

Chapter 13

Prejudice: Causes and Cures

Prejudice

**Prejudice is ubiquitous; it affects all of us
-- majority group members as well as
minority group members.**



Prejudice

Prejudice is dangerous, fostering negative consequences from lowered self-esteem to genocide.

Prejudice

Over the past 30 years, blatant discrimination has been reduced; however, prejudice still exists in subtle -- and sometimes blatant -- forms.

Prejudice

- **Prejudice and Self-Esteem**

Being a member of an oppressed group can lower a person's self-esteem.

Chapter Outline

II. Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination

Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination

- **Prejudice: The Affective Component**

Prejudice is a hostile or negative attitude toward a distinguishable group of people, based solely on their membership in that group.

Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination

- **Prejudice: The Affective Component**

Prejudiced people direct their prejudice towards members of the group as a whole, ignoring distinguishing characteristics.

Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination

- **Stereotypes: The Cognitive Component**

A ***stereotype*** is a generalization about a group of people in which identical characteristics are assigned to virtually all members of the group, regardless of actual variation among the members.

Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination

- **Stereotypes: The Cognitive Component**

Stereotypes are not necessarily emotionally laden and do not necessarily lead to discrimination. However, the potential abuse due to stereotyping can be blatant.

Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination

- **Discrimination: The Behavioral Component**

Discrimination is an unjustified negative or harmful action towards a member of a group, simply because of his or her membership in that group.



Chapter Outline

III. What Causes Prejudice?



What Causes Prejudice?

Whether or not there is a biological root to prejudice, as evolutionary psychologists would expect, is unknown; it is clear that prejudice occurs between biologically similar people who hold different beliefs.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

One explanation for prejudice is that it is the inevitable byproduct of information processing. Examples of mental processes include categorization, the use of schemas and heuristics, and faulty memory processes.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

The first step in prejudice is the creation of groups. Once we have mental categories, we group stimuli into them by similarities, downplaying differences between members of a group and exaggerating differences between members of different groups.



What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

In-group bias is the especially positive feelings and special treatment we reserve for people we have defined as part of our in-group.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

Another consequence of social categorization is ***out-group homogeneity***, the perception that those in the out-group are more similar to each other than they really are, as well as more similar than the members of the in-group are.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

There are two reasons why it is almost impossible to get a person holding a deep-seated prejudice to change his or her mind.

First, it is primarily the emotional aspect of attitudes that makes a prejudiced person hard to argue with.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

Second, people with strong prejudices have a firmly established schema for the target group(s). Thus, the use of logic fails to reduce prejudice.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

Studies have shown that over 30 years, stereotypes regarding established groups have remained fairly stable, becoming somewhat less negative over time.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

Devine (1989) developed a theory about how stereotypical and prejudiced beliefs affect information processing.

Her theory is based on the distinction between automatic and controlled information processing.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

According to her theory, when we process information about another, first the stereotypes that we know about are automatically triggered, then in the controlled process we decide whether or not to accept the stereotype.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

According to Fazio and colleagues (1995), much variability exists in people's automatic processing of negative stereotypes.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

They suggest that there are three kinds of people: (1) those who do not have an automatic negative reaction to members of a given group, (2) those who do have an automatic negative reaction but have no problems expressing their prejudice, and (3) those who have an automatic negative reaction but want to suppress it.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

Bargh et al. (1995) have shown that automatic prejudice can be triggered when certain ideas about the target group come to mind.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Think: Social Cognition**

An *illusory correlation* is the tendency to see relationships, or correlations, between events that are actually unrelated.

Illusory correlations are most likely to occur when the events or people are distinctive or conspicuous; minority group members are so by definition.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **How We Assign Meaning: Attributional Biases**

People's tendencies to engage in attributional biases, like the fundamental attribution error, increase the pervasiveness and persistence of stereotypes. When dispositional attributions about an entire group of people are made, it is called the *ultimate attribution error*.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **How We Assign Meaning: Attributional Biases**

Steele and Aronson have shown that at least one major contributing factor is situational.

They define *stereotype threat* as the apprehension experienced by members of a minority group that their behavior might confirm a cultural stereotype.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **How We Assign Meaning: Attributional Biases**

When an out-group member behaves in a way that disconfirms our stereotypes, we are likely to make a situational attribution for his or her performance, leaving the stereotype intact.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **How We Assign Meaning: Attributional Biases**

Blaming the victim is the tendency to blame individuals for their victimization; ironically, it is motivated by a desire to see the world as a fair and just place where people get what they deserve.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **How We Assign Meaning: Attributional Biases**

The ***self-fulfilling prophecy*** is the case whereby people (a) have an expectation about what another person is like, which (b) influences how they act toward that person, which (c) causes that person to behave in a way consistent with people's original expectations.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **Prejudice and Economic Competition:
Realistic Conflict Theory**

Realistic Conflict Theory is the theory that limited resources lead to conflict between groups and result in increased prejudice and discrimination.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **Prejudice and Economic Competition: Realistic Conflict Theory**

Several historical studies document that prejudice, discrimination, and violence against out-group members is positively correlated with the scarcity of jobs or other resources. Correlational and experimental data exist that support group conflict theory.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **Prejudice and Economic Competition: Realistic Conflict Theory**

Scapegoating is the tendency for individuals, when frustrated or unhappy, to displace aggression onto groups that are disliked, visible, and relatively powerless.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Conform: Normative Rules**

Through both explicit and implicit socialization, we are trained in the norms of our culture.

Stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes are part of this normative package.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Conform: Normative Rules**

Institutionalized racism refers to the racist attitudes that are held by the vast majority of people because we live in a society where stereotypes and discrimination are the norm.

What Causes Prejudice?

- The Way We Conform: Normative Rules

Institutionalized sexism refers to the sexist attitudes that are held by the vast majority of us for the same reason.

What Causes Prejudice?

- The Way We Conform: Normative Rules

In societies in which racism and sexism are institutionalized, *normative conformity* leads to the tendency to go along with the group in order to fulfill their expectations and gain acceptance.

What Causes Prejudice?

- **The Way We Conform: Normative Rules**

Modern racism is prejudice revealed in subtle, indirect ways because people have learned to hide their prejudiced attitudes in order to avoid being labeled as racist. This type of racism is shown when people outwardly act unprejudiced while inwardly maintain prejudiced attitudes.

Chapter Outline

IV. How Can Prejudice Be Reduced?



How Can Prejudice Be Reduced?

- **The Contact Hypothesis**

The contact hypothesis is the idea that merely bringing members of different groups into contact with each other will erode prejudice.

How Can Prejudice Be Reduced?

- **When Contact Reduces Prejudice: Six Conditions**

Allport (1954) suggested that six conditions are necessary for intergroup contact to reduce prejudice.

How Can Prejudice Be Reduced?

- **When Contact Reduces Prejudice: Six Conditions**
 1. **Mutual interdependence**
 2. **A common goal**
 3. **Equal status of group members**
 4. **Having informal interpersonal contact**
 5. **Having multiple contacts with several members of the outgroup**
 6. **When social norms are in place that promote equality**

How Can Prejudice Be Reduced?

- **When Contact Reduces Prejudice: Six Conditions**

A situation where two or more groups need each other and must depend on each other to accomplish a goal that is important to them defines *mutual interdependence*.

How Can Prejudice Be Reduced?

- Why Does Jigsaw Work?

A ***jigsaw classroom*** is a classroom setting designed to reduce prejudice and raise the self-esteem of children by placing them in small desegregated groups and making each child dependent on the other children in the group to learn the course material and do well in the class.

How Can Prejudice Be Reduced?

- **Why Does Jigsaw Work?**

One reason for the effectiveness of the jigsaw classroom is that it succeeds in breaking down in-group versus out-group perceptions. This learning environment also places people in a “favor-doing” situation and leads them to like the people they help. In addition, the jigsaw classroom works because it fosters empathy.



How Can Prejudice Be Reduced?

- **Why Does Jigsaw Work?**

The cooperative learning movement has become a major force in the field of public education, and provides a powerful tool in the battle against prejudice. Unfortunately, the spread of cooperative learning is gradual.