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# Beliefs About Power and Its Relation to Emotional Experience: A Comparison of Japan, France, Germany, and the United States

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*This research examined the concept of power in Japan, France, Germany, and the United States, as well as beliefs about the emotions persons in power tend to elicit in others and about powerful people's regulation (specifically, inhibition) of certain emotions. Definitions of power were assessed by examining the importance of two main components: control over self versus other and freedom of action vis-à-vis social norms. Beliefs about both positive (pride, admiration) and negative (jealousy, contempt) emotions were measured. Analyses revealed that the concept of power differed across countries and that the definitions of power as well as country of origin significantly predicted beliefs about the emotions that are elicited in others by powerful people and also the regulation of expression of emotion by powerful people.*

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**Keywords:** *emotions; power; culture; cross-cultural study*

My people and I have come to an agreement which satisfies us both. They are to say what they please, and I am to do what I please.

—Frederick the Great (1740-1786, King of Prussia)

I have never been able to conceive how any rational being could propose happiness to himself from the exercise of power over others.

—Thomas Jefferson (1745-1829,  
third President of the United States)

Watch out for the fellow who talks about putting things in order! Putting things in order always means getting other people under your control.

—Denis Diderot (1713-1784, French philosopher)

Power is one of the basic forces in social relationships (Fiske, 1993) and in the structure of personality (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003). Still, although asymmetries of power play an important role in social functioning (Brauer, 2001; Guinote, Judd, & Brauer, 2002), the theoretical and practical implications of power have historically received relatively little attention

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in psychology. More recently, psychologists have begun to systematically explore how power influences cognitive processes such as stereotyping (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Sidanius, 1993) and the interpretation of nonverbal behavior (Hall & Halberstadt, 1994; LaFrance & Banaji, 1992), as well as how power is related to emotional experience and beliefs about emotional experience (Clark, 1990; Conway, DiFazio, & Mayman, 1999; Kemper, 1991; Tiedens, Ellsworth, & Mesquita, 2000).

Beliefs about emotional experience are of particular interest because emotions both result from and maintain power relations (Conway et al., 1999; Hess, Herrera, & Bourgeois, 1999). Furthermore, different societies weigh power relationships differently (Mesquita, 2001). Consequently, any hypothesized link between power and emotions is unlikely to be universal. Understanding the relationship between power and emotion therefore implies understanding what power means within a society or culture, as reflected in the above quotes from three of the four countries of interest here.<sup>1</sup>

The aim of the present research was, first, to explore cultural definitions of power. Specifically, we assessed how individuals from Japan, France, Germany, and the United States conceptualize power along the dimensions of control (over self vs. other's outcomes) and of freedom of action, that is, the liberty to transgress versus the obligation to conform to social norms. The four countries studied can be divided into different categories based on their cultural values, specifically, power distance and individualism versus collectivism (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1994). However, we chose to approach this question empirically, allowing the countries to group together based on the similarity of perceptions and beliefs. Our second aim was to relate the emergent definitions of power to beliefs about how power is related to emotional experience. We were concerned with both the beliefs that individuals hold about the influence powerful people have over others' emotions as well as with beliefs about powerful people's regulation of the expression of their own emotions.

### *The Roles of Power in Emotional Experience*

A number of different lines of research have linked power and social status to emotional experience. Thus, appraisal theories of emotion hold that interpretations of emotional events, along a series of dimensions rather than something inherent in the events themselves, determine the emotional experience (e.g., Frijda, 1986; Scherer, 1988). These theories include as one pertinent dimension the notion of power (for an overview, see Scherer, 1999). Appraised power has particular importance for distinguishing between different negative emotions. In this view, one might become angry at someone who made a mistake if one were in a position of power vis-

à-vis that person but might feel dislike or distress if one were in a low power position (see also Averill, 1982; Izard, 1977; Lewis, 1971; Roseman, 1984). In this vein, Tiedens and colleagues (Tiedens, Ellsworth, & Moskowitz, 2000) found that high-status individuals were more likely to feel anger in reaction to negative outcomes, whereas low-status individuals were more likely to feel guilt or sadness. In addition, high-status individuals were more likely to feel pride as a result of positive outcomes, whereas low-status individuals tended to feel appreciation, reflecting in part a difference in perceived responsibility.

An analysis of the behaviors associated with power, particularly from an evolutionary perspective, provides insights about how power is related to the overt expression of emotion. For example, in Old World monkeys and apes, status in the social group is associated with distinct eye brow gestures: Dominant individuals tend to lower and furrow the brow, whereas submissive individuals tend to raise the brow (Bolwig, 1964; Redican, 1975). Such eyebrow gestures are also associated with the perception of dominance and submission among humans. Indeed, cross-culturally, humans perceive individuals with lowered, furrowed brows as dominant and those with raised brows as submissive (Keating et al., 1981; Senior, Phillips, Barnes, & David, 1999). Because such facial displays constitute components of the facial expressions of anger and fear, respectively (Ekman & Friesen, 1971, 1978), this finding suggests that high-power individuals appear to express more anger and contempt and submissive individuals appear to express more fear and surprise. In fact, Marsh, Adams, and Kleck (in press) provide evidence for the notion that anger and fear expressions mimic features of mature and baby faces, which in turn are closely associated with dominance and submissiveness.

Parallel to the association between emotions and power, there is an association between specific emotional action tendencies and power (e.g., Frijda, 1986; Frijda, Kuipers, & ter Schure, 1989). For instance, in nonhuman primates, high-status individuals are more likely to engage in hitting and teeth gnashing, whereas lower status individuals are more likely to engage in withdrawal (Mitchell & Maple, 1985). Conversely, Keltner (1995) showed that low-status humans, such as "pledges" in fraternities, show more facial displays and other gestures that convey embarrassment. Other intrapersonal behaviors, such as posture and gaze, as well as interpersonal behaviors, such as interrupting and pointing, also differentiate between high- and low-power individuals in the United States.

In summary, there is good evidence for a relation between power and emotion. Certain approach emotions, such as anger, contempt, and pride, have been

identified as dominant emotions and appear to be experienced by high-power individuals, whereas other emotions, such as sadness, fear, and embarrassment, have been called submissive emotions and appear to characterize the psychological and social experiences of low-power individuals. Furthermore, there are reasons to expect that many of the observed relations are at least in part reflected in beliefs about the relationship between power and emotion (e.g., Conway et al., 1999; Tiedens, Ellsworth, & Mesquita, 2000).

#### *Dimensions of Power*

But what does it mean to have power? Although there are universal and cross-species consistencies in the link between power and emotion, the complexity of human relations and importance of cultural beliefs and practices is likely to yield differences in beliefs about how power and emotion are related. Recently, Overbeck and Park (2001) organized existing treatments of the concept of power into two more specific concepts, those of social versus personal power. In their terms, social power is characterized by the deliberate exercise of power to control others through the attribution of punishments and rewards (see also Tiedens, 2001a, 2001b). Personal power refers to the "ability to act for oneself" or the experience of personal agency. This distinction highlights the notion that although power is usually associated with influence and control, just who is being controlled and how influence is exerted may vary. The behaviors associated with controlling others versus controlling the self naturally elicit different emotions in those who perceive or are affected by such behaviors. In addition, the maintenance of control over others (vs. the self) requires the expression and inhibition of different emotions.

Another important dimension of power that should be related to emotional experience is the relation between power and liberty of action within the societal structure. As discussed by Lorenzi-Cioldi (2002), the idiosyncratic credit concept (Holland, 1958) refers to the latitude with which a person can deviate from social norms before being sanctioned. In many cultures, high-status groups and individuals can deviate more from social norms without sanctions than low-status groups and individuals, because for them the pursuit of personal goals, individualism, and originality are normative practices. Indeed, high-power individuals are more likely to violate politeness-related communication norms (Brown & Levinson, 1987), talk and interrupt others more (DePaulo & Friedman, 1998), eat more than is allowed and with their mouth open (Ward & Keltner, 1998), break promises, and behave less cooperatively in interactions (Tedeschi, Lindskold, Horal, & Gahagan, 1969) than low-power individuals. Two recent theories have proposed that people high in power are

also differentially expressive of their emotions. Thus, Keltner et al.'s (2003) Approach/Inhibition Theory of Power suggests that power tips the balance between approach and inhibition toward approach. From this perspective, people high in power feel more positive (approach) emotions (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002) but they also are freer to express anger, also an approach emotion. Expectation Demand theory (LaFrance & Hecht, 1999, 2000; LaFrance, Hecht, & Paluk, 2003), in turn, proposes that individuals higher in power have more freedom to express their emotions, whereas those lower in power are more bound by cultural expressive norms.

Yet, one should note that the above-presented evidence for the notion that power is associated with social norm violation is largely based on North American data. Whether this notion generalizes across cultures is unclear. In fact, there is reason to believe that although powerful people may generally have more freedom to violate social norms, the specific norms that can be violated depend on the cultural context. Thus, France's François Mitterand engaged in extramarital relations without any particular societal sanctions, but when Bill Clinton engaged in extramarital relations (and then denied it), this was seen as an abuse of power. In fact, it is quite possible that depending on the salient cultural values, power may be associated with an obligation to uphold social norms, and to serve as a good example, rather than with more freedom to violate those norms.

#### *Dimensions of Power and Beliefs About Emotion Across Culture: The Present Study*

Individuals from Japan, France, Germany, and the United States participated in the present study. As noted above, we chose not to construct a priori groupings. In fact, different such groupings can be predicted from the extant literature. Notably, the four countries differ regarding their cultural values, which in turn are suggestive of the prevalent beliefs regarding power. Specifically, the two European countries and the United States are typically categorized as individualistic cultures and Japan is categorized as a collectivistic culture (Hofstede, 1983; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Mesquita, 2001). Thus, we might expect the three Western countries to group together in their definitions of power.

Yet another pertinent cultural value is power distance (Hofstede, 1983). Power distance refers to how much hierarchical inequality people accept and regard as legitimate according to societal norms (e.g., prestige, wealth, social status, caste system). Individuals from countries high in power distance tend to behave submissively and to be afraid in the presence of their superiors (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994). According to Hofstede, Japan and United States have similar power distance, whereas the

power distance for France is higher and that for Germany lower. Based on level of power distance, one would hypothesize that France might have the most authoritarian and Germany the least authoritarian concept of power, whereas the United States and Japan group together in between.

A third analysis by Schwartz (1999) examined the location of these countries on three cultural values that should be related to power: conservatism versus intellectual and affective autonomy, hierarchy versus egalitarianism, and mastery versus harmony. Based on Schwartz's results, France and Germany group together as high on intellectual autonomy and egalitarianism and differ from the United States and Japan, which are more mastery-oriented and value affective autonomy. Thus, overall, two groupings are plausible. First, Japan and the United States share a series of cultural beliefs, and hence, participants from these countries may arrive at similar definitions of power, which contrast from both French and German definitions. Alternatively, the three Western, individualistic cultures may derive similar definitions of power, especially related to freedom of action, contrasting with Japanese definitions.

To summarize our basic predictions, we must preview the results of two factor analyses of the emotions elicited or inhibited by powerful people. Those analyses suggested that the structure of elicited emotions is best described by two factors that correspond to negative versus positive emotions, whereas inhibited emotions are described by two factors corresponding to dominant and submissive emotions.

In regard to emotions elicited in others, we predict that more authoritarian definitions of power, that is, power defined as controlling others and as conferring the ability to violate social norms, are associated with the belief that powerful people elicit negative rather than positive emotions in other people. Specifically, having one's outcomes controlled by someone else often results in experiences of negative emotions such as jealousy and dislike, even if these emotions are not expressed directly to the powerful person (e.g., Conway et al., 1999). Similarly, if powerful people are believed to violate social norms without sanction, they also should be believed to produce negative feelings in other people. In contrast, if power is conceptualized as the ability to control one's own outcomes, then powerful people may not necessarily be expected to elicit negative emotions in others. Likewise, if powerful people are thought to uphold norms, they should be capable of eliciting feelings of pride as well as other positive emotions, for example, through reflected glory (e.g., Tesser, 1988).

As mentioned previously, emotions both result from and maintain power relations (Conway et al., 1999; Hess et al., 1999). To maintain power, individuals might tend

to express and inhibit emotions differently, depending on the concept of power in their culture. One way to maintain a given power structure is to maintain the perception that one is powerful. Thus, powerful individuals would be expected to express dominant and to inhibit submissive emotions. However, this tendency may be moderated by the cultural definition of power. Thus, this effect may be stronger when power is construed as conferring the right to transgress social norms. Similarly, controlling others' outcomes is only possible if those others perceive the controlling person as powerful. In this context, the inhibition of submissive emotions would serve to protect the powerful person's right to reside outside social norms without sanction.

#### METHOD

University students from France, Germany, the United States, and Japan reported their beliefs about how power is defined in their society. They further completed a questionnaire about the emotions that tend to be inhibited by powerful individuals in their society and about the emotions that such individuals tend to elicit in others. Regression analyses were used to link the beliefs about emotional experiences of powerful people to the definitions of power.

#### *Participants*

A total of 695 participants from France ( $N=141$ ), Germany ( $N=190$ ), the United States ( $N=178$ ), and Japan ( $N=186$ ) took part in the study. The participants were students enrolled in undergraduate-level classes of different disciplines at universities in the four countries. In total, 263 (37.8%) were men and 419 (60.3%) were women. Thirteen (1.9%) participants did not indicate their gender. Within samples, 21.7% of the German sample, 16.5% of the French sample, 46.1% of the U.S. sample, and 66.5% of the Japanese sample were men. The mean age of the participants was 21.30 years ( $SD=3.65$ ).

#### *Measures*

*Definitions of power.* In the first part of the questionnaire, participants were asked to report on their beliefs about what it means to have power in their society. Two items measured the dimension of control ("Having power means that one can control what happens to other people in their lives" and "Having power means that one can control what happens to him or herself in life"), two items measured freedom of action ("Having power means that one must uphold the existing social norms" and "Having power means that one can violate existing social norms without any reaction from others"), and two items measured general emotional liberty and impact ("Having power means that one can display any emotion he or she wants, when he or she wants to"

and “Having power means that one can influence the emotional states of other people”). The six questions were listed in a single random order, and participants expressed their agreement or disagreement with the statements on 7-point rating scales ( $-3 = disagree\ strongly$ ,  $3 = agree\ strongly$ ).

*Elicitation and inhibition of emotions.* The second part of the questionnaire dealt with the elicitation and regulation of emotional expressions by powerful individuals. Concerning the regulation of expression of emotions, participants rated their agreement with statements about the emotions that are inhibited by powerful people (e.g., “When in the presence of others, powerful people tend to conceal feelings of . . .”). Concerning elicitation, participants were asked about the emotions that powerful people tend to elicit in others (e.g., “Powerful individuals tend to elicit in others feelings of . . .”). The same eight emotions items followed each question: indifference, joy, anger, sadness, pride, admiration, jealousy, and contempt, which represent the types of emotions examined in related past work. Again, participants expressed their agreement or disagreement with the statements on 7-point rating scales ( $-3 = disagree\ strongly$ ,  $3 = agree\ strongly$ ). The order of the questions concerning the elicitation and inhibition of emotions was counter-balanced such that half of the participants answered the question about elicited emotions first and the other half answered the question about the inhibition of emotion first. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two versions of the questionnaire. Finally, participants answered demographic questions concerning age, sex, and native language.

#### *Translation*

The questionnaire was initially written simultaneously in English and French by native English and French speakers associated with the project to create a questionnaire that was appropriate and sensitive in both languages. The English version of the questionnaire was then translated into Japanese and German. Back-translations from both languages to English were very acceptable.

#### *Procedure*

The questionnaire was administered during class hours to groups of undergraduate-level students at universities in each of the four countries. The students volunteered their time and did not receive remuneration for their efforts. They were asked to take part in a study dealing with “beliefs about individuals who occupy positions of power in society.” The nationality of the experimenter was always the same as that of the participants. After the participants had agreed to take part in the study, the experimenter distributed the questionnaire

and asked them to read the instructions carefully. Full anonymity was assured and open and honest answers to the questions were encouraged.

## RESULTS

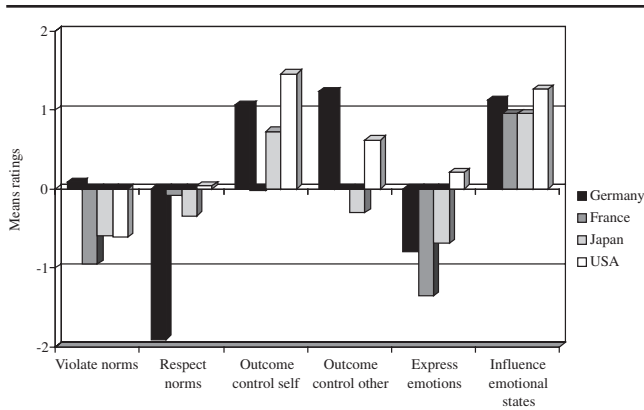
### *Overview*

Initial analyses including gender of participant as a variable revealed no significant main effects or interactions involving this variable, so gender was dropped from the analyses reported below. The data analyses consisted of four steps. First, we performed a series of discriminant function analyses to test for differences between countries on the six items measuring the definition of power, the eight items measuring the powerful individuals’ inhibition of emotions from others, and the eight items measuring the powerful individuals’ elicitation of emotions in others. Second, we performed separate factor analyses on the emotion ratings, one for the eight inhibition items and one for the eight elicitation items. In both cases, we retained a two-factor solution. We then performed regression analyses using power definition items and contrasts representing theoretically meaningful comparisons among the four countries to test whether a participant’s definition of power determined their perceptions of powerful individuals’ tendency to inhibit/ elicit specific emotions and whether it did so beyond the variance explained by country. For this, we separately regressed the four emotion factors onto two difference variables that represented the relative weight given to norm adherence versus violation and control over others versus control over individual outcomes. Finally, post hoc analyses were computed to highlight the effect of country on beliefs by regressing the four emotion factor residuals (i.e., after removing the variance explained by the power definition) onto orthogonal country contrasts.

### *Discriminant Function Analyses*

The discriminant function analysis on the power items revealed that participants’ power definitions differed significantly as a function of country, Wilks’s  $\Lambda = .64$ ,  $p < .001$ . Univariate tests showed that there was a reliable main effect of country for each of the six items, respect norms  $F(3, 689) = 50.61$ ,  $p < .001$ ; violate norms  $F(3, 689) = 8.04$ ,  $p < .001$ ; outcome control other  $F(3, 689) = 24.25$ ,  $p < .001$ ; outcome control self  $F(3, 689) = 17.25$ ,  $p < .001$ ; express emotions  $F(3, 689) = 20.73$ ,  $p < .001$ ; and influence emotional states  $F(3, 689) = 6.06$ ,  $p < .001$ .

The mean responses to the six power definition items, broken down by country, are presented in Figure 1. As can be seen, only German participants appear to believe that powerful people can violate social norms without



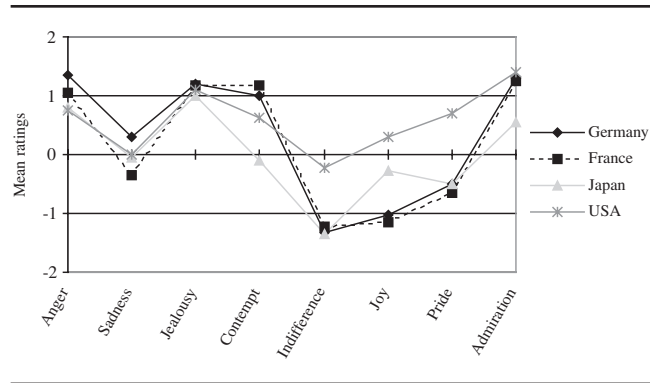
**Figure 1** Mean ratings for the items measuring the definition of power as a function of country.

NOTE: Ratings were made on 7-point scales (from  $-3 =$  strongly disagree to  $+3 =$  strongly agree).

sanction. German, and to some degree French, participants also tended to disagree with the idea that powerful people are obligated to uphold social norms. In all countries except France, and especially in the United States, power was associated with control over the self, that is, a belief in personal power. In Germany, and to some degree in the United States, power also was associated with control over others. Regarding the general emotion items, French, German, and Japanese participants indicated that power is not associated with free expression of emotion, a belief less clearly held in the United States. In all countries, the belief that power is associated with an influence over other people's emotions was found.

With regard to the emotions that powerful individuals are likely to elicit in others, the discriminant function analysis indicated that participants' perceptions varied significantly as a function of country, Wilks's Lambda = .62,  $p < .001$ . Subsequent univariate analyses revealed a significant main effect of country for all emotions, indifference  $F(3, 683) = 19.92$ ,  $p < .001$ ; joy  $F(3, 683) = 32.01$ ,  $p < .001$ ; anger  $F(3, 683) = 6.75$ ,  $p < .001$ ; sadness  $F(3, 683) = 4.83$ ,  $p = .002$ ; pride  $F(3, 683) = 23.8$ ,  $p < .001$ ; admiration  $F(3, 683) = 12.95$ ,  $p < .001$ ; and contempt  $F(3, 683) = 21.89$ ,  $p < .001$ , except for jealousy  $F(3, 683) = .63$ ,  $p = .597$ .

The mean responses to the eight emotion elicitation items, broken down by country, are presented in Figure 2. As can be seen, the emotions elicited by powerful others were highly similar in Germany and France. To summarize, high-power people in those two countries were believed to elicit largely negative emotions, such as anger, contempt, and jealousy, but also admiration, and to elicit low levels of positive emotions, such as joy and pride, as well as low levels of indifference. In the United States and Japan, powerful individuals were believed to



**Figure 2** Mean ratings for the items measuring the elicitation of emotions as a function of country.

NOTE: Ratings were made on 7-point scales (from  $-3 =$  strongly disagree to  $+3 =$  strongly agree).

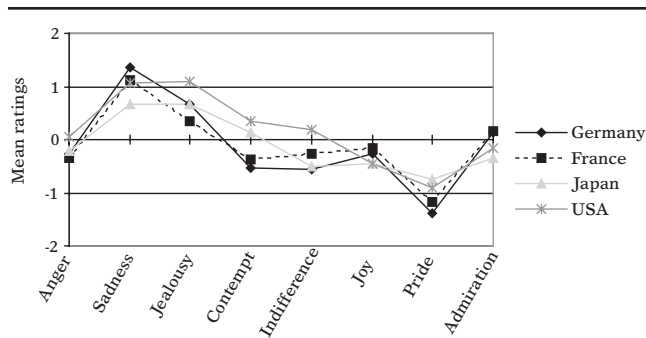
elicit lower levels of negative emotions, particularly lower levels of contempt, than in the European countries. In the United States, powerful people also were believed to elicit higher levels of joy and pride. In Japan, powerful individuals were believed to elicit more joy than in the European countries but less pride and admiration than in the United States.

Furthermore, a discriminant function analysis revealed reliable between-country differences in participants' perceptions of which emotions powerful individuals tend to conceal from others, Wilks's Lambda = .88,  $p < .001$ . The univariate analyses yielded a significant main effect for country for the following emotions: indifference,  $F(3, 682) = 6.26$ ,  $p < .001$ ; sadness,  $F(3, 682) = 5.6$ ,  $p = .001$ ; pride,  $F(3, 682) = 5.44$ ,  $p = .001$ ; admiration,  $F(3, 682) = 3.9$ ,  $p < .01$ ; jealousy,  $F(3, 682) = 4.85$ ,  $p < .01$ ; and contempt,  $F(3, 682) = 8.91$ ,  $p < .001$ , but not for the emotions joy,  $F(3, 682) = .99$ ,  $p = .395$ , and anger,  $F(3, 682) = 1.57$ ,  $p = .195$ .

Figure 3 shows the mean responses to the eight emotion inhibition items, broken down by country. Findings showed that beliefs by German and French participants about the emotions inhibited by powerful people were again very similar. In those countries, powerful people were believed to inhibit emotions usually associated with submission, such as sadness and jealousy, but less those usually associated with dominance, that is, contempt, indifference, and especially pride. Japan resembled the European countries to a large extent. The United States differed from the other three by the prevalence of the belief that powerful people inhibit negative emotions such as contempt and indifference.

#### Structure of Emotions Items

To summarize the underlying structure of beliefs about the elicitation of emotions (in others) and the



**Figure 3** Mean ratings for the items measuring the inhibition of emotions as a function of country.

NOTE: Ratings were made on 7-point scales (from  $-3 =$  strongly disagree to  $+3 =$  strongly agree).

inhibition of emotion (by the powerful person), the eight standardized emotion inhibition and elicitation items were subjected to separate factor analyses. This data reduction revealed that both inhibition and elicitation had three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Based on the scree plot and for reasons of theoretical interpretability, we retained a two-factor solution, which explained 47% of the variance. An orthogonal varimax rotation was applied to the factors. The rotated factor structures for the elicitation and inhibition of emotions are presented in Tables 1 and 2. For the elicitation of emotions, anger, sadness, jealousy, and contempt loaded on the first factor and joy, pride, and admiration loaded on the second factor. Indifference did not load highly enough on either factor to be included (.09 for Factor 1 and .19 for Factor 2). Factor 1 was labeled “negative emotions” and Factor 2 was labeled “positive emotions.”

For the inhibition of emotions, the four items that loaded on the first factor were all related to social dominance (indifference, anger, pride, and contempt), whereas the items that loaded on the second factor were emotions typically associated with social submission: sadness, admiration, and jealousy. Perhaps surprisingly, given past research, joy also loaded on the second factor. In fact, individuals who express joy are usually rated as high dominant (Hess, Blairy, & Kleck, 2000; Knutson, 1996). However, joy is characterized by smiling, which in turn has been considered a submissive display (e.g., Henley, 1977, 1995; Hess, Beaupré, & Cheung, 2002; Keltner, 1995; LaFrance, 1998). Given that in normal social interactions there is usually little demand for the inhibition of joy, a positively valued emotion, it may well be that participants focused more on the inhibition of smiling.

Factor scores were computed for the elicitation factors—negative emotions and positive emotions. They also were computed for the two inhibition factors—dominant

**TABLE 1: Factor Structure for Elicitation of Emotions in Others**

| Emotion      | Component   |             |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
|              | Negative    | Positive    |
| Indifference | .093        | .191        |
| Joy          | -.173       | <b>.765</b> |
| Anger        | <b>.794</b> | -.017       |
| Sadness      | <b>.690</b> | .032        |
| Pride        | -.112       | <b>.769</b> |
| Admiration   | .140        | <b>.637</b> |
| Jealousy     | <b>.667</b> | .065        |
| Contempt     | <b>.704</b> | .007        |

NOTE: Bold numbers indicate the most important number.

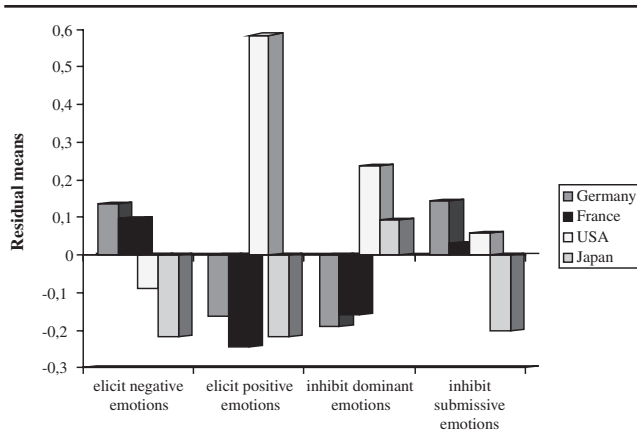
emotions and submissive emotions. These scores were used in further analyses.

#### *Power Definition, Country of Origin, and Beliefs About Emotional Experience*

In the next step, we examined whether participants with different definitions of power had the same beliefs about emotions that powerful people tend to inhibit in the self and to elicit in others and whether these power beliefs explained their expectations regarding emotional experience beyond the influence of the country of origin. To examine this question, we conducted general linear modeling procedures on the four extracted emotion factors. In each of these analyses, the extracted emotion factor was the dependent variable. Country was treated as an independent categorical variable with four levels. In addition, there were two continuous independent variables, one that reflected the difference between the respect norms and violate norms ratings (DifNorm; higher difference scores reflected the belief that high-power individuals have the freedom to violate social norms without retribution) and one that reflected the difference between the control over the self versus control over others ratings (DifControl; higher difference scores reflected the belief that high-power individuals have the ability to control others).

*Elicited negative emotions.* The general linear model analysis yielded significant effects for the two difference scores. DifNorm and DifControl were both significant predictors,  $F(1, 682) = 14.52, p < .001$ , and  $F(1, 682) = 25.85, p < .001$ , respectively. These findings indicate that when individuals define power as related to the violation of social norms (without sanction) and to the control over others, they also believe that powerful people elicit more negative emotions in others. In addition, there was a main effect for country,  $F(3, 682) = 4.15, p < .05$ . Inspection of the adjusted means revealed that this main effect was due mostly to the fact that Americans and Japanese participants believe that powerful people elicit less





**Figure 4** Residual means for the four emotional factors extracted as a function of country.

NOTE: Ratings were made on 7-point scales (from  $-3 =$  *strongly disagree* to  $+3 =$  *strongly agree*).

negative emotions in others than did French and German participants (see Figure 4). The relevant post hoc contrast ( $+1, +1, -1, -1$ , for Germany, France, United States, and Japan, respectively) was significant,  $F(3, 682) = 8.83, p < .01$ , and explained 71% of the variance explained by the main effect of country.

*Elicited positive emotions.* Analysis of the positive emotions believed to be elicited in others by powerful people revealed no significant effects for the two difference scores,  $F(1, 682) = 2.32, p = .13$ , and  $F(1, 682) = .02, p = .89$ , respectively, but a main effect of country,  $F(3, 682) = 31.02, p < .001$ . Specifically, the post hoc contrast ( $-1, -1, +3, -1$ , for Germany, France, United States, and Japan, respectively) comparing the United States and Germany/France/Japan was significant,  $F(3, 682) = 92.37, p < .001$ , indicating that powerful individuals in the United States were believed to elicit more positive emotions in others than in Germany, France, and Japan. This contrast explained 99% of the variance of the main effect of country.

*Inhibited dominant emotions.* The general linear model analysis revealed a significant effect of DifNorm,  $F(1, 681) = 5.26, p < .05$ . This finding indicates that when individuals define power as related to the violation of social norms, they also believe that powerful people inhibit dominant emotions to a lesser degree. In addition, there was a main effect for country,  $F(3, 681) = 7.32, p < .01$ . As Figure 4 shows, this main effect was due mostly to the fact that European participants believed that powerful people inhibit dominant emotions less than did American and Japanese participants. The relevant post hoc contrast ( $-1, -1, +1, +1$ , for Germany, France, United States, and Japan, respectively) was significant,  $F(3, 680) =$

**TABLE 2: Factor Structure for Inhibition of Emotions**

| Emotion      | Component   |             |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
|              | Dominant    | Submissive  |
| Indifference | <b>.539</b> | .099        |
| Joy          | .097        | <b>.497</b> |
| Anger        | <b>.685</b> | .197        |
| Sadness      | -.028       | <b>.804</b> |
| Pride        | <b>.646</b> | -.246       |
| Admiration   | -.043       | <b>.489</b> |
| Jealousy     | .403        | <b>.513</b> |
| Contempt     | <b>.765</b> | .046        |

NOTE: Bold numbers indicate the most important number.

19.91,  $p < .001$ , and explained 90% of the variance explained by the main effect of country.

*Inhibited submissive emotions.* Analysis of the submissive emotions believed to be inhibited by powerful people revealed the DifControl score as a significant predictor,  $F(1, 681) = 8.05, p < .01$ . That is, when individuals define power as related to control over others, expressive displays of submissive emotions are more often believed to be inhibited. In addition, there was a main effect of country,  $F(3, 681) = 4.43, p \leq .05$ . This effect can be explained by the observation that American and European participants believed that powerful people inhibit submissive emotions more than did Japanese participants. Specifically, the post hoc contrast ( $+1, +1, +1, -3$ , for Germany, France, United States, and Japan, respectively) comparing the United States/Germany/France and Japan was significant,  $F(3, 681) = 12.27, p < .001$ , and explained 95% of the variance explained by the main effect of country.

## DISCUSSION

The goals of the present study were to examine the concept of power in four countries, spanning three continents, and to relate both country of origin and the concept of power to beliefs about emotional experiences. We were particularly interested in relating the concept of power to beliefs about the emotions elicited in other people by powerful individuals and also the types of emotions that powerful people are believed to inhibit. An ancillary interest was in the underlying structure of elicited and inhibited emotions.

Although power has many psychological and behavioral components, we chose to examine the concept of power by exploring its roots in social (vs. personal) control as well as in social norm adherence. We hypothesized that these components of power were likely to vary across the countries examined, and we also posited that these aspects of power, due to their important social rele-

vance, would be believed to have relations to emotional experience.

The results revealed the expected relationship between country of origin and concepts of power. Generally, individuals in the two European countries, especially in Germany, tended to hold the belief that power is defined in terms of the liberty to violate social norms without sanction and to control the outcomes of other people. Of course, it should be noted that we did not assess individuals' acceptance or personal agreement with this definition but rather their perception of what it means to hold power in their own society. Individuals in the United States appeared to believe that power was defined in terms of the ability to control outcomes for the self and also to some degree that powerful people have more liberty to express their own emotions in general. Both findings are consistent with the results reported by Schwartz (1999).

With regard to the ancillary interest in the structure of elicited and inhibited emotions, factor analyses revealed that elicited emotions were best characterized as negative versus positive, whereas inhibited emotions conformed to a dominance-submissive structure.

Conceptions of power, as well as country of origin, predicted individuals' beliefs about elicited and inhibited emotions to different degrees. Results indicated that the beliefs that power confers the right to violate social norms, and that power is associated with control over others, are both related to the expectation that powerful people elicit negative emotions in others. In addition, above and beyond the finding just described, individuals in Germany and France, compared to individuals in the United States and Japan, tended to more strongly hold the belief that powerful individuals elicit negative emotions in others. Results further revealed that individuals in the United States believed that powerful individuals elicit positive emotions in others to a greater extent than individuals in Japan, Germany, and France.

A different pattern emerged for beliefs regarding the inhibition of emotions by powerful individuals. The inhibition of dominant emotions was negatively related to the belief that powerful people have the right to violate social norms, without sanction. In addition, individuals in the two European countries thought that powerful people inhibit dominant emotions to a lesser degree than did individuals in the United States and Japan. The belief that powerful people control the outcomes of others was negatively related to the belief that powerful people inhibit the expression of submissive emotions. The belief that powerful people inhibit submissive emotions also was stronger among individuals in the European countries than among individuals in Japan, and especially stronger than among individuals in the United States.

Taken together, the present results allow us to draw a number of conclusions. First, it appears that, as predicted, more authoritarian conceptions of power are associated with the elicitation of negative emotions in others and the inhibition of the expression of submissive emotions. In addition, we found that in many ways, the two European countries of interest to our sample, France and Germany, held these more authoritarian views more strongly.

The results also showed that differences between countries regarding beliefs about the emotional experiences of powerful people are explained by cultural factors that are not captured by the two dimensions of power examined here. Future research should examine additional components of power, which is clearly a multi-dimensional construct, or even a number of subconcepts. In addition, we examined beliefs about power, which are vulnerable to self-presentational pressures and to ideals beyond the reality in the four countries. Of interest, for example, although beliefs about emotional experiences associated with powerful people were almost identical in Germany and France, those two countries were not as similar in how they characterized power in their country as might be expected by a number of prior considerations. Given the pattern of findings, one interpretation of this latter difference is that individuals in Germany described a reality (a real notion of power), whereas those in France described an ideal standard (how they think power should be defined).

It is noteworthy that the United States and Japan were found to be quite similar in a number of their beliefs. Because the United States is an individualistic culture, whereas Japan is a collectivistic culture, these similarities might not have been anticipated. On the other hand, in intercultural studies on the antecedents of and reactions to emotions, Scherer and colleagues (Matsumoto, Kudoh, Scherer, & Wallbott, 1988; Wallbott & Scherer, 1986) found strong agreements among Japanese and U.S. American participants on a number of emotion dimensions.

Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the participants in all countries were university students, and thus relatively young. Because of recent economic changes, as well as media influences, one possibility is that the United States and Japan are becoming more similar with regard to their cultural beliefs (Schwartz, 1999). It also may be the case that the European participants spontaneously thought about political leaders when reporting their beliefs of power and its relation to emotional experience, whereas American and Japanese participants spontaneously thought about business or other corporate leaders.

Although the present study generates as many questions as it answers, it is worth repeating that the notion of

power is a multifaceted one that has many behavioral, cognitive, and emotional consequences. Assuming that the word *power* means the same thing in each country, and each culture and subculture, would be a serious mistake. A strength of the present study is that it allowed individuals to convey their definition of power with respect to a limited number of dimensions. Future studies need to examine the emotional experiences of individuals who actually hold positions of power in different countries and cultures, as well as the relationship between individuals' beliefs about what power confers behaviorally and the actual emotional experience and behavior of powerful people.

#### NOTE

1. These quotes were selected because they come from representatives of three of the countries studied, were uttered during the same historical period, and because they are interestingly related to the findings of the study. We could, of course, have selected any of a number of quotes about power from each of the countries. For instance, George W. Bush (the 43rd President of the United States) has attributed his use of power to guidance from God. In reply to Bush's assertions, we note that the 18th-century American theologian Jonathan Mayhew (1720-1789) once said that "rulers have no authority from God to do mischief." Unfortunately, we did not find a quote from a Japanese source.

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