





Sources of Prejudice: Where does Prejudice come from?

Members of different groups tend to be more alike than they are different. There is greater variation within your own group members, than between different groups. One source of prejudice arises from the belief that members of other social groups are very different than your own group. Cognitive process can exaggerate these differences.

Your book covers three perspectives of prejudicial attitudes. Other books include a social/cultural perspective of prejudicial attitudes.

Economic	Emotional	Cognitive	Social*
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic Group Conflict Theory • Robbers Cave Experiment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minimal group paradigm • Social Identity theory • Frustration-Aggression Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stereotype and Conservation of Mental Reserve • Construal Processes and Biased Assessment • Explaining Away Exceptions • Automatic and Controlled Processing 	

The Economic Perspective: Robbers Cave Experiment



Social Psychology, 2/e Unnumbered 12 p451
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Does competition facilitate intergroup conflict?

22 fifth grade boys were taken to Robbers Cave State Park. These boys had no problems in school, were all from intact, middle-class families, and no notable ethnic differences among them ([page 450](#)) and split into two groups.

The first phase was consisted of various activities to promote group cohesion within their own group, including choosing a name. One group was the Eagles, the other were Rattlers.

There were various competitive events where one team would win, and the other team would lose. Activities included baseball, touch football, and a treasure hunt. These activities were chosen such that it made it more likely that the other team would be seen as a barrier to the fulfillment of their own goal ([page 450](#)).

Soon afterward, the two groups that had no inherent differences were in conflict over scarce resources.

The Economic Perspective: Robbers Cave Experiment



Once conflict between the two groups occurred, simple interactions or social contact (the contact hypothesis) did not reduce conflict. In some cases it made it worse.

Only when the researchers devised several crises that could only be solved by cooperation (a superordinate goal) was hostility reduced.

The important lessons of Sherif's Cave Robber's experiment are that (page 452):

- differences in background, appearance or a history of conflict is necessary for intergroup hostility to develop.
- All that is necessary is that the groups compete for goals that only one can achieve
- competition against "outsiders" can increase group cohesion
- intergroup conflict can be reduced by working together toward a common goal. Simply putting adversaries together is not enough.

The Motivational (or emotional) Perspective

- The minimal group paradigm
- Social identity theory
- Frustration-aggression Theory

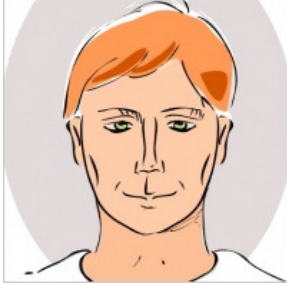
Social Identity Theory: A theory that a person's self-concept and self-esteem not only derive from personal identity and accomplishments, but from the status and accomplishments of the various groups to which the person belongs



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<u>Personal Identity</u>	Self-Concept and Self-Esteem	<u>Group Membership</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychologist • Physicist • Dog person • Stuck in 70's for music • Stuck in 80's for movies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCC part-time faculty • (insert religion) • (insert political affiliation)

The Motivational (or emotional) Perspective

Because our self-esteem is tied to group membership, we are motivated to boost the status and fortunes of our group (page 456).

The success or failure of the group affects our sense of self.

- Those who are allowed an opportunity to engage in intergroup discrimination were more likely to have a higher sense of self-esteem
- Those who received negative feedback about their performance were more likely to invoke prejudicial attitudes
- Those who strongly identify with their group affiliation (Their sense of self is strongly tied to their self-esteem) were more prone to ingroup favoritism.
- People who are highly identified with a particular group react to criticism of the group as if it were a criticism of the self (remember the gender and caffeine study and the aftermath of the Grammy in 2011 that went to Esperanza Spalding and not Justin Bieber)
- When a group threatens your sense of self, your world view, you are more likely to have hostile feelings toward that group (e.g. civil rights and minorities, women voting, immigration, homosexuals and marriage, fox hunting in England, environmentalists)

The Motivational (or emotional) Perspective

Basking in Reflected Glory (BIRG):

The tendency to take pride in the accomplishments of those with whom we are in way associated (even if it is only weakly), as when fans identify with a winning team



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After “your team” wins, there is a tendency for people to say “we won”. After “your team” loses, there is a tendency to say “they loss”. This is subtle, unconscious and difficult to detect the discrepancy because they occur far apart in time.

- When your team wins, you are more likely to see people wearing shirts the next day than after a loss
- When your presidential candidate wins, you are more likely to see their signs displayed than the loser.

The Cognitive Perspective

- Stereotypes and Conservation of Mental Reserves
- Construal Processes and Biased Assessments
 - Accentuation of ingroup similarities and outgroup differences
 - The Outgroup homogeneity effect
 - Biased information processing
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy
 - Distinctiveness and Illusory correlations
- Explaining Away Exceptions
- Automatic and Controlled Processing

Construal Processes and Biased Assessments

- **Construal Processes and Biased Assessments**
 - Accentuation of ingroup similarities and outgroup differences
 - The Outgroup homogeneity effect
 - Biased information processing
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy
 - Distinctiveness and Illusory correlations
- **Explaining Away Exceptions**

The Outgroup Homogeneity Effect

Out-group homogeneity effect: The tendency to assume that within-group similarity is much stronger for outgroups than for ingroups (page 464).

- 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

Biased information processing

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
- Availability heuristic
 - Illusory correlations
 - Fallacy of positive instances
- Beliefs/Expectations/Stereotypes
 - Confirmation bias
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy
 - Belief-bias

Biased information processing

To illustrate how beliefs interfere with our ability to assess beliefs, I will use a common belief that women are bad drivers and show how the same process takes place when evaluating other beliefs.

When many people state this belief, they tend to commit three basic errors:

- Problem 1: People tend to search for evidence that tends to confirm their belief (the confirmation bias). They think of all the women they know that are bad drivers.

	Men	Women
Good Drivers		
Bad Drivers		Think of women who are bad drivers... Chris, Melanie, Lorna

- Problem 2: People tend to use different criteria when evaluating evidence. Different criteria and explanations are used for the same behavior (belief-bias, chapter 7).
 - **He** ran the red light because he had no other choice.
 - **She** ran the red light because she was reckless.
- Problem 3: Disconfirming evidence is explained away. When one comes across a good driver who is a woman, people say “she isn’t really a woman”. This is common with racial stereotypes.

Problems with Casually Testing Beliefs: We use Different Standards for the Same Behavior

“Looted”

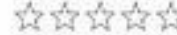


AP Associated Press AP - Tue Aug 30, 11:31 AM ET

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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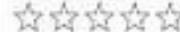


3:47 AM ET

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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• Katrina's Effects, at a Glance AP - Tue Aug 30, 1:26 PM ET

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“Found”

Applying Problems with Casually Testing Beliefs Broadly

These problems in casually testing a belief can lead to an illusory correlation.

	Law Abiding	Criminal
Non-minority		
Minority		You think of all the times minorities commit crimes

	Good Policies	Bad Policies
Democrats		
Republicans		

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.

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. (e.g. Carson from Queer Eye for the Straight Guy or Smithers from the Simpsons)



We tend not to think about Ian McKellan, Zachary Quinto, Neil Patrick Harris, or Richard Chamberlain.

- Cultural images we see on television, advertisements, hear on the radio, etc. can reinforce status of groups

THE MASS MEDIA AND PREJUDICE

Children seeing these two media portrayals of African Americans would obtain sharply contrasting views.

