

Understanding the Power of Stereotypes

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Throughout his career Claude Steele has been interested in processes of self-evaluation, in particular in how people cope with threatening self-images. This work has led to a general theory of self-affirmation processes. A second interest, growing out of the first, is a theory of how group stereotypes—such as stereotypes about African Americans in academic domains and women in quantitative domains—can influence intellectual performance and academic identities. Third, he has investigated addictive behaviors, particularly alcohol addiction, where his work with several colleagues has led to a theory of “alcohol myopia,” in which many of alcohol’s social and stress-reducing effects are explained as a consequence of its narrowing of perceptual and cognitive functioning. Steele is a recipient of the Association for Psychological Science (APS) [William James Fellow Award](#) for his lifetime of [significant intellectual achievements](#) to the basic science of psychology.

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