

Chapter 11

CHANGING PREJUDICE

The Effects of Persuasion on Implicit and Explicit Forms of Race Bias

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The 20th century produced some of the most sweeping campaigns of persuasion the world has ever witnessed, and at their cores were issues of race. In the most notorious act of mass persuasion, Adolf Hitler convinced millions of people to support the genocide of the Jewish people in Europe—a most extreme form of racism. In the United States, the mid-20th century was marked by the rise of the civil rights movement, and leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. campaigned with messages of racial tolerance and equality. The effect of Hitler's message of hate was undeniable. But what has been the effect of campaigns for racial tolerance? Have people's prejudices changed? Psychologists might ask the question: In what ways have racial attitudes changed, and how can such changes be measured?¹

If there is one thing that researchers of racial prejudice can agree on, it is that prejudice is exceedingly complex. At its core, however, racial prejudice has been defined in a straightforward manner. Social psychologist Gordon Allport defined prejudice as a negative attitude that puts the object of prejudice at a disadvantage (Allport, 1954). As will become clear later in the chapter, this definition may be deceptively simple when evaluating evidence concerning changes in racial prejudice and the effects of persuasive campaigns. To set the stage for considering how prejudices may be changed through persuasion, we examine some of the mechanisms that psychologists have identified as contributing to intergroup prejudice. Next, we consider some famous persuasive campaigns that have shaped Americans' views on racial prejudice, noting their focus on two major aspects of racial prejudice: its *morality* and its *legality*. We discuss the psychological processes that underlie the effects of major persuasive campaigns and consider how these campaigns have changed the way in which

prejudice is expressed and, importantly, how changes in various forms of prejudice—from the conscious to the subconscious—can be measured.

THE SEEDS OF PREJUDICE

When 20 third-graders arrived to class one day in 1968 in Riceville, Iowa, a small town whose inhabitants were largely white and Christian, they were met with some unsettling news. Their teacher, Jane Elliot, announced that they were not all alike. Some had blue eyes and others had brown eyes, and they were *not* equal.²

Elliot explained that the blue-eyed boys and girls were nicer, smarter, neater, and generally better than the brown-eyed children, and to help distinguish them, blue-eyed and brown-eyed children would wear different-colored collars reflecting their group memberships. From that point on, blue-eyed children enjoyed special privileges not enjoyed by the brown-eyed children; they got to be first in line, got to play longer at recess, were allowed second servings in the cafeteria, and received more attention and praise when responding in class. The effects of this new classroom distinction were quickly evident. Blue-eyed children were more active and enthusiastic in class discussions and showed improved academic performance. Intergroup hostilities also emerged very quickly. Indeed, later that same day, a boy returned from recess, clearly upset, to report that he had been in a fight with another child who had insulted him. Why? The answer was at once simple and unsettling; he had been called “brown eyes.”

The following day, the children learned that there had been a mistake. Elliot explained that the assignment of traits to eye color had been reversed. It was actually the brown-eyed children who were smarter, nicer, neater, and all-around better than the blue-eyed children. What do you imagine were the implications of the now reversed positions of the students? Did the children, learning from their experience, decide to look beyond eye color and to treat everyone equally? Would the experience of being unfairly stigmatized lead to empathy with this plight of those now stigmatized? Far from it! On hearing the news, the brown-eyed children gleefully and immediately assumed the roles and privileges that the blue-eyed children had enjoyed the day before. And intergroup hostilities, rather than being mitigated, were perpetuated. Switching roles did little to promote intergroup harmony.

Elliot’s demonstration revealed that intergroup prejudices can be formed quite easily (see also Devine, 1995). The children assigned to the superior roles in Elliot’s class assumed their new status with little persuasion, and it took virtually no time for the children to see themselves in terms of their in-group or out-group memberships. Many psychologists have been interested in the ways in which the human mind is tuned to differences between groups and how attitudes toward other people may be based solely on whether or not they are part of one’s own group. Perhaps, by better understanding the basic building blocks of prejudice, we may gain insight into the monumental challenge faced by those who wish to reduce prejudice. In the next section, we examine some of the psychological theory and research suggesting that, in some ways, the human mind is designed to see group differences and that our tendency to focus on these differences contributes to the development of prejudice.

SEEING GROUPS: THE COGNITIVE BUILDING BLOCKS OF PREJUDICE

Cognitive Categorization and Person Perception

At its root, racial prejudice appears to arise from the mind's attempt to simplify and comprehend a vastly complex social world. Allport (1954) wrote, "The human mind must think with the aid of categories. Once formed, categories are the basis for normal prejudgment. We cannot possibly avoid this process. Orderly living depends on it" (p. 20).

To be certain, we live in a complex world, and taking in the constant stream of sights and sounds can be overwhelming. Yet humans have the amazing ability to navigate deftly through this sea of information, to extract the most important features of an object or a situation, and to block out stimuli that are not relevant to the task at hand. Social information, such as group affiliations, relationships, and interpersonal communications, can be particularly complex. How is it that humans can manage the complexities of the social world? Cognitive psychologists have proposed that the human mind is skilled at forming categories of information and that these categories act as *templates* according to which new information is quickly compared and organized. Templates are extremely useful mental tools for facilitating our ability to deal with our environments. When it comes to perceiving people of other social groups, these templates are typically referred to as *stereotypes* (Fiske, 1998; Lippman, 1922).

Just as templates are used to aid people's perceptions of common objects, in one sense, stereotypes function to organize and facilitate the processing of information about members of different social and/or ethnic groups. Stereotype knowledge springs to mind quickly and may aid the perceiver in making inferences about others and in understanding what to expect from them. Stereotypes may be especially influential when perceivers have little information about a specific individual and when responses are made either very rapidly or without much conscious deliberation (e.g., as in nonverbal behaviors) (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990). As a result of their automatic activation, the effect of stereotypes on behavior often occurs without one's awareness and may even affect people's responses unintentionally (Devine, 1989).

On the surface, it seems as though stereotypes might be a good thing; by reducing uncertainty, they may help to facilitate social interactions. Their biggest strength, however, may also be their most limiting quality. That is, a number of complications arise when this type of template-based processing is applied in interactions with people. Often the automatic, category-based assumptions made about members of stigmatized social groups—about their traits, aptitudes, and behaviors—are simply not accurate, and treating people negatively based on these assumptions would be unfair, hurtful, and even unlawful. In addition, as described by Allport (1954), people tend to categorize others in terms of *us* versus *them*, with the in-group (*us*) being favored over the out-group (*them*). That is, evaluations of out-groups tend to be biased in a negative way by simple virtue of the out-group being "different" from the self. When this built-in negative bias is combined with a process that is automatic and able to affect behavior without one's awareness or intention, the result is a potentially insidious component of prejudice. In what follows, we discuss some of the research demonstrating how social categorizations can lead to intergroup prejudice.

MOTIVATIONS FOR PREJUDICE: MECHANISMS OF IN-GROUP FAVORITISM

Social Identity Theory

Henri Tajfel suggested that people's self-concepts—their knowledge of themselves—are closely tied to the social groups to which they belong. Just as people generally like to think positively of themselves, they like to believe good things about their groups (Tajfel, 1978). Tajfel's Social Identity Theory posits that the need to hold a positive view of one's own group causes people to enhance views of their own group while derogating other groups (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1987). Thus, according to this view, motivational forces that drive intergroup prejudices may stem from simple categorization processes.

Minimal Group Paradigm

How strong do group affiliations have to be for the effects of social identity to take place? Not very strong, according to research by Tajfel and others. Several studies have demonstrated that the categorization of participants into groups based on arbitrary factors can lead to profound intergroup biases. The method of examining intergroup biases that arise from such arbitrary group assignments is referred to as the *minimal group paradigm* (for reviews, see Brewer & Brown, 1998; Messick & Mackie, 1989). For example, participants in Tajfel's (1978) study were grouped according to whether they preferred the abstract art of Wassily Kandinski or that of Paul Klee. Although this distinction among group members was not very meaningful, it led to intergroup biases whereby, in a subsequent task, participants gave greater rewards to others with similar preferences than to those with different preferences. Other research has shown that minimal group assignments cause people to view members of their group as being more similar to themselves and to view members of out-groups as being more different (e.g., Brown & Abrams, 1986; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel, Flament, Billig, & Bundy, 1971), thereby exacerbating the basic in-group/out-group effect. The polarizing effect of the minimal group paradigm has been replicated in numerous studies (for a review, see Brewer & Brown, 1998) and provides a powerful demonstration of how group membership along the most arbitrary lines can lead to intergroup prejudice.

Stereotyping to Bolster Self-Esteem

Implicit in many early theories of prejudice is the idea that people stereotype others to make themselves feel better. Applying stereotypes is an easy way in which to cast another person in a negative light so as to make one's own situation seem not so bad. Fein and Spencer (1997) put this idea to the test in a series of studies. In one study, a sample of male participants made personality ratings of a man who was labeled either gay or straight. Just before making the personality ratings, however, participants took an intelligence test. Half of the participants were told that they scored well below average for students at their college. Participants who received this self-esteem-threatening feedback rated the gay man as being more sensitive, feminine, creative, and passive—gay stereotypes that might seem pejorative when applied to straight men—than did participants who received neutral feedback about their intelligence. Participants' ratings of the straight man were not affected by the self-esteem threat, presumably because the

straight man did not present an opportunity for the application of negative stereotypes. In another experiment, Fein and Spencer showed that self-esteem threats were repaired if participants had a chance to derogate out-group members. Specifically, they found that participants who experienced a self-esteem threat evaluated out-group members negatively and that these negative evaluations resulted in a boost in their own self-esteem. This research shows that for people with threatened self-esteem, using stereotypes and prejudice can be rewarding. Although most people would agree that derogating members of stigmatized social groups is a despicable way of bolstering one's own self-esteem, this work shows that the need for self-esteem is nevertheless a powerful motivator of prejudice.

As we have seen from the findings reviewed so far, perceptions of group membership and their associated stereotypes form rapidly and are perpetuated by basic cognitive and motivational processes that can bias memory and attributions for others' behaviors and can promote self-fulfilling prophecies (Devine, 1995). As a "cognitive miser," the human mind perceives social information in terms of categories and stereotypes (Taylor, 1981). Social groups can be formed along the most insignificant differences, quickly leading to in-group favoritism and out-group derogation. Stereotypes are perpetuated by processes such as out-group homogenization—seeing out-group members as being more similar to one another than are in-group members—and by the functions they may serve such as preserving cognitive resources and boosting one's view of the self and one's social group. All this evidence suggests that prejudice can be instigated and maintained with relative ease.

PSYCHODYNAMIC PROCESSES

The research reviewed so far suggests that intergroup prejudices arise from simple group categorizations that lead to in-group favoritism. A different, yet complementary, perspective on the origins of prejudice has been provided by psychodynamic theorists. These theorists suggested that prejudice arises from pent-up displaced aggression. According to the psychodynamic model, people are often placed under hardship by forces that they cannot control. This can result in a buildup of aggression with no outlet to express it, either because the cause is abstract (e.g., broad economic forces) or too powerful to do anything about (e.g., the government, big business). For example, Hovland and Sears (1940) found that lynchings of African Americans in the South escalated during hard economic times. They suggested that because the poor white southerners were unable to aggress against the true cause of their hardship (the economy), they instead turned their frustrations on the nearby black people.

Researchers in the psychodynamic tradition also thought of prejudice as a symptom of an overarching personality disorder. The *authoritarian personality* (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), characterized by exaggerated submission to authority, extreme levels of conformity to conventional standards of behavior, self-righteous hostility, and harsh treatment of deviants and minority group members, was widely believed to underlie people's prejudices. More recently, these personality characteristics have been linked to political conservatism because authoritarians tend to support right-wing policies (Altemeyer, 1988). Hence, this personality type has come to be referred to as *right-wing authoritarianism* and has been associated with intolerance for homosexuals, AIDS patients, homeless people, and environmentalists (Haddock, Zanna, & Esses, 1993; Peterson, Doty, & Winter, 1993).

Realistic Group Conflict Theory

Realistic group conflict theory suggests simply that when two groups compete for the same resources, they inevitably come into conflict that results in prejudice and intergroup hostility (Levine & Campbell, 1972). In theory, prejudice may be ameliorated by ensuring that resources are distributed equally among groups. In practice, however, it is clear that people's subjective perceptions of fairness, whether right or wrong, may drive intergroup hostilities. As such, *relative deprivation theory* proposes that prejudice arises when people perceive, either accurately or not, that they are being deprived of some resource relative to other people or another group (Davis, 1959), and this framework has been used to explain white people's hostilities toward black people (Kluegel & Smith, 1982).

In sum, a variety of cognitive and motivational processes promote the perception that the in-group is different from and better than the out-group, leading to prejudiced attitudes. Cognitive processes serve to form and maintain group differences, whereas motivational and psychodynamic processes, such as the need to bolster one's damaged self-esteem or to justify the distribution of resources, promote in-group favoritism and out-group derogation. Moreover, these processes are self-perpetuating, such that once prejudices are formed, they can become highly resistant to change (Devine, 1995; Monteith, Zuwerink, & Devine, 1994). Hence, the psychological barriers to intergroup harmony and equality are formidable.

PREJUDICE TOWARD BLACK PEOPLE IN AMERICA

Our review of the psychological processes leading to prejudice in the previous section reveals how quickly and forcefully intergroup prejudices may take hold by virtue of basic cognitive and motivational processes and simple in-group versus out-group demarcations. To this point, however, the discussion has neglected the historical context, as well as the social and political contexts, in which intergroup hostilities develop and are played out. Prejudice toward black people in the United States, for example, follows a legacy of slavery and the nation's struggle to deal with a paradox of racism in a nation founded on the fundamental principle of equality. Placing prejudice in its historical and social context reveals that persuasive campaigns aimed at reducing intergroup hate have faced serious challenges.

Clearly, prejudices exist toward many different ethnic and social groups in American society. One may wonder, then, why prejudice toward black people is predominant and has, in particular, motivated such large-scale persuasion campaigns and legislative actions. The answer, we suggest, has to do with the long and troubled history of European–African relations, the slavery of Africans in America, and particularly the sociopolitical processes that have propagated racism toward black people in America. Unlike other ethnic minority groups whose members came to America to flee hardship and to search for opportunity, most black people arrived by force after being hunted down and kidnapped from their homes in Africa. The small percentage of these people who survived the long sea journey and the brutal treatment of their captors were brought before white American colonists to be sold alongside livestock as slaves. As such, black people in America were treated as subhuman from the mid-1600s until the mid-1800s, at which time individual states began to abolish slavery, eventually leading to the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863.

Although slavery was abolished, the U.S. government did not officially oppose segregationist policies until the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964—just 40 years before the writing of this chapter. Although exploring these issues in depth is beyond the scope of this chapter (but see Klinkner & Smith, 1999), these issues nonetheless provide a context in which to consider efforts to reduce or otherwise challenge the sensibility of prejudice and, thus, are noted here. It is important for psychologists to acknowledge that the complex processes underlying prejudice toward black people today have deep roots in the nation's cultural history. It is likely because of this overwhelming complexity that psychologists have had limited success in reducing prejudice and mitigating its harmful effects. Indeed, psychologists' focus on constructs such as category processing, minimal groups, self-esteem needs, and authoritarian personalities can sometimes seem dwarfed in significance when they are viewed against the backdrop of the complexities revealed when race-related prejudice is placed in its social, political, and historical contexts. Yet these constructs engage important mechanisms through which prejudices of the past are perpetuated in the present. Moreover, as we suggest in the next section, it is through mechanisms such as these that large-scale persuasive campaigns to reduce prejudice are likely to have had their effects.

THE ROADMAP TO INTERGROUP ACCEPTANCE: CAMPAIGNS OF POPULAR PERSUASION

Given the research suggesting that the human mind is in some ways predisposed to prejudice, and given the extent to which prejudice is woven into the fabric of the nation's history and culture, what is the route to intergroup acceptance? Major persuasive campaigns have focused primarily on two different strategies: questioning the *morality* of prejudice and questioning the *legality* of prejudice. The effects of these alternative strategies were perhaps the most dramatic and most obvious in producing changes in the country's collective moral conscience, which led to changes in norms regarding the appropriateness of prejudice and to laws proscribing prejudice. At the societal or normative level, these campaigns were highly effective, and the resulting changes were quite compelling and easy to document, as indicated by the adoption of laws prohibiting overt forms of discrimination and by the development of norms against overt expressions of prejudice. But as in any persuasion situation, a key question of interest is whether the persuasion attempts were effective in changing the hearts and minds of individuals, that is, whether they produced changes at the personal level. Answers to this question have proven to be elusive and highlight the difficulties faced by designers of persuasive campaigns in evaluating their effectiveness, for example, determining whether personal prejudices were reduced following exposure to the campaigns. In this section we illustrate examples of famous anti-prejudice campaigns and then consider the psychological processes that likely played a role in their effectiveness in changing attitudes and behaviors at normative (e.g., societal) and personal levels.

Appealing to Morals

In a nation founded on the principles of fairness and equality, the reality of prejudice was easy to challenge based on the notion that it violates such basic principles. Such strategies

strike at the core of people's sense of justice and challenge their views of themselves as fair-minded people. Two of the major campaigns took just this approach.

Uncle Tom's Cabin

The publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852 is considered by many to be the first major anti-prejudice campaign in American history. Released 10 years before the American Civil War, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* exposed the horrors of slavery and denounced it as being fundamentally in opposition to the central Christian (and American) value that all humans are created equal. The book quickly became the best-seller of its era, championed by the North and reviled by the South, and was read widely in Europe. At the time, it was second in popularity only to the Bible. Its argument polarized people's views of slavery and racial discrimination on both sides of the Mason–Dixon Line and helped to galvanize the events leading up to the Civil War (Stowe, 1852/1981; see also Green & Brock, chap. 6, this volume).

Civil Rights Activism

Nearly a century after the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Stowe, 1852/1981), a new era of anti-prejudice activism was taking form. Having recently witnessed the Holocaust during World War II, some Americans became increasingly critical of the prejudices directed at black people in the United States (Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997). Black Americans, with the support of many white Americans, began to organize large rallies and demonstrations to protest racism and demand equal rights for racial minorities. The civil rights movement of the 20th century reached its peak in 1963 at the famous March on Washington, organized by Martin Luther King, Jr., where 200,000 people gathered to protest racial discrimination and the persisting segregation. It was here that King delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech (Figure 11.1). This speech was symbolic of a movement aimed to persuade both the American people and the federal government to support equal rights, and it proffered a message of peaceful integration between white and black people.

Questioning the Legality of Prejudice: Civil Rights Legislation

It may be true that the law cannot make a man love me, but it can keep him from lynching me, and I think that's pretty important.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.,
Wall Street Journal, November 13, 1962

It's been said that *stateways change folkways* and that an effective way of changing people's attitudes is to first change their behavior through legal mandates (Aronson, 1999). Since the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, federal legislation has moved closer to mandating complete equality among people of different ethnicities, genders, religions, and beliefs. This legislation included the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the strongest statement of equal rights to date, which made discrimination of any kind due to race illegal. Arguably, the introduction



Figure 11.1 Martin Luther King, Jr. Speaking at the March on Washington on August 28, 1963

SOURCE: © Flip Schulke/CORBIS.

of these laws set in motion an indirect form of influence designed to produce behaviors that were consistent with the civil campaigns. The hope was that once behavior changed, people's attitudes and beliefs would follow.

PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS OF ANTI-PREJUDICE CAMPAIGNS

The anti-prejudice campaigns that called into question the morality and legality of prejudice were accompanied by substantial changes in the sociopolitical climate of intergroup relations and attitudes in America (Schuman et al., 1997). However, these anti-prejudice campaigns achieved their effects through distinctly different strategies of persuasion. These strategies, by their design and objective, called into play various psychological mechanisms that have been shown through research to have powerful effects on the attitude change process. In this section, we examine some of these psychological mechanisms and discuss their strengths and limitations for reducing racial prejudice. In so doing, we focus on a few illustrative examples of research and direct the reader elsewhere for more extensive literature reviews.

Questioning the Morality of Prejudice

In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe (1852/1981) appealed to white Americans' moral sensibility by pointing out the discrepancy between the practice of slavery and their Christian values of

humanity and equality. In essence, she simultaneously brought attention to two important beliefs held by many people at the time—the belief that one is a good Christian and the fact that one endorses slavery—and hoped that people would identify the conflict and then choose to resolve it by rejecting slavery. During the 1940s, this observation was reprised by Gunnar Myrdal in his book *An American Dilemma*. Myrdal (1944) observed that many Americans experience a conflict between beliefs in egalitarianism and freedom, on the one hand, and beliefs in racial prejudice, on the other. Allport (1954) later noted that “prejudice attitudes are almost certain to collide with deep-seated values that are often equally or more central to the personality” (p. 326), suggesting that people may choose to reconsider their prejudices when they realize that prejudiced beliefs conflict with more central beliefs in personal freedoms. For both Myrdal and Allport, these internal conflicts were decidedly moral and provided impetus for prejudice reduction.

The Value Conflict Approach

The process of attitude change following from conflict between attitudes and moral values was examined systematically by Rokeach (1973). Rokeach proposed a technique of attitude change called *value self-confrontation*, whereby the conflict between beliefs in prejudice and beliefs in egalitarianism were made salient to participants. Rokeach reasoned that feelings of self-dissatisfaction should arise when people acknowledge that their egalitarian self-conceptions are inconsistent with their prejudiced values, attitudes, and/or behaviors (see also Devine & Monteith, 1993; Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991). According to Rokeach (1973), this self-dissatisfaction should motivate people to change the prejudiced components of their beliefs and behaviors to be more in line with their egalitarian self-images.

Rokeach’s (1973) analysis has been tested in several experiments where participants were encouraged to recognize inconsistencies among their personal values regarding prejudice. In these experiments, some participants initially ascribed little personal importance to the values of “equality” and “freedom.” However, these participants viewed equality and freedom as very important after they were confronted with the inconsistency between their low rankings of the values and their views of themselves as fair, tolerant, democratic, and so on. This value change was eventually followed by attitude change such that participants revised their anti-black attitudes to be consistent with their egalitarian values (see also Monteith, 1993). Rokeach’s (1973) program of research is impressive because it underscores the theoretical processes involved in changing prejudiced attitudes.

Empathy

One way in which the civil rights movement and *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* motivated people to question the morality of prejudice was by eliciting their empathic concerns regarding the treatment of black people. That is, they illustrated and explicated the discrimination and abuse experienced by black people. Perhaps, by encouraging white Americans to imagine what it would be like to “walk in someone else’s shoes,” they would motivate white Americans to gain a better sense of what it is like to be discriminated against and, consequently, to oppose prejudiced doctrine more strongly. Indeed, this was what Iowa teacher Jane Elliot had in mind when she “reversed the roles” of blue- and brown-eyed children in her classroom demonstration.

There are several examples of contemporary literature that have been effective in conveying what it is like to be the target of racial discrimination, including *The Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, *Roots* by Alex Haley, *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison, *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, *Native Son* by Richard Wright, and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* by Malcolm X.

In 1959, John Howard Griffin took the idea of “walking in another man’s shoes” quite literally. Born in Texas during the 1920s, Griffin had witnessed prejudices at home in the South and abroad while serving in World War II to help Jews in France escape from the Nazis. Back in America after the war, Griffin decided that if he wanted to understand the prejudices directed toward black people, he would have to become one of them. Using pigment-enhancing medication and tanning lights, Griffin darkened the color of his skin. With his head and hands shaved, he was identified by strangers as a black man. For 6 weeks, Griffin traveled through the Deep South as a black man, where he experienced hate stares, segregated lunch counters, mockery, and threats. The journal that Griffin kept of his experiences provided compelling and often chilling descriptions of the animus and injustices that many white Americans perpetrated against those whose skin color was darker than their own. This powerful treatise, published in Griffin’s (1961) book *Black Like Me*, was immediately praised by some and reviled by others, much as was the case when *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was published some 100 years earlier.

The effects of empathy on reducing prejudice toward homeless people and AIDS patients were examined by Daniel Batson and colleagues. In one study, participants listened to a radio interview of a homeless man who described his plight (Batson et al., 1997). As they listened to the interview, some participants were told to take an objective perspective on what they heard, whereas others were instructed to imagine themselves in the homeless man’s shoes. Batson and colleagues found that participants who empathized with the man (e.g., imagined being in his shoes) later reported more positive attitudes toward homeless people in general provided that it was clear that the homeless man was not responsible for his condition. Similar results were obtained when the stigmatized target was a woman with AIDS (for a review, see Batson, 1998). These findings suggest that inducing people to feel empathy by encouraging them to imagine what it might be like to be a black person in a prejudiced society could reduce prejudiced attitudes.

QUESTIONING THE LEGALITY OF PREJUDICE

A different strategy for challenging prejudiced beliefs is to question the legality of racial discrimination. In line with this strategy, a series of civil rights laws have been enacted since slavery was abolished with the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. These laws represent the most direct ways in which to curtail overt expressions of prejudice and to create opportunities for intergroup contact (e.g., desegregation of schools). The hope was that if behaviors were changed, perhaps people’s hearts and minds would follow. Similarly, if intergroup contact were mandated through the process of desegregation, perhaps people would have their stereotypes disconfirmed and the presumed basis of their negative attitudes challenged. Now we discuss some of the mechanisms through which changes in behaviors may lead to changes in attitudes and beliefs.

Induced Compliance

In terms of persuasion, it is likely that civil rights legislation affected many people's attitudes by first changing their behaviors. According to *cognitive dissonance theory* (Festinger, 1957; see also Cooper, Mirabile, & Scher, chap. 4, this volume), people experience an uncomfortable state of "dissonance" when they act in ways that go against their beliefs. Leon Festinger and others suggested that people are highly motivated to resolve this aversive state of dissonance. One way of resolving this state is to change one's attitude to be consistent with one's behavior. For example, in the case of intergroup relations, a man might hold prejudiced beliefs but give equal treatment to a black person because he wants to comply with legal standards. The act of treating a black person equally despite his prejudiced attitudes would evoke cognitive dissonance in this person. If changing his behavior to be consistent with his attitude is undesirable (because it would be unlawful), the man could instead change his attitude to be consistent with his behavior. That is, he could adopt a more positive attitude toward black people to reduce cognitive dissonance. In this sense, civil rights legislation may constitute an indirect form of persuasion to reduce racial prejudice. Although cognitive dissonance provides a compelling theoretical explanation for the effect of civil rights laws on racial attitudes, it is notable that very few published studies have examined cognitive dissonance effects on racial attitudes and that the evidence they have provided has been somewhat weak (but see Gawronski & Strack, 2004; Leippe & Eisenstadt, 1994).

Intergroup Contact

The passage of civil rights legislation has prompted governmental efforts to increase racial integration through mechanisms such as inner-city busing programs and affirmative action. These programs are based on the premise that increasing contact between groups would produce greater intergroup understanding and would set the stage for the amelioration of intergroup prejudice. This idea was originally formulated in detail by Allport (1954) in his book *The Nature of Prejudice*, in which he proposed that interracial harmony could be achieved through interpersonal contact between group members provided that a set of four conditions were satisfied (Items 1–4 in Table 11.1). Allport's hope was that through such interpersonal contact, the demarcations of group membership would disappear and members of different groups would unite under a single identity.

The basic tenets of Intergroup Contact Theory were put to the test during the 1950s by Muzafer Sherif in the now-famous Robber's Cave demonstration (Sherif, White, & Harvey, 1955). In the study, 22 boys were invited for a 3-week summer camp at Robber's Cave State Park in Oklahoma. Sherif arranged for the boys to be split into two groups, with each group arriving at a separate campsite without knowledge of the other group. The demonstration consisted of three stages, with each stage lasting about a week's time. During the first stage, campers established their group affiliations. They chose names for themselves, with one group dubbing itself the "Eagles" and the other group calling itself the "Rattlers." The groups ate separately and found their own swimming holes and hideouts, developing strong group identities in the process. During the second stage, intergroup prejudices were instigated. The Eagles and Rattlers began to notice signs of each other around the campground. They heard each other's voices, and each group found evidence that members of the other group had walked through its campsite. During this stage, camp staff members began to organize competitions between

Table 11.1 Necessary Conditions for Contact to Reduce Intergroup Conflict

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1. Equal status among participants both within and outside contact situation
 2. Cooperative rather than competitive integration
 3. Institutional support for the contact (e.g., the authorities should support contact)
 4. Relatively high levels of intimacy (e.g., one-on-one interactions between individual members of the two groups)
 5. Positive outcomes of contact
 6. Interaction partner of similar competence
 7. Nonstereotypic interaction partner
 8. Similarity in beliefs and values
 9. Contact with a variety of group members in a variety of situations
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NOTE: Items 1 to 4 represent Allport's (1954) original list of necessary conditions for intergroup contact. Items 5 to 9 represent just a few of the additional conditions found to be necessary by research conducted after Allport's original formulation.

the groups such as tug-of-war battles and campsite inspections. These competitions increased the groups' disdain for each other, which on several occasions erupted into all-out hostilities. However, this was all part of Sherif's plan to set the stage for testing the ameliorative effects of contact. During the third stage, Intergroup Contact Theory was implemented. The camp staff members created activities that promoted intergroup contact and cooperation. For example, when the water supply to the campsites was cut off, the boys had to work together to find a blockage in the water line. On another occasion, the boys were able to start a broken down truck only through their combined efforts. By the end of camp, the two groups of boys had become friends. Thus, in this relatively well-controlled setting, intergroup contact was successful in breaking down the barriers of prejudice.

But has the intergroup contact approach been successful in practice? Initial investigations were met with some success, indicating that racial integration alone had led to more favorable attitudes toward black people in the military (Landis, Hope, & Day, 1984), the merchant marines (Brophy, 1945), and the Philadelphia Police Department (Kephart, 1957). Deutsch and Collins (1951) studied the changes in racial attitudes of two groups of low-income housing tenants. Both groups consisted of both white and black tenants. By state laws, however, one housing project was racially segregated, whereas the other project was integrated. After 6 months, Deutsch and Collins observed that the racial attitudes of the integrated group were substantially more positive than those of the segregated group. Interestingly, when asked to name any faults of their black neighbors, white tenants in the integrated project listed "feelings of inferiority," whereas the whites in the segregated project listed stereotypic black traits such as "rowdy" and "dangerous." Under certain conditions, intergroup contact was successful in reducing prejudice.

Despite its promise and many successes, Intergroup Contact Theory has been criticized for being limited in application due to the specialized (and often idealized) conditions under which it operates effectively (for a review, see Pettigrew, 1998) and to its rather narrow focus on attitude

change within majority group members (Devine, Evett, & Vasquez-Suson, 1996). Moreover, most naturalistic settings that might benefit from contact theory involve structural impediments to its application. For example, the typical classroom structure encourages competition for grades and for the teacher's attention. Most job settings are hierarchical and, thus, violate the condition of equal status. Revisions to the original formulation have called for even more restrictions on its applicability, including requirements of common language, voluntary contact, economic prosperity, and moderate (but not extreme) negative attitudes. Table 11.1 lists some of the necessary conditions that have been added to Allport's (1954) original four conditions (see Items 5–9 in the table). As this list has grown, the difficulty of achieving these conditions has increased and the prospects for change through this process have become increasingly limited.

Assessing the Impact of Prejudice Reduction Campaigns

Measuring the effects of persuasive campaigns has been a major challenge for prejudice researchers. One component of this challenge is that people seldom examine the direct effects of information campaigns. Furthermore, it is difficult to assess just who, among the general public, is actually attending to the persuasive campaigns (e.g., who reads *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, who listens to the core messages of the civil rights campaign). This problem is particularly notable in the current context because people who are unsympathetic to the campaign messages can draw on a wide range of processes to resist the impact of these campaigns such as selective exposure, counterarguing the campaign arguments, and derogating the source (Iyengar & McGrady, chap. 10, this volume). These resistance processes are particularly likely to be involved when important attitudes are threatened (e.g., Petty & Krosnick, 1995; Zuwerink & Devine, 1996).

To address the prejudice reduction issue, researchers have pursued two different strategies. The first strategy is to examine generational changes in self-reported attitudes toward African Americans and toward policies related to providing equal opportunities for African Americans (e.g., affirmative action) by examining public opinion polls and reports of stereotype endorsement. For example, a review of opinion poll data by Schuman and colleagues (1997) revealed that, by some indicators, attitudes toward black people have become significantly more favorable (see the top half of Table 11.2). Other research has found that many of the stereotypes that were applied to black people in the past have faded from use, suggesting the possibility that racial prejudice has faded along with them (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986). Based on evidence such as this, one might conclude that prejudice is no longer a problem in America. However, other findings suggest that attitudes toward black people have not changed much at all (as suggested by additional data provided by Schuman et al., 1997; see also the lower half of Table 11.2), and Devine and Elliot (1995) presented evidence suggesting that stereotypes of black people have not faded but rather have changed in their content (Table 11.3).

The second strategy to assess the extent of prejudice reduction is to examine the consistency in people's reports of their attitudes (what they say) and their actual behavior (what they do). In their comprehensive review of the then-current literature, Crosby, Bromley, and Saxe (1980) noted that although most research participants reported relatively positive attitudes toward black people, their behaviors often indicated substantial race bias. Specifically, they reviewed evidence to suggest that white people are still less likely to help black people than to help other whites, choose to give harsher punishments to blacks than to whites in

Table 11.2 Evidence of Reduction in Prejudice Versus Evidence of Continued Existence of Prejudice: Civil Rights Era to 1990s
(percentages of respondents who agree)

	<i>Civil Rights Era</i>	<i>1990s</i>
Evidence of reduction in prejudice		
Would consider moving away if a black family moved in next door ^a	44	1
Would vote for a qualified black candidate ^a	37	95
Approve of marriage between a white person and black person ^a	4	67
Think that black and white children should be able to attend the same schools ^b	50	96
Evidence that prejudice still exists		
Black people should not push themselves where they are not wanted ^c	78	42
Thermometer rating of black people (mean of 100-point scale, with 100 being most positive) ^d	60	63
Is the government spending too little, too much, or the right amount to help blacks? ^e		
Too little	27	26
Right amount	46	48
Too much	27	26

SOURCE: From Schuman, H., Steeh, C., Bobo, L., & Krysan, M., *Racial Attitudes in America: Trends and Interpretations*. Copyright © 1997. Reprinted with permission from Harvard University Press.

a. 1958 and 1997.

b. 1956 and 1995.

c. 1963 and 1996.

d. 1964 and 1996.

e. 1973 and 1996.

Table 11.3 Frequency of Trait Selections to Describe Black People Across Five Studies From 1933 to 1995

<i>Trait</i>	<i>Katz & Braly</i> (1933)	<i>Gilbert</i> (1951)	<i>Karlins, Coffman,</i> & <i>Walters</i> (1969)	<i>Dovidio &</i> <i>Gaertner</i> (1986)	<i>Devine &</i> <i>Elliot</i> (1995)
Superstitions	84	41	13	6	0
Lazy	75	31	26	12	45
Happy-go-lucky	38	17	27	15	3
Ignorant	38	17	11	10	14
Musical	26	33	47	29	11
Ostentatious	26	11	25	5	0
Very religious	24	17	8	23	11
Stupid	22	10	4	1	11
Physically dirty	17	—	3	0	9
Naïve	14	—	4	4	0
Slovenly	13	—	5	2	0
Unreliable	12	—	6	2	6
Pleasure loving ^a	—	19	26	20	1
Sensitive ^b	—	—	17	13	0
Gregarious ^b	—	—	17	4	0
Talkative ^b	—	—	14	5	5
Imitative ^b	—	—	13	9	0
Aggressive ^c	—	—	—	19	5
Materialistic ^c	—	—	—	19	0
Loyal to family ^c	—	—	—	39	11
Arrogant ^c	—	—	—	14	3
Ambitious ^c	—	—	—	13	0
Tradition loving ^c	—	—	—	13	0
Athletic ^d	—	—	—	—	74
Rhythmic ^c	—	—	—	—	57
Low in intelligence ^c	—	—	—	—	46
Poor ^c	—	—	—	—	45
Criminal ^c	—	—	—	—	35
Hostile ^c	—	—	—	—	25
Loud	—	—	—	—	40

SOURCE: From Devine, P. G., & Elliot, A. J., "Are racial stereotypes really fading? The Princeton Trilogy revisited," in *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 21, pp. 1139–1150. Copyright © 1995. Reprinted with permission.

NOTE: The 10 most frequently selected traits in each study are in bold (11 traits are bolded in the case of ties, and 9 are bolded in the case of incomplete information). Unknown values, because of selective reporting in some studies, are indicated with a dash (—).

a. Additional trait reported by Gilbert (1951).

b. Traits needed by Karlins, Coffman, and Walters (1969) to account for the 10 most frequent selections.

c. Traits added by Dovidio and Gaertner (1986).

d. Traits added to account for the 10 most frequent selections in Devine and Elliot (1995).

teacher–learner experiments (e.g., administer more intense electric shocks as punishment), and are less friendly toward blacks than toward whites in interpersonal situations (see also

Word, Zanna, & Cooper, 1974). In both traditions, the evidence regarding change is rather mixed.

How should we make sense of these seemingly conflicting findings? That is, according to some indicators (i.e., what people say), prejudice has been on the decline, but according to other indicators (i.e., what people do), prejudice is still a strong and pervasive force in inter-group relations. In what follows, we consider how social psychologists have attempted to understand these apparently conflicting findings.

The Trouble With Self-Reports: Concealing Prejudiced Attitudes

How can it be that, according to some reports, prejudice has been substantially reduced, but according to other reports, prejudices are as strong as ever? Jones and Sigall (1971) considered the possibility that many people report overly positive attitudes toward black people because they fear social disapproval. In their experiment, participants gave ratings of black people in one of two conditions. In the first condition, participants simply reported their attitudes toward black people to the experimenter. In a second condition, participants were hooked up to the “attitudes pipeline,” a bogus apparatus designed to make participants believe that the experimenters could detect their true attitudes. Compared with the control group, participants in the bogus pipeline condition reported greater agreement with stereotypes of black people, suggesting that people typically conceal their true, personally held prejudices from others.

What are we to make of these conflicting indicators of attitude change? A key aspect of this challenge is distinguishing the effects of such campaigns on social norms versus their effects on personal attitudes and behaviors (Devine et al., 1991; Plant & Devine, 1998). Several theorists have suggested that persuasive campaigns, such as the civil rights movement and civil rights legislation, have changed norms—that is, the level of race bias that is acceptable according to society’s standards—but that they have not necessarily changed people’s personal attitudes (Crosby et al., 1980; Devine, 1989; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Kinder & Sears, 1981). Similarly, Devine and colleagues (Devine et al., 1991; Plant & Devine, 1998) have noted that people’s personal views on what is acceptable for interracial behavior are not always consistent with their perceptions of what is considered to be normatively acceptable.

Changes in norms appear to have altered the way in which prejudice operates. Because it has become unacceptable for high-prejudice people to express their racist views publicly, people’s prejudices have been forced to go “underground,” where they are expressed in more subtle, indirect, or covert ways. The changes in norms have also posed serious problems for the measurement of prejudice. According to Crosby and colleagues (1980), the trouble with self-report measures of prejudice is that when people claim to be nonprejudiced, the possibility looms large that their claim is motivated by compelling and salient normative standards that proscribe prejudice and does not reflect their true personal attitude toward black people. Indeed, it is ironic that the very success of change in normative standards is what has led researchers to call into question the veracity of people’s reported personal standards. If true prejudice is being expressed in ways that are hard to detect, how can you tell whether a person is truly nonprejudiced or just responding according to nonprejudiced social norms? Importantly, if prejudice has taken on a more subtle and covert form, how can it be changed? In what follows, we discuss the ways in which psychologists have attempted to answer these questions.

THE MODERN FACE OF PREJUDICE

As the prevalence of egalitarian social norms grew in American society, prejudice researchers were forced to develop new theories to explain the effects of these norms on intergroup attitudes and behavior as well as the implications of these norms for researchers' ability to measure people's true racial attitudes. This emerging set of issues inspired several new theoretical perspectives on the interplay of social norms, racial attitudes, and behavior.

Theories of Modern Racism

Symbolic Racism

Like Jones and Sigall (1971), Sears and Kinder (1971) noted the power of social norms to discourage public expressions of prejudice. Although many self-report indicators of racial attitudes suggested a decline in prejudice, Sears and Kinder argued that racial discrimination persisted in more subtle forms such as in government policies that indirectly deprive black people of civil benefits by discriminating according to factors that indirectly distinguish them from whites (e.g., income, location). Thus, the *theory of symbolic racism* (Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976; Sears & Henry, 2003) holds that because many white people are reluctant to express their racism explicitly, they express it indirectly by advocating policies and values that have the effect of putting blacks at a disadvantage. For example, a person may attribute a black person's low income to his or her laziness without considering that blacks tend to have less access to education and receive unfair treatment when applying for jobs. Because laziness violates values of self-reliance and the idea that one gets what one deserves, symbolic racists would be expected to oppose programs such as social welfare and affirmative action. In their minds, these programs "reward" blacks for being lazy and/or for not excelling in school. Furthermore, symbolic racists would resent blacks for wanting such social support because the symbolic racists believe that such aid is unjustified. Sears and Kinder proposed that symbolic racism is expressed in three general domains—antagonism toward blacks' demands, resentment over special favors for blacks, and the denial of continuing racism—and that each domain contributes to people's endorsement of policies that disadvantage black people.

The symbolic racism view inspired a new method of measuring racial attitudes, one that was less direct in its inquiries about respondents' racial attitudes. The *Modern Racism Scale* (McConahay, 1986), for example, was designed to measure more subtle forms of racism identified by Sears and Kinder (Table 11.4). Rather than asking respondents to rate their attitudes toward blacks directly, items on the scale inquire about respondents' views of the moral and political issues associated with three domains of symbolic racism outlined by Sears and Kinder (1971; but see also Sidanius, Deveraux, & Pratto, 1992; Wood, 1994). For this reason, measures of prejudice such as this are sometimes referred to as *indirect* assessments. Responses on the Modern Racism Scale have been shown to predict people's opposition to policy aimed at racial equality, such as affirmative action and school integration (for a review, see Sears, van Laar, Carrillo, & Kosterman, 1997), as well as the tendency to vote against black political candidates (Sears, Citrin, & Kosterman, 1987).

Table 11.4 Items From the Modern Racism Scale

-
1. It is easy to understand the anger of black people in America.
 2. Blacks have more influence on school desegregation plans than they ought to have.
 3. Blacks are getting too demanding in their push for equal rights.
 4. Discrimination against blacks is still a problem in the United States.
 5. Over the past few years, blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve.
 6. Over the past few years, the government and news media have shown more respect to blacks than they deserve.
 7. Blacks should not push themselves where they are not wanted.
-

NOTE: Ratings are made on a 7-point scale ranging from -4 (*disagree strongly*) to +4 (*agree strongly*).

Aversive Racism

Gaertner and Dovidio (1986) proposed that many white Americans simultaneously hold anti-black feelings as well as a sincere belief that people should be treated equally. As with other theories of modern racism, they argued that anti-black sentiment results from people's early socialization in a culture that promotes prejudice and that these deep-seated anti-black beliefs are maintained and perpetuated by mechanisms of human cognition such as stereotyping. Gaertner and Dovidio proposed that although these negative attitudes and feelings toward black people are largely disavowed and consequently unacknowledged by many white people, they are nevertheless activated during interactions with black people, creating a conflict with consciously held egalitarian attitudes. This juxtaposition of prejudice and egalitarianism leads to a state of *aversive racism*, whereby the conflict between simultaneously activated prejudiced and egalitarian views causes aversive feelings such as discomfort, unease, disgust, and sometimes even fear. These aversive feelings motivate people to avoid future interactions with black people in which these feelings may be evoked. Racist or egalitarian behavior is then thought to result as a function of which belief—racism or egalitarianism—is more strongly activated in a particular situation (Frey & Gaertner, 1986). Furthermore, research has shown that when egalitarian norms are clear, "aversive racists" may seek out ways in which to rationalize discriminatory behaviors so that such behaviors cannot be attributed directly to prejudice (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1981).

Ambivalent Racism

More recently, Katz and Hass (1988) provided evidence of *ambivalent racism*, defined as the simultaneous possession of positive and negative attitudes toward black people. Katz and Hass developed two separate measures to assess respondents' positive and negative attitudes. They found that *anti-black* attitudes were correlated with one's belief in the Protestant Work Ethic (i.e., the idea that personal success is determined only by one's hard work and self-reliance),

whereas *pro*-black attitudes were correlated with humanitarianism and egalitarianism. Katz and Hass hypothesized that highly ambivalent people (i.e., those with high levels of both pro- and anti-black attitudes) should be most likely to give extreme pro- and anti-black responses depending on the situation. For example, in situations emphasizing egalitarianism, ambivalent racists would be particularly positive toward black people, whereas in situations emphasizing the merits of self-reliance, the same people would be especially harsh toward black people (Katz & Hass, 1988).

Which Theory of Modern Racism Is Right?

Each theory of modern prejudice has been used to explain different reasons why people may withhold overt expressions of race bias in response to social norms that proscribe prejudice. According to these theories, people might suppress expressions of prejudice so as to avoid social disapproval (symbolic or modern racists) because prejudice goes against their belief in egalitarianism (aversive racists) or because prejudice conflicts with their simultaneously held positive views of black people (ambivalent racists). Thus, different theories of modern prejudice may be best suited for characterizing different people in different situations. However, each theory agrees that, although social norms have become more egalitarian, people's individual beliefs have not necessarily changed. Thus, each theory calls for more sensitive measurement techniques that can bypass self-presentational concerns so as to assess people's true racial attitudes.

Dissociation Model of Prejudice

Whereas previous theories of modern racism focused on conflicts between racist and egalitarian attitudes, Patricia Devine argued that consciously held attitudes are only partly responsible for prejudiced behaviors (Devine, 1989). She proposed that race-related behaviors are governed by a combination of controlled, consciously held racial beliefs and by automatic, subconscious stereotyping processes and that these two processes are dissociable (i.e., may operate and be measured independently). Devine suggested that during socialization, a culture's beliefs about various social groups, such as blacks, become ingrained in the way in which social categories are formed. By virtue of simply knowing what the pervading stereotypes of a group are, social information is automatically interpreted through the race-biased filter of stereotypes. For example, when a white person encounters a black individual, either in person or symbolically (e.g., when thinking about issues of race), the stereotypes that were designed to ease information processing are automatically activated, without conscious awareness or intention, and may influence behavior. However, although virtually all people know the stereotypes of black Americans and are affected by them at the automatic or "gut" level, many people are opposed to these stereotypes and consciously reject racial discrimination. Devine proposed that the influence of automatic stereotype activation can be diminished through controlled processing, that is, the conscious and intentional inhibition of stereotypes. Thus, people with nonprejudiced beliefs may exert controlled processing to inhibit the unwanted influence of stereotypes on their responses. The catch, however, is that exerting control successfully is not always easy. For one thing, to exert conscious control over automatic race biases, one must know that the stereotype has been activated. Moreover, in addition to being alerted to the stereotype's activation and being motivated to control it, one must have the *cognitive resources* to inhibit the influence of stereotypes and to replace any race-biased response tendencies with an

intentional nonprejudiced response (Bodenhausen & Macrae, 1998; Monteith, 1993). Cognitive resources refer to the limited amount of attention and working memory capacity that a person has at a given moment. When your attention is taxed, perhaps because you are momentarily distracted, you have fewer cognitive resources available to you. Hence, when a person lacks sufficient cognitive resources to control the influence of stereotypes, these stereotypes can leak through into his or her behavior, resulting in the unwanted expression of race bias by a low-prejudice person. In this way, the dissociation model provides an alternative explanation for inconsistencies in various measures of prejudice.

Devine's basic model has been supported and expanded on in numerous studies. Across studies, there is consensus that race-biased behavior is best conceptualized as the result of independent *implicit* (automatic and gut-level) processes and *explicit* (controlled and thoughtful) processes. Whereas self-report measures of prejudice are typically designed to tap into explicit race biases, assessing the degree of a person's implicit race bias has posed a new challenge for prejudice researchers. In addition, the newfound appreciation for implicit forms of race bias brought with it a potentially new avenue for attitude change and persuasion.

Measuring Implicit Race Bias

Devine (1989) uncovered a previously unexplored class of racial biases that may play a large role in the expression of prejudice. Whereas past work was limited to the race biases that people were able (and willing) to report, Devine argued that it was just as important to understand the automatic subconscious properties of race bias. But how does one measure a bias that is unconscious and, by definition, unreportable? Moreover, can automatic race biases be changed? If so, how?

For starters, such a measure should not rely on querying self-reported responses because, as noted previously, answers to questionnaire items can easily be altered to reflect an individual's consciously intended response (Fabrigar, Krosnick, & McDougall, chap. 2, this volume). Instead, researchers have focused on behavioral responses that can reflect people's automatic race biases. In what follows, we describe some of the more commonly used measures of implicit race bias.

Measuring Stereotypes

Perhaps the most common way in which to assess implicit stereotyping has been through the use of lexical decision or "word judgment" tasks. In the standard lexical decision paradigm, participants are presented with a string of letters and simply asked whether it is a word. Is "zigblat" a word? No. Is "happy" a word? Yes. What about "lazy"? Yes again. Easy enough, right? In the lexical decision task, these letter strings (called *targets*) are typically presented on the computer screen, and participants respond by quickly pressing a button labeled either "word" or "nonword." The measure of interest is the amount of time it takes a participant to correctly categorize the word. Compared with nonwords, words such as "happy" and "lazy" are familiar to most people and are categorized more quickly. But what happens when, just before participants are presented with the lexical decision, they see another word (called a *prime*) that may or may not be related to the target? If the words are related, at least in the minds of participants, seeing the first word should activate or "prime" the category of the target word, thereby speeding up their ability to process and categorize the target. For example,

seeing the prime “robin” should speed up their ability to judge “bird” as forming a word but not “chair” (Meyer & Schvaneveldt, 1971).

Would a person respond more quickly to the word “lazy” if it were preceded by “African American” than if it were preceded by “white American”? Bernd Wittenbrink and his colleagues used this method to assess automatic stereotyping (Wittenbrink, Judd, & Park, 1997; see also Dovidio, Kawakami, Johnson, Johnson, & Howard, 1997). They proposed that implicit *stereotyping* race bias would be revealed to the extent that the group label “blacks” speeds up responses to stereotype words compared with the group label “whites,” whereas the speed of responding to the nonstereotype words should not be affected by the group label preceding it.

Because Wittenbrink and colleagues (1997) sought to measure people’s levels of implicit (i.e., automatic) stereotyping, it was important for them to show that participants’ lexical decisions were affected by the group labels when participants were not aware that the group labels were being presented. To this end, they presented the primes—in this case the words “black” and “white” and a neutral nonword prime (“#####”)—subliminally. That is, the primes were presented on the computer screen so quickly—just 15 milliseconds—that they were not consciously detectable by participants. As expected, participants responded more quickly to negative stereotype words, such as “poor,” “violent,” and “lazy,” after seeing a black prime compared with a white prime. Moreover, consistent with Devine’s (1989) dissociation model, participants’ levels of implicit stereotyping were not correlated with their explicit prejudice levels, as measured using the Modern Racism Scale.

Measuring Implicit Evaluations

A method of measuring implicit *evaluative* race bias, or people’s gut-level positive or negative feelings toward black people, was introduced by Russell Fazio and his colleagues (Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995). The basic concept of Fazio’s implicit evaluation task is very similar to that of the lexical decision task in that it measures the effect of a prime stimulus on the processing of a target stimulus. In Fazio and colleagues’ (1995) task, primes consisted of face pictures of black and white people presented for 200 milliseconds. After a 100-millisecond interval, the target word was presented. These words consisted of positive and negative trait adjectives not directly associated with stereotypes, and the participants’ task was to categorize each target as either good (e.g., appealing, delightful) or bad (e.g., repulsive, awful). Thus, implicit race bias could be measured as the extent to which a black face prime speeds up responses to negative words and slows down responses to positive words in comparison with a white face prime (Figure 11.2).

As in previous research, participants in Fazio and colleagues’ (1995) study exhibited a general tendency to associate black faces more strongly with negative words and less strongly with positive words in comparison with white faces, suggesting an implicit evaluative race bias against black people. Moreover, participants’ levels of implicit race bias were not correlated with their self-reported prejudiced beliefs. Interestingly, however, greater implicit evaluative race bias predicted more subtle forms of discrimination such as less friendly nonverbal behavior toward a black research assistant. Similar findings have been reported by Dovidio, Kawakami, and their colleagues, whereby implicit, but not explicit, measures of prejudice predicted negative nonverbal behaviors toward a black interviewer (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002; Dovidio et al., 1997).

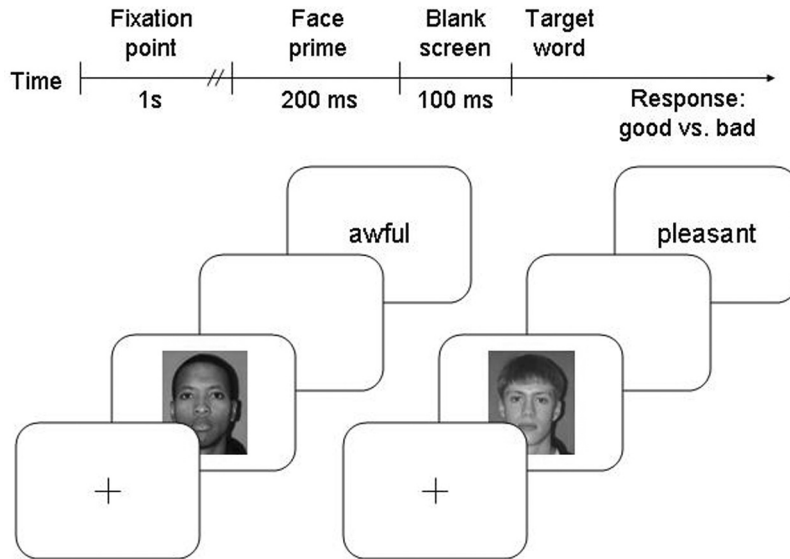


Figure 11.2 Schematic Diagram of an Implicit Evaluative Race Bias Measure

SOURCE: Fazio et al. (1995).

The Implicit Association Test

The Implicit Association Test (IAT) was originally designed by Anthony Greenwald and his colleagues as an alternative method for assessing implicit evaluative race bias (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Instead of measuring implicit evaluations as the degree to which a target (e.g., black face) speeds up the processing of evaluative words (e.g., awful), the IAT measures the extent to which the simultaneous activation of stimuli inconsistent with anti-black bias (e.g., black faces and positive words) slows down participants' ability to process information relative to stimuli pairs that are consistent with anti-black bias (e.g., black faces and negative words). Implicit race bias is reflected by the degree of response slowing when two *incongruent* concepts are activated (e.g., black and good, white and bad) in comparison with two *congruent* concepts (e.g., black and bad, white and good). (The researchers who developed the IAT set up a Web site that you can visit to try the test yourself: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit>.) Like previous measures of implicit race bias, studies using the IAT typically reveal a pattern of implicit bias that favors white faces over black faces such that people can complete congruent categorizations (e.g., black–bad, white–good) more quickly than they can complete incongruent categorizations (e.g., black–good, white–bad).

The Mechanisms of Implicit Biases

Although there has been a veritable explosion of research measuring implicit processes in prejudice and stereotyping, little is known about what implicit race biases represent, much

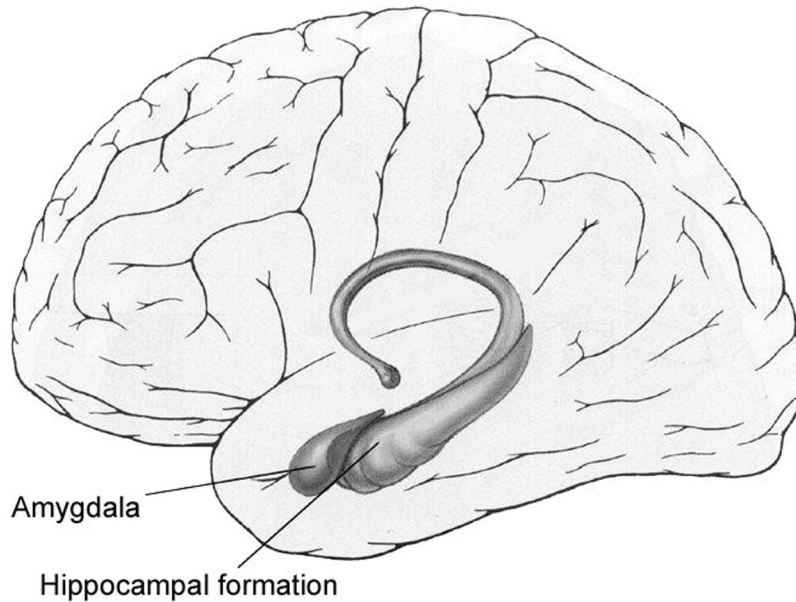


Figure 11.3 Diagram of the Amygdala and Hippocampus

less about how they function and where they come from. Most researchers will agree that it is important to understand the inner workings of a process if the goal is to change it. Recently, researchers have begun to apply brain-based models of implicit and explicit processes in an effort to better understand how implicit race biases are formed and expressed.

Recent cognitive neuroscience research has associated implicit forms of emotion and memory with the amygdala, a small, almond-shaped neural structure located in the temporal lobes of the brain (Figure 11.3). The amygdala is important for detecting threat in the environment and for deploying rapid responses in situations calling for immediate action. Researchers such as Joseph LeDoux have shown that visual information from the environment travels from the retina to the amygdala, by way of the thalamus, in a matter of milliseconds before traveling to the visual cortex and frontal areas associated with more controlled and reflective types of processing (LeDoux, 1996). That is, the amygdala receives and begins to process stimuli before a person is fully aware of what he or she is seeing. Emotion theorists have proposed that the amygdala is designed to make snap judgments about threats when an organism does not have time to think about them safely and that it relies on category properties learned over time through repeated experiences to make these judgments. Because the amygdala was designed to react on very coarse-resolution information, amygdala-based responses tend to be highly generalizable. The amygdala provides a lifesaving function of alerting you to danger quickly and initiating evasive actions, for example, by quickly recoiling when you notice the slithering profile of a snake in the corner of your eye. However, this high level of vigilance comes at a price. For example, sometime in your past, you may have been startled at the sight of a serpentine figure on the ground, only to find that it was actually a (harmless) length of garden hose.

Just as the “quick and dirty” processing of the amygdala is likely responsible for your startled response when you see a snake-like shape, it may also be the cause of a gut-level negative reaction when encountering an unknown black person. For example, the repeated association of black people with violence could create a negative emotional association, by way of the amygdala, over time. As a result, the amygdala would respond rapidly by producing a threatlike reaction when encountering a black person. Amodio, Harmon-Jones, and Devine (2003) used physiological measures to show that amygdala-related activity is increased when participants view the faces of black people in comparison with those of white people and that race-related amygdala activity occurs just 400 milliseconds after seeing a black face. Other researchers, using functional magnetic resonance imaging to measure neural activity, have found that amygdala activity in response to seeing a black face is correlated with levels of implicit race bias measured using the IAT (Phelps et al., 2000). We should note, however, that although research on the amygdala has provided an important starting point for understanding the mechanisms of implicit attitudes, it is surely not the whole story. The process of learning, activating, and acting on implicit race bias involves a wide range of interacting neural structures, with the basal ganglia, anterior cingulate cortex (Figure 11.4), and prefrontal cortex (Figure 11.5) also playing key roles (cf. Amodio et al., 2004).

An understanding of the neural bases of prejudice and stereotyping is useful because it provides clues for how prejudiced attitudes may be changed. Research on amygdala-related learning (and unlearning) suggests that amygdala-based responses operate differently than do the thoughtful reflective types of responses associated with frontal cortical processes (e.g., Rolls, 1999). Whereas information processing linked to the prefrontal cortex is more flexible and easily changed, the information-processing style of the amygdala is comparatively more rigid and resistant to change. Furthermore, research suggests that the amygdala is particularly sensitive to learning and responding to negative information (e.g., blacks are bad) than to positive information (e.g., blacks are good), making it relatively difficult to replace negative associations with more positive ones. Finally, evidence from the animal literature suggests that amygdala-related responses are best changed through repeated exposure to information that goes against what is already learned. Thus, amygdala-based learning is probably not easily altered by the type of overt persuasive communications that are typically studied in social psychology or by thoughtful reflection.

Changing Implicit Attitudes

Given the recent advances in our understanding of implicit race bias, how might researchers go about changing prejudices at the implicit level?

Positive Thinking

If implicit race bias is the product of the repeated pairing of black people with negative things, it follows that one way of reducing implicit race bias would be to counteract the negative associations with black-positive pairings. To test this logic, Dasgupta and Greenwald (2001) designed a study in which some participants viewed a series of pictures of admired famous black people (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr., Bill Cosby) and disliked famous white people (e.g., mafia boss John Gotti, serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer), other participants viewed

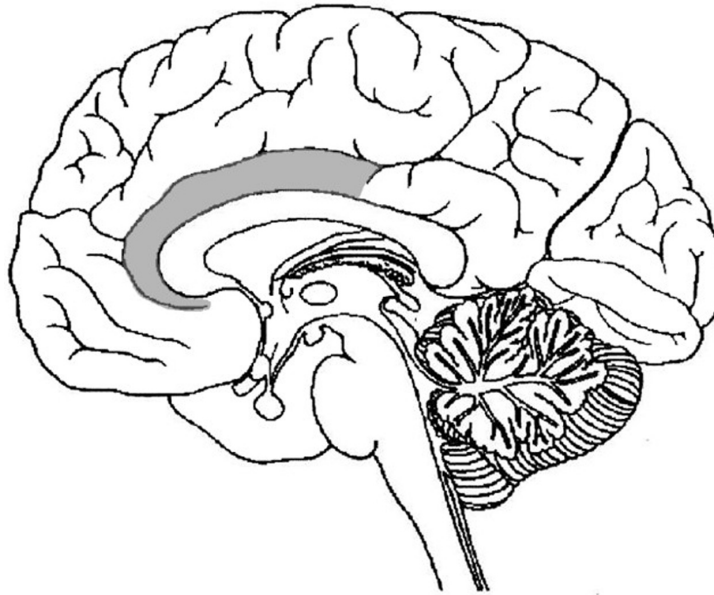


Figure 11.4 Anterior Cingulate Cortex (shaded area)

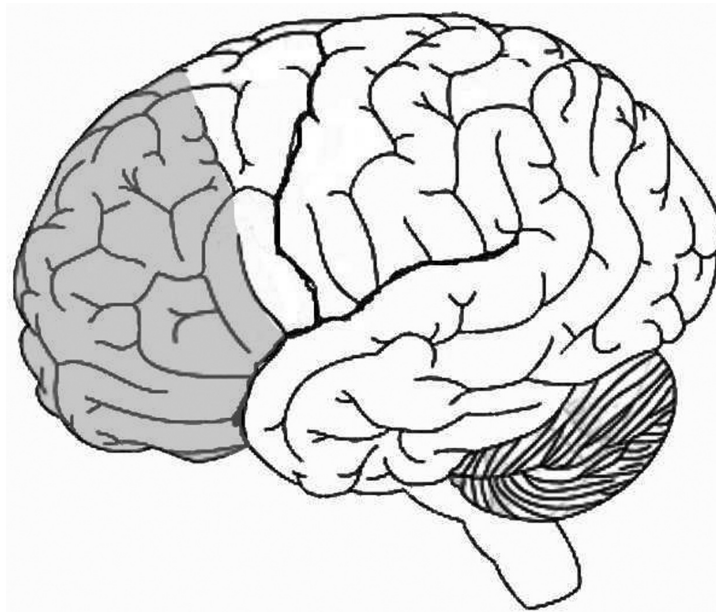


Figure 11.5 Prefrontal Cortex (shaded area)

pictures of admired white people and disliked black people, and a control group saw neither set of pictures. Next, participants in each condition completed the IAT. As predicted, participants in the black-positive/white-negative pictures condition showed lower levels of implicit race bias than did participants in the other conditions, both immediately after picture viewing and at a follow-up session 24 hours later. Thus, it appeared that the repeated reversal of evaluative associations with black people reduced participants' implicit evaluative bias against black people (although it is possible that this effect was at least partially caused by a decrease in favorable biases toward white people).

Just Saying No to Stereotypes

Kawakami, Dovidio, Moll, Hermsen, and Russin (2000) examined whether people's conscious rejection of stereotypes would reduce implicit race bias. In their study, participants completed an initial measure of implicit stereotyping. Next, some participants practiced responding "no" to presentations of black stereotypes (stereotype negation condition), whereas others practiced responding "yes" to these stereotypes (stereotype maintenance condition). Finally, participants completed a second implicit stereotyping measure so that the researchers could see whether the training exercise had an effect on implicit race biases. The results showed that the participants in the stereotype-negation condition exhibited a decrease in implicit stereotyping relative to the pretraining measure, whereas participants in the stereotype maintenance condition showed no change. Consistent with past theorizing (Amodio et al., 2003; Rolls, 1999), the repetition of stereotype negations appeared to reduce stereotyping biases at the implicit level.

IMPLICIT RACE BIAS TRAINING: A NEW FORM OF PERSUASION?

At this point, it is worth pausing to think about how the methods used to alter implicit biases differ from the classic methods of persuasion aimed at changing explicit attitudes. In Kawakami and colleagues' (2000) study, for example, the theme of prejudice reduction was never mentioned to participants, and neither Dasgupta and Greenwald (2001) nor Kawakami and colleagues (2000) presented persuasive messages advising participants not to use stereotypes. In fact, theories of how implicit race bias is formed and operates suggested that such explicit, conscious-level appeals would have no effect on processes that operate without one's awareness or intention. Similarly, implicit race biases should not be affected by social norms prohibiting expressions of prejudice. Rather, the stereotype negation training bypassed explicit appeals for egalitarianism and instead focused on the repeated altering of basic behavioral responses to stereotypes. These researchers used what could be thought of as "implicit persuasion," that is, attempting to change implicit responses by directly altering the link between implicit stereotypes and behavior.

Changing Prejudice: New Challenges, New Directions

The reconceptualization of prejudice as a combination of automatic and controlled processes has introduced a new layer of complexity to the understanding of prejudice with important implications for persuasion and attitude change. The research on the role of persuasion in

implicit forms of race bias is in its infancy, and more research is needed to better understand how various forms of “persuasion” may affect implicit racial biases and how changes in one form of race bias may affect changes in the other form of race bias. Given what we know so far, however, it is likely that the best approach to altering prejudiced attitudes involves a two-pronged strategy of changing both explicit and implicit attitudes. If persuasive efforts target only explicit attitudes or only implicit biases, overall changes in prejudice are likely to be minimal.

In reflecting on the work that has been conducted on the role of persuasion in prejudiced attitudes, one is struck by the relative paucity of research and lack of strong results. The overwhelming message one may glean from this body of work is that prejudiced attitudes are deeply embedded in a complex network of cognitive, social, cultural, geographical, historical, and political processes. As a result, they are seemingly impervious to persuasive efforts. Although social psychologists have shown changes in people’s implicit race biases over the course of a day’s time, the goal of producing lifelong changes in people’s prejudiced attitudes continues to be elusive. Nevertheless, the inroads being made by social psychologists and cognitive neuroscientists regarding the process of changing prejudice attitudes offer promise that prejudice change may ultimately be a tractable endeavor.

CONCLUSION

Without a doubt, persuasion has played a role—albeit a complicated one—in Americans’ prejudices toward black people. There are several psychological and social factors that contribute to prejudiced beliefs and feelings. We see evidence of decreased prejudice in people’s voting preferences, in explicitly reported prejudiced attitudes, and in the civil rights legislation that has been implemented over the past century and a half. However, evidence from other indicators, such as implicit assessments of race bias and evidence of the prevalence of contemporary black stereotypes, suggests that persuasive appeals to reduce prejudice may have had limited effects. What is clear from our review is that prejudice operates at multiple levels—in people’s consciously held attitudes and beliefs, in people’s implicit responses, and in a society’s moral and legal standards. Each of these factors must be considered when designing methods to change prejudice and measure these changes. Because the nature of prejudice toward black people in the United States is multifaceted, the effectiveness of traditional social psychological models of persuasion is limited. As such, the field is ready for new innovations and offers fertile ground for young researchers. Given the recent advances in the theorizing and measurement of different forms of prejudice, we expect to see great achievements in the role of persuasion in prejudice during the years to come.

NOTES

1. Although social psychologists study racial intolerance in general, the scope of the current chapter is limited to prejudice toward African Americans in the United States. Unless otherwise noted, participants in cited studies have been primarily white Americans.

2. Jane Elliot’s classroom demonstrations and more recent workshops have been featured in films made for television. The most popular were *The Eye of the Storm* (ABC News, May 11, 1970) and *A Class Divided* (Yale University Films, PBS Frontline, March 26, 1985).

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