**Stereotype (Cognitive)**

- Assign identical characteristics to any person in a group, regardless of the actual variation among members within the group.
- Categorizing
  - I.e. older people are bad drivers.
  - Not necessarily intended to be malicious, but is something we all do to categorize and make sense of our world.
  - I.e. high school cheerleader, NY cab driver, Italian barber

**Stereotype**

- Can be dangerous since it blinds us to individual differences within a group of people.
  - I.e. Bond study in psychiatric hospital comparing tx of black vs. white patients by all-white staff. Physical restraint and sedation used 4x more often with black than white patients in response to violent behavior. This occurred also despite the initial average dx of blacks as less violent than whites at admission. Over time, staff treated patients equally. Therefore, familiarity with prolonged interracial contact can reduce unfair stereotyping and allow for recognition of individual characteristics. However, contact, in itself, is usually insufficient.
  - I.e. Bodenhausen and Wyer—college students and fictional prisoners up for parole. Use information in files to make decision. Crimes were consistent and inconsistent with stereotypes. When consistent (Latino assault and battery or Anglo embezzlement), tended to ignore other relevant information (good behavior). The assumption is that it is something about them (dispositional) not their life circumstances (situational) that caused their behavior.

**Prejudice (Emotional/Neg. Attitude)**

- A hostile or negative attitude toward a distinguishable group (gender, culture, age, hair color, skin color, etc.) based on generalizations derived from faulty or incomplete information.

**Discrimination (Behavior)**

- Acting based upon our prejudices (prejudging).
Subtyping

- Bombarding people with facts that run counter to their prejudices fails to get them to modify those prejudices.
- Instead, they convince themselves that what they've learned, while probably true, is a rare exception to the stereotype.
- This results in the creation of a new category of “the exception that proves the rule.”
  –I.e. aggressive female, honest lawyer, etc.

Stereotype threat

- Apprehensiveness about confirming a negative stereotype → not perform as well in society.
  –I.e. GRE given to black and white college students. ½ led to believe measuring intellectual ability and ½ just testing the test and not evaluating intellectual ability. White students performed equally well in both groups. Black students were highly affected by the way the test was described. They performed twice as well when they believed that the test was not measuring their intelligence.
- When people think their behavior may confirm a negative reputation about themselves or their group their anxiety can interfere with their performance.
  –I.e. women as bad drivers, teenagers make impulsive decisions, etc.

Attribution

- Our need to find a cause for another person’s behavior.
- Stereotypes are a special form of attribution.

Ultimate attribution error

- In an ambiguous situation, people tend to make attributions consistent with their prejudices.
- Not only does prejudice influence attributions, erroneous conclusions justify and intensify negative feelings which can lead to a spiral attribution process.
- Prejudice causes particular kinds of negative attributions or stereotypes that can intensify the prejudice.
Gender stereotypes

- Almost universal perception of women as more nurturing and less assertive than men.
- Raises questions of “nature vs. nurture.”
- Whether the underpinnings of stereotypes are social or biological, it deprives individuals of the right to be treated as individuals.
- Self-attributions can be negatively impacted by stereotypes.

Gender stereotypes (research)

- Girls attribute math success to luck, boys attribute it to skill.
- Male tennis players try harder after losing a set, female players “give up.”
- I.e. Turner and Pratkanis found women did not try as hard on a difficult task if they thought their selection was influenced by “affirmative action” rather than merit.

Blaming the victim (Just world)

- Tendency to blame victims for their victimization, attributing their predicaments to their own personalities and disabilities—is often motivated by a desire to see the world as a just place.
  - I.e. Lerner found that people tend to assign personal responsibility (dispositional reasons) for any inequitable outcome that is otherwise difficult to explain. If two people work equally hard on the same task and, by flip of a coin, one receives a sizable reward and the other receives nothing, most observers will rate the unlucky person as having worked less hard.
- I.e. negative attitudes toward the poor—blaming them for their situation—is more prevalent among individuals who believe strongly that the world is a just place.
- I.e. If 6 million Jews are exterminated for no apparent reason, it is somehow comforting to believe they might have done something to warrant such treatment.

Hindsight bias

- After we know the outcome of an event, the complex circumstances surrounding its occurrence seem suddenly clear.
- Once we know the outcome, we (erroneously) believe we could have predicted it accurately and without difficulty.
Subtle effects of prejudice

- I.e. Word and white student interviewers. When interviewing black applicant, the interviewer sat farther away, made more speech errors, and terminated the interview 25% sooner.
- A second experiment by Word treated white applicants in the way either black or white applicants had previously been treated. Videotapes were analyzed by independent judges and those who’d been treated as the black applicants had in the 1st experiment were rated as being more nervous and less effective than those treated like the white applicants. The interviewer may be unconsciously behaving in a way that makes the applicant uncomfortable which can affect performance—a SFP.

Subtle effects of prejudice

- “Belief creates reality”—our stereotypes elicit responses that validate our beliefs by our acting on our expectations which makes it more likely that the expectation will occur—creating a SFP or expectancy effect.
  - I.e. I’ve been warned that you’re cold, aloof, and reserved. When we meet, I keep my distance and don’t try hard to engage you in conversation. If you actually are warm and outgoing, my behavior isn’t providing opportunity to demonstrate this. Because of my behavior, you respond to me by keeping distance from me and my expectation that you’re cold, aloof, and reserved is confirmed.
- Stereotypes are resistant to change because when we hold beliefs about others, the self-fulfilling prophecy ensures that we create a social reality in line with these expectations. Even when we’re open-minded enough to test the accuracy of our beliefs, we often unknowingly use “testing” strategies that confirm those beliefs (we see what we expect to see)—even when the beliefs are erroneous.

Subtle gender stereotyping

- Frey and Gaertner—helping behavior or whites toward a black individual. White subjects just as willing to help a black student as a white student, but only when the person needing help had demonstrated sufficient effort. When led to believe that the student had not worked hard enough at the task, more likely to refuse a black student’s request for help than a white student’s.
- Therefore, subtle racism tends to emerge when it can be easily rationalized.

Subtle gender stereotyping

- Glick and Fiske—feelings of ambivalence from men about women can take 1 of 2 forms:
  - Hostile sexism
    - the stereotypical belief that women are inferior to men.
    - I.e. less intelligent, less competent, etc.
  - Benevolent sexism
    - the positive stereotype that assumes that women are the weaker sex and need protecting.
    - I.e. Idealize women romantically, admire women as wonderful cooks and mothers, etc.
- Both forms—for different reasons—serve to justify relegating women to traditional stereotyped roles in society.
Subtle effects of prejudice

• Aronson’s conclusion:
  – As we learn to accept another person’s out-of-role behavior, our own out-of-role behavior will also become increasingly accepted—and we will become freer to fulfill our potential as human beings.

Causes of prejudice

1. Economic or political competition or conflict
2. Displaced aggression
3. Maintenance of status or self-image
4. Dispositional prejudice (personality)
5. Conformity to existing social norms

1. Economic or political competition

• Discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping tend to increase when there is competition over mutually-exclusive goals.
• Prejudice pays off for select people in competitive situations.
  – I.e. job interview—only one will get the job
• I.e. Chinese negative stereotyped initially in the 19th century. When they tried to mine gold in CA, were described as “depraved and vicious…gross gluttons…blood-thirsty and inhuman.” 10 years later, when willing to accept dangerous work on the railroad—work that white Americans weren’t willing to do—were regarded as sober, industrious, and law-abiding.
  – I.e. Sherif—normal, well-adjusted, 12 y.o. boys randomly assigned to Eagles or Rattlers group. Encouraged to cooperate within each group, but compete between groups.

2. Displaced aggression: the scapegoat theory

• Aggression is partly caused by frustration or aversive conditions.
• Aggression is typically directed at the cause of the frustration.
• If the cause is too powerful, or if the cause is vague, another target is usually selected—a scapegoat—to take the blame.
  – I.e. “passing the buck”—allowing someone else to take responsibility
• Scapegoating
  – The process of blaming a relatively powerless innocent person or group for something that is not their fault.
  – I.e. Hovland and Sears found between 1882-1930 the frequency of lynchings in the South could be predicted in any year from knowledge of the price of cotton the year. As the price of cotton dropped, the number of lynchings increased.
Scapegoating targets

• Groups that are disliked.
• Groups that are visible.
• Groups that are relatively powerless.
• Aggression generally escalates as far as societal norms allow (e.g., individual attacks, lynching, ethnic cleansing, genocide).

3. Maintenance of self-image or status

• Powerful determinant of prejudice is to justify our behavior and our self-concept.
• Self-justification intensifies subsequent brutality.
• Strong predictor of prejudice is individual’s low or declining status.

4. Prejudiced personality (Dispositional prejudice)

• People predisposed toward being prejudiced, not solely because of immediate external influences, but also because of the kind of person they are.
  “Authoritarian personality”
  – Rigid in beliefs
  – Possess conventional values
  – Intolerant of weakness in self or others
  – Highly punitive
  – Suspicious
  – Highly respectful of authority to an unusual degree
• People high on authoritarianism don’t simply dislike Jews or blacks, but rather show a consistently high degree of prejudice against all minority groups.
• Much of the data are correlational—two variables are related, but can’t be certain what causes what.
• The development of prejudice in some people is due to conformity through the process of identification.

5. Conformity to Social Norms

• Individuals tend to reflect the norms of their community.
• Demonstrated repeatedly by measuring change in attitudes of people who move into areas more or less prejudiced than the ones they came from.
• The pressure to conform can be fairly overt, as in the Asch experiment. Conformity to a prejudicial norm might be due to the unavailability of accurate evidence and a preponderance of misleading information. This can lead people to adopt negative attitudes on the basis of hearsay.
Changing prejudiced attitudes

- Laws can’t force people to get along with each other.
- Education or information campaigns are not generally very effective.
- Information contrary to firmly-held beliefs is ignored, distorted or rejected.

1. Equal status contact

- Changes in behavior can affect changes in attitudes.
- Equal status contact can result in attitude change.
  - If blacks and whites could be brought into direct contact, prejudiced individuals would come into contact with the reality of their own experience, not simply a stereotype which would eventually lead to greater understanding.
- Under “ideal” conditions, where the individuals’ status is really equal.
- The 1954 Supreme Court decision was the beginning of a gradual change in the frequency of equal-status contact.
- Competition, especially economic, makes attitude change much less likely.

Desegregation

- The “psychology of inevitability.”
  - If I know I’ll be working closely with you and I don’t like you, I will experience dissonance. To reduce dissonance, I will try to convince myself that you’re not as bad as I had previously thought. I will try to look for your positive characteristics and try to ignore, or minimize the importance of your negative characteristics. The fact that I know I will be working closely with you at some point will force me to change my prejudiced attitudes about you, all other things being equal.
- Desegregation by itself does not change attitudes.
- Authority figures must overtly support the change.
- Some attitude change seems to result as soon as individuals accept the inevitability of the change.
- I.e. Pettigrew—violence has generally resulted in areas where authorities give hints that they’ll gladly return to segregation if disturbances occurred.
  - If people were not given the opportunity to reduce dissonance, there was violence.
- Immediate desegregation was far more effective than gradual desegregation.
- Most effective way to reduce prejudice is to require people to desegregate with no options of going back to segregation.
2. Mutual interdependence

- One of the best ways to diminish competition and hostility between groups.
- The situation must require that the groups work together to accomplish a shared goal.
  - I.e. Sherif succeeded in reducing hostility by placing the two groups of boys in situations in which they were mutually interdependent—situations in which they had to cooperate with each other in order to accomplish their goal.

Jigsaw classroom

- Technique developed by Aronson and students to address difficulties in recently desegregated Texas school.
- Requires students to learn material from each other rather than the teacher.
- Very successful in reducing tensions after just a few days.
- This cooperative strategy places people in a favor-doing situation.
- In order to get the whole picture, students needed to listen carefully to the other students in the group as they recited.
- Reinforce interdependence rather than teasing and prejudice.

Jigsaw classroom (continued)

- The interdependence inherent in the technique results in students getting to know each other as individuals.
- Once the students really pay attention to each other, their stereotypes subside.
- The process enhances empathy among the students by cooperating with each other in interdependent classroom situations.
  - Empathy is the ability to experience what your group member is experiencing.

Jigsaw classroom (continued)

- The technique has been used successfully in many countries.
- The technique has been used with students of all ages, elementary through university.
- The results are higher tests scores, as well as more positive interactions among students.