et al. 2009, Vescio et al. 2003) and situational goals (Guinote 2008; Overbeck & Park 2001, 2006) are oriented toward others. For instance, Vescio et al. (2003) found that people in power use stereotypes only when enacting certain leadership styles. Overbeck & Park (2006) found that power holders in simulated people-centered organizations paid more attention to subordinates compared to those in product-centered organizations.

Gruenfeld et al. (2008) found that high-power people evaluate others more positively if they are instrumental for their goals (i.e., they objectify others). Crucially, this bias is linked to the presence of an active goal, suggesting that goals strongly influence the attention and judgments of people in power. Similarly, when others signal their potential for satisfying chronic needs and desires, such as sexual needs, power holders tend to objectify them. For instance, compared to men and women who lack power, those in power show enhanced selective attention to sexualized images of the opposite gender, identifying them better even if they are difficult to see (e.g., inverted; Civile & Obhi 2016).

Other studies (e.g., Weick & Guinote 2008) found that subjective experiences, such as the ease of retrieving group attributes, affect stereotype use more strongly among power holders compared to other people. Research shows that the social judgments of people in power are constructed on a moment-to-moment basis and depend on the goals and states of the power holders. Given that

people in power frequently have nonsocial priorities, the tendency to dehumanize others and be socially inattentive is an enduring risk (see Fiske 1993, Keltner et al. 2003).

Social Behavior

Power holders' propensity for quick decisions and actions can magnify common egocentric biases, leading to a disproportionate focus on their own needs and desires. Generally, in interpersonal relations, power holders sacrifice their interests for those of their partners less often than vice versa (Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. 2012, Laurin et al. 2016, Righetti et al. 2015). Power holders are also more likely to expect to be treated with fairness and are more sensitive to unfair treatment, such as violations of distributive justice, compared to people who lack power (Sawaoka et al. 2015). When communicating, those with power display less language coordination (i.e., mimic others' choices of word classes less) (Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. 2012) compared to their powerless counterparts. In close relationships, dominant and powerful people tend to lead partners to adopt their goals (Laurin et al. 2016).

Nevertheless, people who see power as a responsibility sacrifice their time and resources to benefit others (e.g., Chen et al. 2001, Galinsky et al. 2003, Guinote et al. 2012, Hoogervorst et al. 2012, Sassenberg et al. 2014). When in power, benevolent people are helpful and socially attentive (Chen et al. 2001, Côté et al. 2011, DeCelles et al. 2012, Guinote et al. 2012). Similarly, feelings of group belonging (Hoogervorst et al. 2012), as well as reminders of fairness (Guinote et al. 2012), can block the expression of immediate selfish impulses, increasing power holders' prosocial orientation.

Accountability effectively mitigates power abuse in educational (Ingersoll 2009), organizational, and political arenas (Grant & Keohane 2005) and in experimental conditions (Rus et al. 2012). For example, Oc et al. (2015) conducted a multiround dictator game in which participants distributed resources between themselves and others. Being powerful increased self-serving biases. However, candid feedback from recipients led to fairer distributions, whereas compliant feedback increased self-serving behavior.

CONCLUSIONS

Research over the past 15 years supports the notion that power activates one specific component of approach motivation, that associated with the pursuit of goals. Power energizes people, gives a clear focus, and facilitates seeking or working to obtain salient goals. Power holders spend a great deal of time and effort trying to influence others, promptly intervening, and seeking opportunities to pursue their aims and desires.

As this review shows, power holders successfully attain their desires and aims not only because they can act at will with less resistance [Weber 1914 (1978)] but also because of enhanced self-regulation (DeWall et al. 2011, Guinote 2007c). Powerful people allocate their attentional resources selectively in accordance with their priorities. They tune in to information that is goal relevant and selectively ignore other information (Guinote 2007a,b,c; Overbeck & Park 2006). In addition, they have a greater ability to be creative and flexible and to think abstractly, attributes that are an asset when dealing with complex problems that require innovation and vision of the future. However, to be decisive and readily impact the social environment, power holders often choose to compromise and use fast and frugal decision-making strategies, such as reliance on subjective experiences and gut feelings (Guinote 2010, Weick & Guinote 2008).

Power can be used for good or evil, depending on power roles, the person, and the environment. Consistent with the situated focus theory of power (Guinote 2007a, 2010), power intensifies the active self and helps people strive for salient goals. Common goals of power holders are linked to their roles, predispositions, ideologies, or opportunities and to the task at hand.

Keltner et al.'s (2003) reward- and affect-based theory has dominated more than a decade of psychological research on power. This theory has great explanatory power and has guided research in new directions, producing many valuable insights. The framework presented in this review is consistent with basic tenets of Keltner et al.'s (2003) approach theory of power. However, it departs from the original conception that linked power to reward seeking and positive affect (hedonic tone). The present framework reconciles this theory with Fiske's (1993) sociocognitive paradigm of social attention, which was prominent between 1993 and 2003. Specifically, it incorporates Fiske's functionalist perspective, linking motivation to attention, and proposes that the goal priorities of power holders, fueled by approach motivation, explain the effects of power on social perception. At the same time, the framework explains malleability among power holders and research inconsistencies, opening new avenues for the understanding and prevention of the dark side of power.

Nearly 50 years after the first experimental studies on power and corruption (Kipnis 1972, Zimbardo 1971), evidence continues to testify to the danger of power abuse. The framework of power as activation, wanting, and seeking suggests that this occurs because power intensifies egocentric biases but only to the extent that these are unsupervised and accessible. If organizational goals, culture, and the predispositions of people in power are communally oriented, power holders will primarily benefit their teams and organizations (Chen et al. 2001). Ethical and servant leaders typically do so (Sassenberg et al. 2014).

If power aids social assertion and the quest for priorities, it often does so at the risk of neglecting secondary goals, in particular the needs and perspectives of other people (Fiske & Berdahl 2007, Galinsky et al. 2006). More than two decades after the first discoveries in social cognition linking power to stereotyping (Fiske 1993), related tendencies continue to be uncovered. This includes decreased perspective taking, decreased perception of humanness in others, elevated implicit prejudice, and objectification. Prosocial predispositions and cultural or situational reminders of person-centered goals ameliorate or even reverse these tendencies.

Given the potential negative effects of power in the social domain, what can be done? The research suggests ways of mitigating power abuse and fostering social responsibility. In appointed positions of power, considering predispositions and selecting ethical candidates are important to avoid future abuse. In addition, training can effectively increase social responsibility in powerful people (McClelland & Burnham 1995). Finally, citizens of organizations and communities can influence power holders through norms and culture that associate power with responsibility (Sassenberg et al. 2014, Torelli & Shavitt 2010). Although in nonhuman primate species subordinates often form alliances to challenge power through force (Boehm 2009), in human societies alliances without the use of force and the creation of meaning and shared identities are also influential (Hogg 2001, Parsons 1963). For instance, as a group, subordinates can resort to shared symbolic means, such as culture, to influence power holders. Lastly, reminders of social obligations and accountability have proven successful mechanisms to control power abuse and the neglect of subordinates' needs.

SUMMARY POINTS

1. People who rise to power are typically confident and assertive; many display visible competencies and skills that can help solve organizational or group problems.
2. Having power generally energizes thought, speech, and action. People with power make quicker decisions and speak and act more compared to others, especially on issues that are important to them.

3. Powerful people are goal oriented. They have clarity of focus (wanting) and work toward obtaining (seeking) desired goals.
4. Power affects cognitive strategies, increasing prioritization, selective attention to goal-relevant information, flexibility, and creativity. Nevertheless, power also licenses people to rely on gut feelings and heuristic information processing in domains that are deemed less important or when power holders feel confident and expert.
5. Power increases self-expression. Power holders are more likely to manifest their thoughts, emotions, and predispositions.
6. Power can magnify the expression of common egocentric biases, increasing self-serving behavior. This is often accentuated by feelings of entitlement and deservingness.
7. By increasing freedom to act at will and decreasing accountability, power tends to increase corruption. However, the links between power and corruption depend on personal predispositions and situational factors such as culture. Socially responsible people exercise power ethically.
8. The goal orientation of power holders has downstream consequences for social behavior, often leading to the use of stereotypes, prejudice, and the objectification of subordinates.

FUTURE ISSUES

1. Power is a relational phenomenon, yet little is known about the role of subordinates in power dynamics.
2. Future research must further examine power-related processes across cultures to determine whether the research findings apply also to non-Western cultures.
3. More experimental research investigating power at the group level is necessary to determine how groups affect the exercise of power. Examples of group-level questions are: How do power holders think and act in high power groups (e.g., panels, committees) compared to less powerful groups? How do the gender and ethnic compositions of groups and their leaders affect the exercise of power?
4. Sociocognitive experimental research could develop a better methodology to examine the impact of predispositions and the situation on the ways in which power is exercised, for example by using rotation paradigms that vary the constitution of groups and tasks.
5. Sociocognitive research could further examine power holders' dynamic uses of automatic and controlled processes. This would contribute to the understanding of performance and decision making and clarify controversies regarding when power holders are cognitive misers and when they are efficient processors.
6. The physiological, cardiovascular, and neural correlates of power must be further investigated to determine the biosocial underpinnings of power.

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