



The New Psychology of Leadership: Identity, Influence and Power

By S. Alexander Haslam, Stephen D. Reicher, Michael J. Platow

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Winner of the University of San Diego Outstanding Leadership Book Award 2012!

Shortlisted for the British Psychological Society Book Award 2011!

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According to John Adair, the most important word in the leader's vocabulary is "we" and the least important word is "I". But if this is true, it raises one important question: why do psychological analyses of leadership always focus on the leader as an individual – as the great "I"?

One answer is that theorists and practitioners have never properly understood the psychology of "we-ness". This book fills this gap by presenting a new psychology of leadership that is the result of two decades of research inspired by social identity and self-categorization theories. The book argues that to succeed, leaders need to create, champion, and embed a group identity in order to cultivate an understanding of 'us' of which they themselves are representative. It also shows how, by doing this, they can make a material difference to the groups, organizations, and societies that they lead.

Written in an accessible and engaging style, the book examines a range of central theoretical and practical issues, including the nature of group identity, the basis of authority and legitimacy, the dynamics of justice and fairness, the determinants of followership and charisma, and the practice and politics of leadership.

The book will appeal to academics, practitioners and students in social and organizational psychology, sociology, political science and anyone interested in leadership, influence and power.

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Editorial Review

Review

*"A ground-breaking book on leadership analysing the old psychology of leadership in terms of great men and the cult of personality, the current psychology of leadership focusing on context and the contingency of the perfect match between individual and group before moving on to propose a new psychology of leadership." - **Network Review***

*"The book abounds with historical, political, and organizational examples and anecdotes that breathe life into the concepts and arguments and make them resonate with the reader, providing some entertainment in the process. ... The New Psychology of Leadership: Identity, Influence and Power thus has something new to say on one of the most widely researched topics of all time. This is no small accomplishment. It also speaks to a broad audience, creating a theoretical space for researchers from many disciplines to forge collaborative conversations about collective action and effective leadership, which is another significant accomplishment. It will be worth your time to check out this book." - **Caroline A. Bartel, University of Texas at Austin, USA, in Administrative Science Quarterly***

*"This exciting book ... argues that leadership is not about mastering the 10 or 20 decisive traits that drive change and success, but about 'the followers' – about engaging them to work with the leader to develop the organisation's goals and aspirations. ... What I like about this book, and why I will recommend it to anyone interested in leadership, is how the science of leadership is mingled in a readable way with historical and modern-day examples. It is a must-read for those seeking a different approach to the 'five ways to success as a leader' type of book." - **Cary L. Cooper, Distinguished Professor of Organisational Psychology and Health, Lancaster University Management School, UK, in the Times Higher Education***

*"An illuminating perspective on leadership. ... This book debunks the myth of a specific set of stereotypical leadership qualities." - **Alan McLean in the Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)***

*"The New Psychology of Leadership is written in an accessible style, and logical structure. It goes beyond social and organisational psychological accounts, which, so far, have fallen short of explaining leadership and followership comprehensively. By identifying key principles that provide insight in the ways leaders lead followers, the authors cover new territory for social and organisational psychologists. This sets an exciting and new research agenda for years to come. ... Without doubt, this book will become regarded as a landmark text, and it has the potential to dramatically change our understanding of leadership in the years to come." - **Frank Mols & Jolanda Jetten in The Psychologist***

*"'New Wine; New Bottle.' Citing over 400 empirical studies and texts on leadership spanning 170 years from 1840–2010, The New Psychology of Leadership: Identity, Influence and Power adds a powerful and meaningful review of the literature on leadership otherwise unavailable in one place. As such, this book should be of interest to a wide audience of scholars, students, consultants, and trainers in the field of leadership development, as well as to leaders or aspiring leaders themselves." - **Paul R. Ahr in PsycCRITIQUES***

*"[The New Psychology of Leadership] brings a scientific approach to an important subject that has been without it for too long." - **Michael Bond in Nature***

"As Haslam, Reicher and Platow set it out, a simple but profound theory underlies their New Psychology of Leadership. And that theory seems so very right that it may come as a surprise that this is not already the concept of leadership everywhere. This captures the true structure of what leadership is all about. Accordingly, on almost every page of the text there is a new subtlety about what leadership means and about how it works. It takes a subject older than Plato and as current as Barack Obama in a new and correct way."
- **From the Foreword by George A. Akerlof, Nobel Laureate in Economics, University of California, Berkeley USA**

"Haslam, Reicher, and Platow provide a tremendous service by sorting through the tangle of leadership studies and theories to offer a new perspective that is at once elegant, supported by eclectic research, and readily translatable into practical implications for social domains as varied as business, politics, and sports. It contains a profound wealth of insights on the nature and dynamics of leadership." - **Blake Ashforth, Professor of Management, Arizona State University, USA**

"An amazing book, that completely changed my mind about leadership. It's a double treat: a new theory and a new set of empirical regularities. That the theory makes intuitive sense and that the data fit the theory is just a bonus. I expect that this new, systematic approach to this important topic will attract scholars from many disciplines." - **Rafael di Tella, Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School, USA**

"This is a first rate work that makes a major contribution to an expanded understanding of leadership.... The authors provide a major advance in thinking and they have written a rich and accessible account that will have a major impact on the field." - **George Marcus, Professor of Political Science, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts, USA**

"This book offers a creative, integrative, and highly generative new perspective on a topic of long-term, central interest in psychology, sociology, political science, and allied disciplines. Unusually broad in scope, it offers a comprehensive review of classic and contemporary research on leadership and presents new integrative insights grounded social identity and self-categorization theories. The volume strikes the right balance between breadth and depth, summarizing past scholarship and guiding and inspiring future research, and between theory and application. It will be recognized as a path-breaking book that reinvigorates and redirects scholarship on leadership for many years to come." - **Jack Dovidio, Department of Psychology, Yale University USA**

About the Author

S. Alexander Haslam is Professor of Social and Organizational Psychology at the University of Exeter. He is a former chief editor of the *European Journal of Social Psychology*, a recipient of the European Association of Social Psychology's Kurt Lewin award for excellence in social psychology, and a Fellow of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research.

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Users Review

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