The Bases of Power and the Power/Interaction Model of Interpersonal Influence

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This article provides a summary of work done by Raven and his colleagues on bases of power. It ranges from the initial work in 1959 of French and Raven through decades of follow-up work, and ties the work to that of others doing work on power bases. After the summary, the author responds to a series of questions that probe the work in greater depth, allowing explication of much of the thinking underlying and leading to publications of Raven and colleagues that are well known to social psychologists.

While ours has been described as one of the most widely cited analyses of social power, many *Analysis of Social Issues and Public Policy* readers may not be familiar with its development since our original statement was published in 1959. It therefore seems useful to summarize our original statement, plus the later developments, which include the Power/Interaction Model of Interpersonal Influence. In our initial papers (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 1965), we first defined social influence as a change in the belief, attitude, or behavior of a person (the target of influence), which results from the action of another person (an influencing agent). Social power was defined as the *potential* for such influence, the ability of the agent or power figure to bring about such change, using resources available to him or her. These resources are represented in six *bases of power*: Informational, Reward, Coercion, Legitimate, Expertise, and Referent.

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Editor's Note: This article continues a series of occasional invited papers from distinguished scholars. Bert Raven was invited to reflect on his work on power and impacts that he has seen. After his paper, Jamie Peterson, the editorial assistant for ASAP, and I asked him a series of questions about his work; the questions and responses are appended to the paper. We hope that readers enjoy his paper and responses as we did.

The bases of power differ in the manner that the social change is implemented, the permanence of such change, and the ways in which each basis of power is established and maintained. Let us as an illustration examine the resources of different power bases in terms of a supervisor/subordinate relationship.

Power That Leads to Socially Independent Change

One basis of power, which the supervisor might use, then, is *Informational Power*. The supervisor carefully explains to the subordinate how the job should be done differently, with persuasive reasons why that would be a better and more effective procedure. The subordinate understands and accepts the reasons and changes behavior. Informational influence then results in cognitive change and acceptance by the target. It is thus called "socially independent change" in that altered behavior, though initiated by the influencing agent (supervisor) now continues without the target necessarily referring to, or even remembering, the supervisor as being the agent of change.

Power That Results in Socially Dependent Change, with Surveillance Necessary

Reward Power stems from the ability of the agent to offer a positive incentive, if the target complies (a raise in pay, a promotion, special work privileges. . .). In *Coercive Power*, the agent brings about change by threatening the target with negative, undesirable consequences (demotion, termination, undesirable work assignments. . .), if the target does not comply. For both *Reward Power* and *Coercive Power*, the influence is clearly *socially dependent*, since the target, while complying, relates that compliance to the actions of the agent ("I did it because s/he offered me a reward if I complied" or ". . . threatened punishment if I did not comply.") Reward Power and Coercive Power both differ from other bases of power in that not only are they socially dependent, but their effectiveness requires surveillance by the influencing agent: If reward or coercion are the only bases of power operative, targets will comply only if they believe that the agent will be able to determine whether compliance has occurred. Surveillance, obviously, would not be necessary for Informational Power.

Coercive Power and Reward Power differ in the ease by which the agent may maintain surveillance. With Reward Power, it will be to the advantage of the target to let the agent know that the target has complied; with Coercive Power, there may be a tendency for targets to hide the extent of their noncompliance, so the agent may require, in addition, that the target clearly demonstrate his/her compliance. There is also a greater tendency for targets of Coercive Power to resent the threat of punishment, resent feeling forced, and to have ill feelings toward the agent, as well as toward the behavior that they feel forced to accept. Such is not so likely to

be true for Reward Power; indeed the positive feelings associated with the reward may lead to greater acceptance of the change and greater liking for the influencing agent.

Power That Leads to Socially Dependent Change, with Surveillance Unnecessary

The remaining three bases of power result in change, which, initially, is socially dependent upon the influencing agent, but surveillance is *not* necessary for the influence to occur. *Legitimate Power* stems from the target's accepting the right of the agent to require the changed behavior, and the target's obligation to comply. ("After all s/he is my supervisor and I should do what s/he requests of me.") Terms such as "obliged" or "obligated," "should," "ought to," "required to," may signal the use of legitimate power. *Expert Power* results from the target's faith that the agent has some superior insight or knowledge about what behavior is best under the circumstances ("My supervisor has had a lot of experience with this sort of thing, and so s/he is probably right, even though I don't really understand the reason.") "Understanding the reason," then, is what distinguishes *Informational Power* from *Expert Power*. *Referent Power* stems from the target identifying with the agent, or seeing the agent as a model that the target would want to emulate. ("I really admire my supervisor and wish to be like him/her. Doing things the way s/he believes they should be done gives me some special satisfaction.")

Further Differentiation

Though these six bases of power are widely cited in the organizational literature (in some cases, *Informational Power* is omitted, since it was not included in the original French and Raven (1959) paper), as well as in many research areas, there has been continual development of the typology, based on additional research (Raven, 1992; Raven, Schwarzwald, & Koslowski, 1998). The original six bases are still included, but with further differentiation.

Coercive Power and Reward Power: Personal vs. Impersonal Forms

In our original statement, *Coercive* and *Reward Power* were presented in terms of tangible rewards and real physical threats—threats of being fired or fined, promises of monetary rewards and bonuses or promotion within an organization, etc. However, it should be clear that personal approval from someone whom we like can result in quite powerful reward power; and a threat of rejection or disapproval from someone we value highly can serve as a source of powerful coercive power. Adding *personal* coercion and *personal* reward helped us understand why some

instances of social influence, which we had previously classified as referent power, required surveillance.

Legitimate Power: Position, Reciprocity, Equity, Responsibility

Legitimate Power stems from social norms requiring that the target of influence comply with the request or order of the influencing agent.

Legitimate position power. It is the most obvious form of legitimate power and stems from a social norm that requires that we obey people who are in a superior position in a formal or informal social structure, such as a supervisor or a higher-ranking military officer influencing a subordinate. Other examples, reflecting various cultural norms, might be the right of parents to influence children, of older people to influence younger, teachers to influence students, police officers to influence citizens. There also are additional, subtler forms of Legitimate Power, based on other social norms.

Legitimate power of reciprocity. The reciprocity norm states that if someone does something beneficial for us, then we should feel an obligation to reciprocate ("I helped you when you needed it, so you should feel obliged to do to this for me.") (Goranson & Berkowitz, 1966; Gouldner, 1960).

Legitimate power of equity. Equity can be thought of as righting a wrong, thus following a "compensatory norm" ("I have worked hard and suffered," or "Your past behavior has harmed or hurt me" and therefore "I have a right to ask you to do something to make up for it.") (Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1978).

Legitimate power of responsibility. According to this "social responsibility" norm, we have some obligation to help others who cannot help themselves, or others who are dependent upon us (Berkowitz & Daniels, 1963). (This form of legitimate power has sometimes been referred to as the "power of the powerless.") The supervisor could conceivably say, "Look, I am not about to force you to follow my method, but it is absolutely essential to me that you do so in order to get the job done this way. I really depend upon you to do this for me."

The Power/Interaction Model of Interpersonal Influence

The bases of power are included within a larger context through the development of a Power/Interaction Model of Interpersonal Influence (Raven, 1992). The model begins with a consideration of the motivation for influence and the use of power, then to the factors which lead to choice of power strategy, preparatory devices for implementing the bases of power, the manner in which a power strategy is utilized, the effective changes or lack of change in the target of influence,

the after-effects, and the readjustment of the perceptions and choices of future strategies by the agent.

Motivation for Choice of Bases of Power

Typically, the agent's motivation for influence will be very obvious, the purpose being to attain some goal or desirable outcome. S/he will then use the basis of power, which will accomplish that end most expeditiously and effectively. Often, the situation will affect what bases of power will be selected. One should, of course, expect differing power strategies to be operative by a supervisor in a supermarket, a warden in a prison, the leader of a Boy Scout troop, a parent influencing a child, or a teacher in a classroom. In addition, the selection of power strategies will vary according to how the agent views the target and even more to how s/he believes that the target views the agent.

But, aside from wanting to use a strategy that works most effectively, there may also be more subtle motivations, which will determine the choice of power strategies. David McClelland (1975), David Winter (1973) and their colleagues found three major motives that determined leadership behavior: need for power, need for affiliation, and need for achievement. A leader or supervisor with a high need for power will be more likely to select Impersonal Coercive Power and Legitimate Position Power. Those with strong affiliation needs, and concern that their subordinate will like them, will more likely prefer Referent Power and Reward Power, especially Personal Reward Power. A need for achievement might result in more use of Informational and Expert Power. Other personality characteristics might also affect choice of power strategy, including the agent's having high or low self-esteem. The reason might be that successful influence from informational power tends to be attributed to the target ("I gave him good reasons, but *he* decided to do so."), while successful influence from coercive power tends to be attributed to the influencing agent ("They did so because of *my influencing them* to do so.") For influencing agents who have low self-esteem, it is satisfying for them to know that they are calling the shots. As a result, they would be more likely to select "hard" bases of power such as Coercion (Kipnis, 1976).

Another sort of motivation, which might affect the choice of power strategies, is the attitude of the influencing agent toward the target of influence. The agent's perception of the target helps determine what basis of power would be expected to be effective or ineffective, but, in addition, a strong negative feeling toward the target might lead to a choice of harsh bases of power, such as impersonal coercion, even when that power strategy might not be the most efficient or effective. Similarly, a strong positive feeling toward the target might preclude the use of a harsh basis of power even when, objectively, it might seem most appropriate.

A very significant factor in determining choice of power strategy may be a concern about how third parties will perceive and evaluate individuals' use of

particular influence strategies. An individual might prefer coercive power as most effective and desirable, and yet not use it out of concern that others would strongly disapprove. Instead, that individual might emphasize and use legitimate position power to impress others.

Assessment of the Costs/Benefits for Differing Power Strategies

The agent might also go through a cost-benefit analysis of the influence strategy. Informational influence or persuasion would ordinarily be highly desirable but may require more time and effort than is available. Coercion, as we had indicated, may result in more rapid compliance but carries with it the costs of having to maintain surveillance, the hostility of an unhappy subordinate, and sometimes the violation of one's personal value system or generally accepted social norms. The legitimacy of dependence ("I need your help.") may lead to loss of respect and perhaps may imply an obligation to return the favor. Referent power, which emphasizes similarity, may undermine the target's respect for the agent's superiority in expertise and legitimate position power. In addition, as we have noted, powerholders, because of their personalities, experiences, and values, or force of habit, may tend to prefer some bases of power over others.

Preparatory Devices for Implementing Bases of Power

Though the influencing agent may often have immediate access to his/her bases of power, it is often the case that some preparation or stage setting is necessary. To use coercion, it is sometimes necessary to first make the target realize that the agent has both the means and the will to follow through on the threat. Jones and Pittman (1982) and Goffman (1959) describe a number of these "self-presentational strategies" and "impression management" techniques by which an influencing agent or leader may set the stage for the use of a particular power strategy.

Establishing informational power.   The agent might carefully rehearse his/her speech, examine the logic, practice the delivery. Or the agent may first give the target some "background" information, which would build a basis for the subsequent persuasion.

Intimidation.   To effectively use coercion, it may be important to demonstrate to the target that not only are the means available for coercion, but that the agent is ready and willing to pay the costs that coercion implies. The worker will not be influenced by a threat of dismissal if s/he does not really feel that the supervisor is ready to implement the threat. A supervisor, attempting to establish the credibility

of coercive power, may launch into an emotional tirade, or even fire a worker, just to set an example.

Ingratiation. In order to utilize personal reward or coercion, or referent power, the agent may first attempt to ingratiate her/himself with the target, with well-placed compliments, flattery, etc.

Emphasizing communality. Also to establish referent power, the agent must develop a sense of communality with the target. ("Look," the supervisor may say, "we are really all one team, trying to get this job done.")

Self-promotion. For expert power, a few choice demonstrations of one's superior knowledge would be useful. The supervisor might tell the worker of the amount of training and experience s/he has had on this and similar jobs. (Physicians, attorneys, professors, and other professionals go through elaborate stage-setting devices for expertise—display of diplomas, imposing libraries, using impressive language, etc.)

Authorization for legitimate position power. To establish his/her formal legitimate position power, the supervisor might subtly mention that s/he is, after all, the supervisor who is responsible for this job. Similar preparatory devices may be seen in the cases of the usurper who seizes the throne and then presents evidence that actually his heredity justifies his ascendance, or the dictatorial modern ruler who establishes his legitimate position power through rigged elections.

Favor-doing to establish legitimate reciprocity. The agent to establish this form of legitimacy may first do a favor for the target, or emphasize the various favors that s/he has done in the past.

Guilt induction for legitimacy of equity. An agent may induce guilt in order to establish his/her legitimacy of equity. Somehow the agent may convince the target that the target has caused harm or pain, for which the agent is entitled to compensation in the form of unhesitating compliance.

Demonstrating effective surveillance. Since both coercive power and reward power require surveillance, the influencing agent who expects to use these bases of power may find it necessary to establish his/her ability to determine whether the target has complied. S/he may do this by confronting a subordinate regarding an infraction that the subordinate felt was done in private.

Implementing the Power Strategy and Assessing Its Effects

Following the influence attempt, the agent will want to assess the effects. Was it successful? Is there evidence that the target has actually accepted the influence,

has actually altered his behavior in accordance with the outcome desired by the influencing agent? Does the target really accept the change personally, or is the change socially dependent? Is surveillance important for the change to continue—will the target revert to earlier behavior patterns as soon as the agent cannot continue to check on the degree of compliance? Will the target subsequently internalize the changes in his/her behavior?

The agent might further examine secondary effects: How has the influence attempt, successful or not, affected the target's perception and evaluation of the agent. Has respect for the agent diminished? Is there greater personal liking or disliking? Have the power bases previously available to the agent increased or decreased in their potency? The agent may then attempt to repair the damage and reassess the relationship with the target. If the influence attempt was unsuccessful, then it is likely that an agent will try again. But this time the motivations may change: Whereas previously the agent had merely wanted to achieve the extrinsic goal, s/he now may have developed some hostility toward the target, which in turn will affect the choice of influence strategy the second time around. The agent, having failed in use of informational power, may now resort to intimidation and coercive power, not only to achieve compliance, but also to punish the target for noncompliance. The agent's success or failure will also lead to a reassessment of the available bases of power and the development of a quite different strategy.

Metamorphic Effects of Power

Kipnis (1976) and others have pointed out that the very process of surveillance that goes with coercive power contributes to the influencing agent having greater distrust and further demeaning the target of influence. Demeaning the target leads to the agent feeling more powerful and then using even harsher power strategies—use of informational power may diminish, coercive power and legitimate position power will increase. Kipnis (1976) refers to this escalation process as the "metamorphic effects of power." There are many examples of forthright leaders who have been transformed into tyrants, leading Lord John Acton (1834–1902) to observe that "power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Power/Interaction from the Perspective of the Target

We have thus far examined the Power/Interaction model from the perspective of the influencing agent. We might also examine it from the perspective of the target of influence. Following essentially the same pattern, the target may also have various motives to either accept or reject influence from the agent, some of which may involve personal factors, such as a need for independence, for power, for self-esteem, and for personal feelings—positive or negative—toward the influencing agent. Also parallel to the concerns of the agent, targets may be concerned about

how they would look to third parties if they complied or did not comply. Thus, just as the agent or leader may operate less effectively because of inappropriate motives, the target may sometimes resist influence inappropriately.

In anticipation of the influence attempt, individual workers might very well have marshaled their personal resources in preparation for the verbal assault. They might have tried to anticipate what bases of power the influencing agent might attempt to use and have prepared to counter these one by one. Targets might even invoke powers of third parties to assist in their resistance, or to organize other potential targets so as to resist influence collectively.

Subsequent Relations between Agent and Target

The influence attempt, successful or unsuccessful, has very likely changed both the influencing agent and the target, changed their perceptions of themselves, and changed their perceptions of the other. An unsuccessful influence attempt may result from a misperception of the available effective power bases, as perceived by both the influencing agent and target. Indeed, an unsuccessful influencing agent may alter his/her strategies as the result of the first attempt, adopting new strategies, which might now be effective—except for the fact that the target has also changed. The target may now be amenable to influence strategies that would not have worked the first time around, or be more resistant to strategies that earlier might have been effective. The issues become even more complex as the two participants attempt to influence one another, each serving as both influencing agent and target with respect to the other. Interpersonal or intergroup conflict can be examined in terms of mutual influence attempts, using various bases of power and other strategies by both parties to the conflict, and analyzing the effects that these have one upon the other.

Effectiveness of Various Bases of Power

It is of particular practical interest to know what bases of power or power strategies are most likely to be effective. From reading the above, it should be clear that there is no simple answer. One must first define what one means by "effective." A power strategy, which works almost immediately where surveillance is necessary (e.g., Reward Power or Coercive Power), may not be long lasting if continued surveillance is not possible. One organizational study found that Reward Power tended to lead to greater satisfaction on the part of employees, and thus ultimately might increase influence in a broader range of situations. Coercive power was more effective in influencing a subordinate who jeopardized the success of the overall organization, or threatened the leader's authority, even though in the short term it also led to resentment on the part of the target. A power strategy, which ultimately leads to private acceptance and more long lasting change (e.g., Informational

Power), may be difficult to implement, requiring much time and effort, if the information is very technical and beyond the knowledge of the target. In the short term, complete reliance on informational power might even be dangerous (e.g., trying to convince small children that they should not go into the street unattended), such that the parent might feel it necessary to threaten painful punishment for non-compliance. Military officers leading troops into combat would be severely handicapped if they had to give complete explanations for each move. Instead, they would want to rely on unquestioned Legitimate Position Power, backed up by Coercive Power. Power sources dealing with one target or follower, which may be effective for one leader, may not be effective for a different leader/follower combination. The manner in which the power strategy is utilized will also affect its success or failure. Where Coercion is deemed necessary, the leader might soften its negative effects with a touch of humor. There have been studies indicating that cultural factors may determine effectiveness of power strategies.

As long as humans have had to interact with one another, they have utilized various power strategies. It goes without saying that, in various degrees, they have been very effective with the formal or even naïve knowledge of a Power/Interaction Model or of the bases of social power. The model is an attempt to understand how this process operates and the conditions that determine effectiveness and ineffectiveness of social influence. It is reasonable to conclude that a leader who is more aware, either formally or informally, of the various options in social power strategies will be more successful and effective.

Bert,

Thanks for the fine synopsis of power bases. We would like you to go beyond what readers commonly see, which is the end process of thinking, and talk about how you got to the end. We've developed our questions, which we invite you to answer.

Geoff and Jamie

Question 1: In the introductory comments, you explain well the different bases. But the question that aspiring theorists wonder about is: How did you and French come up with the original six bases of power?

In the early 1950s, the Research Center for Group Dynamics was moving from its focus on group, particularly the effects of the group on the behaviors of its members, to interpersonal influence. Dorwin Cartwright, director of the Research Center for Group Dynamics (RCGD), in his presidential address to the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, referred to "social power" as a neglected variable in social psychology very much in need of clarification and investigation. (Cartwright, 1959a, 1959b, 1959c) The staff of RCGD took the challenge, looking at social power in various settings: Ronald Lippitt continued his interest in democratic and autocratic leadership in terms of social power (Lippitt

& White, 1947). Lippitt, Polansky, and Rosen (1952) looked at power relations in a youth summer camp, which they had called "social contagion." Zander, Cohen, and Stotland (1959) studied power relations in teams composed of psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers. Biddle, French, and Moore (1953) examined power relations between Air Force officers and enlisted men. Blood and Wolfe (1960) studied power relations between husbands and wives. We first had to settle on a common definition of "social power," and we agreed to define social power as potential social influence. With that definition, a large body of theory and research on individual and group influence became relevant.

I had been working with Leon Festinger, until he moved to Minnesota. In 1953, I completed my doctoral dissertation, with John R. P. French as my thesis advisor, studying the manner in which a group member's opinions, beliefs, and behavior would be affected by whether the group majority could punish the individual for nonconformity, and whether the member's behavior could be observed by the majority (Raven, 1959). French and I then began to meet together regularly to study social power. My doctoral thesis, and a chapter by Leon Festinger on the "analysis of compliant behavior," provided a starting point. Some social influence, changes in a person's behavior, in order to persist, required that the person exerting influence be able to observe whether the target person complied. Threat of punishment was one factor, which would contribute to such socially dependent change—we called it "coercive power." Would there be other forms of power, which would operate only when the compliance would be observable? Promise of reward would also operate in such a manner—we called it "reward power." And when would you have continued compliance even when surveillance was not possible? Well, if you really convince a person, give him/her the reason for such compliance, give clear and logical information—we called it "informational influence"—then the compliance would continue without surveillance. In fact, compliance would continue even if the person exerting influence was not present, and was possibly forgotten entirely. That induced change, then, was "socially independent" of the influencing agent.

Our meetings became more exciting as we presented each other with examples and counter-examples. Jack French drew on his firm background in Lewinian theory and his extensive experience in carrying out research and consultation at the Harwood Manufacturing Company, action research in its true sense. I benefited from the Michigan Interdisciplinary Program in Social Psychology, in which the goal was to create true social psychology hybrids, with courses and seminars in psychology, sociology and social organization theory, and anthropology. We recalled experiences from our personal lives—my summer work in war/defense plants, my early years as a shoe salesman, my service in the military . . . . The military? A few years after service in the U.S. Army in World War II, I still recalled basic training, on having it drilled into us that we were to obey a superior officer without question, even if asked to do something that was completely without rational reason. There was always the threat of severe coercive power for

noncompliance, but we had to learn that we were obliged to comply to our superior even when no surveillance was possible. Certainly, then, the social influence was socially dependent—coming from the superior officer—but was unlike coercive power, since it did not require surveillance. From the social organization theorist Max Weber (1957/1922), we took the term "legitimate" power. Superior officers, by virtue of their position, had the right to ask us to do almost anything, and as lower-level enlisted men, we were obliged to comply without question.

Could we think of other power resources, bases of power, where the changed behavior was socially dependent, but where surveillance was not necessary? How about expertise? Studies of the effects of expert opinion had a long history in social psychology. Think of how we are influenced by physicians, whom we may obey because, on the basis of experience and training, they surely must know what is best for us, even if they do not give us a clear explanation. Jack cited his experience in industry comparing the influence of the efficiency expert vs. the influence of the collective behavior of group.

And the influence of group majority? What was that? It was what has been called the group norm, the influence of the group as providing frame of reference (Sherif, Merton. . .). If we identify with someone, either a group or an individual, or see them as a model, it gives us satisfaction to behave or believe as they do. And thus we added the sixth basis of social power: referent power.

Once we had these bases of power established, we were ready to carry out our first laboratory experiments, examining legitimate, expert, coercive, and informational power in terms of the effects of surveillance, internalization, and the targets' personal evaluation of the supervisor.

Question 2: You refer to *six* bases of power, but the original French and Raven paper talks about *five* bases of power. Where did the sixth power base come from?

Yes, that has been something of a problem. Notice, I described the exchange between Jack and me, resulting in a "discovery" of coercive *power*, reward *power*, legitimate *power*, expert *power*, referent *power*, but informational *influence*. To Jack, the term power still seemed to have the overtone of getting the person to do what he or she did not want to do, and the term *power,* then, was not appropriate for information-based change. He insisted then that we *not* call it informational *power.* It was the only point on which we disagreed. I argued, with what I believed was unquestionable logic, that if we defined power as potential influence, and information was a form of influence, then informational influence, in its potential, must be called informational power. The power, which I attempted to use here, I believe, was in itself an example of informational power. If so, it was still insufficient, and in our first article together, an article that is widely quoted and utilized to this day, informational *power* was not included. What, then, was Jack's basis

of power on this issue? I don't think there was any suggestion of reward power or coercive power, nor was it informational power. I did respect Jack's expertise, but expert power was not predominant in this instance. Perhaps there was some referent power, but I think it was mainly legitimate power, stemming from Jack's role as my mentor, my professor, his position as program director vs. mine as research associate . . . . In any event, once I published a discussion of social power on my own, I included all six bases of power, and I have continued to do so ever since.

Question 3: In SPSSI traditions, researchers often demonstrate how theory and research are applicable to everyday circumstances. Even though you provide a number of illustrations of how the bases of power are applicable to everyday settings, the work you describe primarily focuses on effectiveness and/or cross-cultural applications of various power bases. Are there any "action research" or application studies in which you, colleagues, or other researchers assessed the power bases subordinates attributed to a supervisor and their compliance, and then educated the supervisor on power bases and how to more effectively use them given data from the subordinates? Alternatively, is there research that informs managers about the power bases to see if knowing about the various power bases leads to any immediate or lasting changes in those managers' actions and, subsequently, subordinates' compliance?

I would love to see a careful action/research application of our Power/Interaction Model to a work or other situation, with a careful assessment of the ways in which the full model is useful in practice, and with further suggestions for modifying and improving the model based on such experience. Unfortunately, I am not aware of any one doing that systematically. We do get testimonials from people who have used our system in medical education, one from a religious minister, teachers, and supervisors.

Question 4: Referent power is initially socially dependent but does not require surveillance. If a subordinate complied with an influence attempt because he or she wanted to emulate the supervisor, and the supervisor noticed this change and praised the subordinate for it—would the referent power subsequently morph into personal reward power, or would the subordinate continue to comply because of referent power? Said differently, if a supervisor interprets referent power as reward power, would the misattribution by the supervisor affect the basis of power, particularly since the supervisor likely would want to engage in surveillance in the setting? Would it change the power base to reward power if that is what the supervisor thought it was? In contrast, if the supervisor thought the influence was due to informational power that doesn't require surveillance, could the two actors continue to interact while holding very different perceptions of the power dynamics, or

would you predict that over time they would converge on the type of influence being exerted?

First, I hope it is clear that, even though we attempt to focus on one or two bases of power in a specific study, in our everyday interactions, more often than not there are several bases of power operating in varying degrees in any specific situation. A supervisor attempting to influence a subordinate will often work with several power bases at once—his legitimate power as a supervisor may be supplemented by coercive and reward power, both personal and impersonal, by some degree of expert power, and he may at the same time be attempting to use informational power. Taking your example, the subordinate identifies with and emulates the supervisor, making for referent power. If the supervisor then praises the subordinate, that might increase the liking for the supervisor and increase both referent power and personal reward power of the supervisor. My guess is that in this case, the personal reward would not diminish the referent power. But your second example does make sense: the subordinate may initially be complying because s/he interprets the situation as referent power, but the supervisor mentions, during the course of the compliant behavior, that s/he will pay the subordinate for the work, and then tells the subordinate to keep a careful record of work hours, and seems to be watching the subordinate especially carefully. The subordinate, now feeling that his/her personal relationship is an illusion, and that, in fact, the supervisor does not trust him/her, will indeed reduce compliance on the basis of referent power.

One might argue that in order to ensure continued compliance, powerholders would do well to use as many bases of power as they have at their disposal. However, one must be aware of the possibility that one basis of power may undermine another. A powerholder who already has substantial referent power might undermine referent power by emphasizing expertise, which would reduce the target's sense of similarity or commonality. Similarly, an expert who attempts to increase referent power, but emphasizing that s/he is really similar to the target of influence, may thereby reduce the respect, the attribution of superior knowledge, which is necessary for expert power.

This reminds me of a very personal example: In my second year, as a sophomore at Ohio State, I took a social psychology course with Donald Campbell. I enjoyed the subject matter tremendously and I immediately had great admiration for him—giving him tremendous expert and referent power. I was obviously an eager student, and after class one day, I was delighted when Campbell asked me if I would help him in a research project. He gave me a stack of papers, each with a series of numbers which he wanted me to add up and calculate a mean for him. I was ecstatic. I took the papers home and worked hard to calculate all of those means, a particularly tedious job, since I had no idea what I was calculating and I did all the calculations by hand, since I did not have a calculator. When I turned in my work, he asked me to give him an accounting of how many hours I had put in so that he could pay me. This I did not do, even though I could have really used

the money, and even after he reminded me several times, I still did not do so, and have not to this very day. Why?

My explanation: The basis of power, which I was responding to initially, was primarily referent power and perhaps power of dependence (responsibility norm). It felt so good to have someone like him asking me to help with this research, and doing as he requested responded to my sense of identification with him. His suddenly changing this to crass impersonal reward power was shattering, and I would not acknowledge it by accepting his impersonal reward.

Question 5: What are the possibilities for referent power to cause internal changes in the subordinate if the supervisor does not notice compliance over time?

It frequently happens that a socially dependent change may over time become independent. In our discussions, Jack French gave several examples from his work at the Harwood Manufacturing Company in which workers who were asked to change their work procedure, and reluctantly did so, even on the basis of moderate coercive power, would eventually accept that this was, in fact, the best procedure for them to use. They would do that after finding that they actually were able to accomplish their task more quickly and with less effort. We called this a secondary change. We all learn from our experiences and in such cases the experience resulted from behavior, which was induced by coercive power despite our reluctance. Indeed, in Harwood and in the group decision studies, by Lewin and others, the changes induced by the group norm (e.g., for housewives to serve less desirable meat products during war time) could be seen as referent power, which resulted in subsequent change, which is internalized. Many of us, I am sure, have had such experiences—our physician, drawing on expert power, tells us to take a medication. We do so uneasily. Perhaps we are concerned about side effects, but we accept this change once we find no side effects and actually feel much better. The secondary effects of our changed behavior provide us the information that supports our change.

Question 6: You make reference to "invoking the power of third parties." What do you mean by that?

Often an influencing agent does not feel that s/he has sufficient power to bring about his/her desired change in the target. To supplement his/her own power, s/he may then invoke the power of a third party. S/he may do so directly. The mother says to her husband, "I simply can't get Johnny to tidy up his room. Would you take over?" The father does so, perhaps drawing on his substantial coercive power. But even if the father is away, she might remind Johnny that his father will learn of his untidiness, and Johnny knows what he can expect from his father. Any basis of power of a third party can be invoked in this manner. We often supplement our own persuasive attempts by invoking the expert power of those who we know will be

more readily accepted by the target. My examination of cigarette advertisements found many such examples: showing a popular film star smoking the cigarette brand (referent power), a physician saying that he knows that that cigarette is soothing to one's throat (expert power), showing a young smoker being admired by his peers (personal reward power).

Question 7: How is humor used in social power?

There is little formal experimental research on this topic. But in our observations, humor is often utilized. We often see persuasive communications presented in cartoons in which the humor tends to draw and maintain the interest of a prospective target. Those who study the psychology of humor make distinctions between hard, sarcastic humor and soft, whimsical humor. Hard humor may be used as a form of coercive power by ridiculing and embarrassing the target. Example: A maitre-de in a very fancy, posh restaurant sees a diner taking his napkin and tucking into his shirt, below the chin. The maitre-de asks the diner, "What will it be, sir? Shave or hair cut?" I have heard an army drill sergeant use that form of ridicule to affect the behavior of a sloppy recruit. Soft, whimsical humor is sometimes used to soften the negative effects of a painful communication. Physicians report that while using frightening informational power to convince a patient to follow a given regiment (e.g., telling a smoker of the mortal effects of his smoking habits), they will soften the effects with a bit of whimsical humor. Our sergeant, while threatening to deny weekend leave to soldiers who fail to meet inspection standards, may say, "You wouldn't want to spend your weekend twiddling your thumbs on base, when you could be out with the lovely ladies of Louisville."

Question 8: Have you devoted your entire professional life to the study of social power?

By no means. My early research was focused on group behavior, as I had mentioned previously, and not all of that was influence and power related. In the Lewinian tradition, I looked at interdependence in group problem solving, such as the effect of clarity of group goals and the paths toward those goals on cohesiveness and productivity. I did a series of studies on forms of interdependence in three-person groups. I also studied cooperation and competition in Israeli kibbutzim. As part of a program supported by the Centers for Disease Control, colleagues and I examined social factors relating to hospital-acquired infections. At UCLA, we set up tutorial programs and I directed our first Upward Bound Program, for students in inner-city schools, helping and encouraging them to study at UCLA and other universities.

After a lecture/demonstration on perception of persons, with applications to courtroom testimony of eyewitnesses and victims, a young defense attorney asked me to testify on this issue in a criminal trial. Such expert testimony had not been accepted in criminal trials. The judge refused to allow me to testify, saying that

we didn't need anyone to tell us that people's perceptions can be fallible. Finally, in one critical case, the defense attorney appealed and a mistrial was declared. I was then approached by other attorneys, and today, expert testimony on reliability of witnesses and victims is widely accepted and recommended by the Institute of Justice.

Of course, I am particularly proud of my many years of service to SPSSI, as editor of JSI, as well as in many other capacities. But, while I have been involved in many other issues and activities, I always seem to return to social power, like a first love.

Question 9: Tell us about social power in signs.

The more I worked on social influence and power, the more it became part of my personal life. I saw social power, the bases of power, the power/interaction model applied everywhere—in my everyday interactions with salespeople, police giving traffic tickets, visits with my medical doctor, advertisements—including cigarette ads, even in the street signs telling us to do some things and not to do others. In our hospital infection study, I collected signs that dealt with the mortal risk of failing to wash hands or follow infection-control policy. They included legitimate power of dependence—"please protect innocent babies from life-threatening infections." Sometimes a harsh coercive sign would be presented with light humor to take the edge off.

We would visit Britain and as everyone else was taking photos of Westminister Abbey, I would be photographing the threatening sign that said, "£50 fine for allowing dog to foul the footpath!" (Coercive power, of course.) And how else might they say it? How about: "Please be a good neighbor and clean up after your dog." Referent power or, referent power with a touch of humor, "Don't allow your dog to put a stain on Britain." Soon I had friends and former students sending me photos of signs that they noted in their travels. All zoos have signs telling people not to litter, and not to feed or molest the animals. Some of them threaten eviction from the park (again coercive). Some say that their animals are very sensitive and could be harmed if they eat the litter or the food that is not good for them. (Invoking legitimate dependent power for the animals?) My good colleague and good friend, Hal Kelley, brought me a series of signs from the Barcelona Zoo. Each sign showed a naughty boy annoying animals with a sling shot or a blow gun, or reaching out to touch an animal. And each showed a policeman pulling the naughty boy away by the ears; or an adult visitor admonishing the offending child. One sign showed a boy blowing a pea shooter at a swan. Two good boys dressed like Sherlock Holmes, with magnifying glasses, were about to grab the naughty one to take him to the police. The message said, "Don't make light of authority. Be like a policeman yourself." Clever, I thought. Definitely coercive power for the offender, but with complete surveillance, since park visitors could catch you, even if there were no police in sight. I showed and discussed these signs at a meeting in

Alicante. Several faculty responded, firmly, but a bit defensively—"You will not see such signs today. Those were from the days of Francisco Franco." It seems then that the power strategies represented in signs may reflect culture, values, and predominant political ideology.

Question 10: Could you elaborate further on power and religion and how you developed an interest in this topic?

Though I would not qualify as religiously observant, our family has always attended Jewish High Holiday services. In the course of the service, reciting prayers, reading from the bible, and listening to sermons and discussion, I found myself thinking of (what else?) social power.

I should first say that I realize the many positive contributions, which can be traced to religion—religion as providing solace to those in despair; as a source of inspiration for great literary and artistic works; as providing satisfying answers for many regarding our origins, the very nature of life, death, and the hereafter; as providing a sense of community and social support. But it seems to me that religion also has provided an effective mechanism of social control—mechanisms for encouraging some behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes that are considered desirable, and discouraging those that are considered undesirable. As one of my first mentors, Donald Campbell, discussed in his 1975 presidential address to the American Psychological Association, religion has often discouraged selfishness, pride, greed, dishonesty, and wrath, and encouraged more positive forms of social behavior (Campbell, 1975). In my address to SPSSI on the occasion of my receiving the Kurt Lewin Award (Raven, 1999), I argued that much of what we see and hear in religion can be interpreted as a very elaborate application, consistent with the Power/Interaction Model and the Bases of Power. We assume, of course, that the religious holy works and commentaries were written by humans, by religious authorities (some would have to add, with Divine guidance). And in their writings then I could readily see the operation of all of the bases of power.

For traditional religions, the use of these bases of power requires the invocation of the power of the Supreme Powerholder of them all. A major portion of religious services can be viewed as elaborate preparatory and stage-setting devices to establish the various bases of power of the deity. These often require responsive reciting of the Attributes of God. All three religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, describe God as an extremely powerful being (Omnipotent), who can deal with the noncomplying target with the most extreme forms of coercion and reward (heaven and hell), who is Omniscient (expert), Omnipresent (able to maintain complete surveillance). Islam lists 99 attributes. For Judaism and Christianity, the numbers vary but are always quite substantial. These include wise, just, merciful, righteous, loving, wrathful (toward nonbelievers), supreme, forgiving, creator. By emphasizing God in Genesis as the creator, who gave us our very existence

as well as everything worthwhile on earth, we must owe the legitimate power of reciprocity. By making us aware of our many sins, including sins committed by our predecessors, including Eve, and by invoking guilt, we are expected to accept God's legitimate power of equity.

During Jewish New Year's services, the holiest of the Jewish year, it is customary to read and discuss the "binding story." Abraham is commanded by the Lord to take his beloved son, Isaac, to a mountain, where Isaac would be killed and sacrificed to the Lord, as was the custom with animal sacrifices. Abraham misleads Isaac, who accompanies him with a donkey laden with firewood for the sacrifice. Abraham raises his knife to kill Isaac, but his hand is stayed by an angel of the Lord. Abraham has passed the test, and is told that he, his children, and his children's children will have the benefits of being chosen by the Lord. In more liberal Jewish services, this story often leads to dissonance and concern. There are questions: Perhaps Abraham knew all along that he would not have to carry out this awful assignment? What did God really have in mind when God commanded such an act? After all, God did provide a goat for Abraham to sacrifice, so wasn't this part of the plan?

Finally, at one service, I could not contain myself and said that, from my view, we were asking the wrong question. My question is, "Why did religious authorities want to include this story in the Bible, and why is it highlighted on this holiest day of the year?" My question was characterized by some at the service as being completely inappropriate. Perhaps they were right—perhaps this was not the proper time and place. My answer: The story was meant to demonstrate the ultimate Legitimate Position Power of the Lord, requiring that we obey the Lord without question even when the act demanded is utterly unacceptable and bizarre.

There is so much more to say about religious relevance of our Power/Interaction Model. For more on this subject, see Raven (1999).

Final Question: What advice would you offer to students or junior faculty committed to a career in social psychology?

(This is a question that initially was posed to me by Robert Levine, Aroldo Rodrigues, and Lynnette Zelezny (2008) for inclusion in an edited volume *Journeys in Social Psychology: Looking Back to Inspire the Future*. Here, in essence, is my answer. (2008))

1. *Commit yourself to a more restricted area of research and study.* You cannot possibly be an expert in all of social psychology, but if you are fortunate, you will find a topic that is exciting and important for you, something about which you can feel passionate. As you study that phenomenon, you will become more sophisticated, and your interests more specific. In my case, it was social influence to interpersonal influence to social power relationships. Of course,

such a commitment does not limit you from exploring other interesting topics along the way, one of which may become even more exciting for you.

2. *Find a mentor.* Connect with someone whose work you find especially interesting and creative. You mentor will likely be someone with whom you worked and studied, but not necessarily. I see Kurt Lewin as my first major mentor and role model, even though he died before I ever had a chance to meet him. Reading publications by Lewin and his students early in my undergraduate years gave me a direction, which substantially determined my entire academic career. There were several other mentors who were also influential at various stages of my career, including Donald Campbell, Leon Festinger, Daniel Katz, John R. P. French, and my dear friend and colleague, Harold Kelley.

3. *Value your colleagues and peers.* It is invaluable to have others to whom you can turn to test you ideas and research, and to learn to appreciate theirs in return. If they can be collaborators as well, you will be particularly fortunate. Such collaboration, even long distance, is so much easier today with the availability of the Internet.

4. *Don't lose sight of the real world.* Much of what you will study in your coursework will focus on theory and methodology. We social psychologists are particularly sensitive and sometimes defensive about satisfying strict scientific criteria. We are judged to a great extent by how many publications we have published in scientific journals, where scientific criteria sometimes overwhelm the very ideas and social values, which led some individuals into social psychology to begin with. Some publications in our field today, while scientifically correct, are difficult to justify to people outside of our field in terms of their actual value to society. It helps to balance your research with interesting examples of the application of your findings to everyday life.

5. *Develop a tolerance for frustration and disappointment.* What I have described above are ideals that we should strive for. Unfortunately, things do not work out so smoothly. Our initial studies don't pan out. A line of research must be abandoned due to lack of funding. An idealized mentor may have clay feet. Your best journal article is rejected. Be prepared for disappointments and do not give up readily. And, of especial importance at such times, it helps to have a good sense of humor.

Finally, for readers wanting further information regarding academic careers in social psychology, I recommend the excellent volumes edited by Robert Levine, Aroldo Rodrigues, and Lynnette Zelezny (2008) and an earlier edition (Rodrigues & Levine, 1999). These include outstanding chapters by Robert Cialdini, Morton Deutsch, Alice Eagly, Harold Gerard, Harold Kelley, Albert Pepitone, Aroldo Rodrigues, Robert Rosenthal, Shelley Taylor, Harry Triandis, Bernard Weiner, and Philip Zimbardo, all major figures in the development of social psychology

since the end of World War II. I feel honored to have also been included in that collection.

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