Prejudice

next week: Stereotyping

Today’s overview:

In this lecture we’ll discuss:
• Defining prejudice
• The changing nature of prejudice
• Reducing prejudice
What is prejudice?

Allport (1954)
An antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalisation. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed towards a group as a whole, or towards an individual because he is a member of that group.

Jones (1972)
The prior negative judgement of the members of a race or religion or the occupants of any other significant social role, held in disregard of the facts that contradict it.

Worchel et al. (1988)
An unjustified negative attitude toward an individual based solely on that individual's membership in a group.

Key components of these definitions of prejudice is that it is based on a faulty or irrational belief.

BUT ... Can the correctness of a belief ever really be established? Intergroup perception is very subjective and relative.
What is prejudice?

Brown (1995)

The holding of derogatory social attitudes or cognitive beliefs, the expression of negative affect, or the display of hostile or discriminatory behaviour towards members of a group on account of their membership of that group.

BUT ... is it right to argue that all negative feelings toward groups necessarily means prejudice? Maybe we have to accept that no objective definition of prejudice is possible, and that it is partly a value term laden with emotion, history, ideology, & politics.

Composition of prejudiced attitudes

**Cognitive** – beliefs about the attitude object (often held as stereotypes).

**Affective** – strong feelings (usually negative) about the group

**Behavioural** – intentions to behave in negative ways toward the group and its members
Prejudice: jokes and taunts

“Last week, one of our (football) trainers made some racist remarks … and he was taking it as a joke. You know? But some of the boys didn’t take it as a joke.”

Aboriginal man describing comments from police after being taken into custody …

“Oh, you know, getting like … ‘leave your shoelaces on so he can hang himself’ or ‘is he dead yet?’ and that sort of thing”

Prejudice: Ignoring

“I remember I went up to the police station once to register a car … And after about 45 minutes of just standing there, I said ‘excuse me lady, I’ve been here about 30 minutes, 40 minutes.” And she says, ‘the only reason I didn’t see you was because you’re not standing under the light’.
Prejudice: deliberate direct comments

Aboriginal woman after reporting rape:
“I reported it to the coppers, and um, and I had one female copper stare at me in the face, and she told me that I loved it, and that being Black, and I quote, “being Black, I asked for it,” and “I was that drunk, how the hell do I know that I was raped?”

Prejudice: name-calling

Prejudice: threats

“And the copper just walked up to me and started screaming words at me. And he says ‘Oh, I’m gonna have this place cleaned out and I’m gonna have these kids taken away from you’ … And he said ‘if you little Black bastards move I’ll shoot youse’. And the policewoman, she goes ‘he’ll do it, he’ll do it’.

Prejudice: assault

“And, cos they found out that he was Aboriginal at school, they all pickin’ on him ever since, and cos there are no other Aboriginal kids out there. Since that he said that he was, a lot of kids been picking on him, and lately he’s been getting bashed.”

“No Black that I know has got it easy. If they get picked up by the police, they always get a bashing.”
Prejudice: segregation & avoidance

“I had a couple of good mates too. You know? White blokes. And their parents used to say, ‘keep away from them’ – keep away from us”.

“We went to the zoo yesterday, and every time we went up to have a look at the animals, right, there’d be little school groups there, and there’d be mothers with prams there ... As soon as we got up to have a look, ‘come on kids’ and they moved away real quick”.

Aborigine describing behaviour of people on public transport ...

“They sit really on the edge of their chair, like the colour is going to come off and get on them”.

Prejudice: discrimination

“And um the buses, you know the kids, I mean we had to stand up most of the way because they reckoned that Blackfellas didn’t have the right to sit down.”

“An Aborigine goes to a hotel and asks if there’s a room and there’s always some excuse. But if you ring up, you got a room. As soon as you turn up, you haven’t got a room.”
As a helpful assistant, I can provide a text representation of the document if you upload it in a readable format.
Women in Australia

1964 – 1st woman bank teller
1966 – married women allowed in public service
1969 – arbitration commission formally endorses notion of equal pay for women (until then pegged at 75% of men’s wage)
1971 – Bank of NSW first bank to grant loans to women without a male guarantor
1976 – SA makes rape in marriage a criminal offence
1990 – first female State Premier (not elected)
2009 – first female elected State premier
2010 – first female Prime Minister (not elected)

Is prejudice decreasing?

• In 1976, Bartol and Butterfield reported that female leaders in organizations were valued less than were male leaders.

  By the early 1980s this effect could no longer be detected.

• In the mid-1960s, there were a number of studies in which students had to evaluate identical pieces of written work that were attributed either to a man (John T. McKay) or a woman (Joan T. McKay). The woman’s essay was systematically downgraded relative to the man’s.

  But since the late 1980s this effect has disappeared.
Is prejudice decreasing?

- No longer a tendency to devalue women’s work (e.g., Goldberg, 1968; Swim et al., 1989)

- Positive stereotype of women emerging over time (Eagly & Mladinic, 1994)

- More support for gender equity in work (Eagly et al., 1991)
Is prejudice decreasing?

- Increase in representation of ethnic minority groups in non-stereotypical roles in media
- Increased participation of ethnic minority groups in professional occupations and managerial positions
- Near universal awareness that it’s not OK to be racist.
BUT ... cause for concern

- Despite advances in real terms (housing, education, employment), relative inequalities are continuing/increasing
- Gains in public acceptance of some groups haven’t spread to others
- Difference between what people think and what they do.
- Difference between what people think and what people say.
People don’t always behave in line with how they think.

LaPierre (1934) spent two years travelling around the US with a young Chinese American couple. They visited 250 hotels, caravan parks, tourist homes and restaurants and were refused service in only one. After coming home, LaPierre contacted 128 of these places with the question: “Will you accept members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?”

92% said no, 7% were uncertain, and only 1% said yes!

People don’t always say what they feel.

Sigall and Page (1971) got White Americans to rate the extent to which certain traits were characteristic of Whites and the extent to which certain traits were characteristic of Blacks.

They responded either
(a) in a normal questionnaire format, or
(b) While hooked up to what they believed was a lie detector test (“bogus pipeline”).
Sigall & Page (1971)

Scale from +3 (characteristic) to −3 (uncharacteristic).
Sigall & Page (1971)

Scale from +3 (characteristic) to –3 (uncharacteristic).
Unobtrusive observation of behaviour

Crosby et al. (1980) reviewed naturalistic studies of helping behaviour in inter-ethnic settings.

50% showed more help was given to someone of same ethnicity vs. outgroup (whether Black or White).

For White participants effects moderated by context ...
• If there was face-to-face contact, 33% showed bias
• If there was no face-to-face contact, 75% showed bias.

Spontaneous non-verbal behaviour

Weitz (1972) got White participants to record a brief message for another student they were to meet.

Compared anticipated liking (measured verbally) with vocal cues (non-verbal).

*Negative* correlations between verbal rating & measures of voice warmth when expecting to interact with Black.
Spontaneous non-verbal behaviour

Vanman et al. (1997) used electromyography to measure electrical activity from facial muscle groups.
White volunteers viewed slides of White and Black people with whom they had to imagine interacting.
Direct self-report measures showed pro-Black bias.
BUT … indirect measure showed more activity from “frown muscles" to Black photos.

Implicit Association Test (reaction times)

Some of the words were real words (e.g., nurse/butter) & some were nonsense words (e.g., nurse/colef).
Participants had to decide as quickly as possible whether or not both words were real words.
When positive words were paired with the word “Whites” (e.g., ambitious / whites) people responded faster than when positive words were paired with the word “Blacks” or “Negroes” (e.g., ambitious / blacks).
This tendency was uncorrelated with people’s prejudice scores on explicit prejudice scales.
Changing nature of prejudice

In contemporary society, people are socialized to believe that it’s not OK to be racist, sexist, homophobic etc. Conflict emerges between people's ingrained attitudes and modern egalitarian values. This means that prejudice and discrimination are more likely to be expressed in covert ways.

This shift has been addressed in three (related) theoretical approaches:

1. Modern (or symbolic) prejudice
2. Ambivalent prejudice
3. Aversive prejudice
Modern prejudice

According to Sears (1988), negative feelings about Blacks (based on early learned fears and stereotypes) blend with moral values embodied in the Protestant ethic to justify some anti-Black attitudes and therefore legitimize their expression.

This culturally socialized anti-Black affect is then expressed symbolically (e.g., denial of continuing discrimination, resentment over special favours).

Modern prejudice scale

To reflect this more subtle version of racism, a “modern racism scale” was devised. Old-fashioned versions of the scale included items such as

• “I would mind if an Asian person joined my close family by marriage”.

The modern racism scale includes items such as

• “Over the past few years, Asian Australians have received more economically than they deserve”
• “Asians living here teach their children values and skills different from those required to be successful in Australia”
Modern prejudice scale

Concern with the notion of symbolic (or modern) racism is that some political attitudes are automatically labeled prejudice, without regard for the underlying reasons for the attitude.

“Although students scored low on old-fashioned and modern racism, symbolic racism was clearly evident in their discourse. Most students expressed significant concerns about government spending on Aboriginal programs, and many believed that too much money was being spent on Aborigines unproductively. They also expressed firm objections to existing affirmative action policies for Aboriginal candidates in universities, arguing that individual merit should be the only legitimate pathway to university education” (Mellor, 2003)

Support for modern racism scale

Participants less likely to endorse old-fashioned items when tested by Black experimenter than when tested by White experimenter.

But … No effect of experimenter on modern racism.
Ambivalent Racism

According to Katz et al. (1986), White people harbour both pro-Black and anti-Black sentiment.

In other words feelings of sympathy and support for Blacks are coupled with feelings of resentment.

When the situation cues the positive aspects of Whites' perceptions of Blacks, it results in extremely positive responding.

When the situation cues the negative aspects of Whites' perceptions of Blacks, it results in extremely negative responding.

Ambivalent racism

Linville & Jones (1980) asked White participants to evaluate a law school application containing incidental information about the applicant's race.

When the application credentials were positive, the Black applicant was evaluated more favourably than the White applicant.

When the application credentials were weak, the Black applicant was evaluated more negatively.
Ambivalent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996)

Hostile sexism
- “Women exaggerate problems they have at work”
- “Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash”
- “When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against”

Benevolent sexism
- “In a disaster, women ought to be rescued before men.”
- “Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives”
- “Women should be cherished and protected by men”

Old-fashioned, hostile sexism is directed mostly toward women who stray from traditional paths – the career women, feminists, athletes, lesbians etc.

For traditional women, there is a cluster of apparently benevolent attitudes that put women on a pedestal, but reinforce their subordination (benevolent sexism).
Aversive racism

Gaertner & Dovidio (1986) agree that feelings of sympathy for Blacks and negative affect towards Blacks often co-exist within people.

They go further to argue that most people are motivated to maintain a non-prejudiced self-image; they find racial prejudice aversive, endorse fair treatment of all groups, and fear appearing prejudiced.

BUT ... many of these people subconsciously harbour negative feelings toward Blacks all the same.

Discrimination leaks out in situations where behaviour can be justified as non-prejudiced.
Evidence for aversive racism

Gaertner & Dovidio (1977) had White participants fill out a questionnaire either alone or with two other people. While completing the questionnaire, participants heard what sounded like a person have an accident. Did they help?

When the participant was alone (failure to help Black person unambiguously racist) they were more likely to help the Black person than the White person. When they thought there were two other potential helpers (failure to help person could be legitimized) they were much less likely to assist the Black person.
Evidence for aversive racism

A host of studies show that when people are described in neutral or positive ways, people tend to show no racism, and sometimes even favour minority group members.

But when people are described in negative ways, people are more hostile to members of minority groups than to members of the ingroup.

In the latter case people can legitimize their hostility toward minorities by focusing on the person’s unpleasant traits.

Prejudice against skilled immigrants

- Not likely to be burdens on the welfare system
- High status may protect against aversive prejudice
- But foreign credentials allow for selective discounting (Esses, Dietz, & Bhardwaj, 2006); Visible minority groups may be especially vulnerable (e.g., Rietz, 2001)

- 93 Australian-born students who identify as of Anglo/European heritage evaluate job candidates for student health clinic:
  - All candidates registered to work in Queensland, with 3 degrees and 2 relevant jobs 1 of which = in Queensland, for 2 years
  - All candidates have same average personality
  - Differ re where born (Australia vs Pakistan) where received medical training (home country vs UK)

Bias against foreign doctors (but not if UK-trained)

Quality of education  
Quality of work history

Legitimating ideologies

Some theorists argue that people’s ideologies are partly driven by a need to legitimize or rationalize the fact that their group (e.g., Whites) enjoy a dominant position in society. e.g., belief in a just world, individualism
Reducing prejudice – pointing out privilege

Given that legitimizing one’s power and status is linked with prejudice from dominant groups to minority groups, can prejudice be reduced by simply pointing out privilege?

Branscombe et al. (2007) asked participants to either list reasons why Whites are privileged relative to other groups, to list reasons why Whites are disadvantaged relative to other groups, or to list life events (control condition).

They then measured White participants’ levels of modern racism.

Rather than decreasing when participants had to reflect on their privilege, modern racism levels went up.
Reducing prejudice – power of norms

It is widely assumed that the drop off in explicit levels of prejudice in the last 50 years is because of the development of more liberal norms over that time.

Monteith et al. (1996) found experimental support for this notion:

- Experimenters would stop 2 people (one a true participant, one a confederate) and would get them to fill out a questionnaire examining attitudes toward gays.
- In the control conditions the confederate and the true participant would respond privately (no norm).
- In the other conditions the confederate would call out their answers and then the true participant would respond – in some conditions the confederate was relatively prejudiced, in other conditions the confederate was relatively non-prejudiced.
Anxiety and intergroup relations

Stephan & Stephan (1985) highlighted the fact that for many people – particularly those who have had little prior contact with other ethnic groups – interacting with somebody of a different race raises anxiety levels.

One response to this is polarized emotional reactions. If the interaction goes well, people are super-positive. If it goes badly, people are super-negative.

• Next week:
  Stereotyping

• Recommended Readings:
  ▪ Brown 2000 (pp.285-308);

• In the Tutes this week:
  ▪ Optional interviews with Dr. Louis