Organization Science

When the Bases of Social Hierarchy Collide: Power Without Status Drives Interpersonal Conflict

Eric M. Anicich, Nathanael J. Fast, Nir Halevy, Adam D. Galinsky

Please scroll down for article—it is on subsequent pages

When the Bases of Social Hierarchy Collide: Power Without Status Drives Interpersonal Conflict

Eric M. Anicich
Columbia Business School, Columbia University, New York, New York 10027, eanicich16@gsb.columbia.edu

Nathanael J. Fast
Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California 90089, nathanaf@usc.edu

Nir Halevy
Graduate School of Business, Stanford University, Stanford, California 94305, nhalevy@stanford.edu

Adam D. Galinsky
Columbia Business School, Columbia University, New York, New York 10027, adamgalinsky@columbia.edu

Leveraging the social hierarchy literature, the present research offers a role-based account of the antecedents of interpersonal conflict. Specifically, we suggest that the negative feelings and emotions resulting from the experience of occupying a low-status position interact with the action-facilitating effects of power to produce vicious cycles of interpersonal conflict and demeaning behavior. Five studies demonstrate that power without status leads to interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment, both in specific dyadic work relationships and among organizational members more broadly. Study 1 provides initial support for the prediction that employees in low-status/high-power roles engage in more conflict with coworkers than all other combinations of status and power. In Studies 2a and 2b, a yoked experimental design replicated this effect and established low-status/high-power roles as a direct source of the interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment. Study 3 used an experimental manipulation of relative status and power within specific dyadic relationships in the workplace and found evidence of a vicious cycle of interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment within any dyad that included a low-status/high-power individual. Finally, Study 4 utilized survey and human resource data from a large government agency to replicate the power without status effect on interpersonal conflict and demonstrate that power interacts with subjective status change to produce a similar effect; increasing the status of a high-power role reduces conflict whereas decreasing its status increases conflict. Taken together, these findings offer a role-based account of interpersonal conflict and highlight the importance of making a theoretical distinction between status and power.

Keywords: power; status; hierarchy; conflict
History: Published online in *Articles in Advance* November 23, 2015.

Introduction

Interpersonal conflict in organizations is common and costly. A recent survey of organizations from around the world revealed that 85% of employees reported facing some conflict, and 29% of employees reported experiencing conflict with coworkers "always" or "frequently" (CPP 2008). Based on the survey, employees spend 2.1 hours every week managing conflict, which translates to 385 million working days in the United States—roughly $359 billion in paid hours—spent every year dealing with conflict. Not surprisingly, understanding how to reduce such conflict is a growing priority for those wishing to improve the health and well-being of individuals and organizations alike.

Although great strides have been made toward understanding the predominantly negative consequences of interpersonal conflict on group performance (De Dreu and Weingart 2003, de Wit et al. 2012), surprisingly little is known about how specific role characteristics affect the emergence of interpersonal conflict. In the present work, we offer a distinct approach to understanding the determinants of interpersonal conflict by moving beyond a person-based explanation (Jehn et al. 1999, Jehn 1995, de Wit et al. 2012) to test a structural, role-based account (Ashforth 2001, Biddle 1979) that focuses on role-holders' experiences and relative abilities to act on their internal states. Specifically, we articulate and test a new theoretical model of when and why interpersonal conflict is likely to emerge. Our main proposition is that occupying roles that lack status but afford power will lead to more interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment than any other combination of status and power. We further suggest that this tendency can cause vicious cycles of conflict in dyads where power and status are mismatched.

Interpersonal Conflict

Interpersonal conflict in teams and workgroups is typically conceptualized as relational friction caused by

incompatible perspectives, opinions, or personal dislike among group members (Amason 1996, De Dreu and Van de Vliert 1997, Jehn and Mannix 2001, de Wit et al. 2012, De Dreu and Gelfand 2008, Mannix and Neale 2005). Recent meta-analytic findings show that experiencing interpersonal conflict diminishes trust, cohesion, employee satisfaction, commitment, identification, and organizational citizenship behavior, while increasing counterproductive behaviors (de Wit et al. 2012). In short, conflict harms individual and organizational performance (Argyris 1962, Kelley 1979) and identifying its determinants is crucial (De Dreu 2008).

Social Hierarchy in Groups and Organizations

To provide insight into the role-based determinants of interpersonal conflict, we draw on the social hierarchy literature. Status and power are the foundational bases of hierarchical differentiation in groups, organizations, and societies. We follow Magee and Galinsky (2008) in defining status as respect and admiration in the eyes of others and power as asymmetric control over valued resources. Both constructs have important organizational implications (Clegg et al. 2006, Aquino and Douglas 2003) and form the basis of formal and informal hierarchies in the workplace (Fiske 2010).

Status and power often covary in social hierarchies. Respected and admired individuals often gain access to valued resources; similarly, having control over important outcomes and resources often leads to respect and admiration (Kilduff and Galinsky 2013, Magee and Galinsky 2008). However, despite their covariance and mutual reinforcement, status and power are conceptually distinct (Magee and Galinsky 2008). Some roles afford status without power (e.g., an emeritus professor) whereas others afford power without status (e.g., a reimbursement clerk; Fragale et al. 2011).

As would be expected, status and power affect social interactions. Status often leads to helping, cooperation, advice giving, and justice toward others (Blader and Chen 2012, Cheng et al. 2010, Willer 2009). These prosocial tendencies likely occur because roles that provide status give people esteem in the eyes of others (Ridgeway 2001) and, in so doing, meet the need for positive self-worth and affiliation (Leary 2010, Leary and Baumeister 2000). Put simply, having status feels good and leads to positive treatment of others. Lacking status, on the other hand, is psychologically aversive. For example, physical education teachers have lower status relative to other educator roles (Moreira et al. 1995, Whipp et al. 2007) and experience negative feelings as a result (Macdonald 1999, Mäkelä et al. 2014). Low-status individuals are also less liked and influential (Driskell and Webster 1997), which helps explain the negative feelings and emotions associated with lacking status.

Importantly, however, considering role-based status in isolation of other role characteristics is insufficient to make predictions about the actual behavior of low-status role occupants *toward others*. Indeed, lacking status does not always lead to the mistreatment of others. Rather, this negative state needs a catalyst for it to be translated into action. We propose that role-based power is one such catalyst.

There is widespread support for the notion that power facilitates action (Galinsky et al. 2003). Power liberates its holders to act on their own goals and interests. In contrast, lacking power inhibits action and goal pursuit (Hirsh et al. 2011, Keltner et al. 2003). As such, power allows people to express their true feelings (Hecht and LaFrance 1998), attitudes (Anderson and Berdahl 2002, Galinsky et al. 2008), value orientations, and dispositions (Chen et al. 2001, Galinsky et al. 2008, Guinote et al. 2012), and to experience greater feelings of authenticity in social interactions (Kraus et al. 2011, Kifer et al. 2013). Alternatively, lacking power likely reduces the degree to which individuals in low-status roles express their thoughts and feelings because doing so would bring the risk of social and material sanctions (Kahn 1990, Helmreich 2000). The crux of these findings is that (a) power liberates people to act on their true feelings and (b) these feelings are often shaped by the status associated with their roles.

The Interactive Effect of Power Without Status on Interpersonal Conflict

The predominant approaches to studying status and power involve either (1) investigating the effects of status *or* power separately, or (2) treating them as a single variable (Bunderson and Reagans 2011). However, these approaches do not account for the possibility that distinct instantiations of status and power may interact to shape social interactions and relationships (Blader and Chen 2012, Fast et al. 2012, Fragale et al. 2011, also see Bendix and Lipset 1966, Blau 1964, Homans 1974). In this paper, we focus on the unique experience, behaviors, and downstream relational consequences of occupying a low-status, high-power role and in so doing move beyond making potentially inaccurate main-effect predictions related to the source of conflict and demeaning treatment in organizations.

We propose that two forces for individuals in low-status/high-power roles—feeling disrespected and at the same time liberated to act on these negative feelings—interact to produce interpersonal conflict. In particular, the action-facilitating effects of power combine with the resentment from lacking status to foster interpersonal conflict. In contrast, people in high-status roles or low-status/low-power roles are less likely to instigate conflict. For those in a high-status role, treating others negatively will not meet a self-relevant goal. For

low-status/low-power individuals, acting on their negative emotions would put them at greater risk for reprisal at the hands of the more powerful. This produces our first hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 1. *Individuals in roles that lack status but provide power will instigate more interpersonal conflict than individuals in roles with any other combination of status and power.*

Two studies support the idea that power without status produces demeaning treatment. First, Prinstein and Cillessen (2003) found that children high in perceived popularity, which is akin to social power (Garandeau and Cillessen 2006), but low in sociometric popularity, a proxy for status (Coie et al. 1982), demonstrated more aggressive and demeaning behavior than did other children. Importantly, however, although perceived and sociometric popularity are correlated with power and status, they are distinct concepts. By using data from working adults instead of children, the present research extends and clarifies these findings by disentangling and orthogonally manipulating role-based power and status and observing their interactive effect on both interpersonal conflict and demeaning behavior.

Second, Fast et al. (2012) found that people in powerful roles that lack status treated others in demeaning ways. In their study, undergraduate students who lacked status but had power chose more demeaning tasks for their interaction partners. In the present work, we extend these findings by testing the relational consequences of the interactive effects of status and power in organizational settings. Additionally, the current research uses multiple methods and measures, including both a field study and experiments, to examine whether the power without status effect persists in actual organizational settings, where individuals have greater incentive to avoid treating others negatively. Moreover, we examine the prediction that status and power interact to produce interpersonal conflict, a hypothesis not tested in the Fast et al. study.

Haslam (2006) has noted that conflict is associated with demeaning, objectifying attitudes between individuals. Additionally, in a longitudinal study of work groups, Jehn and Mannix (2001) found that the perception of respect among group members was negatively associated with the amount of relationship conflict among the group members. Research among nurses has found similar results; perceptions of respect were negatively associated with conflict experiences (Bies 2001, Laschinger and Finegan 2005). In the same way that power facilitates interpersonal conflict among those low in status, it should free such individuals to treat others in demeaning ways. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

HYPOTHESIS 2. *Individuals in roles that lack status but provide power will show a greater propensity to demean others than individuals in roles with any other combination of status and power.*

Although we predict that individuals in low-status, high-power roles will initiate interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment, there is reason to believe that this mistreatment is unlikely to be passively accepted by targets. Indeed, targets of disrespectful treatment who fail to retaliate against the perpetrator can experience negative self-perceptions (Vidmar 2001) and be viewed negatively by others (Felson 1982, Miller 2001), which may partially explain why being the target of disrespectful behavior can cause anger and aggression (Frone 2000, Miller 2001). Consistent with this view, Andersson and Pearson (1999) proposed that a vicious cycle of incivility can emerge from incidents involving rude and demeaning behaviors. They refer to this process as an "incivility spiral," which closely aligns with work on conflict spirals (Olson-Buchanan and Boswell 2008, Bies and Tripp 1995). Numerous factors can contribute to the emergence of a conflict spiral such as perceptions of a damaged social identity, feelings of anger, and desire for revenge (Andersson and Pearson 1999). Additionally, Meier and Gross (2015) used an interaction-record diary paradigm and found that supervisor incivility led to retaliatory incivility against the supervisor when the time-lag between interactions was short (Meier and Gross 2015), revealing that even though low-power individuals tend to restrain themselves from initiating conflict by acting on negative feelings, they may retaliate and mistreat a higher-power coworker when explicitly provoked.

Finally, Fragale et al. (2011) have shown that people view low-status/high-power actors negatively (e.g., bill collectors, immigration officers). Based on these findings and consistent with the idea that the misalignment of status and power may upset the organizational hierarchy and produce debilitating interpersonal friction and hostility, we offer the following hypothesis (see Figure 1):

HYPOTHESIS 3. *Once interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment are initiated by individuals in low-status, high-power roles, a vicious cycle will follow, with both the initiator and recipient perpetrating the conflict and demeaning treatment.*

However, status and power are not fixed constructs. Indeed, an employee's circumstances can lead others to update their perceptions of the employee and/or the employee's role, potentially resulting in a change to the employee's subjective experience of respect. For example, Neeley (2013) studied a French high-tech company that had recently mandated English as the common language and found that nonnative English speakers felt resentment and distrust toward their native English speaking coworkers following the introduction of this policy because the policy had lowered their status in the organization. Given the facilitative effects of power, we suggest that those with elevated power will be especially

Figure 1   Summary of Hypotheses 1–3 for How Low-Status/High-Power Roles May Produce Demeaning Behavior and Interpersonal Conflict
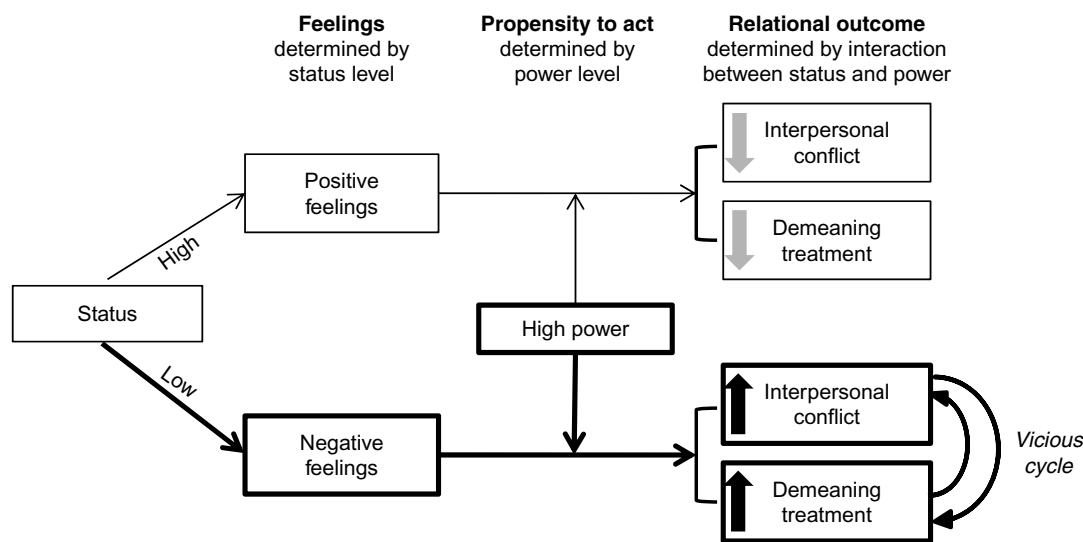
Notes. We start with status in the model. When a position is characterized by a lack of respect in the eyes of others, people experience negative feelings. However, only when one's role affords power does one have the propensity to act on the negative feelings caused by having low status. Acting on one's negative feelings can result in interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment of others, which can spark a vicious cycle between interaction partners.

reactive to changes in status. Therefore our final hypothesis attempts to address Neeley's (2013, p. 476) concern that "we know very little about how individuals experience and respond to their status loss":

HYPOTHESIS 4. *Employees in powerful roles will be especially reactive to status changes. Those who lose status will experience higher levels of conflict with coworkers whereas those who gain status will experience lower levels of conflict.*

Research Overview and Theoretical Contributions

We conducted five studies to test our hypotheses. Study 1 examined whether people in low-status/high-power roles engage in more interpersonal conflict with others in the workplace. In Studies 2a and 2b, we used a yoked, experimental design to identify the source of interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment within in a dyad. Study 3 tested the vicious cycle hypothesis by assessing interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment in the context of specific dyadic relationships in the workplace. Study 4 utilized survey and human resource (HR) data from two regions of a large, federal agency to assess whether the effects of power without status on interpersonal conflict would replicate in this setting. It also allowed us to examine whether an increase or decrease in workers' subjective status alters the tendency for high-power role occupants to engage in conflict.

We seek to make three primary contributions to existing theory. First, whereas current assumptions about the

determinants of interpersonal conflict rely on person-based accounts (e.g., Halevy et al. 2014), we explore how structural factors—namely, roles that provide power but lack status—produce a vicious cycle of interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment. In so doing, we heed Bendersky and Hays' (2012) call to incorporate the structural properties of groups into research on the determinants of conflict. Second, by orthogonally crossing status and power, we answer the call for research to distinguish between the social and psychological effects of these two foundational bases of hierarchy (Magee and Galinsky 2008). Relatedly, we highlight role-based power as an important moderator for the status literature, which has traditionally focused either on (1) low status as leading directly to aggression (Dodge et al. 1990, Lancelotta and Vaughn 1989, Leary et al. 2006, Twenge et al. 2001) or (2) the maladaptive responses to low status that negatively affect health (Goodman et al. 2007, Singh-Manoux et al. 2003). Third, we integrate, and build a theoretical bridge between, the literature on social hierarchy and the literature on conflict in organizations (De Dreu 2008, Amason 1996, De Dreu and Van de Vliert 1997).

Study 1: Power Without Status as a Predictor of Interpersonal Conflict

We first conducted a correlational study to assess whether people in low-status/high-power roles engage in more interpersonal conflict with others in their workplace than those in roles with other combinations of status and power. We recruited members from a variety

of organizations to complete our survey, allowing us to sample individuals across a wide range of vocations and organizational settings.

Method

Context and Sample. Participants were 86 adults (53 women, 33 men; mean age = 37.84, SD = 10.53) recruited from a national database maintained by a large West Coast university.

Status. Participants indicated the degree to which their positions afforded status by answering four items (e.g., "To what extent does your position at work give you high status in the eyes of others?" from 1 = "not at all" to 7 = "very much"; $\alpha = 0.68$; although low, the alpha is acceptable (George and Mallery 2003). A complete list of all the items used in this paper along with additional study details are included in the online appendix (available as supplemental material at http://dx.doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2015.1019).

Power. Participants indicated whether they had the authority to hire and fire people in their organizations (0 = no power to hire/fire; 1 = power to hire/fire others; see Wolf and Fligstein 1979a, b; Elliott and Smith 2004 for similar measures). This provided an objective measure of outcome control derived from the workers' roles, helping to ensure that status and power were not confounded. Status and power were correlated, but this correlation was modest ($r = 0.37$, $p < 0.001$).

Interpersonal Conflict. Drawing from Jehn (1995), we used three items to assess the tendency to engage in conflict (e.g., "I often have personal disagreements with others at my place of work"; $\alpha = 0.92$).

Control Variables. Finally, we assessed participants' age, sex, and income, because each of these characteristics can facilitate objective and/or subjective experiences of status (see Ridgeway 1991).

Results and Discussion

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables. Conflict was correlated with age, $r = -0.35$, $p < 0.01$, and marginally correlated with income, $r = 0.21$, $p = 0.057$. Men ($M = 2.74$, SD = 1.80) reported more conflict than women ($M = 1.86$, SD = 1.08), $F(1, 84) = 8.06$, $p = 0.01$. Thus, we controlled for these variables. Analyses without the controls produced the same results.

Status was negatively related to conflict, $b = -0.54$, $t(83) = -4.30$, $p < 0.001$. *Power* was positively associated with *conflict*, $b = 0.83$, $t(83) = 2.53$, $p = 0.01$ (see Model 1, Table 2). However, these main effects were qualified by the predicted *status* $\times$ *power* interaction, $b = -0.70$, $t(82) = -2.73$, $p = 0.008$ (see Model 2, Table 2). These effects remained significant when adding the control variables, $b = -0.61$, $t(79) = -2.56$, $p = 0.01$ (see Model 3, Table 2). Simple slope analyses revealed that *status* negatively predicted conflict among high-power individuals, $b = -0.92$, $t(79) = -4.66$, $p < 0.001$, whereas this effect was present but weaker among low-power individuals, $b = -0.31$, $t(79) = -2.25$, $p = 0.03$ (see Figure 2). The key finding is that the combination of low status and high power produced the highest levels of conflict.

These results support our prediction that occupying a role that affords power but lacks status is associated with higher levels of conflict with other organizational members in general. However, Study 1 leaves open the question of who initiates the conflict. We test this directly in Studies 2a and 2b.

Study 2a: Identifying the Source of Power Without Status Effects (Layoff Notification Context)

The goal of Study 2a was to elucidate the causal chain linking power without status to interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment. We employed a yoked-study design in order to directly measure the perceptions of conflict and demeaning treatment reported by targets. Furthermore, Study 2a builds on Study 1 by capturing actual behaviors from one person that directly affect the feelings and perceptions of another person. We predicted that occupants of low-status/high-power positions would create more interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment than individuals occupying any other combination of status and power.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 1) ($N = 86$)

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	*Gender*[a]	1.62	0.49					
2	*Age*	37.84	10.53	0.19				
3	*Income*[b]	55.10	44.20	−0.19	−0.12			
4	*Status*	4.64	1.24	0.00	0.17	0.28**		
5	*Power*[c]	0.33	0.47	−0.17	−0.07	0.35**	0.37**	
6	*Relationship conflict*	2.20	1.46	−0.30**	−0.35**	0.21	−0.36**	0.10

[a] 1 = male, 2 = female; [b] in thousands; [c] 0 = low power, 1 = high power.
**$p < 0.01$.

Table 2   Regression Analyses Predicting Relationship Conflict (Study 1)

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Intercept	1.93		2.00		2.99	
Status	−0.54***	(0.13)	−0.30*	(0.15)	−0.31*	(0.14)
Power[a]	0.83**	(0.33)	1.06**	(0.33)	0.65*	(0.32)
Status × Power			−0.70**	(0.26)	−0.61*	(0.24)
Gender[b]					−0.54*	(0.27)
Age					−0.03	(0.01)
Income[c]					7.08E−6*	(0.00)
N	86		86		86	
Adjusted R^2	0.17		0.23		0.34	
F test of model	9.72***		9.46***		8.45***	

Notes. Unstandardized coefficients are reported, with standard errors in parentheses. All continuous variables are mean centered.

[a]$0 =$ low power, $1 =$ high power; [b]$1 =$ male, $2 =$ female; [c]in thousands.

*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

Method

Context and Sample. Participants were 226 adults recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk; they received $0.50 for participating. Part 1 (40 women, 73 men; mean age $= 27.18$, $SD = 9.19$) and Part 2 (59 women, 54 men; mean age $= 32.22$, $SD = 10.12$) each consisted of 113 adults. Each person in Part 1 was yoked to exactly one other person in Part 2. Nine participants from Part 2 were excluded from analyses because three failed an attention check question and six either spent one second or less viewing the layoff notification page (indicating that they had not read it) or the layoff notification did not load properly.

Part 1—Power and Status Manipulation. Participants from Part 1 were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in a 2(power: high, low) × 2(status: high, low) design. Following the boss/employee prompt described in Galinsky et al. (2015), participants in the (low-power) high-power condition read that they were a(n) (employee) boss at a company and that their role included (following instructions and being evaluated)

managing and evaluating others. Participants in the (low-status) high-status condition read that their role was (dis)respected, looked (down on) up to, and (not) admired by those around them.

After the role manipulation, those in the high-power (low-power) condition read that "you need to lay off one of your employees" ("your boss asked you to lay off one of the other employees"). They then provided a written response to "How would you notify this employee that he/she is being laid off?" All participants were instructed to write as if they were communicating directly with the employee.

Figure 2   Relationship Conflict as a Function of Status (+/ − 1 SD) and Power (Low/High) Among Working Adults (Study 1)
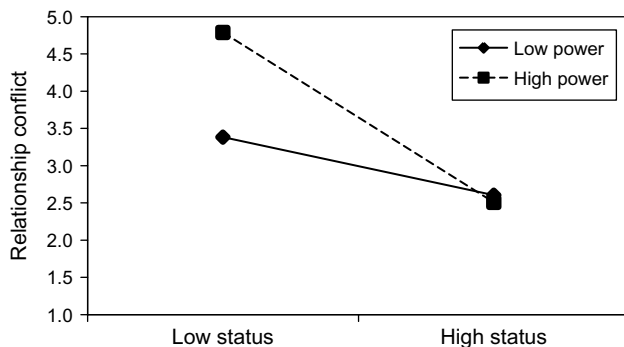
Figure 3   Anticipated Interpersonal Conflict as a Function of Status (Low/High) and Power (Low/High) (Studies 2a and 2b)
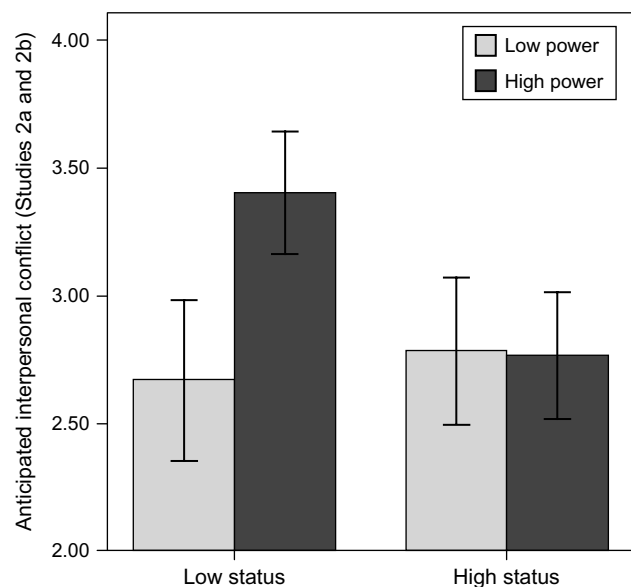
Notes. The figure is based on combined data from Studies 2a and 2b. Error bars indicating the 95% confidence interval are displayed.

Part 2. Participants from Part 2 were randomly yoked to exactly one layoff notification produced by a Part 1 participant. Importantly, these new participants were fully unaware of the power and status of the Part 1 participant. Participants were instructed to read the layoff notification as if they were the employee receiving the decision.

Interpersonal Conflict. We measured the amount of anticipated conflict reported by the Part 2 participant following the receipt of the layoff notification. To assess anticipated conflict, participants responded to an adapted version of Jehn's (1995) eight-item conflict scale (e.g., "How much friction would there be between you and the other person?," from 1 = "none" to 5 = "a lot"; $\alpha = 0.96$).

Perceptions of Demeaning Treatment. We also assessed perceptions of demeaning treatment as a secondary variable. Part 2 participants rated the extent to which the layoff notification was "demeaning," "humiliating," "degrading," "embarrassing," and "uncomfortable" ($\alpha = 0.94$; from 1 = "not at all" to 7 = "very much"). Demeaning treatment correlated with anticipated conflict, $r = 0.76$, $p < 0.001$.

Results and Discussion

Interpersonal Conflict. We first conducted a 2×2 ANOVA. There was a significant main effect of *status*; targets yoked to high-status participants reported lower levels of anticipated conflict compared to targets yoked to low-status participants, $F(1, 101) = 8.57$, $p = 0.004$. There was no main effect of *power* on anticipated conflict, $F(1, 101) = 1.67$, $p = 0.20$. The predicted *status × power* interaction was marginally significant, $F(1, 100) = 3.08$, $p = 0.083$. Simple effects analyses revealed that *status* was inversely associated with anticipated *conflict* when targets were yoked to high-power participants, $t(100) = -3.33$, $p = 0.001$, but was unrelated to anticipated conflict when targets were yoked to low-power participants, $t(100) = -0.86$, $p = 0.39$. Furthermore, targets yoked to low-status/high-power participants reported more conflict (mean = 3.79, SD = 0.90) than targets yoked to

participants in the high-status/high-power condition (mean = 2.80, SD = 1.04), $t(100) = -3.33$, $p = 0.001$, high-status/low-power condition (mean = 2.87, SD = 1.17), $t(100) = -3.01$, $p = 0.003$, and low-status/low-power condition (mean = 3.13, SD = 1.11), $t(100) = -2.17$, $p = 0.032$. Targets yoked to participants in the other three conditions did not differ in their level of anticipated conflict (all p's > 0.25). See Table 3 for all means and standard deviations for Studies 2a, 2b, and 3.

Perceived Demeaning Treatment. A 2×2 ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of *status*: targets yoked to high-status participants felt less demeaned than targets yoked to low-status participants, $F(1, 101) = 12.81$, $p = 0.001$. There was no main effect of *power*, $F(1, 101) = 0.61$, $p = 0.44$. Although the predicted *status × power* interaction did not reach significance, $F(1, 100) = 2.23$, $p = 0.138$, simple effects analyses revealed that *status* was inversely associated with perceived demeaning treatment when targets were yoked to high-power participants, $t(100) = -3.60$, $p = 0.001$, but not when targets were yoked to low-power participants, $t(100) = -1.50$, $p = 0.14$. Furthermore, targets yoked to low-status/high-power participants (mean = 5.22, SD = 1.42) reported feeling more demeaned than targets yoked to participants in the high-status/high-power condition (mean = 3.46, SD = 1.86), $t(100) = -3.60$, $p = 0.001$, and high-status/low-power condition (mean = 3.67, SD = 1.82), $t(100) = -3.08$, $p = 0.003$; the difference in perceptions of demeaning treatment from targets yoked to the low-status/low-power condition was marginally significant (mean = 4.40, SD = 1.83), $t(100) = -1.63$, $p = 0.107$. Targets yoked to participants in the low-status/low-power condition felt more demeaned than those yoked to participants in the high-status/high-power condition ($p = 0.05$), no other cells differed from each other (p's > 0.13).

The results of Study 2a provide support for Hypotheses 1–2. Low-status/high-power participants produced layoff memos that were more demeaning and created more conflict than *each* of the other combinations of status and power. This study also establishes that the low-status/high-power actor is the direct *source* of anticipated conflict and perceived demeaning treatment.

Table 3 Means and Standard Deviations by Condition on Conflict and Demeaning Treatment for Studies 2a, 2b, and 3

Condition	Study 2a Conflict Mean	SD	Demeaning Mean	SD	Study 2b Conflict Mean	SD	Demeaning Mean	SD	Study 3 Conflict Mean	SD	Demeaning Mean	SD
High status/high power	2.80	1.04	3.46	1.86	2.75	1.19	3.26	1.80	2.24	1.36	1.94	1.11
Low status/high power	3.79	0.90	5.22	1.42	3.24	1.05	3.80	1.80	2.99	1.41	2.85	1.49
High status/low power	2.87	1.17	3.67	1.82	2.73	1.27	3.25	1.84	3.10	1.59	2.25	1.24
Low status/low power	3.13	1.11	4.40	1.83	2.41	1.38	3.00	2.19	1.64	0.76	1.33	0.74

Study 2b: Identifying the Source of Power Without Status Effects (Request for Help Context)

In Study 2b we again employed a yoked design, but assessed the generalizability of the effect by using a context that is less formal and more positive (help request from a coworker). Unlike writing a layoff notification, which terminates a relationship, the context of help seeking implies the existence of an ongoing relationship. Additionally, in Study 2b we focused exclusively on relationship conflict, the component of interpersonal conflict that we believe is especially related to the interpersonal dynamics of status and power.

Method

Context and Sample. Participants were 406 adults recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk who received $.40. Part 1 (75 women, 128 men; mean age = 32.62, SD = 11.60) and Part 2 (71 women, 132 men; mean age = 31.51, SD = 9.82) each consisted of 203 adults. Each person in Part 1 was yoked to exactly one person in Part 2. Six participants from Part 2 were excluded because they failed an attention check question.

Part 1—Power and Status Manipulation. Similar to Study 2a, participants from Part 1 were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in a 2(power: high, low) × 2(status: high, low) between subjects design.

Participants read a description of their role in a consulting firm in which the power and status of their role was manipulated relative to another role in the organization. High-power (low-power) participants read that, "You are this person's direct supervisor (subordinate) and therefore have complete control over their daily tasks and monthly performance reviews (therefore they have complete control over your daily tasks and monthly performance reviews)." For the high-status (low-status) manipulation, participants read further that, "You know this person admires your role and has a lot of respect for you as a result (However, you know this person despises your role and has no respect for you as a result)."

Participants next read that, "Recently you patiently spent several hours teaching this person how to use a new software program even though it should take no longer than one hour of training to acquire all the knowledge that is required. This person just approached you and asked if you could go through the software with them again. How would you tell this person that you do not have the time to go through everything again? Please respond as if you are speaking directly to the person (e.g., use "you" language)."

Part 2. Participants in Part 2 were randomly yoked to exactly one help request response produced by a Part 1 participant. As in Study 2a, these new participants were unaware of the power and status manipulation given to the Part 1 participant. Participants were instructed to read the response as if they were the person actually receiving it from a "coworker," but no other contextual information was provided.

Interpersonal Conflict. As in Study 2a, our interest is in the amount of anticipated conflict reported by the Part 2 participant after reviewing the response to the help request. Participants were presented with and responded to only the four relationship conflict items developed by Jehn (1995; e.g., "How much friction would there be between you and the other person?," from 1 = "none" to 5 = "a lot," $\alpha = 0.96$).

Perceptions of Demeaning Treatment. We assessed perceptions of demeaning treatment using the same measure as Study 2a ($\alpha = 0.96$; correlation with anticipated conflict, $r = 0.87$, $p < 0.001$).

Results

Interpersonal Conflict. A 2 × 2 ANOVA revealed no main effect of *status* on anticipated *conflict*, $F(1, 194) = 0.39$, $p = 0.53$. There was a main effect of *power*; targets yoked to low-power participants anticipated less conflict than targets yoked to high-power participants, $F(1, 194) = 5.58$, $p = 0.019$. The *status* × *power* interaction was significant, $F(1, 193) = 5.43$, $p = 0.021$. As predicted, *status* was inversely associated with anticipated *conflict* when targets were yoked to high-power participants, $t(193) = -2.05$, $p = 0.042$, but was unrelated to conflict when targets were yoked to low-power participants, $t(193) = 1.28$, $p = 0.20$. Furthermore, targets yoked to low-status/high-power participants (mean = 3.24, SD = 1.05) reported more conflict than targets yoked to participants in the high-status/high-power condition (mean = 2.75, SD = 1.19), $t(193) = -2.05$, $p = 0.042$, high-status/low-power condition (mean = 2.73, SD = 1.27), $t(193) = -2.03$, $p = 0.044$, and low-status/low-power condition (mean = 2.41, SD = 1.38), $t(193) = -3.34$, $p = 0.001$. Targets yoked to participants in the other three conditions did not differ in their level of anticipated conflict (all p's > 0.16).

Perceived Demeaning Treatment. Neither *status* nor *power* produced a main effect on perceived demeaning treatment (p's > 0.139). The predicted *status* × *power* interaction did not reach significance, $F(1, 193) = 2.10$, $p = 0.149$. The negative effect of status on perceived demeaning treatment when targets were yoked to high-power participants did not reach significance, $t(193) = -1.45$, $p = 0.148$. Status was unrelated to perceived demeaning treatment when targets were yoked to low-power participants, $t(193) = 0.63$, $p = 0.53$. Targets yoked to low-status/high-power participants (mean = 3.80, SD = 1.80) reported feeling somewhat (but not significantly) more demeaned than targets yoked to those

in the high-status/high-power condition (mean = 3.26, SD = 1.80), $t(193) = -1.45$, $p = 0.148$, and targets yoked to those in the high-status/low-power condition (mean = 3.25, SD = 1.84), $t(193) = -1.43$, $p = 0.154$, and significantly more demeaned than targets yoked to participants in the low-status/low-power condition (mean = 3.00, SD = 2.19), $t(193) = -2.08$, $p = 0.039$. Targets yoked to participants in the other three conditions did not differ in their level of perceived demeaning treatment (all p's > 0.48).

Meta-Analyses of Studies 2a and 2b

We conducted meta-analyses of the results from Studies 2a and 2b to establish the size and significance of the effects across both studies (see Ku et al. 2010, Lammers et al. 2008). Using the Comprehensive Meta-Analysis (CMA) software program, we found a significant *status × power* interaction on conflict (point estimate = -0.78, SE = 0.27, Z-value = -2.91, $p = 0.004$) and perceived demeaning treatment (point estimate = -0.88, SE = 0.43, Z-value = -2.06, $p = 0.039$). Additionally, we conducted a small meta-analysis for each focused contrast reported in Studies 2a and 2b using the MEANES macro in SPSS (based on Cohen's d) and following recommendations to weight the effect sizes by the inverse variance (Lipsey and Wilson 2001). For conflict, the results of the meta-analyses using fixed effects models demonstrated that targets yoked to low-status/high-power participants reported more conflict than targets yoked to high-status/high-power participants (mean $d = 0.61$, SE = 0.16, $p < 0.001$), high-status/low-power participants (mean $d = 0.57$, SE = 0.17, $p < 0.001$), and low-status/low-power participants (mean $d = 0.67$, SE = 0.17, $p < 0.001$). For demeaning treatment, targets yoked to low-status/high-power participants reported feeling more demeaned than targets yoked to high-status/high-power participants (mean $d = 0.52$, SE = 0.16, $p = 0.001$), high-status/low-power participants (mean $d = 0.50$, SE = 0.17, $p = 0.003$), and low-status/low-power participants (mean $d = 0.44$, SE = 0.17, $p = 0.01$).

Overall, Studies 2a and 2b provide support for Hypotheses 1 and 2 by showing that participants yoked to actors in low-status/high-power roles anticipated more conflict and felt more demeaned than participants yoked to actors in each of the other three conditions. Importantly, we also identified actors in low-status/high-power roles as the *source* of interpersonal conflict and perceived demeaning treatment. Our next experiment extended the present findings by testing the vicious cycle hypothesis (Hypothesis 3).

Study 3: A Test of the Vicious Cycle Hypothesis

In Study 3 we randomly assigned employed participants to one of four conditions in which they identified a target coworker who had either more or less status and

either more or less power than they had. After identifying a coworker who matched the specifications to which they had been assigned, they indicated how much conflict they experience with that person and how demeaned they feel by that person.

Once conflict and demeaning treatment are initiated by low-status/high-power actors (e.g., as shown in Studies 2a and 2b), we predict that participants will report being engaged in more conflict and feeling highly demeaned in two specific conditions: (1) when the identified coworker has relatively lower status and higher power than the participant, and (2) when the identified coworker has relatively higher status and lower power than the participant (i.e., the condition in which the participant him or herself is in the relatively low-status, high-power position). In each of these cases, one member of the dyad has low status and high power and we predict that this person will initiate conflict and demeaning treatment that will escalate, such that the target of the initial conflict and demeaning treatment will retaliate against the low-status, high-power individual, thereby contributing to a vicious cycle.

Method

One hundred and eight employed participants (47 women, 61 men; mean age = 32.06, SD = 10.37) from Mechanical Turk participated in exchange for $1.50. All participants successfully responded to an attention check question and were therefore retained in the final sample. Participants were asked to identify a coworker and indicate the degree to which they experienced conflict with and felt demeaned by that person. Participants were randomly assigned to identify a coworker whose role provided more versus less status and power than they had. Thus, the study employed a 2(power of coworker relative to participant: high, low) × 2(status of coworker relative to participant: high, low), between-subjects design.

Power and Status Manipulations. Participants were instructed to "Please enter the first name of a coworker whose position provides him/her with more [less] power (i.e., more [less] control over resources that matter to others) than you and more [less] status (i.e., more [less] admiration and respect) than you have." Thus, both relative power and status were manipulated within the dyad. Importantly, conflict and demeaning treatment were not assessed until *after* participants had identified a coworker to ensure that participants did not select coworkers with conflict and demeaning treatment already in mind.

Interpersonal Conflict. Participants responded to an eight-item measure of interpersonal conflict (e.g., "One party frequently undermines the other," from 1 = "not at all/strongly disagree" to 7 = "very much/strongly agree" $\alpha = 0.96$) adapted from conflict measures used by Jehn (1995) and Cox (1998).

Demeaning Behavior. Demeaning treatment was assessed using the same five-item scale used in Studies 2a and 2b ($\alpha = 0.93$). Demeaning treatment was correlated with conflict, $r = 0.86$, $p < 0.001$.

Results and Discussion

Interpersonal Conflict. Neither *status* nor *power* had a significant main effect on *interpersonal conflict* (p's > 0.22), but as predicted, the *status × power* interaction was significant, $F(1, 104) = 18.82$, $p < 0.001$. We probed this interaction using the MODPROBE macro provided by Hayes (2012) and found that when the participant's coworker had relatively higher power than the participant, participants reported experiencing more conflict with relatively lower-status coworkers (mean = 2.99, SD = 1.41) than relatively higher-status coworkers (mean = 2.24, SD = 1.36), $t(104) = -2.09$, $p = 0.04$. When the participant's coworker had relatively lower power than the participant, participants reported experiencing more conflict with relatively higher-status coworkers (mean = 3.10, SD = 1.59) than relatively lower-status coworkers (mean = 1.64, SD = 0.76), $t(104) = 4.03$, $p < 0.001$. In other words, whenever one member of the dyad had higher power and lower status relative to the other person, reported conflict was significantly higher.

To test our vicious cycle hypothesis (Hypothesis 3) we compared the responses of participants in the low-status/high-power and high-status/low-power coworker conditions to the two conditions that did not include a low-status/high-power individual. Participants in the two mismatched status/power conditions reported more conflict (mean = 3.04, SD = 1.49) than participants in the two matched status/power conditions (mean = 1.95, SD = 1.15), $t(106) = 4.28$, $p < 0.001$.

Demeaning Treatment. Participants in the low-power coworker conditions reported lower levels of demeaning treatment compared to those in the high-power coworker conditions, $F(1, 104) = 6.13$, $p = 0.015$. Additionally, the predicted *status × power* interaction was significant, $F(1, 104) = 16.46$, $p < 0.001$. We probed this interaction using the MODPROBE macro provided by Hayes (2012); when the participant's coworker had higher power than the participant, participants reported more demeaning treatment from relatively lower-status coworkers (mean = 2.85, SD = 1.49) than relatively higher-status coworkers (mean = 1.94, SD = 1.11), $t(104) = -2.88$, $p = 0.005$. When the participant's coworker had lower power than the participant, participants reported more demeaning treatment from relatively higher-status coworkers (mean = 2.25, SD = 1.24) than relatively lower-status coworkers (mean = 1.33, SD = 0.74), $t(104) = 2.86$, $p = 0.005$. Whenever one member of the dyad had higher power and lower status relative to

the other person, demeaning treatment was significantly higher.

In directly testing Hypothesis 3, we found that participants in the two mismatched status/power conditions reported more demeaning treatment (mean = 2.55, SD = 1.39) than participants in the two matched status/power conditions (mean = 1.65, SD = 0.99), $t(106) = 3.91$, $p < 0.001$.

Study 3 used a 2×2 quasi-experimental design to examine the interactive effect of status and power within specific work dyads and established evidence of a vicious cycle of conflict and demeaning treatment. As predicted, we found that whenever one party in a dyad had high power but low status relative to the other, more conflict and demeaning treatment were reported. Whereas Study 1 showed that low-status/high-power individuals experienced more conflict, on average, than other individuals, the present study focused on isolated dyads to show that the conflict instigated by low-status/high-power employees creates a vicious cycle of conflict and demeaning treatment within those dyads.

Study 4: Power and Heightened Reactivity to Changes in Status

Study 4 sought to replicate our findings using employees from a large government agency. In addition, Study 4 tested a possible remedy to, as well as amplifier of, the conflict initiated by low-status/high-power role occupants. In particular, we examined whether a *change* in subjective status serves as a lever that influences the amount of conflict engaged in by high-power, but not low-power, actors. That is, because power allows individuals to act on their inner states and feelings, we predicted that high-power individuals would be more sensitive to changes in status than low-power individuals (Hypothesis 4). This possibility is consistent with the idea that the alignment of different bases of hierarchy (i.e., status and power) can serve to reduce conflict in organizations (Halevy et al. 2011).

Method

Context and Sample. We collected data from a large, federal agency that was undergoing an organizational change that required many employees who previously worked in private offices to relocate to an open-plan office setting and implement a "hot desk system" (i.e., multiple workers utilizing the same desk space at different times). We viewed this initiative as an ideal context in which to capture perceptions of status change because private offices are considered important symbols of status that signal one's position along an organizational status hierarchy (Langdon 1966, Greenberg 1988). However, changes in status among employees were not limited to this particular organizational change initiative.

We surveyed employees in offices located in the Midwest (MW) and Rocky Mountain (RM) U.S. regions with a Web-based survey framed as an assessment of "organizational culture" and used archival data sources from the organization to obtain control variables. A unique identification number was emailed to each respondent, which linked the respondent to his or her own survey. All told, data were collected from two nonoverlapping sources—employees and internal HR databases—within both offices.

Ninety-six employees out of a possible 158 (60.8%) in the MW office and 32 employees out of a possible 65 (49.2%) in the RM office provided usable responses resulting in a final sample of 128 employees (57.4% overall response rate). All of the employees in our sample held positions at the General Schedule 13, 14, or 15 pay levels within their department. As compensation for completing the survey, all respondents received their choice of one of three best-selling management books. Employees in the final sample did not differ on any demographic variables from those who did not complete the survey.

Status, Status Change, and Power. Employees reported the status, status change, and power that their roles afforded. Status (the amount of "respect, admiration, and prominence you possess in the eyes of others") was measured using a seven-point scale from "hardly any" (1) to "very much" (7), as was power ("control over valuable resources that others in the organization need and/or the ability to administer rewards and punishments"). Employees also reported whether their status in the organization had changed in the last year on a seven-point scale from "decreased substantially" (1) to "increased substantially" (7).

Interpersonal Conflict. We measured interpersonal conflict with coworkers on a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree"/"never"/"none" (1) to "strongly agree"/"very often"/"a lot" (7) using four items (e.g., "one party frequently undermines another"; $\alpha = 0.87$).

Personality Traits. Personality may correlate with organizational rank (e.g., Judge et al. 2012), and propensity to engage in conflict (Halevy et al. 2014). We therefore assessed personality along the big five dimensions using the 10-item personality inventory (TIPI; Gosling et al. 2003), which includes two items for each of the big five personality traits. Reliability coefficients for the two-item measures were as follows: extraversion ($\alpha = 0.73$); agreeableness ($\alpha = 0.44$); conscientiousness ($\alpha = 0.53$); emotional stability ($\alpha = 0.65$); and openness to experience ($\alpha = 0.54$). Reliability scores were consistent with those obtained by Gosling et al. (2003) in the original scale ($\alpha s = 0.40 - 0.73$).

Control Variables. We also assessed gender, tenure (years of service with current agency), and location (MW region or RM region). Conflict and region were not correlated, $r = -0.10$, $p = 0.28$. Furthermore, including region as a control variable in subsequent analyses does not affect the pattern of results. Therefore, we combined the data from both regions into a single sample. We also controlled for organizational commitment, because it could be associated with position in the hierarchy and/or the propensity to engage in conflicts with coworkers, using four items from the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (e.g., "I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar," $\alpha = 0.61$; Mowday et al. 1979). Finally, we controlled for the general schedule pay scale level.

Results and Discussion

Table 4 reports the descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables. Conflict correlated negatively with organizational commitment, $r = -0.33$, $p < 0.001$, agreeableness, $r = -0.29$, $p = 0.001$, conscientiousness, $r = -0.18$, $p = 0.049$, and emotional stability, $r = -0.21$, $p = 0.018$. Thus we controlled for these variables. Analyses without these controls obtained the same patterns of results.

Status × Power on Conflict. To replicate the status by power effects on conflict observed in our earlier studies, we first regressed conflict scores onto *status* and *power* (both mean centered). Neither status nor power produced a main effect on conflict (both p's > 0.32; see Model 1 in Table 5). Next, we added the *status × power* interaction term and observed the predicted interactive effect on conflict, $b = -0.14$, $t(124) = -2.34$, $p = 0.021$, an effect that remained significant after entering the control variables, $b = -0.17$, $t(120) = -2.96$, $p = 0.004$ (see Models 2 and 3 in Table 5). Simple slope analyses revealed that among high-power individuals (one standard deviation above the mean), status was inversely associated with conflict, $b = -0.44$, $t(120) = -2.42$, $p = 0.02$. The effect of status was null among low-power individuals (one standard deviation below the mean), $b = -0.002$, $t(120) = -0.01$, $p = 0.99$. Thus, we replicated our previous findings.

Change in Status × Power on Conflict. Next, we assessed the interactive effect of status *change* and power on conflict. We regressed conflict scores onto status change and power (both mean centered). A significant main effect of status change emerged, $b = -0.24$, $t(125) = -2.74$, $p = 0.007$ (see Model 4, Table 5) showing that status loss was associated with conflict. The *status change × power* interaction was significant, $b = -0.12$, $t(124) = -2.43$, $p = 0.017$, (Model 5, Table 5). It remained significant after adding the controls, $b = -0.17$, $t(119) = -3.54$, $p = 0.001$ (Model 6, Table 5). Among high-power individuals (one standard deviation

Table 4   Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 4)(N = 128)

No.	Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Interpersonal conflict	2.98	1.32														
2	Status change	4.71	1.39	−0.277**													
3	Power	4.77	1.32	−0.158	0.384**												
4	Gender[a]	1.42	0.50	0.007	−0.096	0.02											
5	GS-pay scale	13.53	0.68	−0.16	0.174*	0.274**	0.007										
6	Tenure	15.93	9.13	−0.172	−0.098	0.145	0.055	0.257**									
7	Region[b]	1.25	0.44	−0.138	0.069	−0.007	−0.055	−0.107	−0.119								
8	Age	45.53	9.13	−0.051	−0.245**	−0.081	−0.099	0.144	0.501**	0.102							
9	Extraversion	4.65	1.52	−0.054	0.092	−0.008	0.180*	−0.003	−0.169	−0.094	−0.227*						
10	Agreeableness	5.23	1.09	−0.286**	0.260**	0.174*	0.252**	0.119	0.01	0.004	−0.04	0.035					
11	Conscientiousness	6.11	1.01	−0.175*	0.223*	0.218*	0.104	0.255**	0.046	0.009	−0.092	0.034	0.336**				
12	Emotional stability	5.55	1.17	−0.209*	0.289**	0.251**	−0.092	0.325**	−0.014	−0.01	0.001	−0.022	0.462**	0.417**			
13	Openness	5.50	1.00	−0.146	0.065	0.089	0.119	0.017	−0.015	−0.118	−0.083	0.337**	0.244**	0.355**	0.256**		
14	Organizational commitment	5.57	1.22	−0.329**	0.356**	0.277**	−0.142	0.214*	0.114	0.014	−0.101	−0.016	0.295**	0.125	0.285**	−0.114	
15	Subjective status	5.48	1.02	−0.167	0.449**	0.623**	−0.058	0.293**	0.032	−0.022	−0.108	0.12	0.200*	0.083	0.327**	0.173	0.218*

[a]1 = male, 2 = female; [b]1 = Midwest region, 2 = Rocky Mountain region. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$.

above the mean), increased status was inversely associated with conflict, $b = -0.36$, $t(119) = -3.19$, $p = 0.002$. The effect of increased status was null among low-power individuals (one standard deviation below the mean), $b = 0.08$, $t(119) = 0.73$, $p = 0.47$ (see Figure 4). These results support Hypothesis 4. Finally, the three-way interaction between status, power, and status change was not significant, $b = 0.003$, SE $= 0.03$, $p = 0.92$, further supporting our theory that power frees people to act on internal states brought about by status.

These results complement our previous findings in two important ways. First, we replicated the power-without-status effect on conflict in a rich organizational setting. Second, we extend our previous findings by examining how perceived changes in status influence the powerful. In particular, we found that employees who have power are especially reactive to changes in status. Those with power who suffered a *loss* of status reported experiencing elevated levels of conflict whereas those who *gained* status reported experiencing reduced levels of conflict.

General Discussion

Across five studies, we found that individuals whose roles afforded power but lacked status were the most likely to experience and produce interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment. Study 1 established that power without status produced the most conflict among employees from a wide range of organizations. In Studies 2a and 2b, we broadened the scope of our findings by isolating the source of perceived interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment (i.e., roles that lacked status but provided power). Recipients of written layoff notifications (Study 2a) and rebuffed help requests (Study 2b) from low-status/high-power partners reported higher levels of anticipated conflict and felt more demeaned relative to recipients who received communications from partners that had any other combination of status and power. In Study 3, employees were randomly assigned to conditions in which they identified a coworker whose role provided either more or less power and either more or less status than their own role; this design produced two types of work dyads: those with an individual in a low-status/high-power role and those without such an individual. In support of our vicious cycle hypothesis, dyads with an individual in a low-status/high-power role reported more interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment than dyads without an individual in a low-status/high-power role. Finally, Study 4 replicated the power-without-status effect on interpersonal conflict using a sample of employees from a large, federal agency, with low-status/high-power role occupants reporting more conflict with departmental colleagues than those in any other role (as in Study 1). Study 4 also extended our previous findings by revealing that employees with power were more reactive to changes

Table 5   Regression Analyses Predicting Conflict (Study 4)

Variables	Replication of status × Power effect						Status change × Power effect						Combined	
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6		Model 7	
Intercept	2.98***		3.10***		3.12***		2.98***		3.06***		3.10***		3.08***	
Subjective status	−0.15	(0.15)	−0.26	(0.15)	−0.22	(0.15)					−0.11	(0.15)	−0.08	(0.14)
Status change							−0.24**	(0.09)	−0.27**	(0.09)	−0.14	(0.09)	−0.18	(0.09)
Power	−0.09	(0.11)	−0.12	(0.11)	−0.02	(0.11)	−0.06	(0.09)	−0.12	(0.09)	−0.03	(0.11)	−0.02	(0.11)
Subjective status × Power			−0.14*	(0.06)	−0.17**	(0.06)							−0.20*	(0.08)
Status change × Power									−0.12*	(0.05)	−0.17**	(0.05)	−0.24***	(0.06)
Subjective status × Status change													0.36***	(0.09)
Agreeableness					−0.22	(0.12)					−0.23*	(0.11)	−0.19	(0.11)
Conscientiousness					−0.08	(0.12)					−0.07	(0.12)	−0.12	(0.12)
Emotional stability					0.00	(0.12)					0.03	(0.11)	0.05	(0.11)
Organization Commitment					−0.31**	(0.10)					−0.32**	(0.10)	−0.32**	(0.09)
Subjective status × Status change × Power													0.00	(0.03)
N	128		128		128		128		128		128		128	
Adjusted R^2	0.02		0.05		0.17		0.07		0.10		0.20		0.29	
F test of model	2.10		3.27*		4.70***		5.44**		5.73**		5.59***		5.66***	

Notes. Unstandardized coefficients are reported, with standard errors in parentheses. All continuous variables are mean centered.
    *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

in status than employees who had less power. This final study highlights the utility of organizational interventions aimed at matching role status to role power and the danger associated with powerful organizational roles losing status.
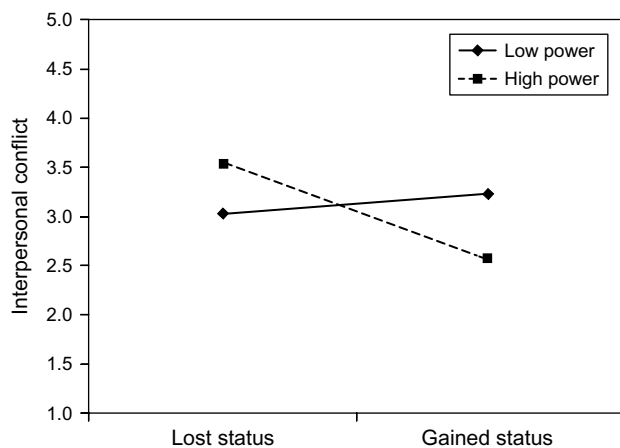
The current research makes key contributions to the literatures on interpersonal conflict and social hierarchy. First, this research moves away from studying consequences of interpersonal conflict (De Dreu and Weingart 2003, Amason 1996, De Dreu and Van de Vliert 1997) to uncover the organizational and social psychological determinants of interpersonal conflict. Current

Figure 4   Conflict as a Function of Status Change in the Past Year (+/ − 1 SD) and Power (+/ − 1 SD) Among Federal Agency Workers (Study 4)

assumptions about the determinants of interpersonal conflict rely on person-based accounts (e.g., Halevy and Katz 2013, Halevy et al. 2014), but we explore how structural factors—namely, roles that provide power but lack status—produce a vicious cycle of interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment. In so doing, we identified a previously unknown cause of interpersonal conflict spirals in organizations.

Second, this research highlights the distinctiveness of status and power, two universal bases of hierarchical differentiation (Magee and Galinsky 2008). Although status and power often covary, they tend to have different effects on behavior (Blader and Chen 2012). The current research provides evidence from the field and the lab that provides greater clarity. We highlight how one cannot precisely predict the effect of status on interpersonal conflict without knowing a person's power level and one cannot calculate the effect of having power on interpersonal conflict without knowledge of a person's status.

Overall, the present research adds to a growing body of work that aims to bridge the literatures on social hierarchy and organizational conflict (e.g., Bendersky and Hays 2012). We believe that a theoretical integration of these two vast literatures holds promise for promoting our understanding of both the functions and dysfunctions of social hierarchy (e.g., hierarchical pay dispersion: Bloom 1999, Halevy et al. 2012, Wade et al. 2006, and group performance: Ronay et al. 2012, Anicich et al. 2015) and the causes and consequences of different types

of conflict in organizations (De Dreu and Weingart 2003, de Wit et al. 2012, Halevy et al. 2014).

Practical Implications

Our findings have practical implications for leaders. First and foremost, it is important for organizational leaders to become aware of the levels of both status and power afforded by various organizational roles. To the degree that a large number of roles in an organization afford power without status, there will likely be elevated levels of interpersonal conflict among workers. Organizational leaders should avoid creating roles that lack status but afford control over valued resources and outcomes.

However, it is not always possible to avoid such roles. Thus, finding ways to raise the status of specific roles that have power but confer little respect may prove to be an effective strategy. For example, Hambrick and Cannella (1993) found that powerful executives who lost status following an acquisition were less likely to leave the firm when the acquiring firm provided them with status-enhancing roles and responsibilities. In other words, the acquired firm's powerful executives were less likely to depart when the acquiring firm put forth effort to align the executives' status with their high level of power.

It is important for organizations to understand the type and magnitude of status enhancement that is required to reduce interpersonal conflict among high-power employees. For example, acknowledging the value of the contributions associated with a particular role and connecting those contributions to the broader organizational mission may lead others in the organization to view the role with greater respect, thereby imbuing it with higher status over time. Attempts by managers to channel status to a low-status role will likely fail unless other employees in the organization view those status claims as legitimate. Therefore, managers must highlight genuine role attributes rather than attempt to disguise inherently low-status features of a role. Similarly, when granting additional power to employees, managers would be wise to ensure that increases in role status accompany these increases in role power, lest employees who lack status use their newfound power to antagonize those around them. For example, when a role holder is given control over additional resources, it may be prudent for organizational leaders to publicly laud the importance of that role for the organization. This social proof approach to status enhancement may be particularly effective because status is a collectively defined social construct (Magee and Galinsky 2008). Additionally, efforts to enhance the status of particular roles will be most successful when spearheaded by organizational members whose own roles have high status because high-status individuals enjoy greater influence over others' opinions (Berger et al. 1980) and actions (Rosenbaum and Tucker 1962, Hodson and Hewstone

2012). Organizations seeking to become more "flat" and/or undergoing systemic changes that eliminate commonly recognized status symbols (e.g., office downsizing initiatives that eliminate larger offices and work spaces) should also be aware that reducing the perceived status associated with high-power roles might unintentionally produce interpersonal conflict.

Managers may help prepare employees for the experience of holding power while lacking respect by highlighting productive ways of increasing one's status (e.g., engaging in behaviors that facilitate respect in the eyes of others). Additionally, by mistreating others, low-status/high-power individuals likely further reduce their own individual status and the status of the role they occupy in the organization, reinforcing the very conditions that led them to feel disrespected and to mistreat others in the first place. Therefore, individuals in low-status roles would be best served by channeling their energy toward behaviors that will *increase* the status of their role.

Finally, it is important for managers to understand the distinction between actual versus perceived demeaning treatment. Actual demeaning treatment perpetrated by individuals in low-status/high-power roles is potentially very toxic to an organizational culture. However, it is also possible that individuals in low-status/high-power roles may be perceived as treating others in a demeaning manner when in fact they are behaving no differently than individuals in other roles. Fragale et al. (2011) documented that people tend to view low-status/high-power actors negatively. Thus, managers should be aware of (and seek to address) both of these factors when designing interventions aimed at reducing interpersonal conflict.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The current research is not without limitations. The results of Studies 1 and 4 relied on unidirectional, self-reported ratings of employees' perceived status, power, and interpersonal conflict. A more comprehensive picture would emerge with bidirectional employee ratings—that is, ratings of managers' perceptions of subordinates and subordinates' perceptions of those same managers. It is possible that managers and subordinates view hierarchical dynamics differently. However, we believe our findings from the field, in combination with the experimental evidence reported in Studies 2a, 2b, and 3 provide compelling evidence that power without status leads to interpersonal conflict and demeaning treatment. Indeed, we suspect that, if anything, the likely result of self-report methods would be that employees would *downplay* the amount of conflict they report as a result of impression management concerns, perhaps muting the findings that, nonetheless, emerged in the present studies.

In Study 1, there was evidence that status was neg-
atively associated with conflict among *low*-power indi-
viduals (even though this effect was stronger among
high-power individuals as predicted). We did not observe
this pattern of results in subsequent studies. Therefore,
future work should seek to further explore the con-
ditions under which low-status, low-power individuals
engage in elevated levels of conflict and demeaning
behavior and the conditions under which the targets of
demeaning treatment accept versus challenge this mis-
treatment. Roles that carry power without status are
unlikely to produce greater interpersonal conflict when
the targets of mistreatment merely accept their treat-
ment (e.g., Hoffman et al. 1994). However, the results
we report in Study 3 suggest that once initiated, con-
flict and demeaning treatment escalate into a vicious
cycle between interaction parties. Additionally, targets
who possess power will likely view being mistreated as a
norm violation worthy of punishment. Targets who pos-
sess high status may have a similar reaction to being
mistreated.

It would also be valuable for future research to explore
additional behavioral and other downstream conse-
quences of possessing power without status. The present
work focuses on interpersonal conflict and demeaning
treatment, but it is worth examining other employee
behaviors as well. For example, leaders with a high
dominance motivation respond to tenuous power in a
self-interested manner, such as withholding valuable
information from one's group, excluding highly skilled
group members, and preventing skilled group members
from having influence over a group task (Maner and
Mead 2010). To the degree that lacking status leads
power holders to view their power as tenuous, Maner
and Mead's (2010) findings point to a number of inter-
esting directions for work on status and power.

Illuminating boundary conditions would also be both
theoretically and practically important. It is conceivable
that under certain circumstances (e.g., facing an upcom-
ing opportunity for promotion), employees in positions
of power without status may strategically act in a con-
siderate manner in order to win favor and accrue rela-
tional credits among one's peers and superiors. This and
other possible boundary conditions (e.g., the existence
or absence of intergroup competition: Maner and Mead
2010, Mead and Maner 2012) would be valuable to
identify. Finally, moving beyond the behavioral realm,
future research may consider the cognitive implications
of occupying positions that afford power but not status.
For example, it could be the case that the psychological
stress of being in such a position impairs cognitive per-
formance (e.g., performance on working memory, inhi-
bition, and other executive function tasks).

Conclusion

The current research demonstrates the importance of dis-
tinguishing between status and power in organizations.
In so doing, we have highlighted a previously over-
looked cause of interpersonal conflict in organizations:
the combination of high power with low status in orga-
nizational roles. We found that power without status
leads to more interpersonal conflict and demeaning treat-
ment than any other combination of status and power.
Our findings enhance the field's current understanding of
social structure, workplace conflict, and social relations
by integrating social psychological and organizational
theories of status, power, and interpersonal conflict. This
work builds on an emerging body of research that seeks
to move beyond the traditional approach of examining
the isolated effects of status *or* power or treating the
two variables as synonymous. It is our hope that the
present results will stimulate future investigations of the
determinants of interpersonal conflict as well as research
examining the interactive effects of status and power.

Supplemental Material

References

Amason AC (1996) Distinguishing the effects of functional and
dysfunctional conflict on strategic decision making: Resolving
a paradox for top management groups. *Acad. Management J.*
39(1):123–148.

Anderson C, Berdahl JL (2002) The experience of power: Examin-
ing the effects of power on approach and inhibition tendencies.
J. Personality Soc. Psych., 83(6):1362–1377.

Andersson LM, Pearson CM (1999) Tit for tat? The spiraling effect
of incivility in the workplace. *Acad. Management Rev.* 24(3):
452–471.

Anicich EM, Swaab RI, Galinsky AD (2015) Hierarchical cultural
values predict success and mortality in high-stakes teams. *Proc.
Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 112(5):1338–1343.

Aquino K, Douglas S (2003) Identity threat and antisocial behav-
ior in organizations: The moderating effects of individual dif-
ferences, aggressive modeling, and hierarchical status. *Organ.
Behav. Human Decision Processes*. 90(1):195–208.

Argyris C (1962) *Interpersonal Competence and Organizational
Effectiveness* (Dorsey Press, Homewood, IL).

Ashforth BE (2001) *Role Transitions in Organizational Life: An
Identity-Based Perspective* (Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ).

Bendersky C, Hays NA (2012) Status conflict in groups. *Organ. Sci.*
23(2):323–340.

Bendix R, Lipset SM, eds. (1966) *Class, Status, and Power* (Free
Press, New York), 201–352.

Berger J, Rosenholtz SJ, Zelditch M (1980) Status organizing pro-
cesses. *Annual Rev. Soc*. 6(August):479–508.

Biddle BJ (1979) *Role Theory: Expectations, Identities, and Behav-
iors* (Academic Press, New York).

Bies RJ (2001) Interactional (in)justice: The sacred and the profane.
Greenberg J, Cropanzano R, eds. *Advances in Organizational
Justice* (Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA), 89–118.

Bies RJ, Tripp TM (1995) Beyond distrust: "Getting even" and the
need for revenge. Kramer RM, Tyler T, eds. *Trust in Organiza-
tions* (Sage, Newbury Park, CA), 246–260.

Blader SL, Chen Y (2012) Differentiating the effects of status and power: A justice perspective. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 102(5): 994–1014.

Blau PM (1964) *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (John Wiley & Sons, New York).

Bloom M (1999) The performance effects of pay dispersion on individuals and organizations. *Acad. Management J.* 42(1):25–40.

Bunderson JS, Reagans RE (2011) Power, status, and learning in organizations. *Organ. Sci.* 22(5):1182–1194.

Chen S, Lee-Chai AY, Bargh JA (2001) Relationship orientation as a moderator of the effects of social power. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 80(2):173–187.

Cheng JT, Tracy JL, Henrich J (2010) Pride, personality, and the evolutionary foundations of human social status. *Evol. Human Behav.* 31(5):334–347.

Clegg SR, Courpasson D, Phillips N (2006) *Power and Organizations* (Sage, London).

Coie JD, Dodge KA, Coppotelli H (1982) Dimensions and types of social status: A cross-age perspective. *Dev. Psych.* 18(4): 557–570.

Cox KB (1998) Antecedents and effects of intergroup conflict in the nursing unit. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond.

CPP (2008) CPP Global Human Capital Report: Workplace conflict and how businesses can harness it to thrive. Mountain View, CA.

De Dreu CKW (2008) The virtue and vice of workplace conflict: Food for (pessimistic) thought. *J. Organ Behav.* 29(1):5–18.

De Dreu CKW, Gelfand M (2008) Conflict in the workplace: Sources, functions, and dynamics across multiple levels of analysis. De Dreu CKW, Gelfand MJ, eds. *The Psychology of Conflict and Conflict Management in Organizations* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New York), 3–54.

De Dreu CKW, Van de Vliert E, eds. (1997) *Using Conflict in Organizations* (Sage, London), 101–105.

De Dreu CKW, Weingart LR (2003) Task versus relationship conflict, team performance and team member satisfaction: A meta-analysis. *J. Appl. Psych.* 88(4):741–749.

de Wit FRC, Greer LL, Jehn KA (2012) The Paradox of intragroup conflict: A meta-analysis. *J. Appl. Psych.* 97(2):360–390.

Dodge KA, Coie JD, Pettit GS, Price JM (1990) Peer status and aggression in boys' groups: Developmental and contextual analyses. *Child Dev.* 61(5):1289–1309.

Driskell JE, Webster M, Jr. (1997) Status and sentiment in task groups. Szmatka J, Skvoretz J, Berger J, eds. *Status, Network, and Structure: Theory Development in Group Processes* (Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA), 179–200.

Elliott JR, Smith RA (2004) Race, gender, and workplace power. *Amer. Sociol. Rev.* 69(3):365–386.

Fast NJ, Halevy N, Galinsky AD (2012) The destructive nature of power without status. *J. Experiment. Soc. Psych.* 48(1):391–394.

Felson RB (1982) Impression management and the escalation of aggression and violence. *Soc. Psych. Quart.* 45(4):245–254.

Fiske ST (2010) Stratification. Fiske ST, Gilbert DT, Lindzey G, eds. *Handbook of Social Psychology* 5th ed. (John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ), 941–982.

Fragale AR, Overbeck JR, Neale MA (2011) Resources versus respect: Social judgments based on targets' power and status positions. *J. Experiment. Soc. Psych.* 47(4):767–775.

Frone MR (2000) Interpersonal conflict at work and psychological outcomes: Testing a model among young workers. *J. Occup. Health Psych.* 5(2):246–255.

Galinsky AD, Gruenfeld DH, Magee JC (2003) From power to action. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 85(3):453–466.

Galinsky AD, Rucker DD, Magee JC (2015) Power. Mario M, Shaver P, Simpson J, Dovidio J, eds. *Interpersonal Relations. APA Handbooks in Psychology*, Vol. 3 (American Psychological Association, Washington, DC), 421–460.

Galinsky AD, Magee JC, Gruenfeld DH, Whitson JA, Liljenquist KA (2008) Social power reduces the strength of the situation: Implications for creativity, conformity, and dissonance. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 95(6):1450–1466.

Garandeau CF, Cillessen AH (2006) From indirect aggression to invisible aggression: A conceptual view on bullying and peer group manipulation. *Aggression and Violent Behav.* 11(6):612–625.

George D, Mallery P (2003) *SPSS for Windows Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference. 11.0 Update*, 4th ed. (Allyn Bacon, Boston).

Goodman E, Huang B, Schafer-Kalkhoff T, Adler NE (2007) Perceived socioeconomic status: A new type of identity that influences adolescents' self-rated health. *J. Adolescent Health* 41(5):479–487.

Gosling SD, Rentfrow PJ, Swann Jr. WB (2003) A very brief measure of the big five personality domains. *J. Res. Personality* 37(6): 504–528.

Greenberg J (1988) Equity and workplace status: A field experiment. *J. Appl. Psych.* 73(4):606–613.

Guinote A, Weick M, Cai A (2012) Does power magnify the expression of dispositions? *Psych. Sci.* 23(5):475–482.

Halevy N, Katz JJ (2013) Conflict templates thinking through interdependence. *Curr. Dir. Psych. Sci.* 22(3):217–224.

Halevy N, Chou E, Galinsky AD (2011) A functional model of hierarchy: Why, how and when hierarchical differentiation enhances group performance. *Organ. Psych. Rev.* 1(1):32–52.

Halevy N, Chou E, Galinsky AD, Murnighan JK (2012) When hierarchy wins: Evidence from the National Basketball Association. *Soc. Psych. Personality Sci.* 3(4):398–406.

Halevy N, Cohen TR, Chou EY, Katz JJ, Panter AT (2014) Mental models at work: Cognitive causes and consequences of conflict in organizations. *Personality Soc. Psych. Bull.* 40(1):92–110.

Hambrick DC, Cannella AA (1993) Relative standing: A framework for understanding departures of acquired executives. *Acad. Management J.* 36(4):733–762.

Haslam N (2006) Dehumanization: An integrative review. *Personality Soc. Psych. Rev.* 10(3):252–264.

Hayes AF (2012) My macros and code for SPSS and SAS. Retrieved November 1, 2015, http://www.afhayes.com/spss-sas-and-mplus-macros-and-code.html.

Hecht MA, LaFrance M (1998) License or obligation to smile: Power, sex and smiling. *Personality Soc. Psych. Bull.* 24(12):1326–1336.

Helmreich RL (2000) On error management: Lessons from aviation. *Brit. J. Manage.* 320(7237):781–785.

Hirsh JB, Galinsky AD, Zhong CB (2011) Drunk, powerful, and in the dark: How general processes of disinhibition produce both prosocial and antisocial behavior. *Pers. Psych. Sci.* 6(5):415–427.

Hodson G, Hewstone M, eds. (2012) *Advances in Intergroup Contact* (Psychology Press, New York), 113–132.

Hoffman E, McCabe K, Shachat K, Smith V (1994) Preferences, property rights, and anonymity in bargaining games. *Games Econom. Behav.* 7(3):346–380.

Homans GC (1974) *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms*, Revised ed. (Harcourt Brace, Oxford, UK).

Jehn KA (1995) A multimethod examination of the benefits and detriments of intragroup conflict *Admin. Sci. Quart.* 40(2):256–282.

Jehn KA, Mannix EA (2001) The dynamic nature of conflict: A longitudinal study of intragroup conflict and group performance. *Acad. Management J.* 44(2):238–251.

Jehn KA, Northcraft GB, Neale MA (1999) Why differences make a difference: A field study of diversity, conflict, and performance in work groups. *Admin. Sci. Quart.* 44(4):741–763.

Judge TA, Livingston BA, Hurst C (2012) Do nice guys—and gals—really finish last? The joint effects of sex and agreeableness on income. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 102(2):390–407.

Kahn WA (1990) Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Acad. Management J.* 33(4):692–724.

Kelley HH (1979) *Personal Relationships: Their Structures and Processes* (Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ).

Keltner D, Gruenfeld DH, Anderson C (2003) Power, approach and inhibition. *Psych. Rev.* 110(2):265–284.

Kifer Y, Heller D, Perunovic WE, Galinsky AD (2013) The good life of the powerful: The experience of power and authenticity enhance subjective well-being. *Psych. Sci.* 24(3):280–288.

Kilduff GJ, Galinsky AD (2013) From the ephemeral to the enduring: How approach-oriented mindsets lead to greater status. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 105(5):816–831.

Kraus MW, Chen S, Keltner D (2011) The power to be me: Power elevates self-concept consistency and authenticity, *J. Experiment. Soc. Psych.* 47(5):974–980.

Ku G, Wang CS, Galinsky AD (2010) Perception through a perspective-taking lens: Differential effects on judgment and behavior. *J. Experiment. Soc. Psych.* 46(5):792–798.

Lammers J, Galinsky AD, Gordijn EH, Otten S (2008) Illegitimacy moderates the effects of power on approach. *Psych. Sci.* 19(6):558–564.

Lancelotta GX, Vaughn S (1989) Relation between types of aggression and sociometric status: Peer and teacher perceptions. *J. Ed. Psych.* 81(1):86–90.

Langdon FJ (1966) *Modern Offices: A User Survey* (*National Building Studies Research Paper No. 41, Ministry of Technology, Building Research Station*) (Her Majesty's Stationary Office, London), 101–115.

Laschinger HKS, Finegan J (2005) Using empowerment to build trust and respect in the workplace: A strategy for addressing the nursing shortage. *Nursing Econ.* 23(1):6–13.

Leary MR (2010) Affiliation, acceptance, and belonging: The pursuit of interpersonal connection. Fiske ST, Gilbert DT, Lindzey G, eds. *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Vol. 2, 5th ed. (John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ), 864–897.

Leary MR, Baumeister RF (2000) The nature and function of self-esteem: Sociometer theory. Zanna MP, ed. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* Vol. 32 (Academic Press, San Diego), 1–62.

Leary MR, Twenge JM, Quinlivan E (2006) Interpersonal rejection as a determinant of anger and aggression. *Personality Soc. Psych. Rev.* 10(2):111–132.

Lipsey MW, Wilson DB (2001) *Practical Meta-Analysis*, Vol. 49 (Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA).

Macdonald D (1999) The "professional" work of experienced physical education teachers. *Res. Quart. Exercise and Sport* 70(1):41–54.

Magee JC, Galinsky AD (2008) Social hierarchy: The self-reinforcing nature of power and status. *Acad. Management Ann.* 2(1):351–398.

Mäkelä K, Hirvensalo M, Whipp PR (2014) Should I stay or should I go? Physical education teachers' career intentions. *Res. Quart. Exercise and Sport* 85(2):234–244.

Maner JK, Mead NL (2010) The essential tension between leadership and power: When leaders sacrifice group goals for the sake of self-interest. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 99(3):482–497.

Mannix E, Neale MA (2005) What differences make a difference? The promise and reality of diverse teams in organizations. *Psych. Sci. Pub. Int.* 6(2):31–55.

Mead NL, Maner JK (2012) On keeping your enemies close: Powerful leaders seek proximity to ingroup power-threats. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 102(3):576–591.

Meier LL, Gross S (2015) Episodes of incivility between subordinates and supervisors: Examining the role of self-control and time with an interaction-record diary study. *J. Organ Behav.* 36(8):1096–1113.

Miller DT (2001) Disrespect and the experience of injustice. *Annual Rev. Psych.* 52(1):527–555.

Moreira H, Sparkes AC, Fox K (1995) Physical education teachers and job commitment: A preliminary analysis. *Eur. Physical Ed. Rev.* 1(2):122–136.

Mowday RT, Steers RM, Porter LW (1979) Measurement of organizational commitment. *J. Voc. Behav.* 14(2):224–247.

Neeley TB (2013) Language matters: Status loss and achieved status distinctions in global organizations. *Organ. Sci.* 24(2):476–497.

Olson-Buchanan JB, Boswell WR (2008) An integrative model of experiencing and responding to mistreatment at work. *Acad. Management Rev.* 33(1):76–96.

Prinstein MJ, Cillessen AH (2003) Forms and functions of adolescent peer aggression associated with high levels of peer status. *Merrill-Palmer Quart.* 49(3):310–342.

Ridgeway CL (1991) The social construction of status value: Gender and other nominal characteristics. *Soc. Forces* 70(2):367–386.

Ridgeway CL (2001) Gender, status, and leadership. *J. Soc. Issues* 57(4):627–655.

Ronay R, Greenaway K, Anicich EM, Galinsky AD (2012) The path to glory is paved with hierarchy: When hierarchical differentiation increases group effectiveness. *Psych. Sci.* 23(6):669–677.

Rosenbaum ME, Tucker IF (1962) The competence of the model and the learning of imitation and nonimitation. *J. Experiment. Psych.* 63(2):183–190.

Singh-Manoux A, Adler NE, Marmot MG (2003) Subjective social status: Its determinants and its association with measures of ill-health in the Whitehall II study. *Soc. Sci. Medicine* 56(6):1321–1333.

Twenge JM, Baumeister RF, Tice DM, Stucke TS (2001) If you can't join them, beat them: Effects of social exclusion on aggressive behavior. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 81(6):1058–1069.

Vidmar N (2001) Retribution and revenge. *Handbook of Justice Research in Law* (Springer, New York), 31–63.

Wade JB, O'Reilly CAI, Pollock TG (2006) Overpaid CEOs and underpaid managers: Fairness and executive compensation. *Organ. Sci.* 17(5):527–544.

Whipp PR, Tan G, Yeo PT (2007) Experienced physical education teachers reaching their "use-by date" powerless and disrespected. *Res. Quart. Exercise and Sport* 78(5):487–499.

Willer R (2009) A status theory of collective action. Thye SR, Lawler EJ, eds. *Advances in Group Processes*, Vol. 26 (Emerald, London), 133–163.

Wolf WC, Fligstein ND (1979a) Sex and authority in the workplace: The causes of sexual inequality. *Amer. Sociol. Rev.* 44(2):235–252.

Wolf WC, Fligstein ND (1979b) Sexual stratification: Differences in power in the work setting. *Soc. Forces* 58(1):94–107.

Eric M. Anicich is a doctoral candidate in the Management Division at Columbia Business School, Columbia University. His primary line of research explores how social hierarchy shapes individual, group, and organizational outcomes.

Nathanael J. Fast is an assistant professor of management and organization at the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business. His research focuses on the determinants and consequences of power and status in groups and organizations, as well as the interpersonal processes that lead people, ideas, and cultural practices to become and stay prominent.

Nir Halevy is an associate professor of organizational behavior at the Graduate School of Business, Stanford University.

His research focuses on conflict and cooperation, interactive decision making, and hierarchy in groups and organizations. Specifically, he investigates how individuals and teams make decisions, manage conflicts, and cooperate to achieve joint goals.

Adam D. Galinsky is the Vikram S. Pandit Professor of Business at the Columbia Business School, Columbia University. His research and teaching focus on leadership, power, negotiations, decision making, diversity, and ethics.