

AIP – XIX Convegno Nazionale Sezione di Psicologia per le Organizzazioni

Prefigurare la vita nuova: la psicologia per le organizzazioni tra conflitto e desiderio,
tecnologia e sostenibilità

LECTIO MAGISTRALIS

**"Who will we be?
Self and Identity in an Uncertain and Changing
World"**

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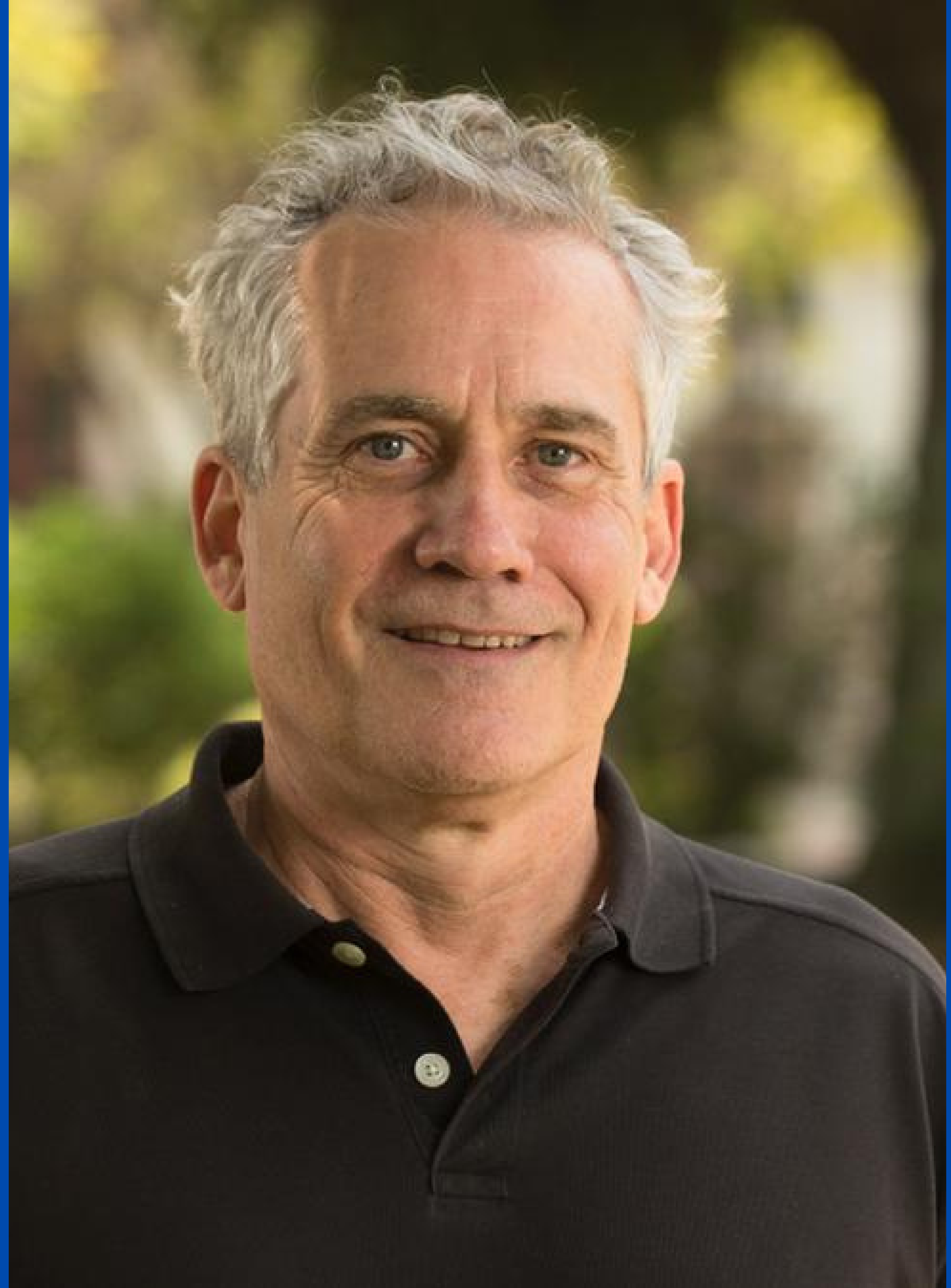
è professore di psicologia sociale e direttore del Social Identity Lab presso la Claremont Graduate University, a Los Angeles, professore onorario presso l'Università del Kent, nel Regno Unito, ex Australian Research Council Professorial Fellow ed ex presidente della Society of Experimental Social Psychology. È membro della British Academy e membro dell'Accademia delle scienze sociali in Australia e ha ricevuto numerosi premi per illustri risultati: il Kurt Lewin Award 2022 della Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, il Campbell Award 2021 della Society for Personality and Social Psychology, l'International Society for Self and Identity's 2020 Distinguished Lifetime Career Award, Carol and Ed Diener Mid-Career Award in Social Psychology del 2010 della Society for Personality and Social Psychology e Early Career Award 1989 dell'Australian Psychological Society. È membro dell'Associazione per la scienza psicologica, della Società per la personalità e la psicologia sociale, della Società di psicologia sociale sperimentale e della Società per lo studio psicologico delle questioni sociali. La ricerca di Michael Hogg sulle relazioni intergruppo, i processi di gruppo, l'influenza e la leadership, il sé e l'identità è associata allo sviluppo della teoria dell'identità sociale ed è stata ampiamente pubblicata (oltre 400 pubblicazioni scientifiche che sono state citate 115.000 volte, h-index 137). È caporedattore della fondazione con Dominic Abrams della rivista Group Processes and Intergroup Relations, redattore associato di The Leadership Quarterly ed ex redattore associato del Journal of Experimental Social Psychology. Gli attuali punti focali della ricerca includono leadership e influenza; incertezza, estremismo e conflitto; esclusione ed emarginazione; e dinamiche di sottogruppo all'interno dei gruppi.



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People have a sense of who they are, a sense of self and identity, that is significantly grounded in and defined by the variety of social groups they belong to and identify with – groups and identities that are related to work, profession, nationality, gender, religion, ethnicity, ideology, and so forth. Self and identity are fundamental social-cognitive anchors for how we experience ourselves and plan our behavior, and how we perceive others and anticipate their behavior. Unsurprisingly, people strive for an identity and sense of self that they not only feel positive about, but also feel certain about – a clearly defined and distinctive identity.

However, we live in a world of continual change and uncertainty that can make us feel uncertain about our identity and sense of who we are. This feeling of self-uncertainty motivates us to try to reduce the uncertainty. One very effective way to accomplish this is by identifying with groups, in the world of work and society more broadly, that have distinctive and clearly defined identities. Leadership plays a key role in constructing and communicating these identities.

This process of self-uncertainty reduction, particularly when the uncertainty is experienced as a challenge that we feel we have the resources to meet, can have very positive consequences for individuals, groups, and society. It produces cohesion, purpose, cooperation, growth, and constructive creativity. However, if the uncertainty is experienced as a threat that we feel we do not have the resources to overcome, the consequences can be quite negative. Uncertainty experienced as a threat can, for example, occur in the face of rapid technological change, mass-migration, climate crisis, changing world order, decay of democracy, redefinition of work, and reconfiguring of the nature of work to accommodate remote working). Resolution of this manifestation of self-uncertainty can produce a preference for groups that function as identity echo chambers – they are homogeneous and inward looking, polarized from other groups, and hierarchically structured with authoritarian leadership.

In this presentation I describe a program of research on uncertainty-identity theory that my colleagues and I have been developing for almost 20 years. It is framed by a social identity perspective on group processes and intergroup relations, and focuses on the role of self-uncertainty in motivating people to identify with groups and on how this uncertainty-identification relationship can have positive and negative outcomes for individuals, groups and society. Although this is a general analysis of the interdependence of self/identity and group life, it is particularly relevant to understanding how individuals, organizations and the world of work might be impacted by and respond to rapid and dramatic change.