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The role of intentions in conceptions of prejudice:

An historical perspective

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As an issue with a great deal of relevance to ongoing historical and social events, prejudice has captured the attention of empirical social psychologists almost since the inception of social psychology. However, the relevance of prejudice to current events has meant that, as the treatment of minorities in American society has changed over time, so too has researchers’ conceptualization of prejudice. The result of these changes in conceptualization is that some ideas that were developed within a particular historical context have since been abandoned to the dustbin of outmoded psychological theory as changing historical circumstances have made those ideas (apparently) irrelevant to the new societal context (Meehl, 1978).

The tendency to perhaps prematurely abandon once promising research ideas is only exacerbated by the fact that, as a construct, “prejudice” is difficult to conceptualize and accurately define (Devine, 1995). The phenomena that are supposedly linked to prejudice span the affective, cognitive, biological, and behavioral domains, and these phenomena can exist at intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup levels. The result of these disparate aspects of prejudice is that, over time, researchers’ definitions of prejudice have emphasized different aspects of these phenomena and levels of analysis (Devine, 1995).

An additional complication is that most people view prejudice as a topic that is highly relevant to their moral values (Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Allport, 1954). This relevance to morals makes the definition of prejudice particularly subject to personal interpretation, and also means that intentions, which have been the object of their own vigorous scientific debates (e.g., Bargh & Chartrand, 1999; Ryan & Deci, 2006), play a central role in many definitions of prejudice. Overall, the difficulties in defining prejudice and the relevance of definitions of prejudice to moral values has made researchers’ conceptualizations of prejudice particularly sensitive to historical events (Duckitt, 1992).
The interaction between historical events and researchers’ changing conceptualizations of prejudice is exemplified by researchers’ assumptions about the intentionality of prejudice. Whereas early in the empirical study of prejudice, most researchers assumed that prejudice was driven mostly by intentional processes (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), most modern researchers focus on the unintentional aspects of prejudice (e.g., Devine, 1989; Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995; Crandall & Eshleman, 2003).

In this chapter, we will draw on previous treatments of the history of prejudice research (Devine, 1995; Duckitt, 1992; Milner, 1983) to conduct an historical review of how events in both the real world and the research world have shaped researchers’ conceptualizations of the intentionality of prejudice. We argue that, while early research focused on the intentional aspects of prejudice, modern research focuses more exclusively on the unintentional aspects of prejudice. As a result of the modern overattention to the unintentional aspects of prejudice, researchers have ignored the possibility that some people are motivated to express prejudice (Forscher & Devine, in preparation). Through our argument, we hope to build a bridge between modern and classic insights into prejudice processes.

*Early conceptions of prejudice: Prejudice follows from negative intentions*

Prior to the 1920s, social scientists accepted the premise of White racial superiority, and theories of race were used as tools to support and justify White supremacy (Haller, 1971). However, the rise of the early Civil Rights movement in the 1920s caused some social scientists to question whether race-based stereotypes and antipathy were justified, leading to the first empirical efforts to define, identify, and measure racial prejudice (e.g., Bogardus, 1925; Guilford, 1931). The earliest of these studies typically involved surveying respondents about
their feelings towards one or more social groups and describing how these feelings varied across occupations, races, and other social categories.

Over time, however, prejudice researchers began to shift from simple description of prejudice to explanation of its origins. In these explanations, prejudice researchers used correlational methods, case studies, and towards the end of the 1940s, experiments to attempt to explain race-based antipathy in terms of Freudian defense mechanisms, which were presumed to be universal features of human psychology (e.g., MacCrone, 1937; Veltfort & Lee, 1943, Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939). Although many researchers following the psychodynamic approach to prejudice used the correlational methods of the previous decades, other researchers added case studies and experiments to the methodological toolbox used to understand prejudice. Overall, researchers following the psychodynamic approach portrayed prejudice as a normal byproduct of ordinary psychological processes. Moreover, intentions did not figure prominently in this conceptualization.

Prejudice research underwent a dramatic transformation in theory if not in method following revelations of the horrific events of the Holocaust during World War II. The anti-Semitism that drove the Holocaust seemed to stem from explicitly articulated intentions to oppress and murder Jews. Thus, conceptualizations of prejudice that did not incorporate intentions seemed inadequate to explain the events of the scale and magnitude of the Holocaust. Moreover, if the dominant theoretical analyses of the previous decades were correct and prejudice stemmed from ordinary psychological processes, the unsettling implication was that the psychological seeds that bore the bitter fruits of the Holocaust were present in everyone (see Milgram, 1963). As a means of distancing prejudice from ordinary people, researchers began to emphasize the intentional, pathological, and / or abnormal aspects of prejudice.
Because this new theoretical approach portrayed prejudice as abnormal or pathological, the intrapsychic processes that were assumed to cause prejudice were similarly characterized as abnormal or pathological. These processes ranged from personality characteristics (e.g., Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950) to belief structures (e.g., Rokeach, 1973), all of which were assumed to be closely embedded with one’s sense of self. Because researchers assumed that change in prejudice required change in the intrapsychic processes that gave rise to prejudice (Rokeach, 1973), change in prejudice, when it did happen, was assumed to be a difficult and sometimes arduous process requiring substantial personal change. Although a few prejudice researchers attempted to tackle the challenge of changing the underlying psychological variables presumed to promote prejudice (Rokeach, 1973), more often prejudice researchers developed tools to identify the people who might be prone to prejudice so that broader society could take steps to ameliorate the potentially dangerous influence of these people.

Although the intensely person-focused approach of post-World War II research did not survive the early years of prejudice research, the more general effects of World War II and the Holocaust on prejudice research lingered beyond the immediate postwar era. Specifically, for decades after World War II, prejudice researchers assumed that prejudice arose because of negative intentions towards a specific out-group. Researchers did shift over time in terms of where they located the ultimate cause of these negative intentions, first preferring individual causes such as pathological patterns of personality (Adorno et al., 1950) and illogical belief structures (Rokeach, 1973), and later preferring social causes such as early childhood socialization experiences (Westie, 1964) and conformity (Pettigrew, 1958). However, a unifying theme of these disparate causal explanations is that they identified prejudice with intentional actions and processes.
The assumption that prejudice is driven by negative intentions lingered even as the changes wrought by the Civil Rights Movement made the expression of overtly negative sentiments toward out-groups socially unacceptable. As national surveys revealed steady improvements in people’s reported racial attitudes (Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997), researchers were reluctant to conclude that these changes in reported attitudes extended to genuine changes in “prejudice”. Indeed, as outcomes for outgroups failed to improve alongside people’s reported attitudes, prejudice researchers speculated that prejudice had gone underground and taken on a new, “modern” form (McConahay, 1983). Under this explanation, although the “old-fashioned” forms of prejudice were no longer expressed in public, prejudice was still revealed through covert patterns of behavior that could not be easily attributed by observers to negative intentions toward the outgroup (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Kinder & Sears, 1981).

The general suspicion that survey evidence did not reflect the reality of people’s hidden, underlying levels of “modern” prejudice, together with a theoretical analysis that argued that people were motivated to hide their “true” levels of prejudice from others, inspired researchers to devise new methods of assessing prejudice that did not rely on surveys or self-reports. These new methods relied on behaviors, such helping, that were clearly valenced, but for which no one particular level of the behavior could be clearly attributed to “prejudice”. By experimentally manipulating whether the target of the chosen behavior was a White person or a Black person and comparing the positivity or negativity of the behavior towards the two different targets, researchers could assess whether, on average, Black people were subject to subtle forms of discrimination. To the extent that Black people were indeed treated more negatively or less positively than White people, the difference was attributed to prejudice, with the concomitant
implication that the participants in the study possessed negative intentions towards out-groups (Crosby, Bromley, & Saxe, 1980).

As evidence accumulated that, in situations where a response could not obviously be attributed to prejudice, people behaved more negatively and less positively towards Blacks than towards Whites, researchers became increasingly disenchanted with self-report measures and increasingly cynical that prejudice could be changed (Crosby, Bromley, & Saxe, 1980). In effect, researchers had shifted their conceptualization of prejudice such that any behavioral response that resulted in a relatively unfavorable outcome for a minority group member was considered evidence for prejudiced beliefs and/or intentions, and any overt protestations to the contrary were considered mere self-presentation. As Crosby and her colleagues (pg. 557) put it, many researchers concluded that “...whites today are, in fact, more prejudiced than they are wont to admit.” This shift in conceptualization was a dramatic change from the earlier era, in which self-reports were taken as face-value indicators of beliefs. Although consistent with the available evidence, the shift in conceptualization had the unfortunate side-effect of leaving the route to reducing and eliminating the disparity between reported attitudes and behavior unclear.

Although Crosby and her colleagues’ (1980) conclusion was consistent with the then-dominant conceptualization of prejudice, the contradiction between self-reports and discriminatory behavior had an alternative explanation. Specifically, perhaps the improvements in reported attitudes did, in fact, reflect genuine changes in intentions, but some biasing process or set of processes prevented people from fully translating these intentions to behave fairly into unbiased behavior. Moreover, to the extent that the biasing processes operate without people being aware of them, people may not even be aware of any inconsistency between their verbal reports and behavior.
If one accepts that discriminatory behavior can arise from unintentional processes despite intentions that are inconsistent with prejudice, one must consider the conclusion that a substantial percentage of discrimination is caused by unintentional processes. One corollary of this conclusion is that subtle differences in behavior towards Whites and minorities can no longer be taken as prima facie evidence of negative intentions toward out-groups. A second corollary is that, one might be able to harness people’s good intentions to disrupt the influence of the unintentional biases, thereby reducing or even eliminating subtle discriminatory behavior (Devine, 1989).

Overall, the interpretation of the disparity between self-reports and subtle behavior as stemming from unintentional processes requires a major shift in researchers’ conceptualization of prejudice. Instead of conceiving of prejudice as antipathy stemming from negative intentions, prejudice is linked more to the processes that prevent the translation of intentions into behavior or lead to discriminatory behavior in opposition to egalitarian intentions. This reconceptualization flew in the face of long-standing assumptions that characterized prejudice and discrimination as intentional. In fact, the alternative interpretation of the discrepancy between self-reports and behavior would not be taken seriously until the development of new theory and methods in the 1990s.

*Modern conceptions of prejudice: Prejudice follows from unintentional associations*

A turning point in the empirical study of prejudice came with the introduction of the prejudice habit model (Devine, 1989). The prejudice habit model distinguishes between controlled and automatic processes and argues that, whereas controlled processes reflect people’s beliefs, automatic processes reflect the associations acquired from broader culture. While people’s beliefs are argued to stem from values and intentions, both of which are central to a
person’s self-concept, automatic associations are argued to stem from frequently activated pairings of groups with stereotypic characteristics. Thus, to the extent that a person believes that the use of stereotypes about a particular group is wrong, that person’s automatic associations about the group may nonetheless conflict with those beliefs. Moreover, because stereotypic pairings occur so frequently in the social environment, merely encountering a member of the group is sufficient to trigger stereotypic associates that are paired with that out-group. The implication of this analysis is that even people who believe that discrimination is wrong may nonetheless behave in ways that have negative consequences for outgroups, provided that situational constraints prevent controlled processes from inhibiting the influence of automatic stereotypes.

The prejudice habit model thus provided the theoretical framework needed to reinterpret the disparity between self-reports and behavior as stemming from unintentional processes. Rather than assuming that all self-reports reflect strategic self-presentation, the prejudice habit model argues that self-reports very often reflect genuine intentions to respond without prejudice. Rather than assuming that subtly discriminatory behavior reflects a “modern” form of prejudice that is only revealed when observers are unable to clearly attribute one’s behavior to negative intentions, the prejudice habit model argues that subtle discrimination stems from situational factors that prevent controlled processes from overriding automatic processes. The more radical effect of the new theoretical framework, however, was the new way in which the framework caused modern prejudice researchers to reconceptualize prejudice. Specifically, instead of identifying “prejudice” as intentional, many modern prejudice research has come to identify prejudice as equivalent to automatic stereotypic associations (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995; Banaji & Greenwald, 1995). Because stereotypic
associations operate independently from and despite countervailing intentions, many researchers’ conceptualizations of prejudice are largely divorced from intentions.

The new dissociation between intentions and prejudice has had a dramatic effect on the collective research agenda. If one accepts the premise that “prejudice” can occur despite countervailing intentions, the most logical research agenda is one that allows the identification of the factors that increase or decrease susceptibility to unintentional bias. In line with this logic, identifying factors that affect susceptibility to unintentional bias has dominated the modern research agenda. This task has required new methodological tools that allow the direct measurement the unintentional biases. Obtaining such direct measures would avoid the ambiguity inherent in the subtle bias experiments of the 1970s and 1980s, in which the processes causing disparities between self-reports and pro-White behavior were unclear. The development of such direct measures has been the major methodological revolution of the modern era. Modern prejudice researchers now have a broad array of cognitive (e.g., Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998; Fazio et al., 1995; Payne, Cheng, Govorun, & Stewart, 2005), mathematical (Payne, 2001; Conrey, Sherman, Gawronski, Hugenberg, & Groom, 2005), and neuroscientific (Amodio, Devine, & Harmon-Jones, 2008; Amodio et al., 2004; Amodio, Harmon-Jones, & Devine, 2003) tools at their disposal that allow them to precisely document the interplay between controlled and automatic processes in the production of unintentional bias.

Using these new theoretical analyses and methodological tools, modern prejudice researchers have discovered that unintentional bias only occurs in specific situations where self-control resources are limited and / or where there is no clear “non-prejudiced” response (Devine, 1989). Modern prejudice researchers have also developed a large number of strategies that reduce automatic stereotypic associations, at least for short periods of time (e.g., Todd,
Bodenhausen, Richeson, & Galinsky, 2011; Kawakami et al., 2000; Dasgupta & Greenwald, 2001). If these strategies are presented to people in the context of a larger program designed to elicit motivation to respond without prejudice and awareness of unintentional bias and its consequences, people who exert effort practicing the strategies create long-term reductions in their susceptibility to unintentional bias (Devine, Forscher, Austin, & Cox, 2012). To the extent that unintentional bias contributes to society-wide disparities, the modern focus on unintentional bias may have provided insights that are useful for broader issues beyond the thorny theoretical problems of past researchers.

Despite spurring many productive lines of research, we argue that the intense focus on unintentional bias has had some inadvertent negative consequences for prejudice research. First, the focus on unintentional bias may have made prejudice researchers less thoughtful about the ways in which they use self-report measures. Second, this focus has limited the range of phenomena that prejudice researchers attempt to explain. Finally, the focus on unintentional bias has placed artificial limitations on the range of interventions prejudice researchers develop to address problems related to prejudice.

The first inadvertent consequence, that of making prejudice researchers less thoughtful about their use of self-report measures, is illustrated in the limited range of purposes to which modern prejudice researchers put self-report measures. More specifically, modern prejudice researchers generally use self-report measures in one of two ways. First, prejudice researchers use self-report measures as indicators of positive intentions (e.g., Plant & Devine, 1998; Dunton & Fazio, 1997) or the “controlled processes” that, according to the prejudice habit model, often conflict with automatic stereotypic associations (e.g., Devine, 1989, McConnell & Leibold, 2001). Research that uses self-report measures as indicators of controlled processes tends to
focus on the circumstances in which controlled processes are subverted by unintentional bias (e.g., Devine, 1989; Payne, 2001; Amodio, Devine, & Harmon-Jones, 2008). Thus, a substantial proportion of research that uses self-report measures as indicators of controlled processes focuses on highlighting the situations in which self-report measures do not predict behavior.

The second way in which modern prejudice researchers use self-report measures is as the controlled counterpart to measures of automatic stereotypic associations (e.g., Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz; McConnell & Leibold, 2001; Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2003; Greenwald, Poehlman, Uhlmann, & Banaji, 2009). Research that uses self-report measures in this way tends to focus on theoretically and empirically validating measures of automatic associations by showing that they relate to behavior in circumstances that self-report measures do not. Thus, research that uses self-report measures as the controlled counterpart to implicit measures is often focused on documenting the ways in which self-report measures predict behavior less well than implicit measures. In sum, modern prejudice research, with its somewhat narrow focus on unintentional bias, uses self-report measures as mere points of comparison for implicit measures, with the result that researchers are less thoughtful about the ways in which self-report measures could be informative for their research.

The second inadvertent consequence of the field’s current focus on unintentional bias is a narrowing of the range of phenomena that prejudice researchers attempt to explain. The theoretical analysis at the foundation of modern prejudice research focuses on explaining the paradox that some people’s subtly discriminatory behavior contradicts self-reports that prohibit prejudice. However, explaining the reasons for this contradiction requires focusing on precisely the behaviors that were labeled “modern prejudice” by the researchers who originally discovered the paradox. Thus, when modern prejudice researchers attempt to explain the psychology of a
particular behavior that they believe might be driven by unintentional/automatic biases, they
typically choose behaviors such as seating distance (Kawakami, Phillis, Steele, & Dovidio, 2007),
eye contact (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002), and speech disfluencies (McConnell &
Leibold, 2001) as their outcome variables. Although these behaviors might have important
consequences in everyday interactions, they represent only a small subset of the universe of
intergroup behaviors relevant to prejudice. Perhaps most importantly, focusing on the
psychological determinants of subtle, mostly unintentional behavior ignores the psychology of
more extreme, mostly intentional behavior, such as hate speech or hate crimes. The fact that
prejudice researchers have ignored more extreme, intentional behavior is perhaps understandable
given that such behavior is relatively difficult to study in the lab, but our ignorance of more
extreme, intentional behavior is strange given the lasting legacies of slavery and the Holocaust
on prejudice research.

The last inadvertent consequence of the field’s current focus on unintentional bias, the
placement of artificial limitations on the interventions that prejudice researchers develop, is
closely tied to the fact that modern prejudice researchers have focused rather narrowly on
explaining and understanding unintentional bias. To the extent that prejudice researchers define
prejudice as unintentional bias, prejudice researchers developing remedies to social problems
involving prejudice will focus their efforts on reducing unintentional bias. Indeed, in the past
twenty years, national institutions and scholars alike have identified unintentional bias as perhaps
the primary factor promoting the maintenance of societal gender, racial, and ethnic disparities
(e.g., Smedley, Stith, & Nelson, 2003; Devine, Forscher, Austin, & Cox, 2012; Bertrand &
Mullainathan, 2004; Fiske, 1998). However, there is scant direct evidence supporting the
privileged position of unintentional bias in promoting societal disparities (but see van den Bergh,
Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010). Although unintentional bias may contribute to ongoing disparities, ignoring the role of other causal factors will lead to interventions that are less effective than those that take a multi-pronged approach (Forscher & Devine, in press).

We have argued that modern prejudice research is perhaps too focused on understanding the problem of unintentional bias and have argued that this focus has unintended methodological, conceptual, and practical consequences for our overall understanding of intergroup phenomena. In the final section of this chapter, we will describe a methodological tool, a scale measuring the motivation to express prejudice, which we developed to help address some of the shortcomings of the focus on unintentional bias. We will also describe how the development of this methodological tool was informed by puzzling empirical patterns in research on the motivation to respond without prejudice.

*Integrating past and modern insights: The case study of the motivation to express prejudice*

The development of the motivation to express prejudice scale grew out of puzzling patterns extant in research on one of the central concerns of modern prejudice research, the reasons people are motivated to respond without prejudice. Plant and Devine (1998) have argued that these reasons can be classified into internal (personal, value-driven) and external (social, norm-driven) categories. Motivation that stems from internal sources arises out of personal values that are inconsistent with the expression of prejudice. Internal motivation tends to lead people to adopt strict, well-internalized, personally-endorsed standards that prohibit even subtle expressions of prejudice (Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Monteith, Devine, & Zuwerink, 1993). Violations of these standards are perceived by internally motivated people as moral failures (Devine et al., 1991), leading to guilt and later efforts to prevent future deviations from the standards (Amodio, Devine, & Harmon-Jones, 2007; Monteith, 1993;
Monteith et al., 2002). In sum, the overall goal of primarily internally motivated people is to reduce and eliminate their prejudice, regardless of whether that prejudice can be detected by others (Plant & Devine, 2009).

In contrast, motivation that stems from external sources is driven by a concern over violating the pervasive anti-prejudiced norms by appearing prejudiced to others. Instead of leading to the adoption of personally-endorsed standards prohibiting prejudice, external motivation tends to lead people to adopt what they perceive to be the standards of others in the regulation of their behavior (Plant & Devine, 1998; Plant & Devine, 2001; Plant & Devine, 2009). Violations of these social standards lead people who are primarily externally motivated to feel threatened and to attempt to hide the violation from others (Plant & Devine, 2001). In sum, in contrast to the goal adopted by people who are primarily internally motivated, primarily externally motivated people have the goal of hiding their expressions of prejudice from others (Plant & Devine, 2009).

An interesting aspect of the internal and external motivations to respond without prejudice is that these two motivations are essentially uncorrelated; people can be high in one type of motivation, both, or neither. Much of the research on the motivations to respond without prejudice has involved uncovering the regulatory patterns of the four motivational subgroups arising from the combinations of these two factors.

Three of the four subgroups are relatively well-understood. Consistent with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), internal motivation to respond without prejudice is primary in that, regardless of whether a person is high or low in external motivation, the primary goal of a person who is high in internal motivation is to reduce and eliminate their prejudice (Devine et al., 2002; Plant & Devine, 2009). Moreover, people low in both internal and external
motivation to respond without prejudice are unmotivated in that they do not exert effort to regulate their intergroup behavior. However, people who are low in internal motivation but high in external motivation have long posed a theoretical and empirical puzzle for researchers interested in the motivation to respond without prejudice. Specifically, this subgroup of people reacts to social pressure to act without prejudice towards the target out-group in ways that suggest more than just a lack of intentions to respond without prejudice towards that out-group (e.g., Plant & Devine, 1998; Plant & Devine, 2001; Plant & Devine, 2009; Cox & Devine, 2014).

Consider an illustrative study by Plant and Devine (2009), which was designed to illuminate the specific intentions that underlie peoples’ efforts to respond without prejudice. Plant and Devine led their participants to believe that they were going to have an interracial interaction. Prior to the interracial interaction, the participants were given the opportunity to complete what was described as a prejudice reduction program that would have one of a variety of different consequences for the participant’s future behavior. As a behavioral indicator of interest in the program (and therefore an indicator of the desire to obtain the described consequences of that program), Plant and Devine measured the amount of time the participants chose to spend on the prejudice reduction program.

When the prejudice reduction program was described as reducing forms of prejudice that would be detectable in the upcoming interaction, people high in external motivation but low in internal motivation spent a relatively long time in the prejudice reduction program. This pattern of behavior is consistent with the idea that this subgroup of people is concerned about appearing prejudiced toward others. However, when the prejudice reduction program was described as reducing both prejudice that was detectable by the interaction partner and prejudice that was undetectable by the interaction partner, people high in internal motivation but low in external
motivation refused to spend much time in the prejudice reduction program, despite the fact that this refusal would presumably come at the cost of appearing relatively prejudiced in the upcoming interaction. Apparently, reducing undetectable forms of prejudice is inconsistent with the identity of people who are high in external motivation but low in internal motivation, to the point where people in this subgroup are willing to pay a cost to avoid reducing their undetectable prejudice. This interpretation is further supported by the fact that, when the prejudice reduction program was described as reducing detectable prejudice and increasing undetectable prejudice, people high in external motivation and low in internal motivation spent a relatively long time in the program. Overall, these patterns of data are difficult to explain with psychological constructs that do not directly implicate intentions to express prejudice, such as unintentionally activated associations, the motivations to respond without prejudice, and racial attitudes. Instead, these patterns of data suggest that some people possess intentions toward out-groups that motivate prejudicial behavior.

If one reflects on the historical events that originally inspired the empirical study of prejudice, it should not be surprising that some people possess intentions to express prejudice towards outgroups. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a psychological explanation for the extreme anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany that does not draw on the idea of prejudicial intentions towards Jews. Modern prejudice researchers seem to have lost sight of the events that motivated the original development of their field, perhaps because of the modern paradox of unintentional bias and the theories and methods that were developed to explain this paradox. However, to understand the full range of intergroup phenomena, we argue that we need to reclaim the insights of classic prejudice research. Reclaiming these insights will enable us to develop theory and methodology required to understand motivated prejudice.
As a first step in this direction, we developed a direct measure of the motivation to express prejudice (Forscher et al., under review). We reasoned that, similar to the motivation to respond without prejudice, people might be motivated to express prejudice for either internal or external reasons, so we created internal and external subscales of our motivation to express prejudice scale. Some example items of the resultant scale include “My beliefs motivate me to express negative views about Black people” (internal) and “I minimize my contact with Black people in order to avoid disapproval from others” (external). We then validated our measure by testing its psychometric properties and its convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity.

In our typical college samples, most people scored low in the motivation to express prejudice. Moreover, people who scored high in one of the motivational subscales also tended to score high in the other. We obtained evidence that the strong relationship between the internal and external subscales is linked to the local normative climate; when the local norms oppose a person’s motivation to express prejudice, the internal and external motivations to express prejudice become strongly linked, perhaps the general difficulty of maintaining an internal motivation without the support of important others. Regardless of the specific reasons for the strong correlation between the internal and external subscales, for the results described in the following paragraphs, we averaged together the internal and external subscales of the motivation to express prejudice scale.

Overall, our results strongly supported the hypothesis that the motivation to express prejudice is a construct that is independent from the motivation to respond without prejudice. The motivation to express prejudice scale had good reliability, as assessed through an internal consistency measure and through test-retest correlations. The motivation to express prejudice was also positively related to measures of related constructs, such as Right-Wing
Authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1996) and Social Dominance Orientation (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994), and negatively related to measures of constructs inconsistent with the motivation to express prejudice, such as the internal motivation to respond without prejudice and measures of positive attitudes towards the target group. The scale was also unrelated to measures of constructs that it should not be related to, such as self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974), social desirability (Crowne & Marlow, 1960), and the external motivation to respond without prejudice (Plant & Devine, 1998). Moreover, when we allowed the interaction between the internal and external motivations to respond without prejudice to predict the motivation to express prejudice, people high in the external motivation to respond without prejudice and low in the internal motivation to respond without prejudice were highest in the motivation to express prejudice. This result may help shed light on why this subgroup of people exhibit patterns of behavior in past literature suggesting more than a lack of a motivation to respond without prejudice – perhaps this subgroup of people resents the pressure they feel from society to respond without prejudice towards a particular group (Plant & Devine, 2001), to the point that expressing covert prejudice towards that target group has become an important part of their identity.

We tested the predictive validity of the motivation to express prejudice scale in two ways: first, by testing whether the Black version of the scale predicted resistance to efforts to promote racial diversity, and second, by testing whether the gay version of the scale predicted voting for political candidates who oppose same-sex marriage on the basis of anti-gay rhetoric. In the first study, we led our participants to believe that we were gathering arguments about a student organization, BadgerConnect, that had the goal of increasing interactions and friendships between Black and White students. The participants were further informed that they would be
asked to write an essay about BadgerConnect, which would be posted on a public website where other students could read and discuss it. Following past induced compliance research (e.g., Elliot & Devine, 1994), we then subtly induced the participants to write an essay either for or against BadgerConnect. We measured whether the participants refused to write the essay of their assigned stance, as well as their evaluations of another essay, their own essay, and the stance of the comments they wrote on their own essay. Consistent with our arguments that the motivation to express prejudice is linked to an identity consistent with expressions of prejudice, people high in the motivation to express prejudice were likely to refuse to write a pro-BadgerConnect essay. If they did agree to write an anti-BadgerConnect essay, people high in the motivation to express prejudice undermined the strength of this support by evaluating others’ anti-BadgerConnect essays favorably, evaluating their own pro-BadgerConnect unfavorably, and writing anti-BadgerConnect comments on their own pro-BadgerConnect essays. These effects held when controlling for attitudes and the motivations to respond without prejudice, suggesting that our new measure is not identical with these alternative constructs.

In our second study, we told the participants that we were comparing voting behavior in the lab with voting behavior from a real local election for the state House of Representatives. The participants then read about three candidates for the election who varied in their stances and rhetoric about a potential ban on same-sex marriage. One of the candidates supported the ban with anti-gay rhetoric, a second supported the ban with rhetoric based on “family values,” and a third opposed the ban with equality rhetoric. We measured the participants’ perceptions of the three candidates, their choice of votes for one of the candidates, and their choice of which candidate to publicly support in a debate with another pro-gay participant. People high in the motivation to express prejudice perceived the candidate who supported the ban with anti-gay
rhetoric relatively positively and were relatively likely to vote for and publicly support this candidate, even controlling for attitudes and the motivations to respond without prejudice.

Our work on the motivations to express prejudice provides a valuable case study in how attending to the intentional aspects of prejudice can help resolve theoretical and empirical puzzles extant in modern prejudice research. Our new understanding of why people high in external motivation but low in internal motivation are particularly negative in their responding toward outgroups would not have been possible by solely focusing on unintentional bias, since the processes implicated in producing unintentional bias circumvent intentions. Moreover, our insights would not have been possible by solely focusing on attitudes, since attitudes are not necessarily directly related to the machinery involved in the production of intentions, such as motivation, standards, and values. By providing direct evidence that some forms of prejudice are motivated, we hope that we can help broaden researchers’ conceptions of prejudice and thereby reconnect modern research with the insights of classic prejudice research.

Summary and conclusion: Prejudice involves both intentional and unintentional processes

In this chapter, we have described how researcher conceptualizations of prejudice have been shaped by a combination of events in the research world and the real world. Specifically, we have argued that World War II caused prejudice researchers to focus on the intentional aspects of prejudice, and that this focus on intentional prejudice persisted through the Civil Rights Movement. However, newly developed theory and methodology in the 1990s caused researchers to focus on the unintentional aspects of prejudice at the expense of our understanding of its intentional aspects, with the inadvertent consequence that modern prejudice researchers are ill-equipped to understand phenomena that are most likely intentional, such as hate-crimes. Finally, we argued that, if we wish to gain a complete understanding of intergroup phenomena,
we must fuse the insights of classic and modern research so that we understand the full range of interactions between intentions, norms, and cognitive and motivational processes in intergroup situations.

More broadly, modern prejudice researchers must recognize that prejudice is more than just unintentional bias. Prejudice research has a healthy tradition of studying the intentional aspects of prejudice that has been all but lost in the theoretical and methodological developments of the 1990s. Focusing on the intentional aspects of prejudice will reconnect modern prejudice researchers with the insights of early prejudice researchers. Reconnecting with past insights will broaden the range of phenomena that prejudice researchers are equipped to explain and the range of societal problems that prejudice researchers can help resolve.
References


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