

Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination

Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination are related, but not the same. The distinction is important to address the social problems associated with them.

- **Stereotypes**: A stereotype is a cluster of characteristics that are associated with all members of a specific social group, often including qualities that are unrelated to the objective criteria that define the group ([page 454](#)).
- **Prejudice**: A negative attitude toward people who belong to a specific social group ([page 454](#)).
- **Discrimination**: The inappropriate and unjustified treatment of people as a result of prejudice.

Stereotypes, while not inherently positive or negative, they do simply social information. Like many mental shortcuts that simplify information, relying on stereotypes can cause problems by attributing a stereotypic cause for an outcome.

For example, a parent who assumes that a girl's poor computer performance are due to her gender rather than a lack of instruction might never encourage her to overcome her problem ([page 455](#)).

The processes that lead to stereotypes, prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behavior can be

- unconscious and automatic as well as
- conscious and intentional.

When they are unconscious and automatic, they can be hard to prevent and change.

When we inappropriately use stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination (there are appropriate times to use them), getting feedback and recognizing when they occur is important in changing stereotypes, prejudicial attitudes, and discriminatory behavior--especially when they are unconscious and automatic. However, getting feedback on these automatic processes is uncomfortable, which is why many avoid it.

Red Cross Poster, 2016



HIMYM video clip

Stereotypes

Stereotypes: A stereotype is a cluster of characteristics that are associated with all members of a specific social group, often including qualities that are unrelated to the objective criteria that define the group ([page 454](#)).

Stereotypes are mental shortcuts that allows us for easy, fast processing of social information. This process is often automatic and unconscious which makes their recognition difficult to recognize and inhibit.

As social scientists use the concept of stereotypes, they are neither good or bad. They reflect efficient cognitive processing ([page 528](#)). Many stereotypes are accurate.

- Men are taller than women (average is implied)
- Engineers are better at math than non-engineers.
- Those who adopt dogs/cats like animals than those who do not.

However, stereotypes can produce harmful results of prejudice and discrimination because stereotypes can be

- (1) inaccurate
- (2) overused
- (3) self-perpetuating, and
- (4) automatic

Prejudice versus Discrimination

Prejudice: a negative attitude toward people who belong to a specific social group ([page 454](#)).

Discrimination: The inappropriate and unjustified treatment of people as a result of prejudice.

		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>

Inaccurate Stereotypes influence Public Policy



Harriet Marsden

@harriet1marsden

Your semi-regular reminder that if your concern with trans women is that men might claim to self-ID as trans to gain access to women's spaces and assault them, then your problem is actually with predatory men and not trans women.

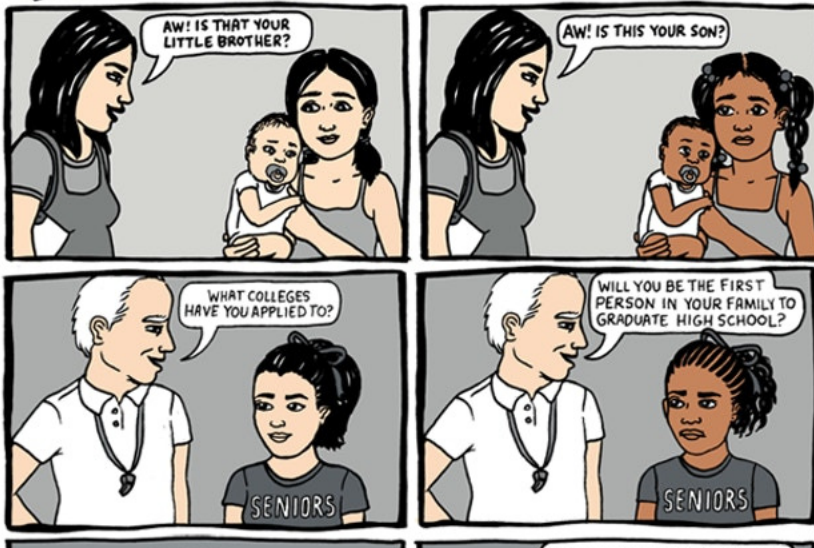
Stereotypes and Sexism and Gender



Men are more likely to interrupt women than men, and more likely to challenge their intelligence.

Stereotypes Can Lead to Different Treatment

QUESTIONS



Stereotypes can be Automatic

To demonstrate how pervasive negative stereotypes are in our culture, take the Implicit Attitude Test (IAT). This can be found on a weblink on the website.

The Implicit Attitude Test

Many prejudicial attitudes and associations are unconscious. The implicit attitude association measures the reaction time in how long it takes you to make a judgment between the color of a person's skin and positive or negative words.

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION 409

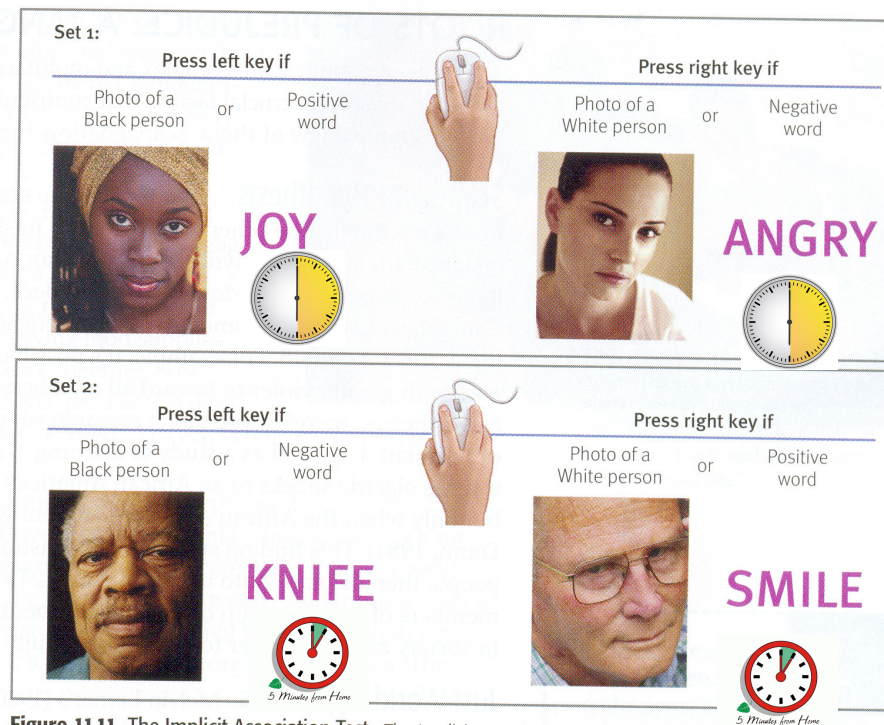
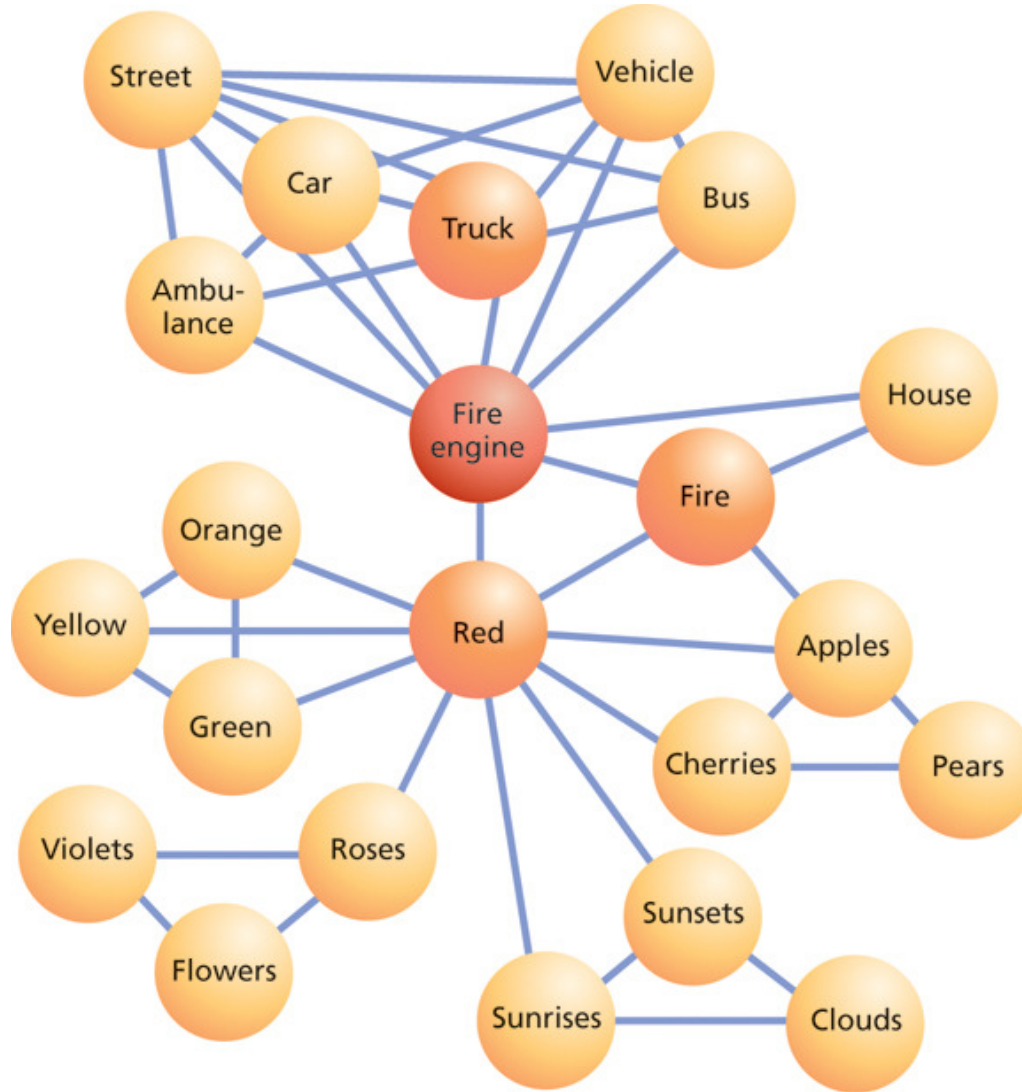


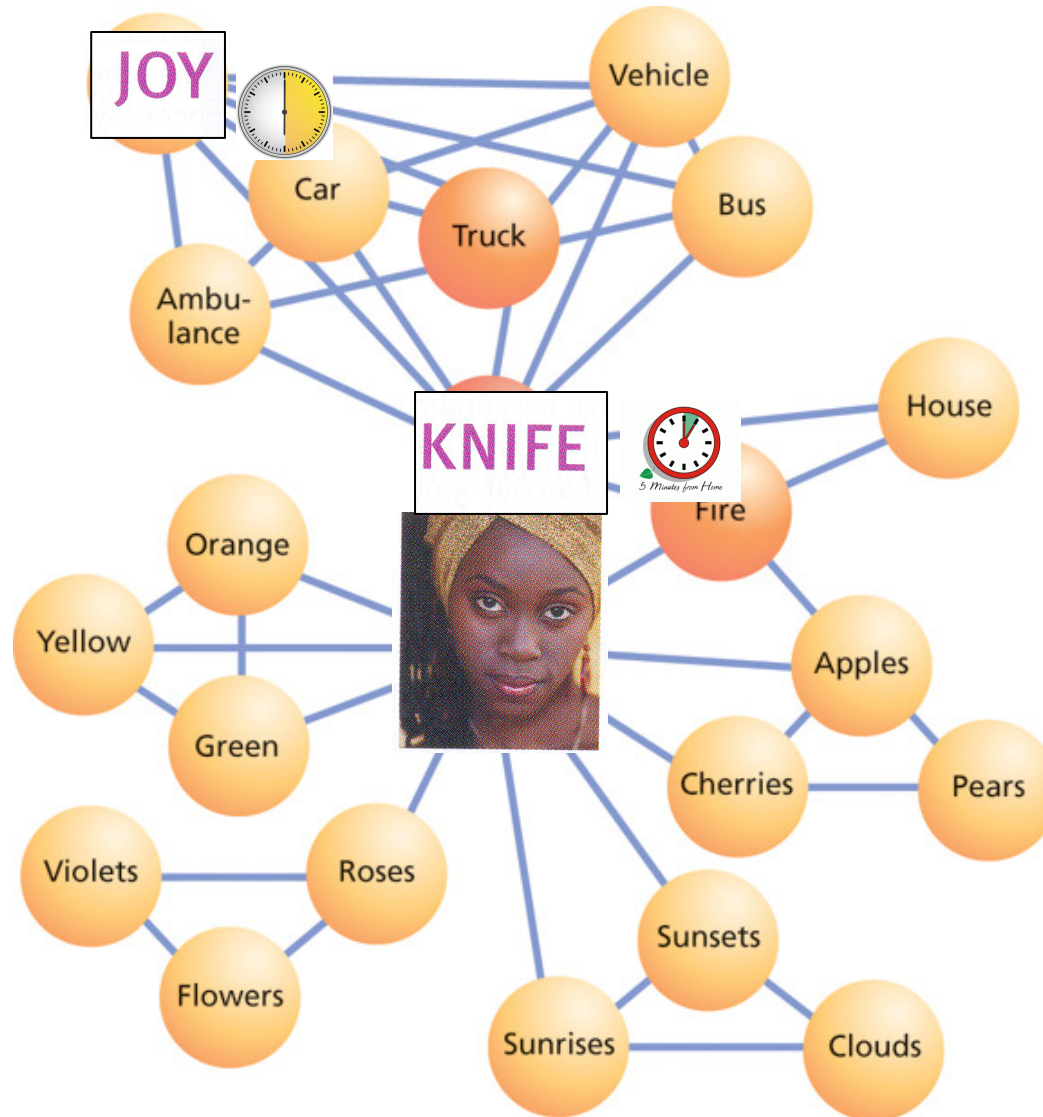
Figure 11.11 The Implicit Association Test. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is the most widely researched measure of implicit or unconscious prejudice using examples like this one. Many people (across races) associate negative words more readily with African American than Caucasian faces. But does the test really measure unconscious prejudice, or does it measure something else?

Image source: Lilliefeld

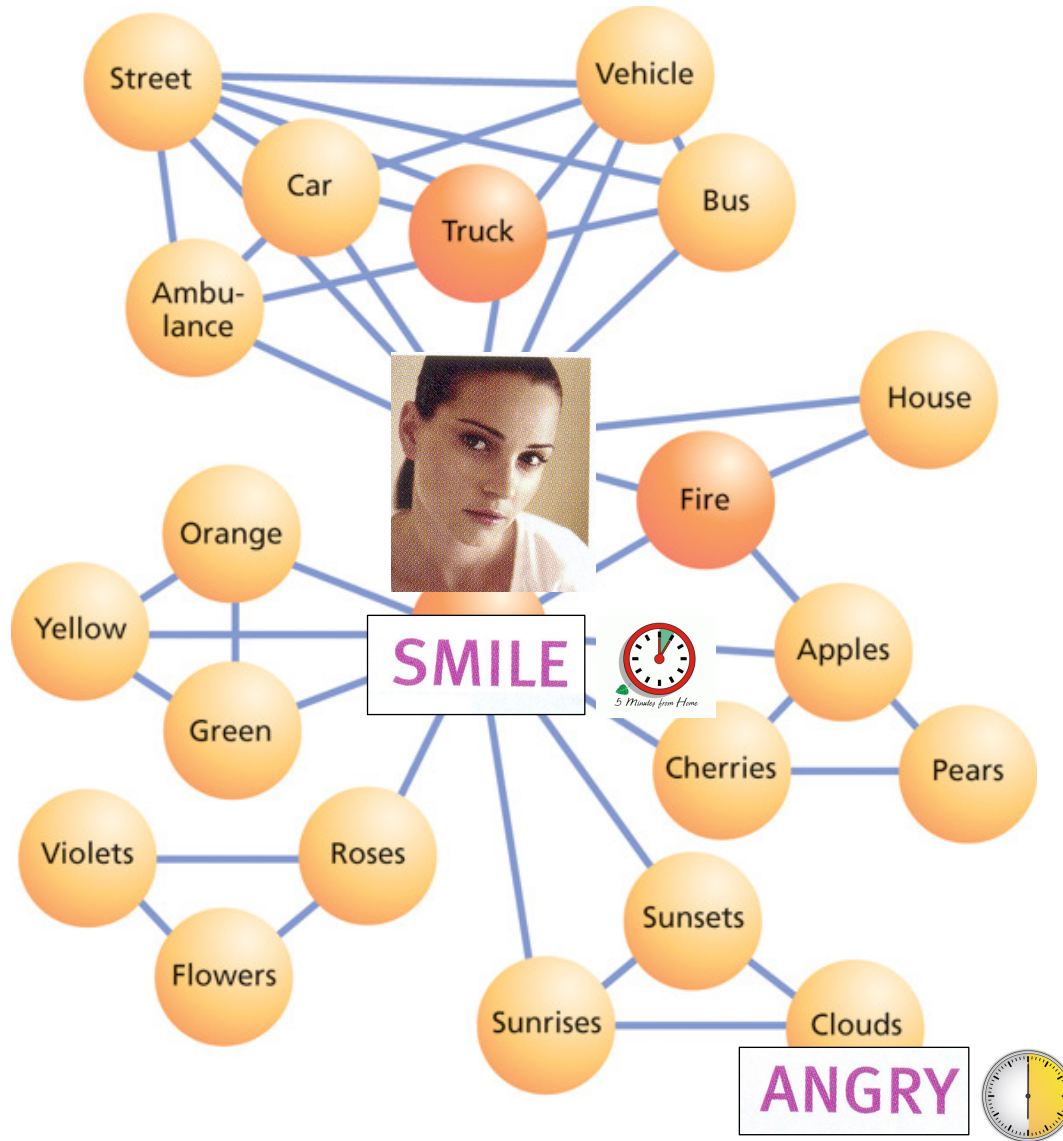
Associative Networks and the Implicit Attitude Test



Associative Networks and the Implicit Attitude Test



Associative Networks and the Implicit Attitude Test

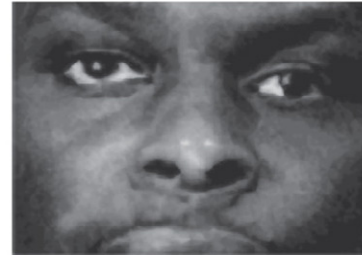


The Implicit Attitude Test

HYPOTHESIS: Stereotypes can influence basic perceptual processes.

RESEARCH METHOD:

- 1 White participants were shown a picture of a white face or a picture of a black face.



- 2 Immediately after viewing a picture of a face, participants were shown a picture of an object and asked to classify it as a gun or a tool as quickly as possible.



RESULTS: Participants primed by seeing black faces identified guns more quickly and mistook tools for guns.

CONCLUSION: Stereotypes affect perception.

SOURCE: Payne, B. K. (2001). Prejudice and perception: The role of automatic and controlled processes in misperceiving a weapon. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81, 181–192.





Role of Stereotypes



Your task is to decide:

- When the criminal was holding a gun, shoot the criminal.
- When the civilian was holding a neutral object, you do nothing.

Role of Stereotypes

	White Skin	Black Skin
Holding a gun	 18 starburst icons	 18 starburst icons
Holding a Camera	 2 starburst icons	 3 starburst icons



People were more likely to identify ambiguous items as weapons if the person was black.

Why do Stereotypes Matter?

- We are more likely to harm members of groups with negative stereotypes
 - Reminding people of negative stereotypes regarding intelligence increase the odds of poorer performance (see stereotype threat).
 - We are more likely to justify harm done to group members with negative stereotypes (e.g. sexual assault victims).
 - We are more likely to believe bad behavior performed by group members with negative stereotypes.
 - Loan offers are more likely to direct minorities to loans with a higher interest rate.
- We are more likely to support cuts in programs for those in need
 - You are more likely to support welfare programs that help the needy due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g. hurricanes)
 - You are more likely to cut welfare programs for the “welfare queen” (which is a very small minority of people who receive welfare).
- Negative stereotypes of groups can lead to unfair treatment
 - Walmart has had problems of detaining minorities for behavior, while non-minorities are not detained for the same behavior.
 - Costco reduces this problem by performing the same behavior for all customers--checking everyone's receipts, not just a select few.

Groups, Stereotypes and Prejudice

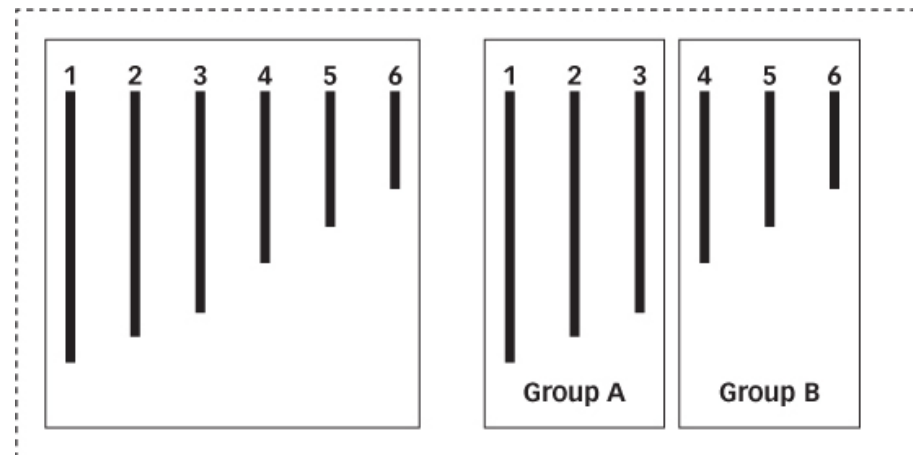
Stereotypes are beliefs and/or cognitive schemas that help us organize information about groups ([page 528](#)).

Dividing people (or anything) into groups can be useful, but dividing things into groups exaggerates the differences between groups. People from different groups, such as from different racial and ethnic groups are far more alike than they are different. Any differences that may exist between members of different groups are far smaller than differences among various group members ([page 454](#)).

Groups, Stereotypes and Prejudice

Those who see the lines on the right (group A and group B)

- tend to overestimate the similarity of lines 1, 2, and 3 and similarity of lines 4, 5 and 6
- underestimate the similarity of lines between lines 3 and 4.



The difference between the length of lines at the boundary that divides Group A and Group B (or line 3 and 4) is seen as larger than it actually is. Even with “content-less lines” that have no meaning, we exaggerate differences between groups.

Group Boundaries Exaggerate Differences Between Groups

Boundaries can create the perception of differences when they don't exist. The following is a visual illusion from the Discovering Psychology #7: Sensation and Perception at about 20:00 into the video



Most people see two different shades in the left and right side. Now cover up the center line.

Context affects perceptions—boundaries

Boundaries can create the perception of differences when they don't exist.



Boundaries, divisions and categories can exaggerate differences between groups that are quite similar. Men and women are more similar than they are different. The different categories accentuate and focus our attention on the differences, not the similarities. With this example it is easy to see how context and a dividing line affect perception. In the real world, it is difficult to see this effect, especially when we can't see the two groups with the boundary removed.

Group Boundaries Exaggerate Differences Between Groups

Dividing people into groups is necessary, however arbitrary divisions exaggerates differences and minimizes similarities. This process is unconscious and automatic which makes combating their influence difficult—especially when “seeing is believing”.

When we categorize people by gender, religion, political affiliation, intelligence, generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennial), socioeconomic status, extraverts versus introverts, etc., we tend to downplay the similarities across groups (men and women are more alike) and the variations within a group (democrats are quite different from one another democrats and republicans are quite different from other republicans)

This can lead to the outgroup homogeneity effect—the tendency for you to perceive the outgroup or “them” as more homogenous (similar) and the ingroup or “us” as quite diverse.

In addition, our perception of the group we belong to can change depending on the context.

Who am I?



Who am I?



Sources of Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination

Generally, stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination develop through multiple processes. Generally, psychologists talk about

- Cognitive sources
- Emotional sources
- Environmental/social/cultural sources

Out-group Homogeneity Effect

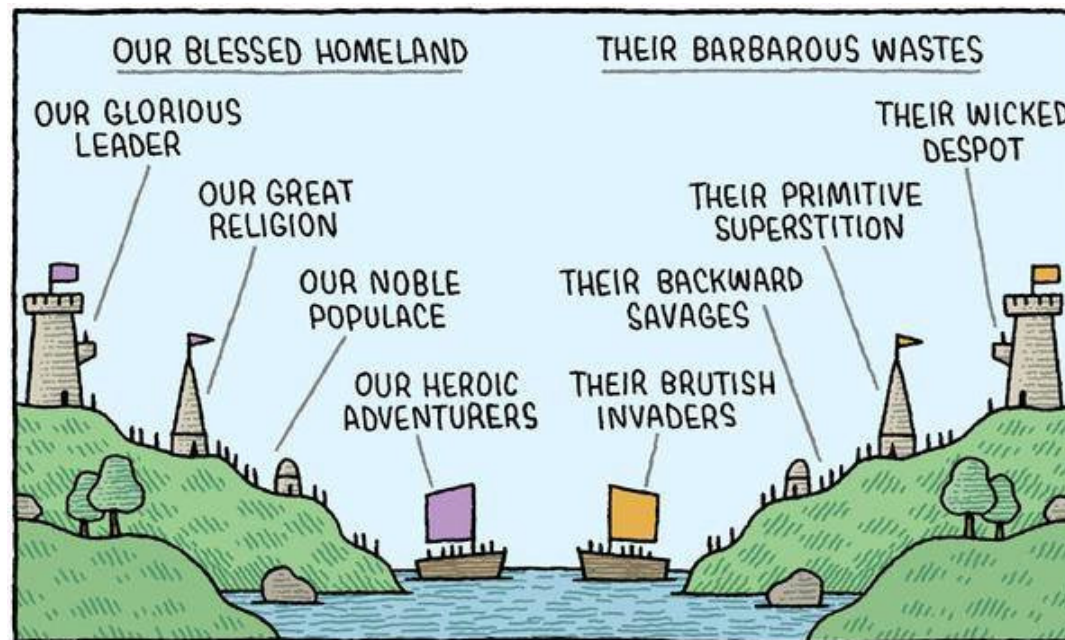
Out-group homogeneity effect: The tendency to see members of out-groups as very similar to one another ([page 457](#)), while exaggerating differences with the in-group.

- 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.
- All of those homeless people are just the same.

Usually the out-group homogeneity effect is talked about in the context of race, but can be applied broadly.

In-group Bias

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”.



Putting people into an out-group as “enemies” can make it less likely you will treat them with respect and fairly and more likely that you will incur harm on them.

In-group	Out-group
<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 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When you attack, it is because you are aggressive.• They are successful because they are lucky. fate and previous• 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.• When the economy grows under “your president”, it is due to his circumstances.• When they support “terrorists” it is

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
- 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.

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
 - 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
-

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,

- fundamental attributional error (FAE),
- actor-observer bias,
- self-serving bias,
- the ingroup-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 13](#)) consists of being fair and unprejudiced, this information can be perceived as being threatening your self-concept and you will ... (insert answer).

Strategies for Dealing with Prejudice

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

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).*

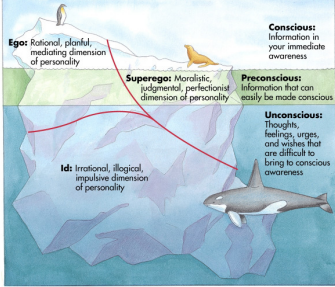

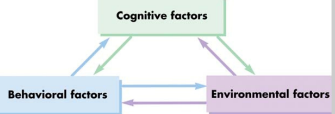
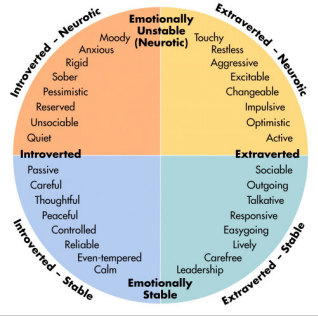
If you are unaware of how prejudicial attitudes and discrimination occur, it makes it difficult to address the problem.

Mutual Cooperation:



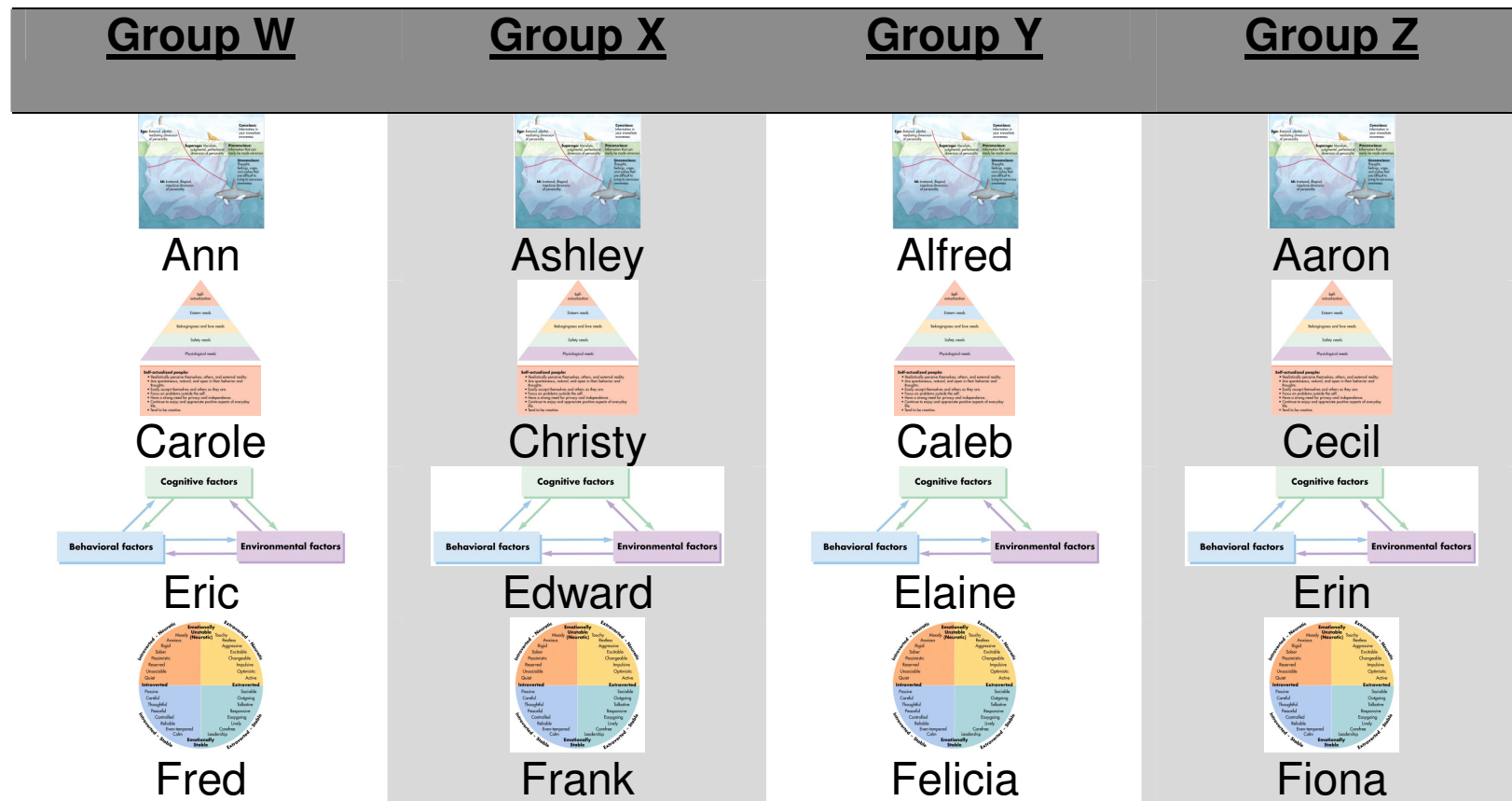
The Jigsaw Method

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

Psychoanalytic	Humanist	Social-cognitive	Trait
 <p>Ego: Rational, planful, mediating dimension of personality</p> <p>Superego: Moralistic, judgmental, perfectionist dimension of personality</p> <p>Id: Irrational, illogical, impulsive dimension of personality</p> <p>Conscious: Information in your immediate awareness</p> <p>Preconscious: Information that can easily be made conscious</p> <p>Unconscious: Thoughts, feelings, urges, and wishes that are difficult to bring to conscious awareness</p>	 <p>Self-actualized peoples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realistically perceive themselves, others, and external reality. Are spontaneous, natural, and open in their behavior and thoughts. Easily accept themselves and others as they are. Focus on problems outside the self. Have a strong need for privacy and independence. Continue to enjoy and appreciate positive aspects of everyday life. Tend to be creative. 	 <p>Cognitive factors</p> <p>Behavioral factors</p> <p>Environmental factors</p>	 <p>Emotionally Unstable (Neurotic)</p> <p>Emotionally Stable</p> <p>Introverted</p> <p>Extraverted</p>
<p>Ann</p> <p>Ashley</p> <p>Alfred</p> <p>Aaron</p>	<p>Carole</p> <p>Christy</p> <p>Caleb</p> <p>Cecil</p>	<p>Eric</p> <p>Edward</p> <p>Elaine</p> <p>Erin</p>	<p>Fred</p> <p>Frank</p> <p>Felicia</p> <p>Fiona</p>

The Jigsaw Method

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.



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 Roker (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?

Difficulties in Reducing Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination

Stereotypes can be self-perpetuation (have a life of their own outside of reality) due to the following processes

- Inconsistencies in attitudes or behavior occur far apart in time and difficult to notice without feedback.
- Self-fulfilling prophecies
 - Acting in ways to elicit the behavior in others that are consistent with our expectation.
 - Examples:
 - Empire Strikes Back
 - Elementary school “Bloomers”
 - Telephone conversation with who they believed was an attractive or unattractive woman.
- Perceptual confirmation
 - The bias to seek and remember information consistent with our beliefs
 - The bias to forget and/or not notice information inconsistent with our beliefs
 - The bias to label behavior differently, depending on the group.
 - The bias in remembering negative instances, rather than positive instances.

For some people, perceiving the alternative is uncomfortable because it threatens their world view and sense of self. This can be especially true if you have a very homogeneous experience not filled with different perspectives.

- Subtyping
 - When inconsistent information is encountered, we create a new category to put that information in, instead of changing our stereotype.
 - If you believe women are bad drivers and observe a woman who is a good driver, you say "she really isn't a woman".

Prejudicial Attitudes and Difficulties Reducing Prejudice: Perceiving Inconsistencies

One of many reasons why reducing prejudicial attitudes is difficult is because they are unconscious and automatic. These inconsistencies may occur far apart in 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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RECOMMEND THIS PHOTO » Recommended Photos
Recommend It: Average (138 votes)
☆☆☆☆☆ ★★★★★

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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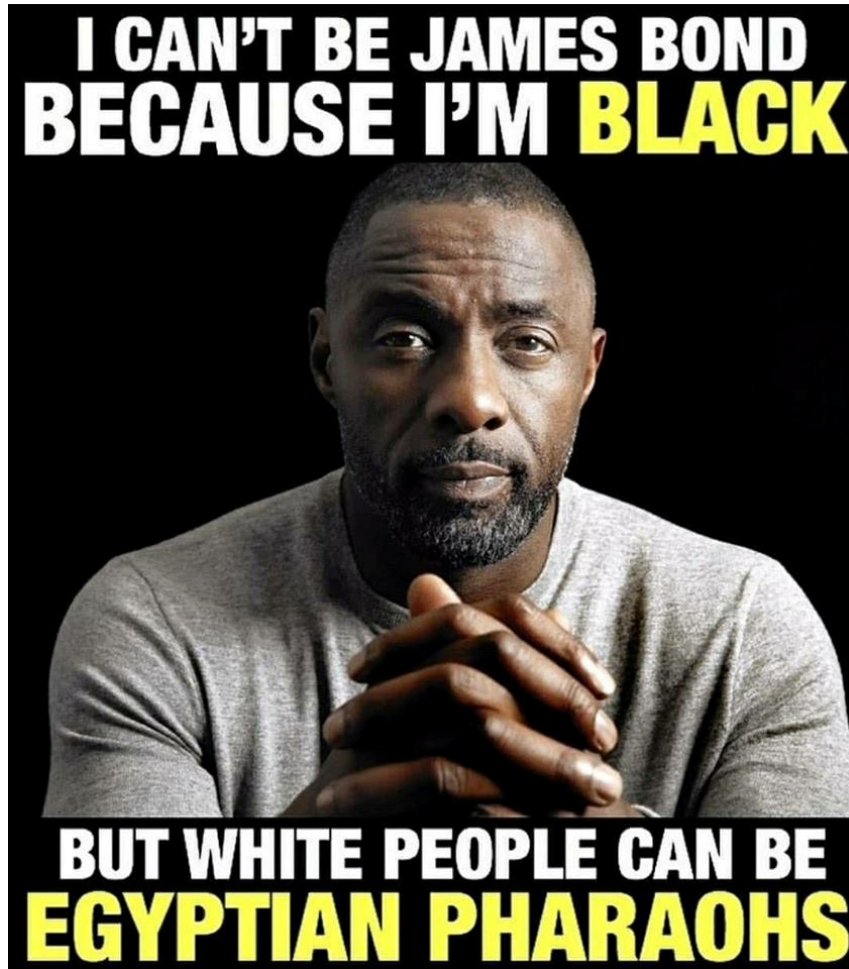
[Hurricanes & Tropical Storms](#)

Attitudes and beliefs can influence the attribution we make.

Stereotypes and prejudice influence how we feel

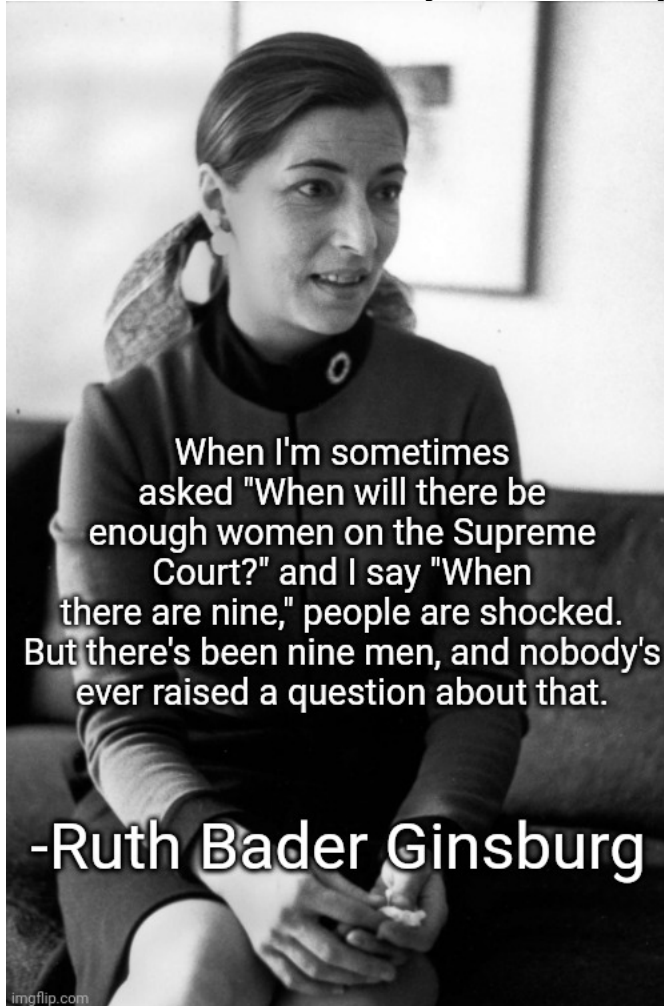


Mental Representations and Inconsistencies



We have mental images and cultural stories. When changes occur, that disrupts our world view and creates anxiety. To reduce the anxiety, we resist the change.

Our culture emphasizes certain stereotypes and prejudices that are unconscious and automatic. Only when they are pointed out, we might notice them.



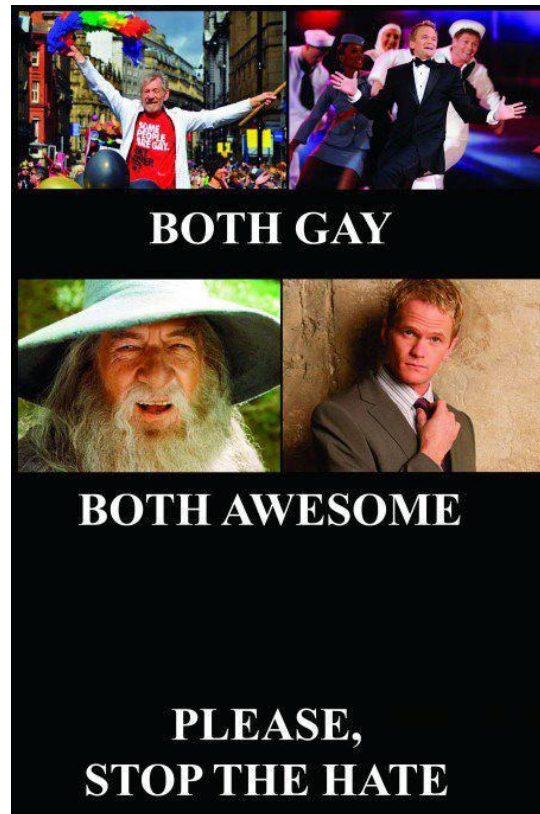
When I'm sometimes asked "When will there be enough women on the Supreme Court?" and I say "When there are nine," people are shocked. But there's been nine men, and nobody's ever raised a question about that.

-Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Difficulties in Reducing Stereotypes and Prejudice

Perceptual Confirmation: Confirmation Bias/Fallacy of Positive Instances

Stereotypes tend to be self-perpetuating because we tend to think of or remember examples that are consistent with that stereotype instead of examples that are inconsistent with that stereotype, which makes dispelling the stereotype difficult.



Difficulties in Reducing Stereotypes and Prejudice Different Labels for the Same Behavior

Stereotypes can persist because we label behavior differently depending on group membership.

WHITES SMOKING WEED:	hippies
BLACKS SMOKING WEED:	thugs
WHITES ON WELFARE:	poor
BLACKS ON WELFARE:	lazy
GIRLS GONE WILD:	good ol college days
BLACK WOMAN TWERKIN:	whore
WHITES CANT FIND A JOB:	bad economy
BLACKS CANT FIND A JOB:	dependent
WHITE COUNTRY BOMBING BROWN COUNTRIES:	democracy
SEPTEMBER 11:	terrorism
WHITES TORCH COP CARS AND DESTROY PROPERTY AFTER BASEBALL GAMES:	rowdy
BLACKS TORCH COP CARS AND DESTROY PROPERTY AFTER A COP GETS AWAY WITH MURDER:	savages
WHITE PEOPLE IN CORPORATE POSITIONS OF POWER:	hard work
BLACK PEOPLE IN CORPORATE POSITIONS OF POWER:	affirmative action

GENDER BIAS



assertive



bitch



articulate



chatty



stud



slut



leader



nag

Negative Stereotypes can Arise from Biases in Attention and Memory

"A teacher came into her class and wrote the following on the board...

9x1=**7**
9x2=18
9x3=27
9x4=36
9x5=45
9x6=54
9x7=63
9x8=72
9x9=81
9x10=90

When she was done, she looked to the students and **they were ALL laughing at her** for getting the first equation wrong.

The teacher let the laughter die down and then said the following;

'I wrote that first one wrong on purpose because I wanted you to see how the world will treat you when you mess up.

I got ONE thing wrong. But I wrote right answer 9 times.

This is how many people in the world will treat you. They will criticize the one wrong thing you do and skip over the million good things you've done."

There can be a bias in remembering errors and negative events, and may have evolved to facilitate survival (see evolutionary perspective), and forgetting/taking for granted the success and positive events.

This can exaggerate the error or negative event, leading to the formation of an stereotype when it relates to group membership like minority status, or the abusive behavior by the police.



Renegade Sailor - 🇺🇸 · Jan 28

I have never in my life met a feminist and then walked away going 'wow, that was an incredibly happy person!'

116 6 31



James Fell ✓
@BodyForWife

Replying to [@Renegade_Sailor](#)

This is quite the self-own.
Because the common denominator in all these interactions is that they just met you.

Maintenance of Stereotypes: Subtyping

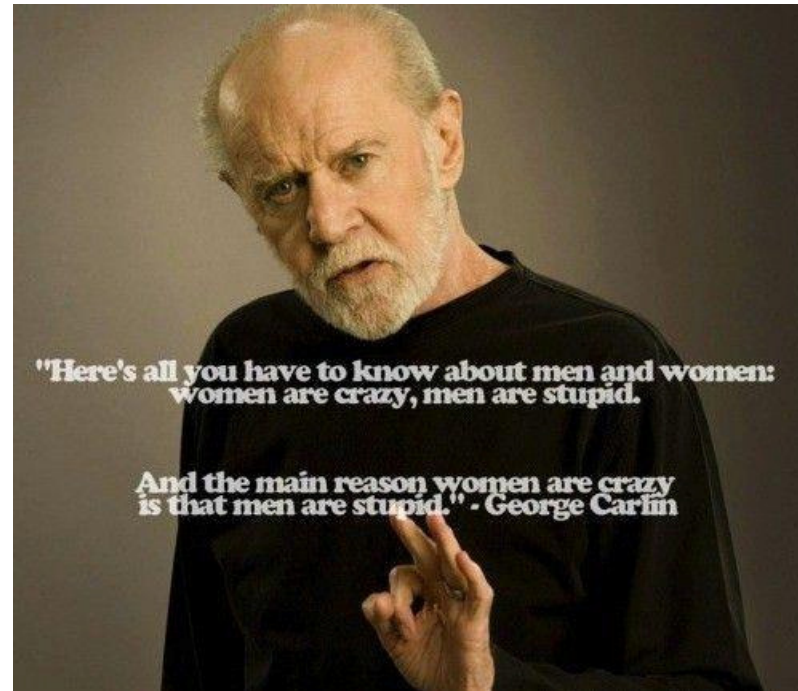
With all the information out there about groups, one can imagine that it would be easy for stereotypes to change and false ones dismissed.

However, it is psychologically easy to distort reality instead of changing our beliefs and stereotypes about the world around us. Subtyping is the tendency for people who are faced with disconfirming evidence to modify their stereotypes (by creating a new category), rather than abandon them.

- When we encounter a woman who is good driver, we don't change the stereotype that women are bad drivers, we say, "She isn't really a woman"
- When we come across a nice dog/cat person and that doesn't match your stereotype, we say "they aren't a dog/cat person, they are an animal person".

Subtyping stereotypic beliefs allows you to maintain your belief in the presence of disconfirming evidence.

Maintenance of Stereotypes: Subtyping



Subtyping stereotypic beliefs

- If you believe that women are crazy and you come across a “normal” woman, you say she really isn’t a woman.
- If you believe that men are stupid and you come across an “intelligent” man, you say he really isn’t a man.

Who should learn about these the psychology of stereotypes, discrimination and prejudice? Why should they learn about them?