Realistic group conflict theory: A review and evaluation of the theoretical and empirical literature.

Jackson, Jay W.

AB A comprehensive review and evaluation of realistic group conflict theory is presented. The philosophical foundations and postulates of the theory, as laid down by M. Sherif (1966), are discussed. The basic propositions of the theory are detailed and appraised, as is the empirical research designed to test the theory. The current status of realistic group conflict theory is evaluated in terms of its theoretical structure, scientific rigor, and ability to fulfill theoretical functions. Finally, some future directions for the theory are outlined. It is concluded that the theory and its underlying philosophy have much to offer to efforts to reduce current and prevent future eruptions of intergroup hostilities.