The Nature of Social Influence in Groupthink:
Compliance and Internalization

Clark McCauley
Bryn Mawr College

Janis's (1982b) discussion of groupthink is examined to clarify the nature of social influence leading to poor decision making. Beginning from Janis's definition of groupthink as premature consensus seeking, the question raised here is whether compliance (public without private agreement) may be as important as internalization (private acceptance of group consensus) in this phenomenon. Analysis of the conditions hypothesized by Janis to be conducive to groupthink suggests that, contrary to some of Janis's discussion, these conditions conduce to compliance as well as to internalization. Consistent with this suggestion, a review of the historical examples cited by Janis indicates that compliance was an important part of poor decision making in at least two of these cases. The review also indicates that structural conditions, notably promotional leadership and group insulation, predict occurrence or nonoccurrence of groupthink in Janis's examples, but that neither cohesion nor any situational condition is predictive. Experimental studies of groupthink are reviewed in light of this analysis, and suggestions are offered for future research.

In his book *Victims of Groupthink*, Janis (1972) described a particular kind of group pathology that he believed contributed to such fiascos of U.S. foreign policy as the Bay of Pigs invasion and escalation of the Vietnam War. The essence of the pathology was described as a group pressure for consensus that interfered with full consideration of available alternatives and risks, and this pressure was hypothesized to be a direct function of the cohesion of the decision-making group. Janis's formulation has proved attractive to many who seek to understand high-stakes and high-pressure group decision making, and has been much cited in social science literature (see Moorhead, 1982) and social psychology textbooks (Myers, 1987; Raven & Rubin, 1983). Although the groupthink model has been criticized (Longley & Pruitt, 1980), revised and expanded (Janis, 1982b), and subjected to some experimental tests (Callaway, Marriott, & Esser, 1985; Flowers, 1977), there remains a basic question about the nature of social influence in groupthink. Is groupthink a phenomenon of internalized influence in which group members accept the correctness of the group decision, or is it also a phenomenon of compliance in which group members suppress their private doubts about the group decision? This question is pursued in the present article and leads to (a) clarification of Janis's (1982b) hypotheses about group cohesion and its effects on decision making that resolves the conflict between these hypotheses and research in group dynamics, (b) reexamination of Janis's (1982b) case histories of decision making with and without groupthink to show the importance of compliance effects and to evaluate Janis's (1982b) hypothesized antecedents of groupthink, and (c) review of laboratory experiments on groupthink to draw the implications of (a) and (b) for future research.

Internalization Versus Compliance in Groupthink Theory

Early research in group influence most often did not try to distinguish between private acceptance and compliance (Kiesler & Kiesler, 1969). But progress toward understanding how individuals conform to group standards soon required this distinction, and it has been represented in several different kinds of terminology by different theorists. Kiesler and Kiesler followed Festinger (1953) in the terminology of private acceptance versus compliance. Kelman (1958) similarly distinguished between internalization and compliance, with identification as a category of influence somewhere between the first two. Deutsch and Gerard (1955) referred to informational and normative social influence, respectively, in emphasizing that individuals depend on groups in two ways—for information about reality and for rewards and punishments mediated by the group. More recently, Moscovici (1980) has found it useful to distinguish conversion from compliance in analyzing the influence of minorities on majorities. In the discussion that follows I will usually use the terminology of internalization versus compliance.

In addition to the theoretical importance that has been attached to the distinction between compliance and internalization, there is obvious practical importance in separating influence that affects only public behavior from influence that can affect both public and private behavior. Aspiring social engineers will always prefer internalization to compliance because, as social control, the latter is less certain and entails costs of continuing surveillance, whereas the former can be self-policing. In short, the distinction between internalization and compliance is central for practical as well as theoretical concerns about group influence and should be useful in understanding the phenomenon of groupthink.

Definition of Groupthink

Janis (1972, 1982b) has offered several definitions of groupthink. The shortest and most explicit definition is *concurrence*

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Clark McCauley, Department of Psychology, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania 19010.

seeking (see Janis, 1982b, Figure 10-1). In text, the definition is amplified to mean "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action" (Janis, 1982b, p. 9). It is important to be clear that groupthink is not simply a group making a bad decision, that is, a decision that turns out badly. Groupthink is concurrence-seeking that interferes with adequate consideration of decision alternatives, which in turn leads to poor decisions (Janis, 1982b, Figure 10-1). But the linkage from groupthink to defective decision-making procedures to bad decisions is probabilistic rather than deterministic. Groupthink can sometimes produce a good decision, and high-quality decision-making procedures will occasionally produce a bad (unsuccessful) decision.

What is the nature of the concurrence-seeking that is identified as groupthink? Concurrence can be obtained from internalization of the group norm, from compliance with the norm, or from some combination of internalization and compliance. Although not always consistent on this point, Janis (1982b) appears to have defined groupthink as internalized group influence *that is to be distinguished from mere compliance:*

> In a cohesive group of policy-makers the danger is not that each individual will fail to reveal his strong objections to a proposal favored by the majority but that he will think the proposal is a good one, without attempting to carry out a critical scrutiny that could lead him to see that there are grounds for strong objections. When groupthink dominates, suppression of deviant thoughts takes the form of each person's deciding that his misgivings are not relevant, that the benefit of any doubt should be given to the group consensus. A member of a cohesive group will rarely be subjected to direct group pressures from the majority because he or she will rarely take a position that threatens the unity of the group. (p. 247)

Consider also Footnote 2 of Janis's (1982b) chapter 10 (which appears essentially the same in the 1982 revision as in the original 1972 book). The footnote is to explain his conclusion that

> For most groups, optimal functioning in decision-making tasks may prove to be at a moderate level of cohesiveness, avoiding the disadvantages of conformity out of fear of recrimination when cohesiveness is low and the disadvantages of strong concurrence-seeking tendencies when cohesiveness is high. (Janis, 1982b, p. 248)

The footnote (p. 299) presents a graph in which "deliberate conformity (out of fear or recriminations)" decreases as group cohesion increases, whereas groupthink increases as cohesion increases. This graph, in association with the text it amplifies, is clear in contrasting groupthink with deliberate conformity, that is, with compliance.

Thus, it appears that Janis accepted the common distinction between internalization and compliance. Furthermore, it appears that Janis meant to identify groupthink with internalized group influence. Still, there are aspects of Janis's (1982b) discussion that could be cited to the contrary (e.g., Figure 10-1 gives "Direct Pressure on Dissenters" and "Self-Appointed Mindguards" as "Symptoms of Groupthink"). Rather than trying to establish what Janis meant, the present article aims to clarify the nature of group influence in Janis's (1982b) case studies and in later research. In particular, the goal of the present article is to show that compliance effects, given little attention by Janis, can be important to groupthink phenomena. Toward this end, groupthink will here be defined as premature

consensus seeking that may involve internalization, compliance, or both.

Definition of Cohesion

Group cohesion is usually defined as the resultant of all forces that hold group members together (Deutsch & Krauss, 1965, pp. 55–56). For an individual, cohesion is experienced as the individual's overall attraction to the group. This definition is worth emphasizing because Janis (1982b), although he began with it, drifted from it in the course of some of his discussion. Janis (1982b) defined cohesiveness as

> 'members' positive valuation of the group and their motivation to continue to belong to it. When group cohesiveness is high, all the members express solidarity, mutual linking, and positive feelings about attending meetings and carrying out the routine tasks of the group. (p. 4)

The second part of this definition does more than amplify the first; it begins to define high cohesion as interpersonal warmth and acceptance, that is, as feelings of solidarity. Later on page 4, Janis referred to the "causes of cohesiveness—how and why group identification and feelings of solidarity develop." This tendency to see cohesion in terms of feelings of solidarity may have contributed to Janis's associating high cohesion with low compliance, as discussed later. Here it is worth emphasizing that high cohesion can come from extrinsic rewards and punishments mediated by the group and from prestige of group membership, as well as from the attractiveness of group members (Back, 1951). Acceptance by other group members can increase cohesiveness, presumably by increasing the attractiveness of other group members to the one accepted, but this is only one of the possible sources of high cohesion.

Janis (1982b) recognized the different sources of cohesion, but went on to suggest that they may have quantitatively different effects:

> Concurrence seeking tendencies probably are stronger when high cohesiveness is based primarily on the rewards of being in a pleasant "clubby" atmosphere or of gaining prestige from being a member of an elite group than when it is based primarily on the opportunity to function competently on work tasks with effective co-workers. (p. 247)

With the perspective of the preceding discussion, this can be interpreted as a suggestion that internalization of group influence is greater when cohesion is based on attractiveness of group members or prestige of membership than when based on task-related rewards. This suggestion has some precedent (Festinger, 1953) even if it has not generally been accepted (cf. Back, 1951). But it is also possible that internalization is greater when cohesion is based on attractiveness of members or prestige of membership *in addition to* task-related rewards. This alternative amounts to saying simply that groupthink is greater when cohesion is greater, recognizing that there are multiple and additive sources of cohesion, rather than assuming special power for some of these sources.

Cohesion in Relation to Internalization and Compliance

There is a theoretical problem created by the footnote and graph that were cited earlier in connection with Janis's defini-

tion of groupthink. The problem is what to make of Janis's (1982b) surprising claim that compliance decreases as cohesion increases. Neither theory (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Festinger, 1954) nor evidence (Kiesler & Kiesler, 1969) from research on group dynamics is consistent with this claim. Janis (1982b) himself quoted Cartwright for the conclusion that "The greater a group's cohesiveness the more power it has to bring about conformity to its norms and to gain acceptance of its goals and assignment to tasks and roles." (p. 4). Longley and Pruitt (1980) and Steiner (1982) have remarked on this problem and have come to the same conclusion: Cohesion, defined as attraction to the group, must be distinguished from uncertainty about approval from the group. Increased cohesion leads generally to more compliance and more acceptance, as indicated by Cartwright (1968), but an individual can be strongly attracted to a group and yet be so confident of group support and approval as to have no need to comply with group expectations. For example, Longley and Pruitt (1980) suggested that long-married couples may not show much compliance in meeting one another's expectations, although courting couples do. Another example is the child who will not obey its parents but who will be actively obliging for neighbors or even strangers. This behavior need not mean that the child is more attracted to strangers than to its parents; rather it may reflect the child's certainty of love and support at home, in contrast with uncertainty about approval outside the family. These examples suggest that even high cohesion, understood as attraction to the group, will not lead to compliance unless an individual experiences some uncertainty about group approval (cf. Hollander, 1958, on "idiosyncrasy credit").

To support his contention that cohesion increases internalization and decreases compliance, Janis (1982b, p. 246) cited a study by Dittes and Kelley (1956). He summarized this study as showing that group members who were led to believe they were rejected by other members showed more compliance to group norms but less private acceptance than group members who were led to believe they were highly approved. Actually, there were four levels of approval in the experiment: Group-members were led to believe they had been rated *above average, average, low,* or *very low* by others. And the results were not quite as Janis summarized them. The very-low-approval group members did indeed show lowest attraction to the group (low cohesion), lowest participation in discussion, and highest public conformity (compliance). Evidently, even low cohesion can produce high compliance if concern for avoiding disapproval is high (Festinger, 1953). But the very-low-approval group members did not show less private conformity (acceptance) than did group members with average approval; it was the average-approval group members who showed higher private acceptance than the other three conditions, which did not differ in acceptance. Because the average- and above-average-status group members reported equally high attraction to the group, the greater private acceptance of group norms in the average-approval condition cannot be attributed to greater cohesion. Rather it appears that desire for above-average approval or status can multiply the effect of cohesion on private acceptance.

The present analysis is aimed at clarifying groupthink theory and research, and, for this purpose, the preceding discussion can be briefly summarized. The study by Dittes and Kelley (1956) showed that variation in group approval can affect both internalization and compliance; it did not show that high cohesion produces internalization and low cohesion produces compliance. There is no reason to turn away from Cartwright's (1968) conclusion, cited earlier, that increased cohesion increases both compliance and internalization.

Conditions Encouraging Groupthink in Relation to Internalization and Compliance

Longley and Pruitt (1980) criticized Janis (1972) for his categorically negative evaluation of groupthink; they pointed out that concurrence seeking is only a problem if it occurs too soon, before critical evaluation of all important alternatives. Fast concurrence-seeking on trivial decisions is, after all, a useful strategy rather than a problem. Janis (1982b) agreed that his groupthink analysis only concerned important policy decisions, and emphasized that high cohesion is necessary but not sufficient to produce groupthink. A number of structural and situational conditions interact with high cohesion to determine whether groupthink will occur. Structural conditions (Janis, 1982b, Figure 10-1, and pp. 248–249) include promotional leadership (a leader who early in discussion reveals a favored policy alternative, especially in the absence of methodical procedures for generating and evaluating alternatives), homogeneity of group members in social background and ideology, and group insulation from outside information. Situational conditions (Figure 10-1; p. 255) include crisis or time stress in reacting to an external threat, a complex and difficult decision problem, and recent group failure in the poor outcome of prior decisions. Janis (1982b, pp. 254–259) saw these conditions as increasing group members' needs for concurrence in the creation of a social reality that can replace the uncertainty and threat of failure associated with responsibility for a difficult decision. The structural conditions make it more likely that a cohesive group will use premature consensus to resolve the stress of uncertainty about an important decision. And the situational conditions contribute to the degree of stress experienced. Thus, both structural and situational conditions conduce to internalization of a premature consensus.[1]

For the present analysis, it is important to note that these same conditions conduce to compliance as well. As discussed earlier, increased cohesion leads to increased compliance. Promotional leadership amounts to norm setting; lack of proce-

---

[1] Several other situational conditions conducive to groupthink (low self-esteem, moral dilemma) are suggested by Janis (1982b, Figure 10-1) as part of his effort to understand the predictors of groupthink in terms of groupmembers' needs to maintain self-esteem. Thus, Janis suggests that recent group failures, current decision difficulty, and lack of feasible alternatives (except ones that violate moral standards) all contribute to lower self-esteem. Whatever the value of this potential integration, there are two reasons to leave self-esteem considerations out of the present analysis. The first is that Janis's descriptions of policy-making groups rarely offer any indication of the self-esteem levels of individual group members. The second reason is that the value of the situational conditions as predictors of groupthink can be assessed whether these predictors work by way of impact on self-esteem or by some other mechanism. Similarly, the perception of moral dilemma by the decision-making group is difficult to ascertain in the examples described by Janis, and this condition, too, is left out of the present analysis.

dures for generating and evaluating alternatives amounts to lack of any norms running counter to the leader's norm setting; and homogeneity of group members is likely to limit individual differences in opinion within the group. The result of these conditions is thus a leader-determined norm that is relatively clear and unopposed, and it is known that clear and unopposed norms produce more compliance than do contested norms (Asch, 1956). Similarly, a difficult problem made more difficult by time pressure amounts to an ambiguous stimulus situation, and it is known that compliance with a majority norm increases with stimulus ambiguity (Asch, 1956).

It appears, then, that the structural and situational conditions that encourage groupthink are likely to encourage compliance as well. As noted earlier, Janis emphasized a social reality explanation of groupthink and gave little attention to compliance effects; his historical examples of groupthink correspondingly emphasized internalized consensus. But if the antecedents of internalization are also antecedents of compliance, the question raised is whether Janis's historical examples provide evidence of compliance as well as internalization. If so, is compliance associated with some antecedent conditions more than others?

Internalization and Compliance in Relation to Antecedent Conditions in Janis's Historical Examples

Janis (1972) offered four examples of groupthink leading to defective decision making (Bay of Pigs, North Korea, Pearl Harbor, and Vietnam) and two contrasting examples of decision making without groupthink leading to more successful decisions (Cuban missile crisis and Marshall Plan). In his revision, Janis (1982b) repeated the original examples and added another groupthink example (Watergate cover-up). The contrast between the Bay of Pigs example and the Cuban missile crisis is particularly informative because much the same group of decision makers produced very different kinds of discussion and decision. These two examples will be examined first—and the remaining examples in the order just mentioned—to seek evidence of compliance effects in groupthink and to begin noting the presence or absence of conditions hypothesized to lead to groupthink.

The Bay of Pigs: Prototype of Groupthink

The salient fact in this example is that in the key meetings that were held before President Kennedy decided to go ahead with an invasion of Castro's Cuba by anti-Castro exiles, there was no serious opposition from the President's closest advisors to the CIA's plan. In addition to Allen Dulles and Richard Bissell from the CIA, these advisors included cabinet members Dean Rusk, Robert McNamara, and Robert Kennedy, White House staff members McGeorge Bundy and Arthur Schlesinger, and the top military officers of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The diversity and experience of this group was impressive. But when the President asked his advisors to vote for or against the CIA plan, no one voted against it. What was the nature of this conformity? Was it compliance, internalization, or some amalgam of both? The distinction is not easy to make even in the laboratory (cf. Deutsch & Gerard, 1955), but some indications are available from the sources available.

One aspect of the Bay of Pigs decision is clearcut: There is no doubt about the origin of the group norm in favor of invasion. President Kennedy had promised to aid anti-Castro rebels during his campaign for the presidency (Janis, 1982b, p. 284) and did not want to look softer on communism than the Republican administration from which he inherited the invasion plan (p. 30). The new President's bias for the CIA's plan was evident in the fact that he consistently allowed CIA representatives "to refute immediately each tentative doubt" (p. 42) that might be expressed, and himself gave the example of questioning only details of execution rather than the basic conception. Senator Fulbright was invited to express his objections to an invasion to the advisory group, but the President cut off any discussion of Fulbright's arguments by calling for a vote on the plan—a vote that at least some members of the group felt was a call for closing ranks behind the president against Fulbright's opposition (p. 281). Janis offered President Kennedy's role in chairing his advisory committee as a prime example of promotional leadership, but this recognition does not advance our inquiry very far because, as noted earlier, promotional leadership can encourage both compliance and internalization.

Indication of compliance can be found in the four explanations of the Bay of Pigs decision that Janis (1982b) termed collectively "the official explanation" (p. 30). These included political calculations, new administration, secrecy, and threats to personal reputation and status. Two of these, new administration and threats to reputation, are explanations of compliance. In discussing the new-administration explanation, Janis noted that

> The new cabinet members and the White House staff had high esprit de corps but had not reached the point where they could talk frankly with each other without constant concern about protocol and deferential soft-pedaling of criticism. (p. 31)

And according to the threats-to-reputation explanation,

> Government policymakers, like most executives in other organizations, hesitate to object to a policy if they think their forthright stand might damage their personal status and political effectiveness. (p. 32)

The example given is that

> Schlesinger admits that he hesitated to bring up his objections while attending the White House meetings for fear that others would regard it as presumptuous for him, a college professor, to take issue with august heads of major government institutions. (p. 32)

Both explanations show self-censorship of public expression of doubts, that is, compliance, rather than private acceptance.

Although Janis (1982b, p. 34; p. 279) accepted all four parts of the official explanation, he did not regard them as sufficient. He argued that the official explanations may apply to peripheral and lower status members of the advisory group, but cannot explain how people the caliber of Robert Kennedy, Dean Rusk, Robert McNamara, and McGeorge Bundy could have been silenced if they entertained real doubts about the plan. Of course, judgments about the best and the brightest tend to be subjective and difficult to refute, but there is evidence that some of the President's closest advisors had not internalized the group norm. Already mentioned is the fact that Schlesinger had doubts about the invasion, doubts that were represented in a memorandum he gave to the President and to Secretary of State

Rusk (Janis, 1982, p. 39). Furthermore, Rusk did not argue against Schlesinger's objections when the two spoke in private; instead, Rusk expressed his own doubts about the invasion plan and indicated his preference for launching the invasion from Guantanamo, the U.S. naval base in Cuba (p. 38).

Nor is there any difficulty in finding the pressure Schlesinger and Rusk complied with. Robert Kennedy took Schlesinger aside at a party and told him that the President had made up his mind and that it was time for his friends to support him. Rusk did not express his doubts in the key meeting in which the advisors voted on the plan, preferring instead to "close ranks with the President" (Wyden, 1979, p. 148, as cited by Janis, 1982b, p. 280). If Rusk had internalized the group norm, he would no longer have had private doubts to stifle. Rather, it is compliance that seems to be at issue, especially when Rusk's experience is contrasted with that of Chester Bowles. Assistant Secretary of State Bowles did try to argue against invasion; his opposition was leaked to the press, and he was fired after the invasion went sour. Rusk continued as Secretary of State for Kennedy and stayed on for the next (Johnson) administration as well.

The conclusion from this review of the Bay of Pigs decision is that compliance with a group norm promulgated by a powerful and attractive group leader—President Kennedy—was certainly part of the decision-making pathology. Two of Kennedy's five closest advisors had doubts, but suppressed them.

Before examining the remainder of Janis's (1982b) examples, it is necessary to be clear about what counts as evidence of compliance. Doubts about whether a decision will bring about a desired result are not sufficient evidence of compliance; an individual can entertain such doubts and yet accept the decision as the best available. But doubt about whether the decision is right, if suppressed, is evidence of compliance. Doubt about whether the decision is right is precisely what, in theory, is resolved by the social reality of consensus. There is, of course, the possibility that face-saving could lead an individual to falsely report having had reservations about a policy that failed badly. To minimize this possibility, evidence that an individual did not agree with the group *at the time of decision making* is required in assessing compliance (e.g., Rusk and Schlesinger corroborating their doubts about the invasion decision). Requiring contemporary evidence of disagreement with the group norm leads to a conservative assessment of compliance. For example, there is no evidence of compliance for three of Kennedy's closest advisors, but the absence of contemporary evidence that they disagreed with the invasion is not definite evidence that they privately accepted it. This review of Janis's (1982b) examples is conservative, then, in accepting the likelihood of internalized consensus whenever—and for whomever—there is no evidence of compliance.

The Cuban Missile Crisis: Prototype of Groupthink Avoided

The importance of the Cuban missile crisis for understanding groupthink is that a different kind of discussion and decision making occurred, with almost the same participants as produced the Bay of Pigs decision. The group discussing what to do about Soviet missiles in Cuba included the two Kennedys, Bundy, Rusk, and McNamara—the key people from the discussions of the Bay of Pigs invasion only 18 months before. The discussions about the missile crisis, however, were full of heated arguments, changes of opinion, importation of outside opinions and information, and were generally chaotic and uncomfortable, whereas the Bay of Pigs discussions had been relatively smooth and unchallenging (Janis, 1982b, chap. 6). The result was a plan to blockade Cuba that, in the event, had at least the success of avoiding World War III. The common participants and a similar level of crisis in the same trouble spot (Cuba) provide an almost experimental control in the comparison between the Bay of Pigs deliberations and the deliberations during the missile crisis. This comparison therefore offers a rich opportunity for understanding when groupthink will occur and when it will not.

Janis (1982b, chap. 6) points to several elements of group structure to explain how groupthink was avoided in the missile crisis. President Kennedy first decided that some kind of coercive action was required to eliminate the missile threat. But to implement this decision, he asked his advisors for consideration of all possible forms of coercion, deliberately absented himself from some of the earlier meetings of his advisors, and appointed Robert Kennedy as devil's advocate to question and attack every proposal offered. In other words, President Kennedy avoided promoting a particular course of action and instead promoted a procedural norm of open questioning and criticism. The result was strain, lost sleep, impatience, and anger as the group argued on and on (Janis, 1982b, p. 147), until finally a majority agreed to recommend a naval blockade of Cuba. Disagreements in the group continued until the time of the decision and afterward, and the President recognized the lack of consensus in deciding for the blockade: "Whichever plan I choose, the ones whose plans are not taken are the lucky ones—they'll be able to say 'I told you so' in a week or two. But this one seems the least objectionable" (as cited in Janis, 1982b, p. 149). For present purposes, this lack of consensus indicates a weak group norm that probably involved internalization for the majority preferring the blockade. Because a minority were able to maintain preferences other than the blockade, there is no reason to suspect compliance in the opinions of those favoring the blockade.

The Cuban Missile Crisis: Groupthink in a Prior Decision

The above treatment follows Janis's (1982b) definition of the group decision of interest in the missile crisis, the decision in favor of blockade. This may be thought of as Missile Crisis Decision B, however, because it followed and depended on a group norm in favor of coercive response to the missiles and in favor of no-holds-barred debate about the form of response. This prior group norm is recognized by Janis (1982b, p. 137) but is worth more explicit examination here as Missile Crisis Decision A.

As noted earlier, President Kennedy decided on a coercive response to the missiles before the first meeting of his advisory committee. When the committee met, both McNamara and Bundy began by arguing against the necessity of coercive response, but by the end of the first meeting, both had been persuaded by other members of the group to drop their objections (Janis, 1982b, pp. 143–144). Their later behavior in the group suggests that McNamara and Bundy internalized the group

norm (Bundy became an advocate of an air strike). President Kennedy was also the source of the procedural norm of broad search for options and of open argument and criticism of these options. A visitor to the group, Dean Acheson, later described the Executive Committee sessions as "repetitive, leaderless, and a waste of time" (as cited in Janis, 1982b, p. 145), but the regular group members do not seem to have raised any such doubts about the value of their adversarial procedure. Indeed, the regular group members, looking back, appear to have believed that the strain of the adversarial procedure was crucial in producing the detailed recommendations and contingency planning that made the blockade successful (pp. 145–147), although not one participant seems to have imported the new procedure back to his own bureaucracy at the Department of State, for instance, or the Department of Defense. It appears, then, that President Kennedy's advisory group unanimously internalized both the need for coercive response and the adversarial procedure for determining that response. In other words, Missile Crisis A is a clear example of groupthink: a consensus arrived at quickly—during the first meeting—with little attention to alternatives. One may surmise that a less successful outcome for the blockade decision would have led Janis to focus on the groupthink in Crisis A rather than on the absence of groupthink in Crisis B.

Missile Crisis Decisions A and B now provide a very powerful comparison. Note that the situational conditions conducive to groupthink—the pressure of time constraints in reacting to an external threat, a difficult decision, and previous group failure (Bay of Pigs)—are constant for this comparison. Among the structural conditions favoring groupthink, the homogeneity (heterogeneity in this case) of group members is also constant for Decisions A and B. Two structural conditions were different: Promotional leadership and insulation from outside information were prominently present for Decision A and absent from Decision B. Indeed, Janis (1982b) saw the avoidance of promotional leadership and the seeking of outside information and opinion as explaining the absence of groupthink in the missile crisis. In the present analysis, the missile crisis provides examples of both groupthink and the avoidance of groupthink, but the importance of promotional leadership and outside information is even clearer. The very same group—President Kennedy and his advisors—dealing with two aspects of the same crisis problem—Missile Crisis A and B—did and did not suffer from groupthink, depending on the presence or absence of promotional leadership and insulation from outside information.

North Korea: Groupthink Without Evidence of Compliance

At the time of the decision to invade North Korea, the decision-making group was composed of President Truman and his closest advisors. The occurrence of groupthink is suggested by the fact that none of the members of this group anticipated major intervention by the Chinese. The group was unanimous in supporting the decision authorizing General MacArthur to proceed as far as the Chinese border.

As with the Bay of Pigs decision, the decision to invade North Korea was associated with structural conditions that are conducive to both internalization and compliance. Most notably, Janis (1982b, p. 67) found evidence of promotional leadership. In the discussions that led to the United States entering the Ko-

rean War, Truman early took the view that world communism in general and the Russians in particular were testing U.S. resolve: "I told my advisers that . . . the Reds were probing for weakness in our armor; we had to meet their thrust without getting embroiled in the world-wide war" (as cited in Janis, 1982b, p. 68).

There is no indication, however, that any of Truman's advisors harbored the kind of doubts that two of Kennedy's advisors had about the Bay of Pigs invasion. That is, there is no indication that the consensus to invade North Korea was tainted with compliance. Rather, it seems clear that Truman's advisors privately accepted the course they agreed to in discussions. As Janis (1982b, p. 70) pointed out, none of the advisors later suggested that he had had the wisdom of doubting the decision before the shock of the Chinese attack. Various historians who have examined the decision for escalation have agreed that "Truman's advisory group genuinely believed that there were solid grounds for recommending the escalation decision" (Janis, 1982b, p. 70). Thus, although promotional leadership set the stage for both compliance and internalization, the unanimous support for invading North Korea appears to have been entirely a case of internalized consensus.

Pearl Harbor: Groupthink Without Evidence of Compliance

The decision-making group in this case was composed of Admiral Kimmel, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, and the naval officers advising him at his headquarters in Hawaii. Groupthink is suggested by the fact that the group ignored numerous warnings about an imminent Japanese attack in order to maintain a unanimous consensus that, whatever the Japanese might do, they would not attack the U.S. fleet in its anchorage at Pearl Harbor. The policy accepted was to emphasize regular training rather than reconnaissance and preparation for possible attack.

This is a particularly interesting case because of the relative absence of the conditions conducive to groupthink. There is no indication of promotional leadership for the consensus policy; indeed, Janis (1982b, p. 79) described Kimmel expressing some anxiety about the safety of the fleet on the very afternoon before the attack. He was reassured by his staff with a recitation of the assumptions that had led to the training-as-usual policy. Nor was the group insulated from outside information. Admiral Kimmel and his staff knew about Japanese preparations for war from cryptographers who had broken the Japanese codes and ciphers; they received explicit warnings of war with Japan in dispatches from Washington. None of the situational conditions conducive to groupthink was present. There was no sense of crisis conditions or stress; in fact, the lack of such a sense was the problem. Admiral Kimmel and his staff had no recent occasion of failure or low self-esteem and were not conscious of facing a complex problem with normally ambiguous alternatives. Of all the conditions Janis (1982b) described as conducive to groupthink, the only ones present were that the admiral and his advisors formed a homogenous and highly cohesive group facing an external threat (p. 77).

*Escalation of the Vietnam War: Groupthink
With Compliance*

The policy group during the period of major escalation of the war in Vietnam was composed of President Johnson and a small group of advisors, which, at various times, included Bundy, Rusk, and McNamara from the preceding Kennedy administration. Although some men left the group and others joined, the departures and additions took place one at a time in a way that preserved the continuity and identity of the group. Groupthink is suggested by the fact that this policy group supported military victory as the goal of U.S. policy in Vietnam, despite mounting evidence that military victory was not forthcoming.

Although he admitted that better data were needed about the nature of deliberations in Johnson's policy group, Janis (1982b, pp. 114–117) did see evidence that conformity pressures in the group were strong and overt. President Johnson took dissent from his war policy as personal disloyalty.

> We learn from Thomson that during the Johnson administration everyone in the hierarchy, including every senior official, was subjected to conformity pressures, which took the form of making those who openly questioned the escalation policy the butt of an ominous epithet: "I am afraid he's losing his effectiveness." This "effectiveness trap"—the threat of being branded a "has been" and losing access to the seats of power—inclines its victims to suppress or tone down their criticisms. (Janis, 1982b, p. 115)

This is a clear case of pressure for compliance.

The crucial evidence of compliance in Vietnam decision making is the number of advisors who left the group under circumstances that indicate that their departure was occasioned by failure to accept the group norm in favor of escalation. George Ball, Bill Moyers, McGeorge Bundy, and Robert McNamara all left the policy group under such circumstances (Janis, 1982b, p. 115). The departing advisors must have failed to internalize the group norm, and their departure strongly indicates that some of their earlier agreement was only compliance with a group norm strongly promoted by a powerful President. Indeed, the evidence for compliance in this case is so strong that it raises the question of whether there was any internalization going on at all. Janis (1982b) recognized the problem:

> The decisions may have largely reflected the influence of just one man, the President himself. It seems improbable, however, that his advisors exerted no real influence over him and that when they said they agreed to his policy of escalation they secretly disagreed. Men of the caliber of McNamara, Rusk, Rostow, and Bundy are not likely to be mere sycophants, like those who surround a dictator. (p. 130)

This argument once again hangs on intuitions about the best and brightest, and not everyone is confident that the United States is safe from an imperial presidency. Furthermore, one need not believe Johnson to have been impervious to influence from his advisors as a group to believe that he was capable of making each singly feel the power of the "effectiveness trap." In short, Janis did not provide clear evidence of internalized group influence, although he did provide clear evidence of compliance pressures and promotional leadership.

*The Watergate Cover-Up: Groupthink Without Evidence
of Compliance Until Dean Faced Prosecution*

The policy group included President Nixon and his close advisors, most particularly, H. R. Haldeman, John Erlichman, and John Dean. The suggestion of groupthink here is that the group remained unanimous in supporting the cover-up effort over a period of months during which evidence accumulated that too many people knew too much for the cover-up to succeed.

Janis (1982b, chap. 9) argued that all the structural and situational conditions conducive to groupthink were present in Nixon's advisory group. Promotional leadership from Nixon began with approval of his subordinates' first emergency steps toward a cover-up: "In the transcripts Nixon time and again let everyone in the group know which policy he favored, and he did not encourage open inquiry" (Janis, 1982b, p. 235). Janis showed that the group, in its need for secrecy, was insulated from outside opinion. He noted as well the homogeneity of political background and ideology in the group (p. 239). Nor is there any doubt that the group operated under considerable stress of time pressure in facing a complex problem (especially as the cover-up began to unravel) fraught with moral ambiguity.

Given the number and strength of conditions favoring groupthink, it should be no surprise to find that the Nixon team was without dissent in supporting the cover-up. From June 1972 until March 1973, when Dean began to be more worried about his own future than about the President's, the group members all seem to have been privately, as well as publicly, convinced of the wisdom of the cover-up.

The Making of the Marshall Plan: Groupthink Avoided

Secretary of State Marshall gave George Kennan 2 weeks (later extended to 3 weeks) to produce a broad outline of plans to extend economic aid to European nations suffering poverty and disorganization in the aftermath of World War II. The outcome of this group's deliberations was a set of policy proposals that, after some further considerations and refinements, became the core of the successful program of foreign aid that came to be called the Marshall Plan.

Kennan chose five men to work with him on what became known as the Policy Planning Staff, including an economist, an Army colonel, a Foreign Service officer, and two State Department officials. The diverse backgrounds of the group members were put to use in discussions intense enough to produce real intellectual agony for the participants, as proposals were criticized and debated (Janis, 1982b, p. 166). Kennan appears to have been the source and encouragement of the open style of discussion, and his own proposals were heavily criticized in the group.

It is worth noting that this was a case of a leader promoting favored alternatives without recourse to the norm structure that Janis (1982b) has called promotional leadership, that is, leadership without using the power of the leadership position to exempt some assumptions from criticism and debate. Whereas President Kennedy avoided the norm structure of promotional leadership for Missile Crisis B by offering no suggestions to his advisors and absenting himself from some of their discussions, Kennan avoided promotional leadership even as he offered al-

Table 1

Presence or Absence of Compliance and Conditions Conducive to Groupthink for Eight Policy-Making Decisions

Condition	Bay of Pigs	North Korea	Pearl Harbor	Vietnam	Watergate	Missile crisis A	Missile crisis B	Marshall Plan
Compliance	Yes (38)	No (70)	No (87)	Yes (115)	No	No	No (139)	No (166)
High cohesion	Yes (35)	Yes (49)	Yes (77)	Yes (99)	Yes (233)	Yes (147)	Yes (147)	Yes (169)
Group insulation	Yes (32)	Yes (60)	No (73-5)	No (106)	Yes (234)	Yes (144)	No (141)	No (162)
Promotional leadership	Yes (42)	Yes (67)	No (79)	Yes (115)	Yes (235)	Yes (143)	No (141)	No (166)
Group homogeneity (background & ideology)	No (16)	Yes (49)	Yes (77)	No (99)	Yes (239)	No (16)	No (16)	No (162)
Crisis (time pressure)	No (251)	No (63)	No (281)	Yes (108)	Yes (239)	Yes (134)	Yes (134)	Yes (162)
External threat	Yes (31)	Yes (68)	Yes (80)	Yes (251)	Yes (240)	Yes (251)	Yes (251)	Yes (161)
Perceived difficult decision	Yes (31)	No (55)	No (80)	Yes (122)	Yes (240)	No	Yes (139)	Yes (162)
Recent group failure	No (35)	No	No	Yes (105)	Yes (221)	Yes (139)	Yes (139)	No

Note. The eight examples are taken from Janis (1982b), except that the missile crisis example is here divided into Missile Crisis A and B. From left to right, the 1st six are examples of groupthink; Missile Crisis B and the Marshall Plan are examples of groupthink avoided. A page number is given in parentheses for each judgment that can be supported by the citation of a specific page from Janis (1982b). Yes = condition present; no = condition absent.

ternatives and participated fully in the discussion. Kennan's accomplishment is important in making clear that the absence of promotional leadership, as a structural condition working against groupthink, is not the absence of leadership but rather a positive accomplishment of leadership in encouraging no-holds-barred criticism and debate in group discussion. The proposals that Kennan's group came up with seem to have been fully accepted by all members of the group; that is, the group norm regarding policy was evidently internalized by all group members. There was no hint of private doubts about the policy recommendations; in other words, there was no hint of compliance from any members of Kennan's group.

Summary of Antecedent Conditions as Predictors of Groupthink and Compliance in Groupthink

The preceding review of examples of policy-making groups at work is summarized in Table 1. Each of the seven examples offered by Janis is represented, and the distinction between Missile Crisis Decisions A and B brings the total of examples to eight. From left to right in Table 1, the first six are examples of groupthink and the last two are groupthink avoided.

The first row of Table 1 summarizes the conclusions of the previous discussion concerning the presence or absence of compliance in conformity to a group norm. For each of the eight examples, a *yes* in the table corresponds to a judgment that there was compliance by one or more groupmembers and a *no* corresponds to a judgment that there was not. Compliance was present in two of the six groupthink examples that Janis (1982b) cited—Bay of Pigs and Vietnam—and was not present in the example of groupthink added in this review—Missile Crisis A. The four groupthink examples without evidence of compliance are presumed to involve only internalized consensus, and internalization is also presumed for some individuals in the two groups with evidence of compliance. In addition to *yes* or *no* in regard to compliance, Table 1 presents in parentheses the page number or numbers in Janis's (1982b) book where the text explicitly justifies the judgment. Such textual references are not always possible, as for instance for the judgment for Mis-

sile Crisis A that there was no compliance in the group consensus for coercive response and adversarial debate.

The remainder of Table 1 uses the same conventions to represent the presence or absence of eight hypothesized antecedents of groupthink: cohesion, three structural conditions (group insulation, promotional leadership, and group homogeneity), and four situational conditions (time pressure, external threat, perceived difficult decision, and recent group failures).

A few words of explanation are necessary about some of the judgments represented in Table 1. Judgments about group homogeneity are difficult because of the lack of clear criteria for what constitutes "common background and ideology" (Janis, 1982b, Table 10-1). The filtering of individuals into positions of power in the United States guarantees that high-level policy groups will look very homogeneous from a Third World perspective and perhaps even from a European perspective. But Janis implied some differentiation within this kind of broad similarity, and it is relatively easy, for example, to determine that the group of naval officers involved in the Pearl Harbor example were more homogeneous than were the group of political, military, and academic men involved in the Bay of Pigs and missile crisis examples.

Similarly, clarification is required concerning the judgment of presence or absence of a difficult decision. The naval officers at Pearl Harbor did not understand that they were facing a difficult decision in estimating whether Japan would attack Pearl Harbor. In retrospect, one can see that they were. Janis's (1982b, p. 255) discussion of decision difficulty as conducive to groupthink points to the importance of individual uncertainty about a decision perceived as complex and difficult. Thus, Table 1 offers judgments about the presence or absence of *perceived* difficulty in the decision problem, and the Pearl Harbor example gets a *no* for this condition.

The second row of Table 1 shows that the decision-making group was highly cohesive for every example. This result probably reflects the attractiveness of a group at the pinnacle of national power to group members who have devoted their lives to seeking, exercising, or studying political and military power.

But for purposes of predicting the occurence of groupthink in high-level decision-making groups, cohesiveness is not helpful. Janis (1982b) may be correct that high cohesion is necessary but not sufficient for groupthink, but this prediction was not tested in his examples because attraction to the group was high in all of these high-status groups.

With regard to the structural conditions hypothesized to be conducive to groupthink, Table 1 has a more favorable implication. Group insulation, promotional leadership, and group homogeneity do tend to predict groupthink (phi coefficients for presence or absence of condition vs. groupthink or not are .58, .76, and .45, respectively). Also noteworthy is the fact that the only two examples in which all three structural conditions are absent are the two (Missile Crisis B and Marshall Plan) in which groupthink is absent and a good decision outcome was obtained. These two examples are also the only two in which the group discussion was carried out under the procedural norm of no-holds-barred criticism and debate—a procedure that in both examples was experienced by the group members as personally stressful. As noted earlier, the group norm supporting this kind of debate is a positive accomplishment of strong leadership. The personal pain involved is testimony to the gradient to be overcome by the leader of a cohesive group.

Earlier the question was raised whether compliance effects in groupthink—if any were found—might be associated more with some antecedent conditions than with others. For situational conditions, as discussed later, there is no such indication. But there is a tantalizing hint that absence of one of the structural conditions, group homogeneity, is associated with compliance. Both groupthink examples with evidence of compliance (Bay of Pigs and Vietnam) involved relatively heterogeneous decision-making groups, whereas only one of the four groupthink examples without evidence of compliance involved a heterogeneous group (Missile Crisis A).

In this review, I have tried to distinguish groupthink from compliance in Janis's (1982b) examples of groupthink, but the important lesson of Table 1 is that both contribute to bad policy. Group insulation, promotional leadership, and group homogeneity contribute to both internalization and compliance with a premature consensus, as was suggested earlier in the theoretical analysis based on the group dynamics literature. All three are thus useful predictors of bad policy-making. But the predictor of successful policy is the wide-open debate that goes beyond the absence of the predictors of groupthink and compliance (cf. Courtright, 1978). Janis (1982b, pp. 262–271) recognized the force of this distinction in his prescriptions for avoiding groupthink; these have more to do with establishing the norm of critical debate than simply avoiding the structural conditions conducive to groupthink.

In considering the four situational conditions conducive to groupthink, Table 1 indicates that one of these conditions, external threat, is present for all eight examples. Like cohesion as a structural condition, external threat may be necessary but not sufficient for groupthink, but this prediction is not tested in the examples cited.

The other situational conditions hypothesized to be conducive to groupthink—time pressure, perceived difficult decision, and recent group failures—do little to predict presence or absence of groupthink in Table 1 (phi coefficients = .45, .00, and −.45, respectively). Note that recent group failure was judged

present for the Vietnam and Watergate examples because the group consensus in these two cases persevered through months of failures of earlier group decisions. By comparison with the pattern for structural conditions, the pattern for situational conditions suggests that the latter are much less useful as predictors of groupthink, and perhaps not useful at all. To summarize what Table 1 indicates about conditions conducive to groupthink, three classes of results can be distinguished. First, high cohesion and external threat appear for all of the policy-making examples and, thus, do not predict any of the observed variation in decision making—although they may yet be conditions necessary for groupthink. Second, the structural conditions of group insulation, promotional leadership, and group homogeneity tend to be correlated with poor decision making, sometimes as the occasion of groupthink and sometimes as the occasion of compliance. There is some indication that compliance in groupthink is associated with group heterogeneity. Third, the situational conditions of time pressure, perceived difficulty of decision, and recent group failures do not predict groupthink or poor decision outcome, and their status as conditions favoring groupthink is in doubt.

It is important to note a major limitation of the analysis just summarized: The analysis depends on Janis's (1982b) description of the policy group interactions rather than on first-hand study of the historical materials represented by Janis. The fact that such an analysis of Janis's descriptions is even possible is a tribute to the breadth and eclecticism of his research. Janis did select and represent these examples, however, and a study of the original historical materials might lead to somewhat different judgments and perhaps even to a substantially different pattern of judgments in Table 1. Despite this limitation, the present review does indicate the importance of compliance in two of Janis's (1982b) five cases of groupthink and does go beyond his discussion in assessing the extent to which his examples support his hypotheses about the conditions favoring groupthink.

Implications for Groupthink Research

As Moorhead (1982) pointed out, there has been surprisingly little research aimed at testing Janis's hypotheses about the groupthink phenomenon. In a content analysis of the public statements of decision makers involved in Janis's (1982b) case studies, Tetlock (1979) found more simplistic perceptions and more positive own-group references for the groupthink cases. As Tetlock noted, however, this kind of correlational study of archival records has ecological validity but some uncertainty of interpretation. When more warlike decisions are associated with more simplistic and more evaluative public statements, the direction of causality cannot be safely assumed. Thus, research on groupthink has more often turned to manipulation of relevant variables in simulation experiments, despite the acknowledged loss of external validity in the laboratory. Janis (1982a) has himself suggested that laboratory experiments can provide useful evidence about the group dynamics contributing to groupthink, although he has also emphasized the potential of more naturalistic studies that might be conducted in organizational settings (see Hensley & Griffin, 1986; Manz & Sims, 1982; Moorhead & Montanari, 1986 for recent case and correlational studies of groupthink). In the last section of the present article, I will examine the implications of the preceding analysis

for understanding and improving experimental studies of groupthink.

Experimental studies of groupthink have been almost exclusively concerned with two of the conditions hypothesized to be conducive to groupthink: high cohesion and promotional leadership. Three experiments have manipulated cohesion and looked for evidence of defective decision making. Flowers (1977) varied cohesion by comparing groups of acquaintances with groups of strangers and found no effects on decision making. Courtright (1978) varied cohesion by giving some groups more time together in the laboratory and telling them they were particularly compatible personalities (the latter a cohesion manipulation following Back, 1951). There was no simple effect of cohesion, although high-cohesion groups instructed to emphasize cooperation with fewer ideas (groupthink condition) showed less disagreement in discussion than did high-cohesion groups instructed to emphasize competition with more ideas. Leana (1985) compared groups having 15 weeks of experience working together on class projects with ad hoc groups of strangers and found that members of the more cohesive groups brought out more of the information originally divided among individual group members—the opposite of the groupthink prediction.

In light of Janis's (1982b) emphasis on the importance of cohesion as conducive to groupthink and bad decision making, the results of manipulating cohesion are relatively weak and uncertain. The previous analysis of groupthink theory suggests why cohesion effects have not been more powerful and clearcut: Groupthink may depend on uncertainty about group approval as well as on attraction to the group. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the only one of these studies that found a simple effect of cohesion (better information exchange—Leana, 1985) is the only one in which the high-cohesion groups had had the kind of history (15 weeks) that might produce certainty of group acceptance as well as attraction to the group. Whatever the value of this interpretation, it seems clear that greater care in distinguishing attraction to the group from certainty about group acceptance should increase the theoretical yield of groupthink research.

Experiments manipulating the structural condition of promotional leadership have had—compared with cohesion manipulations—rather more success. Flowers (1977) trained group leaders to use either closed (groupthink) or open leadership style, and found that closed leadership got less information into discussion and fewer solutions proposed. Courtright (1978) aimed to approximate promotional leadership by experimental instructions encouraging many and competing ideas (vs. fewer ideas and cooperation). The only result was an interaction of instructions with cohesion, as described earlier. Leana (1985) assigned *directive* group leaders a preferred solution to the group problem and instructed them to discourage alternative solutions while emphasizing the importance of consensus. *Participative* leaders were assigned to encourage debate and were given no preferred solution. Leana found that promotional leadership led to fewer solutions proposed and discussed, more group adoption of the leader's preferred solution, and less private agreement with the solution adopted by the group. Finally, Callaway et al. (1985) followed Courtright in manipulating decision procedures by means of experimental instructions; some groups received instructions encouraging debate and discourag-

ing consensus and other groups did not receive these instructions. Here the variation in instructions had no effect, perhaps because the absence of instructions was far from encouraging promotional leadership. That is, groups receiving no instructions may have naturally used decision procedures much like those encouraged in the groups that did receive instructions.

Promotional leadership was actively instantiated, then, in two of the studies cited (Flowers, 1977; Leana, 1985) and produced significant effects consistent with groupthink predictions in both. In two other studies, promotional leadership was approximated by a manipulation of decision instructions (Courtright, 1978; Callaway et al., 1985), and the results were weaker and more uncertain. It appears, therefore, that decision instructions are not an adequate approximation of promotional leadership. Experiments designed to test the impact of promotional leadership should, on this showing, actually assign and train leaders to represent the desired leadership style. The analysis of the present article, consistent with Janis's (1982b) prescriptions for avoiding groupthink, has emphasized that a procedural norm of wide-open critical debate is a positive accomplishment of strong leadership. From this perspective, it seems particularly important that experiments on the role of promotional leadership should compare strong leadership in promoting a preferred alternative with strong leadership promoting the procedural norm of wide-ranging debate.

As reviewed here, laboratory research on groupthink has focused on the impact of cohesion and promotional leadership on decision making. Groupthink research has given little attention, either conceptually or empirically, to distinguishing compliance from internalization in group members' support for group decisions. To the extent that the conditions favoring internalized consensus—such as high cohesion and promotional leadership—are also conditions favoring compliance, the distinction between internalization and compliance becomes at once more difficult and more necessary.

In the experiments reviewed, assessment of internalized influence and compliance was either absent (Courtright, 1978) or problematic in depending on postexperimental ratings of pre-discussion opinion and agreement with group decision (Flowers, 1977; Callaway et al., 1985; Leana, 1985). Perhaps the most important implication of the present analysis for research on groupthink, therefore, is that the distinction between compliance and internalization requires explicit attention and assessment in groupthink experiments. Fortunately, there is a well-known model for making the distinction between internalization and compliance. This is the pretest–group-decision–posttest paradigm used for research on group risk shifts (Pruitt, 1971) and group extremity shifts on issues of many kinds (Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969). Group members are asked their private and individual opinions before entering group discussion, then they engage in discussion of the opinion issue until a unanimous group opinion is obtained, and finally they are again asked for their private individual opinions with the understanding that these may or may not differ from the group consensus. The difference between pretest individual opinion and group decision is a measure of group influence that includes both internalized influence and compliance. The difference between pretest individual opinion and posttest individual opinion is a measure of internalized group influence. And the difference between group decision and posttest individual opinion is a mea-

sure of compliance. This paradigm offers a familiar and successful answer to the problem of distinguishing between compliance and internalization in conformity to a group norm.

Conclusion

Groupthink is properly understood as premature consensus that includes both internalized consensus and compliance without private acceptance. Group cohesion cannot be identified with congeniality and liking among group members because a high-status decision-making group is likely to be attractive even if the personal attractiveness of group members is low. Contrary to Janis's (1982b) claim, there is no reason to believe that compliance decreases with increasing group cohesion, although there is reason to believe that cohesion interacts with uncertainty about group acceptance in conducing to both compliance and internalized consensus. The structural and situational conditions hypothesized by Janis to be conducive to groupthink are, like cohesion, conducive to both internalized consensus and compliance. The examples of groupthink cited by Janis (1982b) include at least two cases in which compliance is an important part of the poor decision making observed. The structural conditions of group insulation, group homgeneity, and especially, promotional leadership are correlated with occurrence of groupthink in Janis's examples, but cohesion and situational conditions of crisis, external threat, perceived difficulty of decision, and recent group failure are not thus correlated. Finally, these conclusions can inform groupthink research, particularly in suggesting the desirability of the pretest-discussion-posttest design for distinguishing internalization from compliance in future experiments testing groupthink predictions.

References

Asch, S. E. (1956). Studies of independence and conformity: A minority of one against a unanimous majority. *Psychological Monographs, 70* (9, Whole No. 416).

Back, K. W. (1951). Influence through social communication. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 46,* 9–23.

Callaway, M. R., Marriott, R. G., & Esser, J. K. (1985). Effects of dominance on group decision making: Toward a stress-reduction explanation of groupthink. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 49,* 949–952.

Cartwright, D. (1968). The nature of group cohesiveness. In D. Cartwright & A. Zander (Eds.), *Group dynamics: Research and Theory* (3rd ed.; pp. 91–109). New York: Harper & Row.

Courtright, J. A. (1978). A laboratory investigation of groupthink. *Communications Monographs, 45,* 229–246.

Deutsch, M., & Gerard, H. B. (1955). A study of normative and informational social influence upon individual judgment. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 51,* 629–636.

Deutsch, M., & Krauss, R. M. (1965). *Theories in social psychology.* New York: Basic Books.

Dittes, J. E., & Kelley, H. H. (1956). Group acceptance and conformity. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 53,* 100–107.

Festinger, L. (1953). An analysis of compliant behavior. In M. Sherif & M. O. Wilson (Eds.), *Group relations at the crossroads* (pp. 232–256). New York: Harper.

Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations, 1,* 117–140.

Flowers, M. L. (1977). A laboratory test of some implications of Janis's groupthink hypothesis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 35,* 888–896.

Hensley, T. R., & Griffin, G. W. (1986). Victims of groupthink. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 30,* 497–531.

Hollander, E. P. (1958). Conformity, status, and idiosyncrasy credit. *Psychological Review, 65,* 117–127.

Janis, I. L. (1972). *Victims of groupthink.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Janis, I. L. (1982a). Counteracting the adverse effects of concurrence-seeking in policy planning groups: Theory and research perspectives. In H. Brandstatter, J. J. Davis, & G. Stocker-Kreichgauer (Eds.), *Group decision making* (pp. 477–501). New York: Academic Press.

Janis, I. L. (1982b). *Groupthink* (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Kelman, H. C. (1958). Compliance, identification, and internalization. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 2,* 51–60.

Kiesler, C. A., & Kiesler, S. B. (1969). *Conformity.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Leana, C. R. (1985). A partial test of Janis' groupthink model: Effects of group cohesiveness and leader behavior on defective decision making. *Journal of Management, 11,* 5–17.

Longley, J., & Pruitt, D. G. (1980). Groupthink: A critique of Janis's theory. In L. Wheeler (Ed.), *Review of personality and social psychology* (Vol 1, pp. 74–93). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Manz, C. C., & Sims, H. P. (1982). The potential for "groupthink" in autonomous work groups. *Human Relations, 35,* 773–784.

Moorhead, G. (1982). Groupthink: Hypothesis in need of testing. *Group and Organizational Studies, 7,* 492–444.

Moorhead, G., & Montanari, J. R. (1986). An empirical investigation of the groupthink phenomenon. *Human Relations, 39,* 399–410.

Moscovici, S. (1980). Toward a theory of conversion behavior. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 13, pp. 209–239). New York: Academic Press.

Moscovici, S., & Zavalloni, M. (1969). The group as a polarizer of attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 12,* 125–135.

Myers, D. G. (1987). *Social psychology* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Pruitt, D. G. (1971). Choice shifts in group discussion: An introductory review. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 20,* 339–360.

Raven, B. H., & Rubin, J. Z. (1983). *Social psychology* (2nd ed.). New York: Wiley.

Steiner, I. D. (1982). Heuristic models of groupthink. In H. Brandstatter, J. H. Davis, & G. Stocker-Kreichgauer (Eds.), *Group decision making* (pp. 503–524). New York: Academic Press.

Tetlock, P. E. (1979). Identifying victims of groupthink from public statements of decision makers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 37,* 1314–1324.

Wyden, P. (1979). *Bay of Pigs: The untold story.* New York: Simon & Schuster.