

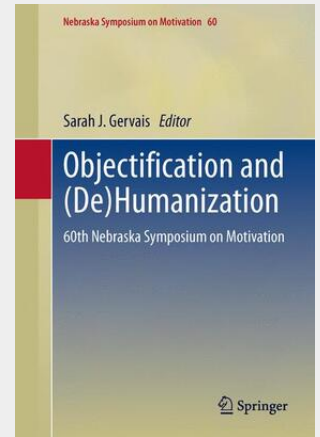
Objectification and (De)Humanization

60th Nebraska Symposium on Motivation

People often see nonhuman agents as human-like. Through the processes of anthropomorphism and humanization, people attribute human characteristics, including personalities, free will, and agency to pets, cars, gods, nature, and the like. Similarly, there are some people who often see human agents as less than human, or more object-like. In this manner, objectification describes the treatment of a human being as a thing, disregarding the person's personality and/or sentience. For example, women, medical patients, racial minorities, and people with disabilities, are often seen as animal-like or less than human through dehumanization and objectification. These two opposing forces may be considered a continuum with anthropomorphism and humanization on one end and dehumanization and objectification on the other end. Although researchers have identified some of the antecedents and consequences of these processes, a systematic investigation of the motivations that underlie this continuum is lacking. Considerations of this continuum may have considerable implications for such areas as everyday human functioning, interactions with people, animals, and objects, violence, discrimination, relationship development, mental health, or psychopathology. The edited volume will integrate multiple theoretical and empirical approaches on this issue.

Objectification and (De)humanization brings together a wealth of scholarship from across psychology and the social sciences to illuminate how we understand "human-ness" and to focus on the many ways that those human qualities are minimized--and frequently denied--in others.

"They're all alike. I have no use for them. They're not like us-- they're barely human." These statements are easily recognized as different degrees of stereotyping, bigotry, and discrimination. But psychologically speaking, these inaccurate perceptions of people show other, deeper, forces at work: objectification, the reduction of people to specific parts or functions, and dehumanization, the treating of humans as animals or inanimate objects. This forward-looking Volume in the Nebraska Symposium on Motivation offers research on dehumanization and objectification as experienced by both the targets and the initiators of these processes for clear insights into their effects on individual mental health and societal well-being. The theories in this book carry wider implications for action, from addressing various forms of pathology to advancing social justice. Included in the coverage: - Moving towards a unified theory of objectification and dehumanization. - A terror management perspective on the objectification of women. - Pity, disgust, other? Varieties of dehumanization. - Self-objectification as justification of unjust systems. - Treating pets as people/treating people as animals. - Considering a pan-theoretical approach to objectification and dehumanization. Objectification and (De)humanization is a groundbreaking reference for social psychologists, cognitive psychologists, clinical psychologists, and experimental psychologists as well as researchers in gender studies, anthropologists, and sociologists. Its depth of analysis is a testament to our continued recognition of our shared humanity.



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