

**How did you feel about the authors' conceptualization of power, including determinants of power, social power, and consequences?**

Frederick Douglass said "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will." Keltner, Gruenfeld and Anderson examine how power influences an individuals or groups behavior and offers constructs for defining it in terms of variables for contribution and subsequent consequences. Keltner et al. would agree with Frederick Douglass's assertion that without a demand of "resources" power cannot be determined. I concur with the author's definition of stating the provision or withholding of resources as a vital determinant of establishing power.

More specifically Keltner et al. define power "as an individual's relative capacity to modify others' states by providing or withholding resources or administering punishments." They state that the ability to modify others is limited to the ability of the person who claims to hold the power and their actual ability of delivering the resources or punishment. Resources can be defined as tangible materials such as "food, money, economic opportunity, physical harm, or job termination," as well as social factors such as "knowledge affection, friendship, decision-making opportunities, verbal abuse, or ostracism."

Defining power as one's ability to limit access of others to the aforementioned resources appears to be valid when considering my experiences and knowledge of power thus far. I will support my claim with several examples that further support the author's determinants. Individual variables of personality traits and/or physical characteristics is clearly shown in both the natural world of survival of the fittest and even in a machismo or alpha male dominated society. In situations of conflict, the more numerous or defendable the army, the more likely the power struggle of withholding resources from the opponent will be attained.

Exceptions to this paradigm do exist. Individuals strength includes examples of brains over brawn are witnessed throughout history from the biblical story of David vs. Goliath to more modern examples of grass root organizers helping neighbors post Hurricane Sandy provide essential goods.

Another determinant of power is dyadic variables such as interest in relationship and your relative commitment level. This determinant is greatly limited by the ability of the person in power to withhold or provide the sought after emotion, membership, or behavior. As in all human relationships, one spouse seeks affection from the other until a mutualistic affection is returned. If it is not, a struggle for attainment of that affection persists until it is either achieved or a replacement is found. Crimes from lost love dominant our media culture as a result of this power determinant. Media focused exemplars include Amy Fischer and Joey Buttafuccho and the OJ Simpson murders of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman.

With-in group variables include perception of authority and status. As one's power increases with-in a group the struggle by the others often leads to the social consequences that the authors state such as positive and negative emotion, systematic and controlled cognition and changes in behavior. Keeping in mind modern society and pop culture we see with-in group variable altering power status frequently. Examples include the breakup and newly established stardom of Destiny Child's lead singer Beyonce Knowles, the ability of the House of Congress majority leader to influence law and actions by the president and government, and the Arab Spring uprising in Egypt establishing many small factions of local government seeking greater control by either force of influence or direct control over access to resources.

Lastly, between-group variables have its roots deeply engrained in all aspects of civilization dating back thousands of years. Variables include ethnicity, gender, class, ideology, and numerical majority/minority. Ethnic differences have invaded society from the earliest records of human civilizations to most modern atrocities in the Middle East and Africa. These power struggles have persisted because of their connection to social power seekers of resources and control of freedom. It is well understood that the purveyors of resources in these areas will defend until death for control of resources and maintenance of power. Blood Diamond's in Africa are an example of with-in and between-group power struggles.

All of the determinants listed previously define one's ability to maintain and attain power. The social consequences to these power determinants causes a didactic outcome of attention to rewards vs. attention to threats; positive emotion vs. negative emotion; automatic cognition vs. systematic, controlled cognition; and disinhibited, state/trait driven behavior vs. inhibited, situationally constrained behavior.

In conclusion, Keltner, Gruenfeld and Anderson, have defined power thoroughly with concerns identified as resources, limitations, purpose, and consequences. I construe their broad inclusiveness of multiple variables to permit their definition of power be applied to all facets of power research while seeking to clarify what power determinants are. To further Frederick Douglass's thinking, I offer another expression that clarifies and impairs the work presented by the authors.

"Power is paradoxical." Friedrich Durrenmatt

**Briefly summarize Proposition #9. Do you agree with it? Do you have any examples or counterexamples?**

Power struggles are significantly influenced by roles of individuals and emotion. The authors of *Power, Approach, and Inhibition* further elaborate on power and social behavior as having more influence during various periods of history in “noteworthy and at times disturbing ways.” They offer an argument that “elevated power increases the likelihood of approach-related behavior” in proposition 9. In proposition 9, the authors contend that persons of higher power dominance often engage in behaviors that exhibit increased sexual behavior and flirtation than those with lower socio-economic status, especially if they are older males. Behaviors include forward leans, provocative eye contact, touches, and disinhibited fashion. The author’s offer future inquiry and understanding of how such flirtatious power influences sexual response both phenomenologically and physiologically.

This proposition is a constant theme in sexual fantasies and relationships throughout history and society. Earliest civilizations include the use of virgins as a status symbol and the achievement of godliness. This cultural belief pervades in Roman culture and Islamic religion. We furthermore see this ethos in our governmental figures frequently as exemplified by the Congressional impeachment of President Bill Clinton s a result of the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

I am in agreement with the assertion that behaviors of power dominance lead to sexual prowess and activity. The example of presidential power exercising intimate relationships is extended to many branches of political figures, athletes, social dominate individual, and business leaders; as evident by scandals that are released to media outlets regularly. I am witness to these behaviors in my leadership role at work as well.

What I find most intriguing is the definition of power from the authors clearly states that the power holder may not be the one in perception of the power. This is clearly evident regarding proposition 9 and sexual behavior. As a flirtatious subordinate may have the social power dominance over their boss as the bearer of the reward or resource desired. Lastly, I am interested in learning more about the nature of flirtatious power and its influence on sexual response both phenomenologically and physiologically.

**Based on what you've read about power, including perceived threat and individual and cultural differences, how do you think differences in power can affect a conflict resolution process?**

The authors of *Power, Approach, and Inhibition* define power "as an individual's relative capacity to modify others' states by providing or withholding resources or administering punishments." They include social variables as determinants of how the power struggle exists between individuals along differences of ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status and other factors. Understanding the inclusive components essential for power can clearly affect resolution when a conflict arises either between-groups or with-in groups.

For conflict resolution to be achieved, the individual with and without power both must concede partially. Without partial conceding, resolution is not attained, only agreement is met. As a result, all parties must feel empowered partially by allowing for multiple power holders to exist as a result of the previously stated determinants.

This is a vital component for successful negotiations between employees and their employer. Both sides obligate particular power, and neither side possesses absolute power. Additionally, neither side can negotiate efficaciously if they internalize they have the advantage of power and are not willing to "budge." In the case of conflict resolution or negotiations as I have outlined here, the following may help facilitate achievement, "lay all cards out on the table."

Laying your cards out on the table implies you are a willing participant and genuinely prepared to offer your "hand" for viewing and discussion. Of course laying your cards out on the table is predicated on the other power struggler to do the same. The differences in power sought by both parties are self-serving but needs to benefit both individuals for mutual

agreement. When both negotiating parties are fully aware of the details surrounding the conflict, social consequences yield positive emotion and attainment, and then power between groups can be maximized for both groups.

The feeling of power itself can lead to conflict resolution if offered to the less dominant group/individual. Overall, if ability to obtain requested resources is achieved, then conflict resolution can be attained successfully and although power differences will continue to exist, punishments will be minimized and cognitive appeal will be satisfied.