



## **An Introduction to Social Psychology**

*The Cognitive Social Perspective*

### **Prof Haslam:**

My career as a social psychologist started with someone who was just interested in the questions that social psychology addresses. Issues of prejudice, stereotyping and group behaviour generally.

### **Prof Postmes:**

Initially what interested me was collective behaviour and the study of crowds. But the sort of theoretical backdrop to that, that I found really fascinating was social identity theory and soft categorisation theory.

### **Prof. Jetten:**

When I studied psychology I think I very quickly became very interested in interactions between people, how people are influenced by the environment they're in. And also small groups and people talking to each other, influencing each other, and really what makes people behave the way that they behave.

### **Prof Haslam:**

If you say to me what is social psychology? I'll say there's lots of different kinds of answers, lots of different people have different takes on that. For me as a social psychologist, the issue is how is 'the mind', how are our thoughts structured by society? So for me a definition of social psychology is the science of the socially structured mind. And then social cognition and the various traditions within that are about the interface between society and cognition.

How is what goes on in our heads are thought processes, how is that structured by what's kind of out there? And how does what's happening in our mind facilitate action in the world out there? And how does it change it?