

## **Stigma-by-Association: The Infection of Bad Company**

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Stigma-by-association represents the process through which the companions of stigmatized persons are discredited. Conduits for stigma-by-association range from the strong and enduring bonds of kinship to the arbitrary occasions of being seen in the company of someone who is stigmatized. A theoretical model is proposed in which both deliberative and spontaneous processes result in the spread of stigma to the companions of stigmatized persons. Support for this model was found across four studies that examined how explicit and implicit stigma-relevant attitudes moderate stigma-by-association effects.