

Justice Theory and Research:
A Social Functionalist Perspective

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Abstract

There are at least five functionalist metaphors that have guided justice theory and research in social psychology: people as lay or intuitive (a) economists, (b) politicians, (c) scientists, (d) prosecutors, and (e) theologians. These frameworks answer the question of what people care about when thinking about fairness in different ways by suggesting that fairness serves different needs and goals. This chapter reviews each of these broad categories of justice research, and concludes by proposing a functional pluralism model of justice. The adaptive challenges people confront in their everyday lives require the ability to move fluidly between different goal states or motives. People have to resolve the problems of (a) competing for scarce resources, such as wages or jobs (the economist), (b) how to get along with others and secure their standing in important groups (the politician), (c) making useful inferences about others' goals, behavior, and trustworthiness (the scientist), (d) defending themselves and others from harm (the prosecutor), and (e) building a meaningful sense of existence (the theologian). The functional pluralism model's position is that people are economists, politicians, scientists, prosecutors, *and* theologians, and how they reason about fairness at any given time depends on their frame of reference and goal states at any given time. Which orientation guides people's thinking at any given time depends on the current goal orientation of the actor and the salience of various situational cues that could activate one or another of these mindsets.

Keywords: Distributive justice, procedural justice, retributive justice, fairness, deonance, morality

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Social systems cannot function without some degree of agreement on the norms and principles that regulate relationships among individuals. One widely invoked solution to the problem of social regulation is to focus on fairness and justice, or as Hospers (1961) suggested, “getting what one deserves: what could be simpler?” (p. 433). Perhaps a more appropriate question, however, is what could be more complex? For example, what criteria should be used to decide who deserves scarce resources? What is a just income distribution? How much of the public purse should be spent on defense, to stimulate the economy, or to aid the poor? Should taxes be fixed or progressive? When people fail to live up to cooperative social norms, should they be punished, and if so, how severely? Who should be entrusted to make these decisions and how should those chosen make decisions in ways that ensure people will accept and abide by them, even when those decisions go against the immediate interests of those affected?

There are a variety of ways to summarize the vast psychological literature that has grown to address these and related questions in psychology. The approach taken here will be to describe five functionalist metaphors of human nature that researchers have relied on at different times to help guide theoretical explanations about how people make judgments and choices (e.g., Tetlock, 2002). Like most other psychological theories, theories of justice often rest on implicit and sometimes explicit functionalist assumptions about human motivations and goals. In other words, theorists generally assume that people do not think, feel, and act as they do without reasons. Instead, theorists often assume people think, feel, and act as they do because it serves some kind of end. Researchers’ assumptions about the ends people are attempting to achieve can play an important role in shaping theory and research.

There are at least five functionalist metaphors that have guided justice theory and research in social psychology: people as lay or intuitive (a) economists, (b) politicians, (c) scientists, (d) prosecutors, and (e) theologians. These functionalist metaphors are similar to Lakatos' concept of "hard-core" assumptions that guide science (Lakatos, 1978), and influence what research questions are considered interesting and important, how these questions are structured, the relevant data observed or collected, and how the results of scientific investigations are interpreted. The goal of this chapter is to review (a) how these social functional metaphors have guided justice theorizing and research, (b) the major discoveries associated with of these approaches to justice research, (c) the boundary conditions of each approach, (d) how insights gleaned from one approach might fruitfully inform other programs of research, and finally, (e) a functional pluralism model of justice that theoretically integrates and unifies these different lines of inquiry.

The Intuitive Economist

The intuitive economist metaphor characterizes social life as a series of negotiated exchanges, in which people rely on subjective cost-benefit analyses to guide their behavior and to understand both themselves and others. Theories guided by the intuitive economist metaphor vary in the degree to which they assume people are motivated by rationale self-interest. At one end of the continuum are models positing that people are solely motivated by their immediate and rational self interests. At the other end are models positing that a Hobbesian war of "all against all" is curtailed by the human realization that participating in social cooperation and fair exchange maximizes individuals' interests in the long run. In this view, complete and total self-interest is bounded and constrained by people's recognition that they must engage in social cooperation.

Theories inspired by the intuitive economist metaphor focus on distributive justice, that is, “the fairness of the distribution of the conditions and goods that affect individual well-being” (Deutsch, 1985, p. 1). Examples of theories based on the intuitive economist view of human nature include various versions of equity theory including more recent versions in behavioral economics (e.g., Adams; 1963, 1965; Homans, 1958; 1961; Konow, 2003; Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1976), social exchange theory (e.g., Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), and theories of relative deprivation (e.g., Crosby, 1976, 1982; Folger, 1984, 1986; Stouffer, Suchman, Devinney, Star, & Williams, 1949; see also Walker & Smith, 2002).

One particularly influential program of justice research inspired primarily by the idea of humans as intuitive economists is equity theory (Adams, 1963, 1965, Homans, 1958, 1961; Walster et al., 1976). Equity theory extended a central thesis of Aristotelian ethics that fair outcomes are those that are divided into parts consistent with the merits of those participating in an exchange. Equity theorists argue that people expect that a balance should be maintained between the ratio of people’s outcomes to their contributions or inputs and the outcome/contribution ratios of those with whom they interacts. In other words, equity theory posits that people perceive that they have been treated fairly when the two proportions presented below are equal:

$$\frac{Outcomes_{Self}}{Inputs_{Self}} = \frac{Outcomes_{Other}}{Inputs_{Other}}$$

Equity theorists and researchers are also particularly interested in the consequences of injustice, which occurs when the ratio of people’s outcomes to contributions is less or more than other’s. The further an outcome is from the expected reward given a relevant social comparison, the more distressing the injustice. When people feel inequity-based distress they engage in efforts to restore actual or psychological equity. Inequity distress can be resolved in a number of

different ways, including increasing or decreasing contributions to the exchange relationship (e.g., working harder if one is overpaid, or reducing effort if one is underpaid), subjectively recalibrating impressions of one's own contributions and outcomes or those of the comparison other, or leaving the exchange relationship (Walster et al., 1976). Two core discoveries of research inspired by equity theory are that fairness and favorability are distinguishable constructs, and the importance of social comparisons in how people decide whether they have been treated fairly or unfairly, topics we review next.

Fairness vs. Favorability

Outcome fairness refers to the degree that an outcome is consistent with, or can be justified by, a standard of deservingness (e.g., outcomes are proportional to inputs) whereas outcome favorability refers to whether one receives a positive or negative result (Kulik & Ambrose, 1992; Stepina & Perrewe, 1991). From a purely self-interested point of view, receiving more pay than one's peers for similar levels of effort should be experienced as pleasurable—lots of reward for little cost or investment; what's not to love? One key insight of research guided by a view of people as intuitive economists, however, was the discovery that fairness is an important boundary condition on pure selfishness. Even though people respond more strongly to under- than over-benefit (Greenberg, 1982), they do not respond to over-benefit with pleasure, but with distress instead (e.g., Austin & Walster, 1974). For example, husbands and wives who feel either under- or over-benefited relative to their spouses report higher levels of depression and other forms of distress than those who report more equitable and balanced relationships (e.g., Shafer & Keith, 1980; Sprecher, 1986). People also experience elevated levels of cardiovascular activity (Vermunt & Steensma, 2003) and serum lipids (Richards, Hof, & Alvarenga, 2000)

when treated unfairly, variables that could ultimately affect people's health outcomes (Greenberg, in press).

Receiving more or less than is deserved leads people to attempt to restore equity by subsequently increasing or decreasing their contributions to an exchange relationship (e.g., the exchange of work for pay in an employee/employer relationship, Adams, 1963; Adams & Freedman, 1976; Adams & Jacobson, 1964; Adams & Rosenbaum, 1962; Greenberg, 1982; Pritchard, Dunnette & Jorgenson, 1972). People also react negatively to a mismatch between valence of contributions and outcomes (such as cheating to win a race), much as they do to an imbalance of their input/output ratios relative to other's input/output ratios. In short, it is particularly unfair for negative inputs to yield positive outcomes or vice versa (Feather, 1994, 1999, 2008).

In further support of the idea that there is something special about fairness that does not reduce to favorability, a meta-analysis of the effects of outcome fairness and outcome favorability manipulations and measures on outcome satisfaction found that outcome fairness explained 43% whereas outcome favorability explained 19% of the variance in outcome satisfaction judgments. Outcome fairness also explains significantly more variation in organizational commitment, organizational citizenship, and task satisfaction than does outcome favorability (Skitka, Winkvist, & Hutchinson, 2003).

Research in behavioral economics also supports the claim that concerns about fairness constrain self-interested behaviors. For example, when people are given control of scarce and therefore valuable resources (e.g., they are asked to imagine they have the only supply of snow shovels in the context of a major storm), they do not raise the prices of the shovels. Although people clearly recognize that raising prices is personally advantageous, it is nonetheless

perceived as unfair (Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, 1986). Similarly, when people are given an endowment (e.g., \$10) and are given the opportunity either to share or not share it with another participant (in what is called a “dictator game”) nearly all participants give a portion—typically half—to the other participant, even under conditions in which they are completely anonymous and will never meet the other participant (see Bolton, Katok, & Zwick, 1998; Henrich, Boyd, Bowles, Camerer, Fehr & Gintis, 2004 for reviews). Likewise, third parties punish “dictators” who fail to share their endowments with recipients, and the degree of punishment corresponds to the degree of the dictator’s selfishness (Fehr & Fischbacher, 2004).

In summary, outcome favorability and fairness are psychologically distinct constructs, with distinct consequences. Concerns about fairness also serve as an important constraint on rampant self interest.

The Importance of Social Comparison

Another important discovery of the intuitive economist approach is the important role of social comparisons in how people make justice judgments. One of the earliest empirical examples of the importance of social comparison information in shaping people’s perceptions of fairness came from studies of American soldiers during World War II. Samuel Stouffer and colleagues asked soldiers among other things, “have you gotten a square deal in the Army?” (Stouffer et al. 1949). Soldiers’ responses were not determined by rank, promotion rates, or their actual likelihoods of being promoted, but were instead based most strongly on how they felt they were treated relative to those immediately around and similar to them. Although in many cases certain classes of soldiers (e.g., the military police or MPs) had fewer opportunities for promotion and other positive outcomes than others (e.g., the Air Corp), the MPs were nonetheless more satisfied and felt their treatment in the army was fair, in part because the MPs

compared their outcomes with other MPs (many of whom were also not promoted), instead of comparing themselves with soldiers in the Air Corp. In short, the Stouffer studies are important because they discovered that people's perceptions of fairness are influenced not only by their rewards and punishments, but also by whether their rewards and punishments are proportional to those of similar others.

A substantial body of subsequent work further revealed the importance of comparison others on the degree to which people recognize when they are the targets of fair or unfair treatment. Although historically discriminated against groups have little difficulty recognizing that there is group-level discrimination, they nonetheless do not tend to see themselves as being individual victims, which Crosby (1982, 1984) labeled as the "denial of personal discrimination." For example, although employed women are victims of pay discrimination in objective terms, they nonetheless express no more dissatisfaction with their pay than do men, even though they understand that women as a class are being discriminated against. When making group level social comparisons (i.e., comparing women's treatment to men's), women can recognize they are at a disadvantage. However, because women tend to compare their lots with other women, it is more difficult for them to recognize when they are the personal victims of discrimination. These results have subsequently been replicated across a wide range of different historically discriminated against groups (Crosby, 1982; 1984; 2003; see also Operario & Fiske, 2001; Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam & LaLonde, 1990).

In summary, people use social comparison information to judge whether they are fairly or unfairly treated. Moreover, to understand people's fairness judgments, one has to have a clear understanding of people's choice of comparison. One unfortunate side effect of the tendency to

compare one's lot with similar others, however, is that it can inadvertently facilitate the persistence of group-level inequities (Crocker & Major, 1989).

Empirical and Conceptual Boundary Conditions of the Intuitive Economist

The intuitive economist and equity theory dominated justice theory and research from the mid-1950s through the late 1970s or early 1980s. A major strength of equity theory was the clarity of its core proposition that just outcomes are ordinally related to individual contributions. In a perfectly just system, those who contribute more get more. That said, considerable debate began to emerge about the precise form of the equity formula, such as whether it is best represented by an additive or ratio model (e.g., Mellers, 1986; Messick & Sentis, 1979) and how people quantify contributions and outcomes. For example, Deutsch's (1985) concern remains as much of an issue now as it was several decades ago, that equity theory "assumes a common currency underlying diverse rewards and costs, which permits addition, subtraction, and division. Such a psychological currency, of course, has not yet been identified, and it is still an unsolved problem of how to add such rewards as a good dinner, a mediocre concert, and a kiss" (p. 25).

Other scholars objected to the intuitive economist as the dominant guiding metaphor for justice research on different grounds. They argued that theories based on assumptions that people are like intuitive economists are problematic because they implicitly reify capitalistic and individualistic values at the expense of other important human values and belief systems (e.g., Bakan, 1966; Sampson, 1975).

Another core challenge for equity theory was the empirical finding of robust gender differences in both how people allocate resources and what kind of allocations they perceive as fair. Women are more likely to allocate material rewards equally rather than equitably, and to

rate equal allocations as more fair than equitable ones (e.g., Major & Adams, 1983; Major, Bylsma & Cozzarelli, 1989; Watts, Messé, & Vallacher, 1982).

In a related vein, evidence also emerged that the distributive rules people use to allocate resources or judge the fairness of outcome distributions are context dependent. People at times allocate resources equally or according to need, rather than proportionally. Deutsch (1985), Lerner (1974), Leventhal (1976b) and Sampson (1975) provided similar theoretical accounts for the contingencies that predict when people are more likely to allocate resources according to equity, equality, or need rules and when perceivers are most likely to perceive allocations based on each of these principles as more fair. They predicted that in cooperative relationships in which economic productivity is the dominant goal, people should be more likely to see equity as more fair than either equality or need. When the dominant goal orientation is to facilitate solidarity and group harmony, equality should be seen as more fair than either equity or need. Finally, when fostering personal development and individual welfare, need-based distributions will be seen as most fair.

Consistent with these predictions, equitable distributions are preferred and seen as more fair than need or equality when participants are focused on productivity (e.g., Deutsch, 1975, 1985). Equal allocations are preferred over equitable ones in contexts that emphasize partnerships (Lerner, 1977), when working to help out a friend (Leung & Park, 1986), and when instructions motivate allocators to have the goal of enhancing group solidarity and harmony (Leventhal, Michaels, & Sanford, 1972; Mikula, 1974). Need emerges as a stronger distributive norm than either equity or equality in contexts that emphasize minimizing suffering (e.g., Lerner, Miller, & Holmes, 1976; Leventhal, 1976b, Schwartz, 1975), and in more intimate than distant relationships (e.g., Lamm & Schwinger, 1980; Schwinger, 1980).

Taken together, these representative findings made it increasingly clear that even though equity theory has many strengths, it nonetheless is not a complete theory of justice. Equity concerns are instead best understood as one of several concerns or distributive rules people use when thinking about the problem of how to distribute outcomes fairly.

In summary, an intuitive economist portrait of human motivation, nearly by definition, focuses researchers and theorists on questions of distributive justice, to the neglect of considering the possibility that people weigh other considerations besides costs/benefits and material interests as important to how they decide if they have been treated fairly. Increasing concern about anomalous findings that could not be easily explained by equity or other theories guided by the intuitive economist metaphor, as well increasing discomfort with the intuitive economist metaphor itself, led theorists and researchers to begin to look for new ideas. They began to consider the possibility that people's fairness reasoning is shaped as much or more by characteristics of procedures and interactional treatment as is it by outcome considerations. Although one can partially explain the effects of procedural fairness on people's reasoning by relying on bounded self-interest, procedural justice research began to focus more on power, decision control, and status explanations. In short, the intuitive economist ceded to the intuitive politician as a dominant metaphor guiding justice theory and research.

The Intuitive Politician

If people are like intuitive politicians, they should be motivated to be in a position to influence others, to accumulate the symbols, status, and prestige that go along with influence and power, and to be thought well of by the social groups and individuals to whom they are accountable (Tetlock, 2002). Intuitive politicians' motivation is rooted in "the knowledge that one is under the evaluative scrutiny of important constituencies in one's life who control

valuable resources and who have some legitimate right to inquire into the reasons behind one's opinions or decisions. This knowledge activates the goal of establishing or preserving a desired social identity vis-à-vis these constituencies" (Tetlock, 2002, p. 454).

Thinking about motivation in more political than economic terms leads to different kinds of research questions and hypotheses about why people care about fairness and what should influence their fairness reasoning. Accordingly, justice theory and research began to emphasize people's needs about control and status. This shift was first marked in the mid-1970s with the development of process control theory (e.g., Thibaut & Walker, 1975), which explained people's concern with fairness through the lens of people's desires for power and decision control. Another shift occurred in the mid-to-late 1980s when theories began to focus more on people's needs for status and standing than on needs for control (e.g., Lind & Tyler, 1988).

Decision Control: Power in the Form of Voice

One of the first theories of procedural fairness focused on the importance of decision control, primarily in the form of having an opportunity for voice in decision making. Specifically, Thibaut and Walker (1975) were interested in people's fairness perceptions of situations in which conflicts between two parties were to be decided by a disinterested authority. They reasoned that adversarial procedures that allow opportunities for affected parties to present their case would be seen as more fair than inquisitorial procedures that provide no decision control to participants.

Given the emphasis process control theory placed on getting desired outcomes, one could argue that the theory is premised more on an intuitive economist than politician guiding metaphor (e.g., Shapiro & Brett, 2005; Tyler & Blader, 2000; Van Prooijen et al., 2008). Thibaut and Walker (1975), however, argued that people are motivated more by needs for control and to

ensure fairness, than with maximizing their outcomes. Consistent with this idea, the most frequent explanation people provide for their desire to go to trial is not the desire to win or to minimize transaction costs, it is to “tell my side of the story” (Lind, Kanfer, & Earley, 1990; MacCoun, 2005; MacCoun, Lind, Henseler, Bryant & Ebener, 1988). Although there continue to be debates about whether voice effects are motivated more by control needs or utility maximization, the consensus opinion seems to be that that voice can and does serve both needs simultaneously (see Shapiro & Brett, 2005 for a review).

Research has generally validated the importance of providing voice in enhancing perceptions of both procedural fairness and outcome satisfaction (e.g., Folger, 1977; Lind et al. 1990; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Shapiro & Brett, 1993; Tyler, Rasinski, & Spodick, 1985; Van den Bos, 2005). Even very autocratic procedures are perceived as more fair if they incorporate opportunities for voice (Folger, Cropanzano, Timmerman, & Howes, 1996; Sheppard, 1985). Among other things, people are more willing to accept negative outcomes when they are the result of procedures that include opportunities for voice (the “fair process effect”¹). Evidence for the fair process effect has been found in laboratory experiments (e.g., Folger et al., 1979; Greenberg, 1987, 1993; Lind et al., 1980, 1990; Van den Bos et al. 1997) as well as correlational field studies conducted in the courts, citizen-police encounters, public policy decision making, police officer evaluations of the fairness of their assignment decisions, and more (e.g., Farmer, Beehr, & Love, 2003; Lind et al., 1993; Tyler, 1994; Tyler et al., 1985; Tyler & Caine, 1981; Tyler & Degoey, 1995; Tyler & Folger, 1980; Tyler & Huo, 2002). A meta-analysis indicated that variation in opportunities for voice explained an estimated 2% of the variance in measures of performance and 4% of the variance in turnover (variables often measured behaviorally; Skitka

¹ Van den Bos (2005) extended the term the “fair process effect” to refer to all effects of procedural fairness, rather than more narrowly define the positive effect of voice on willingness to accept non-preferred outcomes. We are retaining the Folger et al. (1979) narrower definition to maintain greater conceptual specificity.

et al. 2003). Variables usually measured with self-reports revealed stronger effects for voice: voice explained 9%, 12%, 8%, 27%, and 46% in the variance respectively in affective reactions to decisions, organizational citizenship, organizational commitment, decision acceptance, and task satisfaction across studies (Skitka et al., 2003).

Although voice appears to have effects on a host of variables, not all studies find support for the fair process effect and some studies find evidence of fair process effect reversals (i.e., that fair procedures lead to lower levels of satisfaction with negative outcomes). For example, an opportunity to voice one's views is helpful in groups in which conflicting opinions were relatively high, because having some opportunities for voice allows participants and leaders to learn where all group participants' stand. Continued opportunities for voice, however, and repetition of competing points of view increases conflict and decreases satisfaction with both the process and the outcome it yields (Peterson, 1999). In other words, too much voice can be a bad thing.

Moreover, voice only increases perceived fairness and satisfaction when people have a direct connection to the decision being made, such as when the decision is personally relevant and important. Voice has no effect when decisions are not particularly important or personally relevant to the participant (Van den Bos & Spruijt, 2002), and when people feel they do not have anything useful to contribute to decision making (Brockner et al., 1998). Similarly, voice does not ameliorate the negative effects of having an important aspect of one's identity challenged or threatened (the "identity violation effect," Mayer, Greenbaum, Kuenzi, & Shteynberg, 2009). Although fair procedures often increase people's satisfaction with unfavorable outcomes, fair procedures do not lead people to judge distributively unfair (inequitable) outcomes as fair or satisfactory (e.g., Van den Bos et al, 1997; 1998).

Other research finds either no evidence of a fair process effect (e.g., Mullen & Nadler, 2008; Skitka, 2002; Skitka & Mullen, 2002; Skitka, Bauman, & Lytle, 2009) or finds fair process effect reversals (e.g., Bauman & Skitka, 2009) when people have strong moral attachments to outcomes. Other reversals of the fair process effect emerge when people are given voice when they have been led not to expect it (Van den Bos, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1996), or are prompted to directly compare their outcomes with the procedures that yield them (Van den Bos, 2002). Negative effects for voice have been attributed to a “frustration effect” that emerges when opportunities for voice nonetheless yield unfavorable or unfair outcomes (e.g., Bauman & Skitka, 2009; Folger, 1977; Kulik & Clark, 1993; Renn, 1998), an effect that may be especially likely to emerge when outcomes are framed in terms of losses rather than gains (Cropanzano, Paddock, Rupp, Bagger, & Baldwin, 2007).

The Importance of Standing, Respect, and Status

Other theorists guided by the intuitive politician metaphor have focused less on decision control and more on the importance of fairness in the maintenance and stability of long-term relationships (e.g., Bies, 1987; Bies & Moag, 1986; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Bies, 1990, Tyler & Blader, 2003; Tyler & Lind, 1992; cf. Bies, 2005²). This theoretical approach is based on assumption that people care more about being valued by important authorities and peers than by the material outcomes of a specific encounter or exchange. Similar to theorists inspired by the intuitive economist metaphor, these theorists argue that people’s long-term interests are best served by cooperating with others. However, trusting one’s fate to others comes with attendant

² There is some controversy about whether interactional justice (defined as the fairness of one’s interpersonal treatment, Bies & Moag, 1986) and procedural fairness defined in terms of dignity processes (e.g., Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992) represent the same or different constructs. Bies at one point concurred that these constructs were essentially the same thing (Tyler & Bies, 1990). A later meta-analytic review concluded that these variables were highly overlapping but nonetheless distinguishable constructs (Colquitt et al., 2001) and Bies (2005) now argues that these constructs should be treated as separate facets. At this juncture, however, we see the cost to theoretical parsimony to be greater than the gain in theoretical or empirical precision of treating them separately given how much the constructs conceptually and empirically overlap.

risks, including possible neglect and exploitation. Although other process dimensions matter as well (e.g., the neutrality of the procedure and trustworthiness of authorities, e.g., Leventhal, 1976a), people are theorized to be especially attuned to information that they have good status and standing with group members and authorities. Standing and status affirmation are communicated by “dignity processes” such as polite, dignified, and respectful treatment (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992).

Consistent with theoretical predictions, being treated with greater dignity, respect, and propriety not only increases people’s perceptions of procedural fairness, but also facilitates decision acceptance (e.g., Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Williams, 1999). Dignity processes also affect a host of other relevant organizational variables including organizational commitment (e.g., LaVelle et al., 2009; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992; Siegel, Post, Brockner, Fishman, & Garden, 2005), trust in supervisors (e.g., Folger & Konovsky, 1989), extra-role citizenship behavior (e.g., Blader & Tyler, 2009; LaVelle, et al., 2009; Moorman, 1991; Moorman & Bryne, 2005), job satisfaction (Diekmann, Sondak & Barsness, 2007, cf. McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992), successful management of work-life conflict (Seigel et al., 2005), and stress (Vermunt & Steensma, 2003; 2005).

In addition to these organizational outcomes, the relationship between fair procedural treatment and status and standing concerns has also received strong support. For example, people spontaneously mention issues about treatment and lack of respect more than they do specific outcomes when asked to recall specific instances of injustice or unfairness (Lupfer, Weeks, Doan, & Houston, 2000; Mikula, Petri, & Tanzer, 1990). People react especially negatively when they feel they have been disrespected (MacCoun, 2005; Miller, 2001, cf. Vermunt, Van der Kloot, & Van der Meer, 1993). Moreover, dignity process variables and voice have stronger

effects when social identity needs are particularly strong (Brockner, Tyler, & Cooper-Schneider, 1992; Huo, Smith, Tyler, & Lind, 1996; Platow & Von Knippenberg, 2000; Smith, Thomas, & Tyler, 2006; Wenzel, 2000, 2004), participants are of low rather than high status (Chen, Brockner, & Greenberg, 2003), status concerns are primed (Van Prooijen, Van den Bos, & Wilke, 2002), people are higher in interdependent self-construal (Brockner, Chen, Mannix, Leung, & Skarlicki, 2000; Holmvall & Bobocel, 2008) or higher in the need to belong (De Cremer & Alberts, 2004), and in cultures that place a higher value on interdependence than independence (Brockner et al., 2000). People treated with greater procedural fairness also experience gains in self-esteem (e.g., Koper et al. 1993; Shroth & Shah, 2000; Tyler, 1999; Tyler et al., 1996, cf. Brockner et al., 1998; Van den Bos, Bruins, Wilke, & Dronkert, 1999), and a sense of self-other merging with relevant authorities (De Cremer, Tyler, & Den Ouden, 2005). In summary, people care about procedurally fair treatment in part because being treated with dignity and respect serves their needs to feel valued and like they have status and standing vis-à-vis authorities and the group.

Empirical and Conceptual Boundary Conditions of the Intuitive Politician

Although research inspired by the intuitive politician metaphor has generated considerable interest in both social psychology and organizational behavior studies of justice, there are nonetheless some limitations to some of the claims made by this theoretical approach as well as anomalies that are difficult to explain in terms of the motives of the intuitive politician.

For example, researchers inspired by the intuitive politician guiding metaphor often claim that procedures are more important to people's justice reasoning than are the outcomes people receive (e.g., Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Blader, 2003). These claims are sometimes interpreted to mean that theories of distributive justice are outmoded or are not particularly

relevant. It is important to acknowledge that claims about the relative importance of procedures over outcomes are based on comparisons of procedures and favorable or unfavorable, but not necessarily fair or unfair, outcomes (Fortin, 2008). For example, most tests of the relative importance of procedural and outcome variables on people's perceptions of fairness do not provide participants with social comparison information that allows them to make a clear judgment of whether their outcomes are fair. It is not surprising then, that procedural fairness might appear to have a stronger influence than "outcome fairness," given participants are making judgments in a social vacuum and without relevant information they need to make an outcome fairness judgment (i.e., social comparisons). Two of the few studies that provided participants with relevant social comparison information found results that were inconsistent with the claim that procedural fairness is more important to people's justice reasoning than distributive fairness (Van den Bos et al., 1997, 1998).

Similarly, a meta analysis of more than 80 studies that included measures or manipulations of procedural fairness variables as well as outcome fairness or favorability revealed that (a) there is little evidence of the fair process effect when the criterion is outcome fairness rather than outcome favorability, (b) outcome fairness has stronger effects than outcome favorability, and equally or stronger effects as procedural fairness variables on a host of outcome measures, and (c) manipulations of outcome fairness and favorability have stronger effects on perceptions of procedural fairness than the converse (Skitka et al., 2003). Outcome fairness is therefore as, if not more, influential than procedural fairness.

These conclusions should not be interpreted to mean that procedural fairness is irrelevant to how people think about fairness. One of the most important tests of any complete theory of justice is a demonstration of the relative power of justice considerations—procedural or distributive—relative to other motives. Discovering that procedural fairness concerns do not

reduce to material self-interest is important validation of the role that procedural fairness concerns play in social life. Discovering the importance of procedures on how people think about fairness does not, however, persuasively diminish the importance people also attach to concerns about distributive justice (Greenberg, 1990).

Distributive justice theorists and researchers took considerable pains to distinguish between fair and favorable outcomes and to prove that people's outcome fairness judgments were based on something unique to fairness, rather than just involving violated expectations (e.g., Austin & Walster, 1974; Fisk & Young, 1985). Procedural justice researchers, however, have not made similar efforts to establish the discriminant validity of judgments of procedural fairness. The few studies that have tested expectations in the context of procedural fairness research have found reversals of the fair process effect when providing voice violated participants' pre-existing expectations (i.e., instead of voice leading to increased perceptions of procedural fairness and decision acceptance, it led to decreased perceptions of procedural fairness and decision acceptance; Kanfer et al., 1986; Van den Bos et al., 1996). More research is needed that tests whether procedural fairness effects are really about fairness rather than favorability or unfavorability, or expected versus unexpected interpersonal treatment.

Given the emphasis placed on social comparison information and deservingness in the intuitive economist approach to justice research, the amount of theoretical and empirical attention to social comparisons when people judge the fairness of procedures has also been surprisingly thin. The limited available evidence suggests that people do weigh whether people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect (Heuer et al., 1999; Sunshine & Heuer, 2002). Moreover, people make ample use of social comparison information about how others are treated when making judgments of procedural fairness as well (Grienberger, Rutte, & Van Knippenberg, 1997; Lytle, 2010; Van den Bos, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1996), results that confirm the central (but

neglected) role that consistency plays in people's judgments of procedural fairness (e.g., Crosby & Franco, 2003; Leventhal, 1976b, Lytle, 2010).

Finally, some argue that this field of inquiry promotes the positive social benefits of procedural fairness as a means of ensuring social cooperation and compliance without considering the possible ways that creating a false consciousness of fairness without substance amounts to appeasing the masses without any concern whatsoever for treating them with real fairness and justice (Fortin & Fellenz, 2008; MacCoun, 2005). The perils of encouraging blind obedience and compliance in the context of already overly socialized tendencies to respect authority are well known (e.g., Milgram, 1974). As MacCoun (2005) noted, "The neglect of the dark side of procedural justice is unfortunate. As a psychological dynamic, procedural fairness is clearly a double-edged sword. Our poignant desire for voice and dignity makes it possible to promote cooperation and tolerance in a diverse society facing uncertainty, scarcity, and inevitable conflicts of interest. But these same needs leave us potentially vulnerable to manipulation and exploitation by those who control resources and the processes for distributing them" (p. 193). More research is clearly needed to explore the potential "dark side" of procedural justice, and researchers should be sensitive to not only the positive implications of procedural fairness, but the negative implications as well.

In summary, the intuitive politician has been an incredibly generative metaphor that has dominated most justice theory and research for the last 20 to 30 years. Although a number of areas need further research inquiry, the shift from the intuitive economist to the intuitive politician nonetheless has led to a number of important discoveries. People do care about status and socioemotional aspects of social exchange and not just material gain. Some procedural justice theorists, however, struggled to find a way to understand mounting experimental evidence

that both outcomes and procedures seem to matter to people's fairness reasoning and that their relative effects depend on the availability or salience of different kinds of information. Models based on the intuitive scientist guiding metaphor were therefore invoked to provide a potentially more natural account for information processing effects than do theories based on the intuitive economist or politician.

The Intuitive Scientist

Theories inspired by the intuitive scientist focus on the cognitive processes that give rise to different kinds of judgments, and in particular to the cognitive short cuts people tend to take when processing information. Because people have limited capacity to process information, they depend on automatic processes and various mental shortcuts to more efficiently and easily navigate their way through the buzz and confusion of everyday life (Fiske & Taylor, 1984). The intuitive scientist approach to justice reasoning suggests that people make fairness judgments relying on the same kind of cognitive heuristics and short cuts they use to make other kinds of judgments. The most influential justice theory that takes the intuitive scientist perspective—fairness heuristic theory, and in its most recent incarnation, uncertainty management theory—is reviewed next.

Fairness Heuristic and Uncertainty Management Theories

Similar to many other theories, fairness heuristic theory starts with a motivational premise, in this case, that people are especially motivated to manage uncertainty about the potential for being exploited in their social exchange relationships (Lind, 2001; Lind et al., 1993; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002). Information about procedures and outcomes serve the heuristic function of managing people's uncertainty about others' motives and are therefore considered relatively interchangeable. Thus, in the absence of relevant information to judge the fairness of outcomes,

people rely on procedural information. In the absence of information about procedural fairness or dignity processes, people rely on outcome information. Being treated either distributively or procedurally fairly serves as a heuristic proxy for trust. Neither source of information, however, is predicted by fairness heuristic theory to be as important as having direct knowledge that authorities or others can be trusted.

Uncertainty management theory primarily differs from fairness heuristic theory in the emphasis placed on trust as driving people's uncertainty management concerns. Uncertainty management theory posits a broader existential role for uncertainty management, regardless of whether uncertainty is specific to trust in relevant authorities (Lind & Van den Bos, 2002; Van den Bos, 2001; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002). Fair treatment is theorized in uncertainty management theory as a remedy for all kinds of uncertainty (e.g., about the self, about the future), and not just uncertainty specific to trust in authorities.

Consistent with fairness heuristic and uncertainty management theories, the effects of dignity process variables and voice are weaker when uncertainty is not salient (Van den Bos, 2001), when people have more rather than less trust in an authority (Van Dijke & Verboon, 2010; Van den Bos et al. 1998, Yang, Mossholder, & Peng, 2009), and when social comparison information about others' outcomes is available (Van den Bos et al., 1997; see also Blader, 2007; De Cremer, Brebels, & Sedikides, 2008; Jones & Martens, 2009; Van den Bos & Miedema, 2000 for other forms of support).

In summary, the intuitive scientist guiding metaphor has played a recent role in shaping theory and research on the psychology of justice and fairness, but the intuitive scientist approach to justice research has not received as much empirical attention as the economic and politician

models. The long-term viability of the intuitive scientist as a guiding metaphor in justice research has yet to be fully tested, and remains an area for further theoretical development and research.

The Intuitive Prosecutor

In addition to studying questions of distributive and procedural justice, some justice researchers have focused their attention on questions of retributive justice-- the psychological processes that explain how justice relates to punishing people who violate social, legal, or moral norms. Retributive justice researchers found it more useful to draw on the notion that people approach transgressions in ways that resemble intuitive prosecutors than as intuitive economists, politicians, scientists, or theologians. The core functionalist premise of the intuitive prosecutor is that people are motivated to vigorously defend their commitment to social systems, norms, and rules that they see as integral to their view of the way the world either works, or should work. Violations of these rules of appropriate conduct cause harm to both individual victims as well as the broader social fabric (Tetlock, 2002). Among the core questions of interest in the study of retributive justice has been whether people as intuitive prosecutors are primarily concerned with (and therefore motivated by) the desire to deter future transgressions, compensate victims, or punish perpetrators.

Even though people often say they are motivated by other concerns, numerous studies find that people show a clear preference for punishment based in retribution and just deserts over deterrence (e.g., Carlsmith, 2006; Carlsmith & Darley, 2008; Carlsmith, Darley & Robinson, 2002; Van Prooijen, 2010). Punitive reactions are also driven by a sense of moral outrage. In other words, people are not rationally and dispassionately applying principles of rewards and punishments as much as they are emotionally striking out at those who disrupt the social order and harm others (Darley, 2009; Darley & Pittman, 2003). Punitive responses are especially likely

when (a) offences are intentional rather than unintentional (Darley & Pittman, 2003), (b) people are high in chronic or situationally primed concerns about social threat (Tetlock et al. 2007), (c) the perpetrator has low rather than high moral status (Carlsmith & Sood, 2009), (d) people have been recently exposed to examples of unpunished transgressions (Goldberg, Lerner & Tetlock, 1999, Lerner, Goldberg, & Tetlock; 1998; Tetlock et al., 2007), (e) people are socially aware and connected to others (e.g., when high in interdependent self-construal, Gollwitzer & Bucklein, 2007), and (f) among those for whom the intuitive prosecutor mindset is more chronically activated (e.g., political conservatives; Carroll, Perkowitz, Lurigio, & Weaver, 1987; Skitka & Tetlock, 1992; 1993).

One reason why people are motivated to respond punitively to transgressors may be that they expect hedonic benefit or catharsis from vengeance. Exacting revenge, however, is not sufficient to derive psychological benefit from punishing transgressors: people need to believe that transgressors understand their punishment is a direct consequence of a specific transgression (Gollwitzer & Denzler, 2009; Gollwitzer, Meder, & Schmitt, 2010). There are also ironic effects for revenge-seeking: people who seek vengeance end up ruminating more about the transgression, and therefore experience more negative affect than those without an opportunity for vengeance (Carlsmith, Wilson, & Gilbert, 2008).

Theories of retributive justice tend to include explicit propositions about factors that make it more or less likely for people to adopt this particular mindset: In other words, there is considerable evidence that the intuitive prosecutor mindset has several “on” and “off” buttons (Alicke, 2000). For example, some researchers have recently begun to explore the degree people can be prompted to care about restorative justice and rehabilitation (e.g., Okimoto & Wenzel, 2009; Wenzel, Okimoto, Feather, & Platow, 2008). These researchers find that (a) when

transgressions are seen as questioning shared community values, the goal of punishment can shift to restoring justice by reaffirming those values rather than degrading the offender (Wenzel & Thielman, 2006) and (b) dispute resolution processes that focus on shared identity and bilateral communication between victim and offender—in addition to appropriate punishment—are perceived by people to be fairer than dispute resolution processes that focus on retribution and punishment alone (Okimoto, Wenzel, & Feather, 2009).

In summary, although the majority of justice researchers have tended to focus on the allocation of positive material and socioemotional resources or goods, there has been increasing attention to the psychology of retributive justice and the allocation of punishment. Punishment, however, is only one negatively valenced resource. It would be interesting for future justice research to explore how people think about the fair distribution of other negative resources. For example, we know a great deal about how people think about the benefits of social cooperation, but little about how the costs, should be distributed (see however, Sondak, Neale & Pinkley, 1995). What fairness considerations loom as most important, for example, when deciding where to locate landfills, nuclear waste dumps, or halfway homes for sexual offenders?

We turn next to a review of justice theory and research motivated by the idea that people are like intuitive theologians, including justice world theory and recent theories that posit a contingency role for moral concerns as shaping people's concerns about fairness. These theoretical approaches share some commonalities with theory and research inspired by the intuitive prosecutor, including positing important roles for moral emotions and focus on explaining how people react to violations of justice norms and beliefs.

The Intuitive Theologian

Research guided by the intuitive theologian metaphor posits that people are motivated by concerns about morality and immorality, and questions of fundamental right and wrong. According to this view, conceptions of morality are not arbitrary social constructions, but are instead experienced as fundamental truths about the social world. People's moral values therefore "provide reassuringly absolute answers to unsettling questions about the meaning of existence and the ends to which we should devote our lives" (Tetlock, 2002, p. 458).

According to the intuitive theologian view, the particular challenges of group living (e.g., aggression, competition, cooperation, deception, and the undermining role of self-interest) led to adaptation through natural selection of human capacities to care about morality and justice independent of self-interest, power, status, or uncertainty management needs. People who learned to manage the balance between competition and cooperation, develop conceptions of moral right and wrong, and punish those who broke contracts or other justice arrangements, had a clear adaptive advantage over those who failed to develop traits which allowed them to manage these challenges (see Robinson, Kurzban, & Jones, 2007 for a detailed review). In short, a working definition of justice and what it means to people could reasonably start with the adaptive functions of morality, righteousness, virtues, and ethics rather than with self-interest, status, or other non-moral motivations.

A variety of current theories of justice postulate that people's concerns with fairness reflect moral concerns, rather than serving as a proxy for people's non-moral needs and goals. These perspectives range from those positing that moral concerns lay at the core of when and why people care about justice to more contingent approaches that suggest people's justice reasoning is sometimes motivated by moral concerns, even if at other times other concerns (e.g., economic, relational) might play roles as well. We review these approaches in turn next.

Just World Theory and the Justice Motive

Just world theory is premised on the notion that one of the fundamental dilemmas facing children during development is whether to seek immediate satisfaction for their needs versus delaying gratification (Lerner, 1975, 1980). Developing children ultimately design what Lerner called the personal contract, that is, a sense of entitlement. Children learn that if they give up and are willing to do certain things, desired outcomes come to them in the end. The concern with getting what one deserves develops eventually into the concern for fairness and the belief that others should get what they deserve as well (otherwise referred to as the justice motive, Lerner, 1987). People become so invested in the notion that what happens to people is a consequence of something about them, that any information or instance that contradicts this belief, such as being the random victim of a violent crime, causes considerable distress. This distress in turn leads people to generate justifications for why victims must have deserved their plight.

Consistent with just world theory predictions, willingness to delay gratification and to commit to long-term goals is correlated with increased concerns about deservingness, as well as individual differences in a belief in a just world (Brabant & Lerner, 1974; Hafer, 2000a; Hafer, Bégue, Choma, & Dempsey, 2005; Lerner, 1977, 1980; Lerner et al. 1976; Long & Lerner, 1974). A now rather vast amount of research has also tested the prediction that having a stronger justice motive will be associated with greater victim blaming (see Furnham, 2003; Hafer & Bégue, 2005 for recent reviews). When there is little hope of fully addressing a victim's plight, people cope by re-interpreting and rationalizing the harm by believing it was somehow deserved (Reichle & Schmitt, 2002), engaging in denial, avoidance and psychological distancing (Drout & Gaertner, 1994; Hafer, 2000b), focusing more on the victimization than the cause of the

victimization (Correia & Vala, 2003), or even by distorting their memory of what happened to victims (Callan, Kay, Davidenko, & Ellard, 2009).

A belief in a just world may serve as a buffer against a wide array of threats beyond fears of exploitation in social exchange or reactions to innocent victims because people higher in a belief in a just world work actively to compensate for or justify their fate (e.g., by self-blaming or down playing the injustice; see Bulman & Wortman, 1977; Dalbert, 1998), belief in a just world can provide an effective coping strategy in the face of misfortune. Consistent with this idea, flood victims who were higher in just world belief had less depression, anxiety, insecurity, hostility, and paranoid thinking than those with weaker beliefs in a just world (e.g., Otto, Boos, Dalbert, Schops, & Hoyer, 2006; see also Bulman & Wortman, 1977; Dalbert, 1998, 2001, 2002 for examples in other contexts of misfortune, such as being the victim of a severe accident).

Just world theory has been very generative and has received considerable empirical support. For the most part, however, just world theory does not provide predictions or guidance that help resolve some of the core debates in the justice literature, such as when and why dignity process concerns might matter to people's fairness reasoning, and when outcome considerations might matter more; it simply posits that the justice motive is at the root of people's concerns with justice, whether those concerns are related to procedures or outcomes.

One could argue that even Lerner's personal contract is still overly focused on the notion that people are primarily concerned with getting what they want, even if it involves deferring gratification and incorporating beliefs about deservingness. According to other moral theorists, if people are like intuitive theologians, then people's concern about fairness—at least at times—is based on feelings of obligation, duty, and morality, not various personal wants or needs (deferred or otherwise). We review these theoretical perspectives next.

“Deonance Theory”

Folger and colleagues use the term “deonance theory” as a description for the meta-theoretical position that one can better understand why people care about justice, and therefore behave justly, more from the view of the intuitive theologian than from either an intuitive economist, politician, or scientist perspective (Cropanzano & Stein, 2009; Folger, 2001; Folger, in press). Although presented as a theory, we prefer to consider it a meta-theory, or an alternative way of representing the intuitive theologian as a guiding metaphor, largely because “deonance theory” is not a formal theory with testable if-then propositions. Consistent with this interpretation of deonance theory, research cited as supporting or testing deonance theory to date has relied upon indirect evidence rather on theoretically derived hypothesis testing.

For example, deonance theorists cite evidence against the hegemony of self-interest or relational motives that indicate people are willing to sacrifice some profit to punish others who intentionally violate fairness norms (Kahneman et. al., 1986; Turillo, Folger, Lavelle, Umphress, & Gee, 2002). These results are clearly inconsistent with a theory arguing that rational self-interest governs people’s behavior, because the majority of the participants in these studies sacrifice maximizing their own gain to punish unfair behavior. Moreover, because participants do not know each other and never meet face-to-face, it is difficult to attribute these results to something about people’s needs to be accepted or valued by the group. The results do make sense, however, if justice is a morally motivated response that can trump people’s desires to maximize their material or socio-emotional utilities. Taken together, deonance theorists’ critical analysis of previous perspectives on justice and focus on the alternative guiding metaphor of the intuitive theologian has played a useful role in motivating more research that takes ethics and morality seriously as possible motivational underpinnings of people’s concern with justice.

Most justice theorists appear to be wedded to one or another guiding assumption about human nature, and therefore what explains why people care and how they reason about fairness. There have, however, been a number of recent attempts to provide some integration across different guiding metaphors to generate more complex and contingent explanations for how people think about fairness, and that incorporate a role for morality as one motivational basis for these concerns. We turn next to a brief review of two theories that have taken this approach: the accessible identity and contingency models of justice.

Contingency Models of Morality

The contingency model of justice (an updated version of the accessible identity model, or AIM, Skitka, 2003) argues that people will sometimes be concerned about maximizing material gain; other times they will be more concerned about their social status and standing in the group; yet other times, they will be motivated to live up to or defend personal conceptions of the moral good (Skitka, Aramovich, Lytle, & Sargis, 2009). This constitutes a contingency model about when the concerns of the intuitive theologian are likely to dominate people's reasoning. How people define what is fair or unfair and the factors that weigh most heavily in their fairness judgments should vary as a function of which perceptual frame of reference they currently see as most relevant to the situation. The AIM version organized these predictions around different aspects of the self—that is, people's material, social, and personal/moral identities (Skitka, 2003). The contingency version leaves open whether the self is integral to when people care about fairness, making it a testable proposition rather than a guiding assumption of the model. Instead it posits that the economic, politician, and theologian can serve as functional schemas or mindsets as a function of which point of view is either situationally activated or more chronically accessible to perceivers (Skitka et al., 2009).

Two predictions of the contingency model (Skitka et al., 2008) are described: The authority independence and litmus test hypotheses. The authority independence hypothesis is that when people's moral convictions are at stake, they are more likely to believe that duties and rights follow from the greater moral purposes underlying rules, procedures, and authority dictates, than from the rules, procedures or authorities themselves (Skitka et al., 2008; Skitka & Mullen, 2008; see also Kohlberg, 1976). Moral beliefs are not by definition anti-establishment or anti-authority; they just are not dependent on establishment, convention, rules, or authorities. Instead, when people take a moral perspective, they focus more on their ideals, and the way they believe things "ought" or "should" be done, than on a duty to comply with authorities.

The litmus test hypothesis is that people's personal moral beliefs affect not only their perceptions of decisions and willingness to comply with authorities, but also their perceptions of authorities' legitimacy. When people have moral certainty about what outcome authorities and institutions should deliver they do not need to rely on standing perceptions of legitimacy as proxy information to judge whether the system works—in these cases, they can simply evaluate whether authorities get it "right." "Right" decisions indicate that authorities are appropriate and work as they should. "Wrong" answers signal that the system is somehow broken and is not working as it should. In short, the litmus test hypothesis predicts that people use their sense of morality as a benchmark to assess procedural fairness and authorities' legitimacy.

Consistent with these predictions, voice and dignity process variables have weak or no effects on people's perceptions of outcome fairness, decision acceptance, and other related variables when people have a moral investment in outcomes (e.g., Bauman & Skitka, 2009; Skitka, 2002; Skitka & Houston, 2001; Skitka & Mullen, 2002; Skitka, 2009). Instead, people primarily care that the morally correct outcome is achieved. Procedural fairness concerns play a

more significant role in people's justice reasoning only when people do not have a vested moral interest in outcomes (Bauman & Skitka, 2009; Skitka & Houston, 2001). In support of the litmus test hypothesis, people use whether authorities get it "right" to inform their judgments about both procedural fairness (Skitka, 2002; Skitka & Mullen, 2008) and authorities' legitimacy (Skitka et al., 2009).

In summary, even though contingency models of justice still posit roles for the intuitive economist and politician, these models also (a) rely on the intuitive theologian as a guiding metaphor, and (b) do not reduce all concerns about justice to one or another kind of instrumentality or utility maximization. Given that the intuitive theologian approach to justice theory and research is relatively new, however, it has yet to receive the same degree of empirical and theoretical scrutiny as the other guiding metaphors. With additional research, the boundary conditions and limitations of theories based on the intuitive theologian metaphor will be identified, much as we have discovered the limitations or boundary conditions on people as intuitive economists, politicians, scientists, and prosecutors. That said, we concur with Greenberg (in press) who concluded that "any approach to justice that ignores the role of morality is surely incomplete."

Putting it Together:

***A Functional Pluralism Model of
Justice***

Although there have been a number of attempts to integrate the theoretical and empirical insights across different social functionalist approaches for the psychology of justice (e.g., Cropanzano et al., 2001; Lind, 2001; Lind & Van den Bos, 2002; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992; Schroeder, Steel, Woodrell, & Bembeneck, 2003; Skitka, 2003; Skitka et al. 2009; Törnblom &

Vermunt, 2007; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002), for the most part researchers adopt a single approach as “the” way to study the psychology of fairness.

We argue that there is sufficient evidence in support of each approach to justice that they each need to be taken seriously when explaining when, why, and how people care about justice. Theoretical integration is the only way to move the field forward. Rather than remain wedded to a monistic account about how concerns about fairness shape people’s thoughts, feelings, and behavior, we therefore build on the contingency models discussed earlier and propose a functional pluralism model of justice instead—a model that incorporates the predictions of all five social functionalist guiding metaphors reviewed here.

The adaptive challenges people confront in their everyday lives require the ability to move fluidly between different goal states or motives. For example, people have to resolve the problems of (a) competing for scarce resources, such as wages or jobs (the economist), (b) how to get along with others and secure their standing in important groups (the politician), (c) making useful inferences about others’ goals, behavior, and trustworthiness (the scientist), (d) defending themselves and others from harm (the prosecutor), and (e) building a meaningful sense of existence (the theologian). In short, the functional pluralism model’s position is that people are economists, politicians, scientists, prosecutors, *and* theologians, not just one or another of these options. Which homunculus will be driving the ship at any given time (so to speak), depends on the current goal orientation of the actor and the salience of various situational cues that could activate one or another of these mindsets (e.g., Higgins, 1996; Mischel & Shoda, 1995).

Based on previous theory and research, we already have some idea of the conditions that will predict when one or another mindset is most likely to dominate fairness reasoning. For example, people are most likely to take a material or economic perspective when (a) their basic material

needs and goals are not being met or are under threat (e.g., Abramson & Inglehart, 1995; Cropanzano et al, 2001; Maslow, 1993), (b) material losses or gains are explicitly primed, (c) the relational context is defined primarily in market pricing terms (e.g., when shopping, negotiating the price of car, paying rents, tithing, e.g., Fiske, 1991), and (c) the goal of the social system is to maximize productivity (Deutsch, 1985; Lerner, 1977; Leung & Park, 1986).

Existing research also provides some clues about when people are more likely to take the intuitive politician perspective when thinking about fairness. Specifically, people should be more like intuitive politicians in their fairness reasoning when: (a) their material needs are at least minimally satisfied (e.g., Abramson & Inglehart, 1995; Maslow, 1993), (b) their needs to belong, for status, and inclusion, are not being met or are under threat (e.g., Cropanzano et al., 2001; Maslow, 1993; De Cremer & Blader, 2006), (c) the potential for significant relational losses or gains are made especially salient, (d) the dominant goal of the social system is to maximize group harmony or solidarity (e.g., Deutsch, 1985), (e) people's interdependency concerns are primed (e.g., Holmvall & Bobocel, 2008), and (f) accountability demands are salient (Tetlock, 2002).

Although further research is still needed to test the full implications of how the intuitive scientist metaphor guides justice reasoning, the current literature suggests that people should be motivated to engage in causal analysis of their situation and whether it is fair or unfair when they are confronted with negative and unexpected events (e.g., Taylor, 1982; Weiner, 1985).

According to uncertainty management and fairness heuristic theory, people should also be motivated by the intuitive scientist when they are feeling especially (a) uncertain, and (b) information about the trustworthiness of others is not directly available. These hypotheses are also consistent with the prediction that people should be more likely to behave more like

intuitive scientists than intuitive economists, politicians, prosecutors, or theologians when they are dealing with strangers.

There also are likely to be circumstances when people will adopt the intuitive prosecutor mindset. Specifically, people are more likely to be guided by the prosecutor when they perceive a norm violation to be: (a) offensive to shared moral values, (b) widespread and routinely unpunished (Goldberg et al., 1999; Lerner et al., 1998; Tetlock et al., 2007), (c) intentional (Darley & Pittman, 2003), (d) threatening to the social order or society at large (Gollwitzer & Bucklein, 2007), or (e) transgressors exhibit a weak understanding of the connections between the punishment and perpetrators' specific offense (Gollwitzer & Denzler, 2009; Gollwitzer et al, in press), or lack of sincere evidence of reform (Skitka & Tetlock, 1993).

Existing theory and research also provides suggestions about when people will be most likely to take on the mindset of the theologian. Specifically, people should be more likely to use a moral frame of reference for evaluating fairness when (a) their material and social needs are minimally satisfied (Maslow, 1993), (b) people have a moral stake in the outcomes being decided (e.g., whether abortion is or is not legal; e.g., Skitka, 2002; Skitka & Mullen, 2002; Skitka et al., 2009); (c) moral emotions are aroused, such as moral outrage, guilt or shame (Haidt, 2003; Mullen & Skitka, 2006), (d) there is a real or perceived threat to people's conceptions of moral order and not just to normative conventions (e.g., arbitrary rules and laws) (e.g., Skitka, 2002; Tetlock, 2002), (e) people's sense of personal moral authenticity is questioned or undermined (e.g., Zhong & Liljenquist, 2006), or (f) people are reminded of their mortality (e.g., Jonas, Schimel, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2002).

Implications and Directions for Future Research

Hastorf and Cantril (1954) conducted a study that is often cited as providing the case for the value of social psychology. Specifically, they studied Dartmouth and Princeton students' perceptions of an actual football game played in 1951 between the Dartmouth Indians and the Princeton Tigers. It was a particularly rough game with many penalties. The Princeton quarterback had to leave the game with a broken nose and a concussion in the second quarter of the game; the Dartmouth quarterback's leg was broken in a backfield tackle in the third quarter. One week after the game, students who saw the game, as well as a sample of students who viewed a film of it were queried. Despite seeing the same game, Princeton and Dartmouth participants viewed it very differently. The Princeton students "saw" the Dartmouth team make over twice as many rule infractions as the Dartmouth students, whereas the Dartmouth students "saw" a reverse pattern of infractions. Sixty-nine percent of Princeton students described the game as "rough and dirty," whereas a majority of Dartmouth students felt that even though the Dartmouth team played rough, the play was generally "clean" and "fair." These results indicated that people actively constructed different realities as a function of their perspective; as Hastorf and Cantril (1954) put it: "there is no such 'thing' as a 'game' existing 'out there' in its own right which people merely 'observe.' The game 'exists' for a person and is experienced by him only insofar as certain happenings have significances in terms of his purpose" (p. 133).

Hastorf and Cantril's (1954) findings and other similar research results led psychologists and other scholars to the realization that people do not react to each other's actions in a stimulus-response pattern without the mediating influence of interpretation. People's interpretations of their social worlds and human interactions are mediated through their *understanding* of what social interactions mean (Blumer, 1969). Similarly, a guiding premise of the functional pluralism

theory of justice is that there is not an objective reality or set of circumstances that are fair or unfair. People do not always interpret social interactions like football games, performance evaluations, negotiations of the price of a car or home, social policies, or their intimate relationships from similar perspectives. Instead, people actively construct their perceptions of fairness and unfairness, and these active constructions are influenced by different fairness norms and the various goals, needs, expectations, and histories people carry with them into their social interactions.

In addition to regrounding justice theory in classic conceptions of symbolic interactionism, a functional pluralism theory of justice can account for the mundane reality that people often disagree about whether a given situation was handled fairly or unfairly. Until people arrive at some consensus about the nature of the judgment to be made and the goals they wish to achieve in a given context, it is not surprising that they approach the same situation with very different conceptions of fairness. The notion that people are likely to approach the same situation from different perspectives and that these perspectives shape the fairness norms or considerations they apply to it, suggests that future research should extend beyond the study of how individuals in isolation make fairness judgments. Future research should begin to explore how people socially negotiate and arrive at consensus about how to make decisions fairly and whether fairness has been achieved in specific circumstances.

In a related vein, a truism of early theories of distributive justice is that people do not make justice judgments in social vacuums (e.g., Homans, 1958, 1961; Stouffer et al., 1949). Instead, justice judgments are inherently *social* judgments and require social comparison information. The social aspect of deciding whether something is fair or unfair may go beyond relying on available comparisons to see if others received outcomes proportional to inputs, similar

treatment, or opportunities for voice. Instead, people's natural fairness reasoning may rely more on active gathering of social information. People are likely to attempt to seek social consensus about how others interpret a given situation and whether they too see it as fair or unfair before deciding whether an event amounts to an injustice and whether to act on these judgments. Moreover, it will be interesting to explore whether active influence attempts which frame issues more in intuitive economic, politician, scientist, prosecutor, or theologian terms differentially affect concessions to others' views that situation is fair or unfair (Skitka, 2003).

Finally, although previous theory and research provides some grounds for making predictions about when each functional set of justice assumptions will be most likely to influence how people reason about fairness, it is important to note that these functional metaphors have fuzzy and indeterminate boundaries. Some situations are likely to prompt more than one set of concerns or mindsets. Serious transgressions, for example, are likely to activate concerns consistent with both the intuitive prosecutor and the intuitive theologian. Some of the most interesting possibilities for future research will be to explore what happens when different justice relevant goals and mindsets come into conflict. Among other things, when people feel unjustly treated according to one subjective mindset, they may be highly motivated to find evidence in support of being treated fairly using another mindset, in part to stave off the risks of social conflict and strife. Also, it will be interesting to test how effective different kinds of trade-offs might be, for example, whether serving a greater moral purpose might balance the pain of economic or socio-emotional losses. Expanding the theoretical scope of justice to acknowledge the reality that people have many needs and concerns and that they have developed complicated conceptions of justice and morality in an effort to cope with the many challenges of social coordination opens the door to a host of new and fascinating research questions.

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