

Understanding Prejudice: What is Prejudice?

Stereotype	<p>A cluster of characteristics that is associated with all members of a specific social group that often include qualities that are unrelated to the objective criteria that define the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women can get pregnant• Christmas trees are conifers and green• Chinese tend to have brown eyes
Prejudice	<p>A negative <u>attitude</u> towards individuals based on their membership in a group (racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, gender, elderly, etc).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women are no good at math and shouldn't go to engineering school
Discrimination	<p><u>Treating</u> people unfairly based on the group to which they belong.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women are rejected to engineering school based on the fact that they are women• Cognitive dissonance will "help create" explanations when you reject women for engineer school based on reasons unrelated to succeeding.

Prejudice versus Discrimination

Prejudice: A negative attitude towards individuals based on their membership in a group (racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, gender, elderly, etc).

Discrimination: Treating people unfairly based on the group to which they belong.

		Prejudice (attitude)	
		no	<u>yes</u>
Discrimination (behavior)	no		A restaurant owner who is <u>bigoted against gays</u> treats them fairly because he needs their business.
	yes	An executive with favorable attitudes toward blacks <i>doesn't hire</i> them because he would get in trouble with his boss.	A professor who is <u>hostile towards women</u> <i>grades his female students unfairly.</i>

Sources of Prejudice: Where does it come from?

Cognitive: Stereotyping that underlies prejudice can be a byproduct of the normal ways in which we simplify and organize the world.

- In-group bias (in-group favoritism/out-group derogation)
- Out-group homogeneity bias
- Illusory correlations
 - Fallacy of positive instances
 - Availability heuristic
 - Confirmation bias
- Beliefs/Expectations/Stereotypes
- Belief-bias

Motivational / Emotional: Frustration breeds hostility and fear, which is sometimes vented on scapegoats, and sometimes expressed more directly against competing groups that are perceived as responsible for one's frustration.

- Competition for limited resources
- Social changes that threaten our self-concept
- Enhancing self-esteem

Social: The social situation breeds and maintains prejudice in several ways.

- Cultural message that reinforce negative stereotypes of outgroups.
- The rules of society can both intentionally and unintentionally reinforce prejudicial attitudes

Cognitive Sources of Prejudice: Ingroup Bias

Stereotypes of groups can lead to discrimination, prejudice and affect our memory by influencing our thinking process.

In-group bias: The tendency to make favorable, positive attributions to members of the “in-group” and unfavorable, negative attributions to members of “out-groups”. You give the benefit of the doubt to members of your own "in-group" and not the benefit of doubt to members of the "out-group".

Ingroup	Outgroup
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When we attack, it is because we were provoked.• We are successful because of hard work.• When we save money, we are being thrifty.• There is the tendency to give the benefit of the doubt to white applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements for a loan,• When “our president” is the president during an economic downturn, we say it is it partly due to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When you attack, it is because you are aggressive.• They are successful because they are lucky.• When they do it, it is being stingy.• while rejecting black applicants (and thus not providing an opportunity for them, or forcing them to borrow money by other means at a higher interest rate).• When “your president” is president during an economic downturn, it is due to incompetence.

circumstances he inherited.

- When “our president” is president during unprecedented economic growth, it is due to his leadership. (also see self-serving bias)
- When we support “terrorists” such as the Northern Alliance, it is because we have no other choice.
- When “we” provide information, it is the truth and for educational purposes.
- We are taking a break.
- We disagree with the president on principle
- Our “pork barrel spending” stimulates the economy.
- We are an community interest group
- Our militants are extremists or fanatics.
- I know what he means
- Our team won because we are very skilled.
- When the economy grows under “your president”, it is due to his circumstances.
- When they support “terrorists” it is because they are evil.
- When “they” provide information, it is propaganda and spin.
- They are lazy.
- They disagree with the president as partisan
- Their “pork barrel spending” are unfair subsidies.
- You are a special interest group.
- Their militants are terrorists.
- She is vague
- Our team lost because we were tired.* (not ingroup)

bias but...)

- The KKK is not a terrorist organization.
 - When Jerry Falwell says that Mohammed is a terrorist, we say...
 - When we “torture” it is for a good reason
 - When the Federation attacks the Klingons, it is because the Federation was provoked (situational).
 - When we go to war, it is in the defense of our way of life.
 - Al-Qaida is a terrorist organization.
 - When a Muslim cleric says Jesus or the U.S. is a terrorist...
 - When they “torture” it is because they are evil.
 - When Klingons attack the Federation, it is because Klingons are aggressive (dispositional).
 - When they go to war, it is because they are war mongers
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Cognitive Sources of Prejudice: Outgroup Homogeneity Bias

Out-group homogeneity bias: By clustering people into categories, these categories tend to make those within to “outgroup” seem more similar and uniform than they really are while exaggerating differences within the in-group.

- Women are all the same (implied is that men are quite different from one another)
- All New Yorkers are the same. Oregonians are different.
- People from Eugene are quite diverse. All those from Springfield are all the same.
- All those Democrats/Republicans are the same.
- All those Middle Eastern people are terrorists.
- The American population is quite diverse, however, those Europeans, Iraqis, etc. are all alike (you know “those kind of people”).
- All those artist, accountants, blondes, etc are all alike

Illusory Correlations

Illusory correlations is the belief that two (or more) variables are related when they actually are not, or the relation is not as strong as we think they are. For example, there is the belief that women are bad drivers. There is an illusory relationship between gender and the ability to drive.

Several cognitive factors can lead to illusory correlations.

Fallacy of positive instances: Stereotypes affect what we remember. We tend to notice and remember information that is consistent with our stereotype while forgetting information that is inconsistent.

- If we have the stereotype that the elderly are senile and are in nursing homes, there is a tendency not remember instances that are inconsistent with this stereotype.

Availability heuristic: The tendency for information that stands out or is psychologically available (the example is easy to recall) to have more weight than information that is not psychologically available (the example is difficult to recall)

- Having Caucasian police officers coming into minority communities can lead to prejudicial attitudes. Why? What will the officers tend to remember about crime and race on the job? What will the officers tend to remember about crime and race off the job?

Confirmation bias: If you have a stereotype or prejudicial attitude, you tend to seek evidence that is consistent with that belief, rather than disconfirm.

- We tend to think of examples of minorities that are criminals and fail to consider minorities who are law abiding citizens.

Cognitive Sources of prejudice: Beliefs/Expectations/Stereotypes

Beliefs, expectations and stereotypes: Our expectations, beliefs and stereotypes influence what we see and what we don't see. There is a tendency for us to "see" things that are consistent with our beliefs, expectations and stereotypes and fail to see things that are inconsistent with our beliefs, expectations and stereotypes.



Figure 6.11

Psychologist Gordon Allport showed subjects this picture for a very brief period of time to test the accuracy of their "eyewitness" testimony in a situation in which racial prejudice might influence their perception.

From "Eyewitness Testimony" by Robert Buckhout. Copyright © 1974 by Scientific American, Inc. All rights reserved.

Beliefs, Expectations and Stereotypes

Beliefs, expectations and stereotypes can influence the language that you use. These differences can be very subtle. These inconsistencies can be difficult if they occur far apart in space or time.




Ap Associated Press AP - Tue Aug 30, 11:31 AM ET

A young man walks through chest deep flood water after looting a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it

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AFP 3:47 AM ET

Two residents wade through chest-deep water after finding bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)

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Beliefs, Expectation and Stereotypes

Beliefs, expectations and stereotypes can not only influence what we see and don't see, but it can lead you to act in ways of acting that elicit the behavior you expect that could confirm your belief. This is often referred to as the self-fulfilling prophecy.

- If I believe that you are not smart,
 - I might do everything for you
 - I might talk to you in a demeaning way
 - I might not provide challenges for you

In addition, your beliefs can influence how you evaluate evidence. Evidence that is consistent with our beliefs, expectation and stereotypes is criticized lightly, while evidence inconsistent is harshly criticized. This is called the belief bias.

- Belief: Women are bad drivers
 - Man runs a red light—he had no choice
 - Woman runs a red light—she is reckless

Motivational / Emotional Sources of Prejudice

Frustration breeds hostility and fear, which is sometimes vented on scapegoats, and sometimes expressed more directly against competing groups that are perceived as responsible for one's frustration.

- Competition for limited resources (jobs, land, prestige, etc.) fosters prejudicial attitudes—especially when the competition threatened (physically or psychologically) one's ingroup
 - Social change (civil rights, homosexuality, immigration, bans on fox hunting, women voting, etc.) can trigger prejudicial attitudes because it can threaten the way the individual views themselves.
- Enhancing self-esteem: When our self-esteem is threatened, some individuals derogate others to help restore their own self-esteem. Prejudice can provide a feeling of social superiority and may also help cover one's feelings of inferiority.

Social Sources of Prejudicial Attitudes

The social situation breeds and maintains prejudice in several ways.

- A group that has social and economic superiority will often justify its standing with prejudicial beliefs—“that’s just the way things are and/or should be”.
- Cultural message that reinforce negative stereotypes of outgroups.

Dealing with Prejudice and Stereotypes

The problem is that the activation of stereotypes, discrimination, and prejudice is unconscious, automatic and we are not aware of our own thinking processes and our behavior.

For example,

- the ingroup-bias,
- fundamental attributional error (FAE),
- actor-observer bias,
- self-serving bias,
- reduction of cognitive dissonance,
- belief bias, and
- confirmation bias

are all thinking processes that occur without our awareness and distort our perception of reality.

If your self-concept ([see chapter 12](#)) consists of being fair and unprejudiced, this information can be perceived as being threatening your self-concept and you will ... (insert answer).

So what? Does treating groups of people differently affect behavior?

- The Baraku people in Japan achieve lower scores on intelligence tests than other Japanese. When they come to America and are treated like Japanese, they difference disappears ([Chapter 9](#)).

- It increases the perception of helplessness and decreases self-efficacy
- Can it make some individuals or groups experience more stress?

Strategies for Dealing with Prejudice

- Jigsaw method
- Mutual Cooperation
- Inhibiting prejudicial attitudes
- Mere contact (the contact hypothesis)

The Jigsaw Method

Groups are established by a common theme or topic (e.g. perspective of personality) where each group member studies their topic or theme.

<u>Psychoanalytic</u>	<u>Humanist</u>	<u>Social-cognitive</u>	<u>Trait</u>
Ann	Carole	Eric	Fred
Ashley	Christine	Edward	Frank
Alfred	Cameron	Elaine	Felicia
Aaron	Cecil	Erin	Fiona

After each group has learned their theme or topic, they form new groups where each member of the original group (perspective of psychology) will teach each other member their perspective.

<u>Group W</u>	<u>Group X</u>	<u>Group Y</u>	<u>Group Z</u>
Ann	Ashley	Alfred	Aaron
Carole	Christine	Cameron	Cecil
Eric	Edward	Elaine	Erin
Fred	Frank	Felicia	Fiona

Mutual Cooperation:

Dealing with Prejudice at the Individual Level

People who are not consciously prejudiced against others may react in prejudicial ways. Stereotypes are automatically activated, and can affect our behavior without our awareness.

Patricia Devine argue that prejudice reduction at the individual level is a three-step process (I have slightly modified it).

- The individual must decide that prejudiced responses are wrong and consciously reject prejudiced and stereotyped thinking.
- They must internalize their non-prejudiced attitudes so that those beliefs become part of your personal self-concept.
 - *The person must recognize that they act in a discriminatory manner, have stereotypes of groups, and have some prejudicial attitudes.*
- Individuals must learn to inhibit automatic prejudicial reactions and deliberately replace them with non-prejudiced responses that are based on their personal standards.
 - *Individuals need to recognize the thinking process that lead to and reinforce prejudicial attitudes (eg. the confirmation bias, the belief bias, ingroup-bias, illusory correlations, actor-observer bias, just-world belief, FAE, self-serving bias).*

If you are unaware of how prejudicial attitudes and discrimination occur, it makes it difficult to address the problem.

Reducing Prejudicial Attitudes: The Contact Hypothesis

Another strategy that has been hypothesized to reduce prejudice is that the mere contact with out groups/minorities will decrease group conflict. This is called the contact hypothesis or contact theory.

Does the contact hypothesis/theory work? Why?

- It was argued that John Rocker (Atlanta Braves pitcher who publicly expressed prejudicial attitudes), will become less prejudiced against minorities over time because he has to work with them.
- At UC Berkley, there is a lot of group diversity. Is there less inter-group conflict at UC Berkley?
- Many people may believe that African-Americans are not intelligent and are lazy. People who work with Colin Powell will find that he does not match this stereotype (I am not accusing or suggesting anyone in the Bush Administration of having these beliefs—Colin Powell is an easy example to illustrate the thinking process). How do they resolve this apparent conflict while maintaining their belief?

Prejudice is most likely to be reduced when they

- (1) engage in sustained close contact,
- (2) have equal status
- (3) work to achieve a common goal that requires cooperation
- (4) are supported by the broader social norms