As I near the end of my career in social psychology, I thought that I would use this occasion to consider, briefly, what I think are two important ideas of mine which have been mainly neglected by me as well as by other social psychologists. I have labeled the ideas: "Deutsch's Crude Law of Social Relations" and "Social Relations and Psychological Orientations." Each is considered below:

I. Deutsch's Crude Law of Social Relations

Many years ago, my students and I were doing research to answer the question: What are the factors which determine whether a conflict will take a constructive or destructive course? (See Deutsch, 1973, for a summary and discussion of this research) After much research, a major simplifying idea occurred to me which I labeled Deutsch's Crude Law of Social Relations. It is that the characteristic processes and effects elicited by a given type of social relationship (e.g., cooperative or competitive) tend also to elicit that type of social relationship; and a typical effect of any type of relationship tends to induce the other typical effects of the relationship.

In my research on conflict, we had demonstrated that when conflict is viewed by the parties involved, as a mutual problem to be resolved cooperatively, it mainly leads to a constructive process of conflict resolution with mutually satisfactory outcomes. On the other hand, a competitive, win-lose orientation to a conflict mainly leads to a destructive course of conflict resolution with both sides losing or the stronger party defeating the less powerful one. From the "crude law," one would expect that when the typical effects of a cooperative process are introduced into a conflict situation, the conflict is likely to be characterized by a constructive process; while the typical effects of a competitive process are apt to produce a destructive process of conflict resolution.

Thus, cooperation induces and is induced by fair treatment, perceived similarity in beliefs and attitudes, readiness to be helpful, openness in communication, trusting and friendly attitudes, sensitivity to common interests and de-emphasis of opposed interests, orientation toward enhancing mutual power rather than power differences, and so on. Similarly, competition
induces and is induced by use of the tactics of coercion, threat, or deception; unfair treatment; attempts to enhance the power differences between oneself and the other; poor communication; minimization of the awareness of similarities in values and increased sensitivity to opposed interests; suspicious and hostile attitudes; the importance, rigidity, and size of issues in conflict; and so on.

In other words, if one has systematic knowledge of the effects of cooperative and competitive processes, one has systematic knowledge of the conditions that typically give rise to such processes and, by extension, to the conditions that affect whether a conflict takes a constructive or destructive course. My early theory of cooperation and competition (Deutsch 1949a, b) is a theory of the effects of cooperative and competitive processes. Hence, from the Crude Law of Social Relations, it follows that this theory brings insight into the conditions that give rise to cooperative and competitive processes.

Below, I characterize the typical effects of cooperative and competitive processes (See Deutsch, 1949, 1973, and Johnson & Johnson, 2005, for research results)

Cooperative relations (whether within or between groups), as compared with competitive ones, show more of the following positive characteristics.

1. Effective communication is exhibited. Ideas are communicated and members of the different groups are attentive to one another, accepting of the ideas of the others and influenced by them. They have fewer difficulties in communicating with or understanding others.

2. Friendliness, helpfulness, respect and less obstructiveness are expressed in their discussions. Members of the cooperating groups also are more satisfied with the relationship of the other group's members. In addition, members of the cooperating groups rate themselves high in desire to win the respect of their colleagues and in a sense of obligation to the others.

3. The members of each group expect to be treated fairly by the other and feel obligated to treat the other fairly. In their relations to one another, justice is an important value.

4. Coordination of effort, division of labor, orientation to task achievement, orderliness in discussion and high productivity are manifested in the cooperating groups (if the solution of the conflict requires effective communication, coordination of effort, division of labor or sharing of resources).
5. Feeling of agreement with the ideas of others and a sense of basic similarity in beliefs and values, as well as confidence in one’s own ideas and in the value that other members attach to those ideas are obtained in the cooperating groups.

6. Recognizing and respecting the others by being responsive to the other’s needs.

7. Willingness to enhance the other’s power (for example, the knowledge, skills, resources and so on) to accomplish the other’s goals increases. As the other group’s capabilities are strengthened, you are strengthened; they are of value to you as well as to the other. Similarly, the other is enhanced from your enhancement and benefits from your growing capabilities and power.

8. Attempts to influence the other rely on persuasion and positive inducements.

9. Defining conflicting interests as a mutual problem to be solved by collaborative effort facilitates recognizing the legitimacy of each other’s interests and the necessity to search for a solution responsive to the needs of all. It tends to limit rather than expand the scope of conflicting interests.

In contrast, a competitive process has the opposite effects:

1. Communication is impaired as the conflicting parties seek to gain advantage by misleading the other through use of false promises, ingratiating tactics and disinformation. It is reduced and seen as futile as they recognize that they cannot trust one another’s communications to be honest or informative.

2. Obstructiveness and lack of helpfulness lead to mutual negative attitudes and suspicion of each other’s intentions. One’s perceptions of the other tend to focus on the other’s negative qualities and ignore the positive.

3. Fairness to the other is not valued. Each group is willing to exploit or harm the other to advantage themselves.

4. The parties to the process are unable to divide their work, duplicating one another’s efforts such that they become mirror images; if they do divide the work, they feel the need to check continuously what the other is doing.

5. The repeated experience of disagreement and critical rejection of ideas reduces confidence in oneself as well as the other.

6. Attempts to influence the other often involve threats, coercion, or false promises.
7. The conflicting parties seek to enhance their own power and to reduce the power of the other. Any increase in the power of the other is seen as threatening to oneself and one’s group.

8. The competitive process stimulates the view that the solution of a conflict can be imposed only by one side on the other, which in turn leads to using coercive tactics such as psychological as well as physical threats and violence. It tends to expand the scope of the issues in conflict as each side seeks superiority in power and legitimacy. The conflict becomes a power struggle or a matter of moral principle and is no longer confined to a specific issue at a given time and place. Escalating the conflict increases its motivational significance to the participants and may make a limited defeat less acceptable and more humiliating than a mutual disaster.

9. As the conflict escalates, it perpetuates itself by such processes as autistic hostility, self-fulfilling prophecies, and unwilling commitments.

Since this is a Conference on Social Justice, let me emphasize that one of the effects of cooperation is that the members of a cooperative group are treated fairly and expect to be treated fairly by the others and one feels obligated to treat the others fairly. In their relations to one another, justice is an important value. On the other hand, in an unregulated competition, fairness to other is not valued. Each is willing to deceive, exploit, or harm the other to advantage themselves. My Crude Law indicates that cooperation is induced by perceived fairness and that competition will be induced by perceived injustice. Due to a false consciousness, in the Marxist sense, an unjust relation may be perceived as just. As I have indicated in a number of papers on the awareness of injustice (e.g. Deutsch, 1985, 2006), various institutions of society, ego defenses, and identification with the aggressor may lead the exploited to feel that they are receiving their just desserts.

The Crude Law has also been applied in my work on the social psychology of distributive justice (Deutsch, 1985, Chapters 6, 11). Studies in our laboratory clearly demonstrated that the nature of the distributive system (e.g., “equity,” “equality,” “need”) under which one is working can strongly influence one’s psychological orientation so that one’s mode of thought, the personality traits that one manifests and one’s moral orientation are all very much affected.

Thus, working under the equity principle (where people are awarded in direct proportion to their relative contribution to the group’s productivity) produced an economic psychological
orientation. This is characterized by a competitive, task-oriented, formal social relation with a detached, analytical, objective, logical mode of thought oriented toward the future and with a universalistic value orientation. In contrast, working under the equality principle (where the group members shared equally the group’s reward or outcome) developed a solidarity psychological orientation. This is characterized by a cooperative, social-emotional, and informal social relation as well as by intuition, empathy, personal feeling, a present-time perspective and the proclivity to apprehend the reality of others from their inside rather than outside. As the “Crude Law” suggests, the research results indicated that when subjects were, experimentally, induced to have an economic orientation, they preferred to work under an equity distribution. Conversely, when they were induced to have a solidarity orientation, they preferred an equality distribution of their group’s outcome.

I have termed Deutsch's Crude Law of Social Relations as “crude” because it needs refinement in, at least, three important ways. First of all, it needs to be more systematic and dynamic, with an underlying computer or mathematical model, which permits explicit deductions about quantitative as well as qualitative changes over time. Secondly, it needs to indicate the conditions and types of relations in which the Crude Law is not applicable. Finally it is crude because it expresses surface similarities between effects and causes; the basic relationships are genotypical rather than phenotypical.

The surface effects of cooperation and competition are due to the underlying type of interdependence (positive or negative) and type of action (effective or bungling), the basic social psychological processes involved in the theory (substitutability, attitude formation, and inducibility) and the cultural or social medium and situational context in which these processes are expressed. Thus, how a positive attitude is expressed in an effective, positively interdependent relationship depends on what is appropriate to the cultural or social medium and situational context; that is, presumable one would not seed to express it in a way that is humiliating or embarrassing or likely to be experienced negatively by one’s partner.

Similarly, the effectiveness of any typical effect of cooperation or competition as an initiating or inducing condition of a cooperative or competitive process is not due to its phenotype but rather to the inferred genotype of the type of interdependence and type of action. Thus, in most social media and social contexts, perceived similarity in basic values is highly suggestive of the possibility of a positive linkage between oneself and the other. However, we
are likely to see ourselves as negatively linked in a context that leads each of us to recognize that
similarities in values impel seeking something that is in scarce supply and available for only one
of us. Also, it is evident that although threats are mostly perceived in a way that suggests a
negative linkage, any threat perceived as intended to compel you to do something that is good for
you or that you feel you should do is apt to be suggestive of a positive linkage.

Although the law is crude, my impression is that it is reasonably accurate; phenotypes
often indicated the underlying genotypes. Moreover, it is a synthesizing principle, which
integrates and summarizes a wide range of social psychological phenomena. The typical effects
of a given relationship tend to induce that relationship; similarly, it seems that any of the typical
effects of a given relationship tend to induce the other typical effects. For example, among the
typical effects of a cooperative relationship are positive attitudes, perception of similarities, open
communication and orientation toward mutual enhancement. One can integrate much of the
literature on the determinants of positive and negative attitudes in terms of the other associated
effects of cooperation and competition. Thus, positive attitudes result from perceptions of
similarity, open communication and so on. Similarly, many of the determinants of effective
communication can be linked to the other typical effects of cooperation or competition, such as
positive attitudes and power sharing.

Andresz Nowak, in a meeting in Poland last October, presented a dynamic model of the
“Crude Law” which has made it more systematic and which enables one to derive many
interesting implications from it. His model suggests many research studies, as does even my
cruder version. I hope that some of you will do research to develop and refine the crude law.
When it is well-developed, I believe this will be one of the basic laws of social psychology.

II. Social Relations and Psychological Orientation

A number of years ago, I was doing a study of marital couples and I wanted to develop a
way of characterizing the nature of the couple relationship. With the help of Myron Wish (Wish,
Deutsch, & Kaplan, 1976), we developed a method of doing so. In the course of doing so, we
identified what we considered to be several of the basic dimensions of social relations:
cooperation-competition; power distribution; task-oriented versus social-emotional; formal
versus informal; degree of importance. Some of these are similar to those described by other
investigators.
In terms of these dimensions, “friends” would be generally considered to be cooperative, of equal power, in a social-emotional, and informal relationship of considerable importance. In contrast, the relationship between a police officer and a thief might be viewed as competitive, unequal power, task-oriented, formal and of moderate importance.

My next thought was that to act appropriately in a given type of social relation one must have an appropriate psychological orientation to that relationship: one’s psychological orientation must “fit” the social relation. For example, my psychological orientation when I am negotiating the price of a car with a used-car salesman will be rather different than when I am playing with my six-year-old grandson. Different types of social relations will induce different types of psychological orientations; and, according to my “Crude Law,” different types of psychological orientations will induce different types of social relations.

The nature of psychological orientations

In my current view, a psychological orientation consists of four highly interdependent elements: a cognitive orientation, a motivational orientation, a moral orientation, and an action orientation. In my publications (Deutsch 1982, 1985), action orientation was not included.

Cognitive Orientations

In recent years, scholars in a number of different disciplines – cognitive psychology, social psychology, sociology, linguistics, anthropology, and artificial intelligence – have utilized such terms as schema, script, and frame to refer to the structures of expectations that help orient the individual cognitively to the situation confronting him. I employ the term cognitive orientation as being essentially the same as these terms. In the view being presented here, the person’s cognitive orientation to his situation is only one aspect of his psychological orientation to a social relationship.

Underlying the concepts of schema, script, and frame is the shared view that people approach their social world actively, with structured expectations about themselves and their social environments that reflect their organized beliefs about different social situations and different people. Our structured expectations make it possible for us to interpret and respond quickly to what is going on in specific situations. If our expectations lead us to inappropriate interpretations and responses, then they are likely to be revised on the basis of our experiences in the situation. Or if the circumstance confronting us is sufficiently malleable, our interpretations and responses to it may help to shape its form.
It is important for the participants in a particular social relationship to know “what’s going on here” – to know the actors, the roles they are to perform, the relations among the different roles, the props and settings, the scenes, and the themes of the social interaction. However, everyday social relations are rarely as completely specified by well-articulated scripts as is social interaction in a play in the traditional theatre; ordinary social interactions have more the qualities of improvisational theatre in which only the nature of the characters involved in the situation is well-specified and the characters are largely free to develop the detail of the skeletonized script as they interact with one another.

The improvisational nature of most social relations – the fact that given types of social relations occur in widely different contexts and with many different kinds of actors – makes it likely that relatively abstract or generalized cognitive orientations, schemas, or scripts will develop from the indifferent types of social relations. I assume that people are implicit social psychological theorists and, as a result of their experience, have developed cognitive schemas of the different types of social relations that, though usually not articulated, are similar to those articulated by theorists in social psychology and the other social sciences. Undoubtedly, at this early stage of the development of social science theory, the unarticulated conceptions of the average person are apt to be more sophisticated than the articulated ones of the social scientists.

Motivational Orientations

Just as different cognitive orientations are associated with the different types of social relations, so also are different motivational orientations. A motivational orientation toward a given social relationship orients one to the possibilities of gratification or frustration of certain types of needs in the given relationship. To the cognitive characterization of the relationship, the motivational orientation adds the personal, subjective features arising from one’s situationally relevant motives or need-dispositions.

The motivational orientation gives rise to the cathexis of certain regions of the cognitive landscape, making them positively or negatively valent, and highlights the pathways to and from valent regions. It gives the cognitive map a dynamic character. It predisposes one to certain kinds of fantasies (or nightmares) and to certain kinds of emotions. It orients one to such questions as “What is to be valued in this relationship?” and “What do I want here and how do I get it?”

Moral Orientations
A moral orientation toward a given social relationship orients one to the mutual obligations, rights, and entitlements of the people involved in the given relationship. It adds an “ought to,” “should,” or obligatory quality to a psychological orientation. The moral orientation implies that one experiences one’s relationship not only from a personal perspective but also from a social perspective that includes the perspective of the others in the relationship. A moral orientation makes the experience of injustice more than a personal experience. Not only is one personally affected; so are the other participants in the relationship, because its value underpinnings are being undermined. The various participants in a relationship have the mutual obligation to respect and protect the framework of social norms that define what is to be considered as fair or unfair in the interactions and outcomes of the participants. One can expect that the moral orientation, and hence what is considered fair, will differ in the different types of social relations.

**Action Orientation**

Action orientations refer to the kinds of behavior which are viewed as appropriate in a given type of social relationship. Different cultures often have different views as to what is appropriate behavior in a given social relationship. Thus, if I felt very pleased with the outcome of my negotiations with the used car salesman (I got a very good price), it would be inappropriate behavior to express my pleasure by kissing him.

Since this Conference is about Social Justice, I would like to express the view that the “moral orientation,” what is perceived to be just or unjust, will vary in different types of social relations. I also would like to express my view that social psychologists have unduly neglected the moral aspect of every social relation. Let me illustrate the moral complement of several different types of social relationships.

**Equality-Inequality**

There are a number of different moral orientations connected with equality and inequality: Other features of the relationship, in addition to the distribution of power within it, will determine the nature of the moral orientation that will be elicited. Thus, in a cooperative, equal relationship one would expect a kind of egalitarian relationship. In a cooperative, unequal relationship, the moral orientation obligates the more powerful person to employ his power in such a way as to benefit the less powerful one, not merely himself. In such a relationship, the less powerful one has the obligation to show appreciation, to defer to, and honor the more
powerful person. These obligations may be rather specific and limited if the relationship is task-oriented or they may be diffuse and general if the relationship is a social-emotional one.

In an equal, competitive relationship, one’s moral orientation is toward the value of initial equality among the competitors and the subsequent striving to achieve superiority over the others. This orientation favors “equal opportunity” but not “equal outcomes”: the competitors start the contest with equal chances to win, but some win and some lose. In an unequal, competitive relationship the moral orientations of the strong and the weak support an exploitative relationship. The strong are likely to adopt the view that the rich and powerful are biologically and, hence, morally superior; they have achieved their superior positions as a result of natural selection; it would be against nature to interfere with the inequality and suffering of the poor and weak; and it is the manifest destiny of superior people to lead inferior peoples. The beatitude of those in powerful positions who exploit those in weaker positions appears to be, “Blessed are the strong, for they shall prey upon the weak” (Banton, 1967, p. 48). In an unequal, competitive relationship, the weak are apt to identify with the aggressor (A. Freud, 1937) and adopt the moral orientation of the more powerful and to feel that their inferior outcomes are deserved. Or, they may feel victimized. If so, they may either develop a revolutionary moral orientation directed toward changing the nature of the existing relationship or they may develop the moral orientation of being a victim. The latter orientation seeks to obtain secondary gratification from being morally superior to the victimizer: “It’s better to be sinned against than to sin”; “the meek shall inherit the earth.”

Task versus Social-Emotional Relations

The moral orientation in a task-oriented relationship is that of utilitarianism. Its root value is maximization: People should try to get the most out of situations. Good is viewed as essentially quantitative, as something that can be increased or decreased without limit (Diesing, 1962, p. 35). A second element in this moral orientation is the means-end schema, in which efficient allocation of means to achieve alternative ends becomes a salient value. A third element is impartiality in the comparison of means, so that means can be compared on the basis of their merit in achieving given ends rather than on the basis of considerations irrelevant to the means-ends relationship. In Parsonian terms, the moral-orientation in task-oriented relations are characterized by the values of universalism, affective neutrality, and achievement. In contrast, the moral orientation of social-emotional relations are characterized by the values of
particularism, affectivity, and ascription (Diesing, 1962, p. 90). Obligations to other people in a social-emotional relationship are based on their particular relationship to oneself rather than on general principles: They are strongest when relations are close and weakest when relations are distant. In a task-oriented relation, one strives to detach oneself from the objects of one's actions to treat them all as equal, separate interchangeable entities; in a social-emotional relationship one is the focal point of myriad relationships that one strives to maintain and extend, since action takes place only within relationships (Diesing, 1969, p. 91) ascription is the opposite of the achievement value: It means that one's actions and obligations toward people spring solely from their relationship to oneself rather than as a response to something they have done.

Some Relevant Research

From my "Crude Law," it follows that the causal arrow connecting psychological orientations and types of social relations is bidirectional: A psychological orientation can induce or be induced by a given type of social relation. Here, I would go further and indicate that the cognitive, motivational, and moral components of a psychological orientation can each induce one another—hence, they are likely to be found together—and each of the components can induce or be induced by a given type of social relation. The foregoing assumptions proliferate into a great number of testable, specific hypotheses that I do not have the space to elaborate in this paper. To illustrate, however, these hypotheses would predict a two-way causal arrow between specific modes of thought and specific types of social relations. Thus, a "bureaucratic" social situation will tend to induce "obsessive-compulsive" modes of thought and obsessive-compulsive modes of thought will tend to "bureaucratize" a social relationship. They would also predict that a competitive social relationship will tend to increase the psychological weight or importance of the differences in values between oneself and one's competitors, whereas a cooperative relationship will tend to increase the psychological importance of the similarities in values between oneself and one's fellow cooperators. We would also hypothesize that a tendency to accentuate the differences in values between oneself and others is apt to induce a competitive relationship, whereas a tendency to accentuate the similarities is likely to induce a cooperative relationship. Further, it can be predicted that different principles of distributive justice will be associated with different types of social relations: A fraternal relationship will be connected with the principle of equality; a caring relationship with the principle of need; a hierarchical organization with the principle of equity; a power struggle with the principle of
“winner-take-all.” Each of these different principles can induce different modes of thought and different types of social relations when experimentally introduced into an otherwise unstructured social situation. For all of the various hypotheses that entail two-way causal arrows, from an experimental point of view, the independent variables are the ones that are manipulated by the experimenter and the dependent variables are the ones that are affected by the manipulated variables.

Some of the ideas presented in this paper have been tested by experiments reported in two of my books, *The Resolution of Conflict* (1973) and *Distributive Justice* (1985). The latter book which focuses on the effects of different systems of distributive justice and the factors affecting the preference for one or another system is particularly relevant. However, I am rather disappointed that these ideas have not led to more research by other social psychologists.

**Concluding Comments**

In this paper, I have advanced several theses. First, different types of social relations can be characterized in terms of their positions on a number of basic dimensions of interpersonal relations. Second, each of the different types of social relations have associated with them distinctive psychological orientations. A psychological orientation is a complex consisting of interrelated cognitive, motivational, and moral orientations. Third, the causal arrow connecting psychological orientations and types of social relations is bidirectional: A psychological orientation can induce or be induced by a given social relationship. Fourth, the various elements (cognitive, motivational, and moral) of a psychological orientation tend to be consistent with one another. As you can see, my “crude law of social relations” is embedded in these statements as well as the ones that follow.

My argument is not that social relations determine psychological orientations without regard to the personalities of the individual participants nor is that psychological orientations induce distinctive social relations without regard to the nature of the social situation confronting them. My thesis is rather that there is a tendency for consistency between psychological orientations and social relations that will lead to change in one or both until congruence between the two has been largely achieved. In some circumstances, it will be easier to change psychological orientations; in others, social relations can be more readily altered. I have not addressed the problem of what determines how a conflict between one’s psychological
orientation to a relationship and the nature of that relationship will be resolved. This is an important problem for future work.

My discussion throughout this paper has been of "ideal types" of social relations. Actual social relations are inevitably more complex than my discussion would suggest. An intimate, love relationship, for example, is often characterized by considerable ambivalence: There are not only strong positive elements manifest in the relations but also intense anxieties latent within it; there are quarrels as well as embraces. In addition, it must be recognized that relationships develop and change. Apart from my brief discussion in my book, Distributive Justice, I have not attempted to characterize the dynamics of relationships. This, too, is an important problem for future work.

One final comment, I consider myself to be a "grandiose" theorist who is willing to present half-baked ideas which require more "cooking" so long as the ideas bear on central social psychological processes. I believe the ideas that I have presented are important but they need considerably more baking by other social psychologists.