Prejudice Toward Blacks: With and Without Compunction?

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Previous work has shown that only individuals with low prejudiced (LP) attitudes toward gay men experience compunction (e.g., guilt, self-criticism) when they respond with a greater degree of prejudice than is allowed by their own personal standards. Those high in prejudice (HP) toward gay men do not experience much compunction (e.g., Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991). The generalizability of these findings to the domain of prejudice toward Blacks was examined in our research. Despite differences in the nature of prejudice toward gay men and Blacks, the results of two studies closely replicated previous findings. Specifically, LP individuals reported low prejudice and well-internalized personal standards for responding to Blacks, and violations of those standards resulted in feelings of compunction. In comparison, HP individuals reported more prejudice and less well-internalized standards that were not associated with strong compunction when violated. Implications for prejudice reduction are discussed.

Influential theorists such as Gunar Myrdal (1944), Gordon Allport (1954), and Milton Rokeach (1973) have suggested that most White Americans experience a
conflict between their general egalitarian beliefs and their more specific prejudiced responses toward Blacks. In these writings, the assumption is that most White Americans have egalitarian self-concepts based on the American creed of “freedom and justice for all.” Despite this egalitarian creed, the specific values, attitudes, and behaviors manifested by White Americans toward Blacks can be very prejudiced in nature. According to Allport (1954), this inner conflict (or what Myrdal called the “American dilemma”), when recognized, leads to feelings of compunction (e.g., guilt, self-criticism, self-dissatisfaction). Despite its intuitive appeal, this notion of prejudice with compunction went largely untested for nearly four decades.

Recent investigations, however, provide evidence for prejudice with compunction, at least among low prejudiced individuals (i.e., those who score low on an attitudinal measure of prejudice; Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Monteith, 1993; Monteith, Devine, & Zuwerink, 1993). We have found that many low prejudiced individuals report discrepancies between their low prejudiced standards for responding to outgroup members and their moderately prejudiced actual responses. Recognizing their failure to respond consistently with their low prejudiced standards leads to feelings of psychological discomfort (e.g., tense, bothered) for these individuals (e.g., Aronson, 1968; Carver & Scheier, 1990; Duval & Wicklund, 1972; Higgins, 1987). In addition to this general discomfort, low prejudiced individuals also feel guilty and self-critical. That is, as Allport (1954) theorized, they experience compunction when reflecting on discrepancies from their low prejudiced standards.

We have argued that two factors are responsible for the experience of compunction among these low prejudiced individuals. First, their standards are well-internalized. That is, their standards for nonprejudiced responding are personally very important, involve a strong degree of commitment, and are self-defining (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith et al., 1993). Second, the guilt associated with violating these standards implies that they are based primarily on the “own” standpoint (Higgins, 1987). That is, low prejudiced individuals believe that they have a personal, moral obligation to respond consistently with their standards, so that any violation of the standard is interpreted as a personal moral failure. Furthermore, the guilt experienced as a result of such failures can serve to facilitate the process of prejudice reduction. It does so by motivating attempts to respond in low prejudiced ways in the future (see Devine & Monteith, 1993; Monteith, 1993; Rokeach, 1973).

Like those low in prejudice, many high prejudiced persons report discrepancies between their standards and their actual responses, but the nature and consequences of their discrepancies are quite different from those of low prejudiced individuals (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith et al., 1993). First, the location of both their standards and their actual responses are more prejudiced. Thus, their discrepancies involve moderately prejudiced standards and very prejudiced actual responses. Second, high prejudiced individuals’ standards are less well internalized than those of low prejudiced individuals, and they do not appear to be based on a strong sense of personal.
moral obligation. Consequently, their discrepancies produce the same degree of tension and discomfort as do those of the low prejudiced individuals, but much less compunction. In one study (Monteith et al., 1993), we have found discrepancies among high prejudiced individuals to be associated with negative affect directed toward others. This pattern of affective responses suggests that for high prejudiced individuals, discrepancies are not likely to facilitate prejudice reduction (Monteith et al., 1993) and may even heighten negative feelings toward the target group.

Although we have assumed that the findings from this program of research reflect general processes that should apply to all targets of prejudice, the research has been conducted primarily in the domain of prejudice toward gay men. In one study (Devine et al., 1991, Study 1), we did find that subjects low in prejudice toward Blacks (LPs) felt discrepancy-associated compunction. However, the sample used in that study did not include individuals high in prejudice. Thus, it is unknown whether or not large discrepancies will lead to feelings of compunction for individuals high in prejudice toward Blacks (HPs). The primary purpose of our research is to answer this question.

We have assumed (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, Zuwerink, & Devine, 1994) that the processes that lead to prejudice with compunction are the same, regardless of the target group under investigation. Thus, if those who are high in prejudice toward Blacks do not have an internalized sense of obligation to live up to their standards (prejudiced though they may be), then we would not expect them to experience compunction when discrepancies are made salient. In other words, the extent to which standards are internalized is the key determinant of the experience of compunction. Thus, we considered it critical to examine high- and low prejudiced individuals' standards for the treatment of Blacks, and the extent to which those standards are internalized (Study 1). If we observe group differences in the extent to which standards are internalized, then we will expect prejudice with compunction (for LPs) and without compunction (for HPs) in Study 2. Such findings would support our assumption that the processes that lead to prejudice with and without compunction do not depend on the specific target group under investigation.

Additional considerations further warrant a test of the generalizability of our initial findings (i.e., Devine et al., 1991, Studies 2 & 3). These considerations are based on differences in the nature of prejudice toward gay men versus Blacks. At the sociological level, prejudice toward Blacks is grounded in a history of economic oppression and is justified by both an ideology of individualism (Katz & Hass, 1988) and a belief in abundant economic opportunity for those who work hard enough (Kluegel & Smith, 1986). In contrast, prejudice toward gay men is more closely related to traditional sex role attitudes and ideologies (Henley & Pincus, 1978; Herek, 1987b; Kite & Deaux, 1987; Kurdek, 1988; Taylor, 1983). That is, negative attitudes toward gay men seem to be based on the belief that men and women should behave according to traditional sex role norms and that gay men violate those norms (Kurdek, 1988; Taylor, 1983).
At the psychological level, prejudice toward these two groups may differ in terms of the psychological function served by the negative attitude (Herek, 1987a; Katz, 1960; Smith, Bruner, & White, 1956). For example, Herek (1987b) examined attitudes toward Blacks and toward gay men and lesbians among individuals with different religious orientations (intrinsic vs. extrinsic). He found that individuals with an extrinsic approach to religion (i.e., one in which religion is self-serving and fulfills a social identity function) reported more racism than those with an intrinsic approach (i.e., one in which religion provides a world-view or value system within which the meaning of life is understood). However, people with both types of religious orientation reported a similar degree of prejudice toward gay men and lesbians. This finding suggests that for intrinsically religious people, prejudice against gay men and lesbians is a means of expressing their values (i.e., that gay and lesbian behavior is sinful). Intrinsically religious people do not evidence prejudice toward Blacks because Blacks do not threaten or violate their fundamental value system. These findings support the contention that prejudice toward Blacks versus that toward gay men and lesbians can serve different functions.

Considering these differences in the nature of prejudice toward Blacks versus prejudice toward gay men and lesbians suggests that the consequences of these prejudices may be different. For example, it may be that people high in prejudice toward gay men and lesbians feel “justified” in their prejudice (e.g., because same-gender sexuality is deviant). This observation suggests an alternative explanation for the lack of compunction discussed in our previous work among those high in prejudice toward gay men. Compunction may have been absent because these individuals do not believe that gay men deserve fair and egalitarian treatment. Therefore, these high prejudiced people may not feel any moral responsibility for their treatment of gay men. For example, a high prejudiced person may reason that “because gay men are social deviants, I shouldn’t have to care how I treat them.” Thus, when they are confronted with a discrepancy (i.e., with the fact that they responded with more prejudice than their own standards suggest is appropriate), they have no reason to feel guilty.

In contrast, those who are high in prejudice toward Blacks might be expected to feel compunction when they violate their standards. Allport (1954) argued that compunction arises from an awareness of discrepancies between one’s specific prejudiced responses and one’s general egalitarian self-conception. The possibility of compunction among individuals high in prejudice toward Blacks, then, rests on two contingencies. First, they must see themselves as egalitarian, fair, and tolerant. Second, this egalitarian self-concept must be seen as relevant to the treatment of Blacks. Over the years, the assumption that most White Americans have egalitarian self-concepts has been articulated repeatedly (e.g., Allport, 1954; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; McConahay, 1986; Myrdal, 1944; Rokeach, 1973). Although this assumption has received scant empirical attention, recent findings support its validity: Monteith and Walters (1996) found that individuals at all levels of
prejudice toward Blacks reported that being egalitarian and democratic is very important to their self-concepts.

Furthermore, many historical events (e.g., Civil Rights legislation) arguably have made it clear that egalitarian values are directly relevant to the treatment of Blacks in this country (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Schuman, Steeh, & Bobo, 1985; see also Monteith, Zuwerink, et al., 1994). Thus, even individuals with high prejudiced attitudes may believe that society calls for nonprejudiced responses toward Blacks and, consequently, may realize that their egalitarian values are relevant to their responses toward Blacks. In other words, a person may dislike the group (and thus score high on an attitudinal measure of prejudice), but still realize at some level that he or she should not behave in a prejudiced manner (e.g., he or she should not purposefully avoid sitting next to a Black person on a bus). Thus, as implied by classic theorizing (Allport, 1954; Myrdal, 1944; Rokeach, 1973), even high prejudiced subjects’ standards may involve a sense of personal, moral obligation to respond fairly to Blacks. To the extent that this is true, high prejudiced individuals may experience discrepancy-associated compunction, as do low prejudiced individuals.

The studies we report next are straightforward tests of the generalizability of our initial findings concerning prejudice toward gay men (Devine et al., 1991, Studies 2 & 3). The first study examined precepts concerning people’s responses to Blacks. Specifically, following Devine et al. (1991, Study 3), we assessed the degree of prejudice permitted by individuals’ personal standards for responding to Blacks and by their perceptions of society’s standards for responding to Blacks. We also measured the degree to which they had internalized their personal and society’s standards. This procedure should tell us whether participants actually perceive that American society calls for the fair and equal treatment of Blacks. We should also be able to determine if high prejudiced individuals have established egalitarian personal standards and if their standards are internalized. Study 2 examined specific affective reactions to prejudice-related discrepancies and should tell us to what extent individuals high in prejudice toward Blacks feel compunction for violating their personal standards.

STUDY 1

Method

Participants and Design

In our previous investigations at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (e.g., Devine et al., 1991, Study 1), we have been unable to obtain an adequate number of subjects who score high in prejudice toward Blacks to complete a thorough
investigation of the issues just discussed. Because recent surveys indicate that there is a greater proportion of people in the South than in the North who report high prejudiced attitudes toward Blacks (Schuman et al., 1985), these data were collected at a Southern university.

Students from the University of Arkansas participated in exchange for extra credit. Of 131 participants, data from 21 non-White students were discarded. Attitudes toward Blacks were measured using the seven-item Modern Racism Scale (MRS; McConahay, Hardee, & Batts, 1981)—a relatively nonreactive measure of prejudice. The MRS items were embedded in a series of 40 personal opinion statements related to public policy issues, politics, and general beliefs. Responses were made on a 9-point scale from −4 (disagree strongly) to +4 (agree strongly). MRS scores could range from −28 to +28, with lower scores reflecting less prejudice. For half of the subjects this measure came first in the questionnaire (described later), and for half it came last. The order of reporting personal standards and society’s standards was also counterbalanced.¹

Procedure

Individuals participated in small groups. Introductory instructions encouraged participants to respond openly and honestly to a questionnaire regarding reactions to Black people and assured them that their responses would be completely anonymous. After they completed the questionnaire, the experimenter explained the purpose of the research and thanked them for participating.

Questionnaire

With the exception of the prejudice measure, the questionnaire and all instructions used in this study were the same as in Devine et al. (1991, Study 3). Separate instructions were provided for the sections on personal and society’s standards. Between sections participants were told that their responses may or may not be consistent with their previous responses.

Personal standards and internalization. Personal standards were measured by having participants report how they believed they should respond in five different scenarios involving Blacks. Three situations involved how one might feel

¹Because participants were not preselected, cell sizes were very unequal when these order variables were considered for analysis. As a result, it was not possible to perform analyses involving these factors. Note, however, that in Devine et al. (1991, Study 3), order had little effect on the outcome measures.
and two involved what one might think in a given situation. For example, one scenario read as follows:

Imagine that you saw a young, Black woman at the grocery store with four small children. According to your own personal standards: Your initial thought should be—"How typical."

Participants rated the extent to which they agreed with the last statement (in bold) on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). Three of the items were worded in terms of how individuals believed they should respond, two in terms of how they should not respond. After reverse scoring the should not items, responses to the five items were combined to form an index of personal standards, with lower scores indicating less prejudiced responses (Cronbach's α = .79). Subjects then reported how important it is, how committed they are, and how central to their self-concept it is to respond to Blacks in ways that are consistent with their personal standards (1 = not at all; 7 = very). These three questions were combined to form an index of internalization (Cronbach's α = .88).

Society's standards and internalization. Perceptions of society’s standards were measured using the same five scenarios. In this case, however, participants were asked to respond on the basis of the norms that society has for how people should respond to Blacks and to think about what society as a whole would consider a socially desirable response. As an example, one scenario read as follows:

Imagine that you went to a job interview and found out that the interviewer was Black. According to society's standards: You should not feel uncomfortable about the interviewer being Black.

Responses to the five scenarios were combined to form an index of society’s standards (Cronbach’s α = .80). Following the report of society’s standards, participants completed the importance, commitment, and centrality ratings. Responses to these measures were combined to form an index of internalization of society’s standards (Cronbach’s α = .82).

Results and Discussion

Overview of Analyses

Scores on the MRS ranged from -28 to +24, with a mean of -6.4 (SD = 12). The data were analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) so that mean comparisons could easily be made among different levels of prejudice. Therefore,
scores on the MRS were trichotomized, based on the sample distribution, to produce low (range = -28 to -12; \( N = 38 \)), moderate (range = -11 to -2; \( N = 34 \)), and high (range = -1 to +24; \( N = 38 \)) prejudice groups of approximately equal size.

**Personal Standard/Society Standard Measures**

Ratings of personal and society’s standards were analyzed using a 2 (standard type) \( \times \) 2 (gender) \( \times \) 3 (prejudice) mixed-model ANOVA, with Standard Type as the only within-subjects factor. This analysis revealed significant main effects for Prejudice, \( F(2, 104) = 9.20, p < .001 \), and Standard Type, \( F(1, 104) = 62.83, p < .001 \). These main effects were qualified by a significant Prejudice \( \times \) Standard Type interaction, \( F(2, 104) = 9.20, p < .001 \). As can be seen in the top row of Table 1, low and moderately prejudiced individuals reported significantly less prejudiced personal standards than their high prejudiced counterparts. Interestingly, perceptions of society’s standards did not differ as a function of prejudice level.

Note also the fairly high degree of prejudice reflected in perceptions of society’s standards. We had anticipated that people would perceive society as calling for less prejudiced responses toward Blacks than was observed in previous research concerning gay men. The existence of such societal standards concerning Blacks might, then, encourage high prejudiced persons to see the link between their egalitarian values and their treatment of Blacks. However, the society ratings from the present research reflect a level of perceived prejudice that is nearly identical to that found by Devine et al. (1991) when the target group was gay men. This lack of perceived nonprejudiced societal standards decreases the likelihood that high prejudiced

**TABLE 1**

Mean Ratings of Personal and Society Standards as a Function of Prejudice Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should</td>
<td>4.08(_{aA})</td>
<td>2.14(_{bA})</td>
<td>4.10(_{aA})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalization</td>
<td>2.88(_{aA})</td>
<td>6.11(_{bA})</td>
<td>3.18(_{aA})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* For each dependent measure, we performed two types of mean comparisons. First, lowercase subscripts refer to tests for significant differences between society and personal ratings within each prejudice level. Significantly different society and personal cell means have different lowercase subscripts (\( p < .05 \), at least, by relevant tests of simple main effects). Second, uppercase subscripts refer to the effect of prejudice within each type of rating. For society and personal ratings (separately), means not sharing uppercase subscripts differ significantly (\( p < .05 \), at least, by Fisher’s least significant difference test).
persons will evaluate their prejudiced treatment of Blacks in light of the egalitarian values that they hold.

Finally, a significant Standard Type × Gender × Prejudice interaction was also obtained. \( F(2, 104) = 3.16, p < .05 \). high prejudiced men reported slightly (but not significantly) more prejudiced personal standards \((M = 4.45)\) than society standards \((M = 4.04)\). In contrast, participants in all other conditions reported personal standards that were less prejudiced than their perceptions of society’s standards.

**Internalization Indices**

The ANOVA performed on the internalization indices revealed a marginally significant main effect for Gender, \( F(1, 104) = 3.81, p < .06 \). Overall, men reported slightly higher levels of internalization \((M = 4.46)\) than did women \((M = 4.12)\). There were also significant effects for Prejudice, \( F(2, 104) = 3.22, p < .04 \), and Standard Type, \( F(1, 104) = 108.83, p < .001 \), which were qualified by a significant Prejudice × Standard Type interaction, \( F(2, 104) = 7.46, p < .001 \). As shown in the second row of Table 1, there were no significant differences in the degree to which individuals at different levels of prejudice internalized society’s standards. However, low and moderately prejudiced individuals internalized their own personal standards to a much greater degree than high prejudiced individuals. These findings replicate those of Devine et al. (1991, Study 3) regarding gay men.

**Summary**

In the introduction we suggested that clear, low prejudiced social norms might cause even high prejudiced people to realize the link between their egalitarian ideals and how they should treat Blacks. Yet, the results of Study 1 revealed that individuals do not perceive that society has uniformly low prejudiced standards regarding how to respond to Blacks. Indeed, ancillary measures suggested that society communicates, at best, a mixed message regarding the treatment of Blacks.² Study 1 further revealed that high prejudiced individuals’ personal standards were

²Following Devine et al. (1991, Study 3), participants were asked to rate the extent to which they thought society had well-defined and consistent standards for the treatment of Blacks. Participants at all levels of prejudice rated society’s standards at the midpoint of this 7-point scale \((M = 3.75)\). In an open-ended format, subjects were then asked to explain their ratings of this item. Coding of these responses (following Devine et al. 1991) revealed that most participants (47%) thought that society communicates a mixed message regarding the treatment of Blacks. A substantial percentage (21%) suggested that society has consistently negative standards. A mere 9% indicated that society communicates consistently positive standards. (The remaining 23% wrote responses that were either completely ambiguous or irrelevant.)
more prejudiced and less well-internalized than the standards of their low prejudiced counterparts. This suggests that even if high prejudiced individuals feel some sense of moral obligation to curb their prejudiced responses toward Blacks, and therefore experience some compunction when they fail to do so, this compunction should not be as intense as that of low prejudiced individuals. Altogether, the consistency between these findings and those of Devine et al. (1991, Study 3) suggests that affective reactions to discrepancies involving Blacks should be no different than those we have observed in connection with gay men (see Devine et al., 1991, Study 2; Monteith et al., 1993, Study 2). Specifically, both high and low prejudiced individuals with large discrepancies should feel discomfort, but only low prejudiced individuals with large discrepancies should experience a high degree of compunction.

STUDY 2

Method

Participants

A total of 178 introductory psychology students from the University of Arkansas participated in exchange for extra credit. Data from 15 non-White students were discarded, as were data from 4 who did not follow instructions.

Procedure

Individuals participated in small groups. As in Study 1, introductory instructions encouraged them to respond openly and honestly to a questionnaire regarding reactions toward Blacks and assured them that their responses would be completely anonymous. After participants completed the questionnaire, the experimenter explained the purpose of the research and thanked them for participating.

Questionnaire

The format of the questionnaire and all instructions used in this study were the same as in Devine et al. (1991, Study 2). As in Study 1, prejudice was assessed using the MRS (McConahay et al., 1981).

Discrepancy measure. Discrepancies were measured in terms of the extent to which individuals’ actual responses did not match their personal standards for
responding to Blacks in various situations. The same five scenarios described in Study 1 were used. Subjects first reported their personal standards for how they should respond in the five scenarios. Next, participants were asked to imagine how they actually would respond in the same situations. Care was taken in the instructions to communicate that one’s actual responses may or may not be consistent with one’s standards, and participants were encouraged simply to be honest. For both the Should and Would measures, individuals rated the extent to which they agreed that they should (not) and would (not) have the response described using a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

After reverse scoring when necessary, responses to the five Should items were added to form a Total Should index, with lower scores indicating less prejudiced standards (Cronbach’s α = .84). Similarly, a Total Would index was computed, with lower scores indicating less prejudiced actual responses (Cronbach’s α = .79). Finally, a discrepancy score (total–d) was calculated for each subject by subtracting his or her Should score from his or her Would score for each scenario and summing across the five scenarios. Positive total–d scores indicate that one’s actual responses are more prejudiced than one’s personal standards indicate are appropriate.

**Affect measure.** After responding to the scenarios, participants reported how they were feeling about the extent to which their actual responses (woulds) matched their personal standards (shoulds) for responding to Blacks. They rated 32 affect items in terms of how much each item (e.g., tense, self-critical, happy) applied to how they were feeling about the match or mismatch (1 = does not apply at all; 7 = applies very much).

**Results**

Scores on the MRS ranged from −28 to +27, with a mean of −8.0 (SD = 13). As in Devine et al. (1991, Study 2), the data were analyzed using hierarchical regression. Main effects were assessed simultaneously, thus testing the significance of the unique portion of variance attributable to each variable. Increments in $R^2$ due to interactions were assessed at the step at which the relevant interaction term was entered into the regression equation. Following Aiken and West’s (1991) suggestion, predictor variables were centered in all analyses.

**Total Should and Total Would Ratings**

Total Should and Total Would ratings were analyzed using gender, prejudice, and their interaction as predictors. Replicating our previous findings (Devine et al.,
1991; Monteith et al., 1993), the only significant effects involved prejudice. For the Should index, individuals higher in prejudice reported more prejudiced personal standards, $F(1, 155) = 87.38, p < .001 (B = 0.286)$. Similarly, for the Would index, those higher in prejudice reported that they would respond more negatively to Blacks in the various situations compared to those lower in prejudice, $F(1, 155) = 83.76, p < .001 (B = 0.343)$.

### Discrepancy Scores

Discrepancy scores ranged from −5 to +19. Out of 159 cases, 74.2% had positive discrepancies, indicating that their actual responses were more prejudiced than their personal standards indicated was appropriate. As with our previous work, this finding shows that the vast majority of our participants are willing to admit that they sometimes respond in a more prejudiced manner than they think they should. Total–d scores were 0 (actual responses matched personal standards) for 16.4% of the sample. A small number of respondents (9.4%) had negative total–d scores. Out of 15 of these respondents, 9 were high-prejudiced. The negative discrepancy data include too few cases to permit a systematic examination of their effect on, for example, discrepancy-associated affect (see Monteith et al., 1993, for analyses of negative discrepancy data). Thus, following Devine et al. (1991), these cases were excluded from the main analyses. We do, however, report the results of analyses including the negative discrepancy for interested readers.

The full range of total–d scores was represented at all levels of prejudice for the positive discrepancy data. However, a hierarchical regression analysis using gender, prejudice, and their interaction to predict non-negative total–d scores revealed that high prejudiced participants’ total–d scores were, on average, larger than those of low prejudiced participants: $F(1, 140) = 4.34, p < .04 (B = 0.057)$. This finding was also obtained when the negative discrepancy data were included in the analyses, $F(1, 155) = 3.96, p < .05 (B = 0.057)$. The positive, linear relation between discrepancies and prejudice obtained in this study differs somewhat from previous findings (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith et al., 1993), in which discrepancies increased as prejudice increased but then became slightly smaller at very high levels of prejudice. This difference across studies suggests that previous research concerning gay men included more extremely high prejudiced people who said they both would and should respond in prejudiced ways than is the case in the present research concerning Blacks.

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3One additional case was dropped from all analyses because it proved to be an outlier in tests of normality assumptions.
Construction and Analysis of Affect Indices

Five affect indices were formed on the basis of a factor analysis and our previous work. For each index, scores for all affect items included in the index were averaged together to obtain an overall score for each participant. The theoretically most important indices reflect negative self-directed affect (compunction) and discomfort. The Negself index included angry at myself, guilty, embarrassed, annoyed at myself, regretful, disappointed with myself, disgusted with myself, shame, and self-critical (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .91$). The Discomfort index included fearful, tense, bothered, uneasy, uncomfortable, and threatened (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .85$). Three additional indices included Positive (friendly, happy, energetic, optimistic, good, and content; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .86$); Depressed (depressed, sad, low, and helpless; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .73$); and Negother (irritated with others, disgusted with others, and angry at others; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .87$).

Each index was analyzed using hierarchical regression. Gender, prejudice, discrepancy (total–d), and the interactions among these variables were used to predict each affect measure.

Discomfort and Negself. Based on the results of Study 1, it was expected that the effects of discrepancies on feelings of discomfort and compunction would replicate our previous research concerning gay-related discrepancies. Consistent with this expectation, the regression analysis on Discomfort (using the non-negative discrepancy data) revealed a significant main effect for total–d, such that individuals with larger discrepancies experienced greater levels of Discomfort, $F(1, 139) = 4.77, p < .03$ ($B = .053$). As in previous research, this main effect was not qualified by a significant interaction between total–d and prejudice. Thus, it appears that low- and high prejudiced individuals prone to non-negative discrepancies experienced equivalent levels of discrepancy-associated discomfort.

In the analysis including the negative discrepancy data, the effect of total–d was marginal, $F(1, 154) = 2.54, p < .12$ ($B = .034$). This finding is sensible, in that the participants who were prone to negative discrepancies (many of whom were high prejudiced) theoretically would be expected to experience discomfort (see Monteith et al., 1993). That is, thinking “I should be more prejudiced than I am” gives rise to discrepancy-associated discomfort. Overall, then, including the negative discrepancy data in the analysis attenuated the positive relation between total–d and discomfort.

The regression analysis on Negself also revealed a significant main effect for total–d, such that respondents with larger discrepancies experienced greater levels of negative self-directed affect, $F(1, 139) = 10.88, p < .001$ ($B = .079$). The key finding, however, is that the interaction between prejudice and total–d was signifi-
cant, $F(1, 138) = 4.33, p < .04$. The nature of this interaction was examined by calculating and plotting predicted values. Specifically, we substituted one standard deviation below the mean of the relevant variable for small values (small discrepancy, low prejudice) and 1 standard deviation above the mean of the relevant variable for large values (large discrepancy, high prejudice) in the regression equation (see Cohen & Cohen, 1983). As can be seen in Figure 1, the pattern of the interaction replicates previous findings. Low and high prejudiced individuals with small discrepancies experienced very low levels of Negself. However, when discrepancies were large, low prejudiced individuals reported more intense compunction than did their high prejudiced counterparts.

This interpretation of the interaction was supported in additional analyses testing the significance of the simple slopes of the regression lines (see Aiken & West, 1991). Whereas the effect of prejudice on Negself at small levels of discrepancies was not significant, $t(139) = .70, ns$, prejudice was significantly related to Negself feelings at large levels of discrepancies, $t(139) = 2.34, p < .02$. These findings clearly indicate that, relative to those high in prejudice, low prejudiced individuals felt much more guilty and self-critical about the fact that their actual responses toward Black people do not always match their personal standards for responding.

Because there is little theoretical reason for expecting individuals with a negative discrepancy to experience Negself feelings (see Monteith et al., 1993), including these data should not alter the significance or pattern of the Prejudice x Total-d interaction. Indeed, analyses involving the negative discrepancy cases revealed that the interaction between total-d and prejudice remained significant, $F(1, 153) = 5.75, p < .02$. Also, the simple slope analyses revealed that the effect for prejudice at small levels of discrepancies was not significant, $t(154) = 1.03, ns$, whereas at large levels of discrepancies, low prejudiced individuals did experience greater Negself than their high prejudiced counterparts, $t(154) = 2.31, p < .02$.

![FIGURE 1 Predicted values for negative self-directed affect (Negself) as a function of prejudice and size of discrepancy.](image-url)
Finally, we assessed the effects of the predictor variables on Negself and Discomfort, independent of the correlation between these two indices. That is, two additional hierarchical regression analyses were performed in which the effects of one index (e.g., Negself) was partialed out of the other (e.g., Discomfort) before examining the effects of the predictor variables. When Negself was partialed out of Discomfort, the effect for total–d was no longer significant, \( F(1, 138) = 0.08, \ ns. \) In contrast, when Discomfort was partialed out of Negself, the main effect for total–d remained significant, \( F(1, 138) = 5.91, p < .02 \) (\( B = .04 \)). In this analysis, prejudice also added a significant increment to \( R^2 \), such that high prejudiced individuals reported less Negself than their low prejudiced counterparts, \( F(1, 138) = 8.69, p < .004 \) (\( B = -.017 \)). Most importantly, the Prejudice \( \times \) Total–d interaction remained significant, \( F(1, 137) = 4.19, p < .05 \). Thus, the interaction between prejudice and discrepancy was not dependent on the correlation between Negself and Discomfort. Including the negative discrepancy data in the analyses produced the same results. The effect of total–d on discomfort was not significant when Negself was partialed out, \( F(1, 153) = .32, \ ns. \) However, the effects of prejudice, total–d, and the Prejudice \( \times \) Total–d interaction all were significant when Discomfort was included in the analysis of the Negself index (all \( ps < .03 \) at least).

**Positive, Negother, and Depressed.** The hierarchical regression analysis of the Positive index revealed only a main effect for total–d, such that individuals with larger discrepancies reported feeling less positive than those with smaller discrepancies, \( F(1, 139) = 13.11, p < .001 \) (\( B = -.107 \)). Analysis of the Negother index revealed an interaction between gender and total–d, \( F(1, 136) = 5.20, p < .03 \), which was qualified by an uninterpretable three-way interaction between gender, total–d, and prejudice, \( F(1, 135) = 4.29, p < .04 \). Finally, the analysis of the Depressed index yielded no significant findings.

Analyses including the negative discrepancy data replicated these results exactly, with the exception that the Prejudice \( \times \) Total–d interaction was significant for the Depressed index, \( F(1, 153) = 3.88, p < .052 \). Low prejudiced individuals with large discrepancies reported greater depression (\( \bar{Y} = 2.16 \)) than their counterparts with small discrepancies (\( \bar{Y} = 1.69 \)). A smaller effect for total–d was observed among high prejudiced individuals (large discrepancy \( \bar{Y} = 1.89 \); small discrepancy \( \bar{Y} = 1.73 \)). This pattern mirrors the findings for the Negself index.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

The combined results of Studies 1 and 2 showed that individuals who were low in prejudice toward Blacks reported low prejudice and well-internalized personal standards. In addition, their affective reactions to the violation of those standards...
included both discomfort and compunction. In comparison, high prejudiced individuals’ personal standards were more prejudiced and less well internalized. Furthermore, their affective reactions to their discrepancies included discomfort but very little compunction, even when discrepancies were large. These findings replicate those obtained in our previous research, in which gay men served as the target group (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith et al., 1993). Thus, it appears that despite differences in the nature of prejudice toward gay men versus Blacks, the phenomenon of prejudice with and without compunction is a general one that applies to both of these groups.

One would think, as suggested in the writings of Allport (1954), Myrdal (1944), and Rokeach (1973), that high prejudiced individuals would realize that the coexistence of their egalitarian values with their prejudices toward Blacks constitutes a highly self-relevant inconsistency. The analysis of the discrepancy data did indicate that even very high prejudiced individuals tended to be prone to discrepancies. In previous research, extremely high prejudiced individuals were more likely to report that they should and would have very negative responses to gay men. This target group difference suggests that individuals high in prejudice toward Blacks may realize the inconsistency between their egalitarian values and their prejudices toward Blacks to some degree. However, because these individuals did not report high levels of negative self-directed affect in connection with their discrepancies, it appears that they do not see the self-relevant implications of their inconsistencies. Perhaps part of the reason for their failure to see the implications is that despite society-level changes, society’s message that prejudice toward Blacks is unacceptable and nonegalitarian is not as unambiguous and uniform as is suggested in many contemporary writings (e.g., Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Katz, Wackenhut, & Hass, 1986; McConahay, 1986). To the contrary, findings from Study 1 revealed that individuals believed that society permits quite a high degree of prejudice toward Blacks.

An alternative explanation for the lack of compunction among high prejudiced individuals is that they are dispositionally less likely to be self-critical or guilt-prone compared to low prejudiced individuals. In other words, they may see the self-relevant implications of an inconsistency between their personal standards and their actual responses but still not feel guilty about it. Although possible, we do not favor this explanation for a number of reasons. First, it seems unwarranted to make a dispositional attribution for the lack of compunction among high prejudiced individuals. On what basis should we assume that because someone is prejudiced toward Blacks, he or she would be unlikely to experience guilt after violating an internalized, self-relevant standard? Second, recall that Herek (1987b) found that the same individuals (intrinsically religious people) expressed prejudice toward gay men and lesbians but not Blacks. To the extent that these individuals have internalized nonprejudiced standards for responding to Blacks, they should feel guilty about violating those standards. These same individuals, though, may not experience
compunction in connection with their responses toward gay men and lesbians. Third, this explanation does not ring true with our previous findings, which indicated that low- (vs. high-) prejudice individuals are not dispositionally more likely to be guilt-prone (see Devine et al., 1991). Nevertheless, only future empirical work can rule out this alternative explanation conclusively.

Implications for Prejudice Reduction

For individuals low in prejudice toward Blacks, the continuing challenge is to eliminate responses that are discrepant from their nonprejudiced standards (Devine & Monteith, 1993). Unfortunately, these individuals are often prone to discrepancies because, even though they have internalized nonprejudiced standards, well-learned stereotypes continue to be easily activated and used (Devine, 1989; Devine & Monteith, 1993). Thus, low prejudiced individuals must learn to inhibit stereotype-based responses and replace them with belief-based responses. We remain optimistic about the potential for individuals to achieve this goal. One reason for our optimism is that the experience of discrepancy-associated guilt appears to be a key motivator in this learning process (Monteith, 1993). Monteith (1993) examined the consequences of an experimentally induced behavioral violation of individuals' personal standards for responding toward gay men. For low- (but not for high-) prejudice individuals, the consequences included both compunction and the instigation of self-regulatory processes aimed at eliminating future discrepant responses.

In thinking about high prejudiced individuals, in contrast, the enduring challenge concerns how to encourage these individuals to adopt personally significant, nonprejudiced standards, the violation of which will result in the change-motivating experience of guilt. We believe that it is best to approach this challenge with a theoretical analysis of what is required to initiate change. As we have noted elsewhere, previous efforts at reducing intergroup prejudice have been primarily atheoretical, having a "hit-or-miss" quality about them (Monteith, Zuwerink, et al., 1994). As a result of this hit-or-miss approach, it is difficult to evaluate why a given prejudice reduction strategy fails (or succeeds, in the cases that it does). For this reason, we believe that an approach grounded in theory will ultimately prove most productive in encouraging real prejudice reduction and improvement in intergroup relations.

Our own theoretical analysis suggests that high prejudiced individuals must be encouraged to view their prejudiced responses as personally significant violations of their egalitarian self-concepts (see also Rokeach, 1973). Only when they do so will they feel guilty about their prejudiced responses and consequently be motivated to work at changing them. One strategy for achieving this objective might be to emphasize, at a societal level, the link between the American ideal of egalitarianism
and the individual treatment of minority group members. For example, recent research suggests that salient social norms can influence individual behavior (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990; Monteith, Deneen, & Tooman, in press). Unfortunately, the results of Study 1 suggest that normative, unambiguous, moral prescriptions against prejudice do not exist, at least in the minds of the participants in our sample. So, not only should nonprejudiced social norms be made more salient, but they should also be made more consistent and unambiguous in communicating that prejudice is unacceptable in American society.

Still, regardless of how consistent and salient are societal norms against prejudice, it is questionable to what extent such norms can facilitate true, internal change rather than simply promoting compliance (Kelman, 1958). Therefore, it is critical to explore strategies for promoting internal, individual-level change—strategies that can complement and reinforce any existing nonprejudiced social norms. One such strategy is suggested by the thoughtful work of Rokeach (1973). In his work, Rokeach demonstrated that directly confronting individuals with the inconsistencies between their higher level values (e.g., egalitarianism) and their more specific level behaviors (e.g., a prejudiced response) would lead to self-dissatisfaction. This self-dissatisfaction would, consequently, lead to a revision of the more specific element. In other words, he argued that the specific level response would be changed to be more consistent with the higher order value. We believe that Rokeach’s self-confrontation technique holds promise as a means of prejudice reduction.

Another theoretical approach that might be applied to the challenge of promoting real and lasting attitude change among high prejudiced people involves the study of the functional value of high prejudiced attitudes. The basic idea behind a functional approach to attitude change is that if one understands the psychological need (function) being served by the attitude, one is in a better position to design change strategies that target the specific function (Herek, 1986; Katz, 1960; Smith et al., 1956). This approach is discussed more fully in Monteith et al. (1993).

Conclusion

Our research suggests that the nature and consequences of prejudice-related discrepancies are the same whether one is considering prejudice toward gay men (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith et al., 1993) or Blacks. In both cases, it is necessary to have highly internalized one’s personal standards for responding to outgroup members (i.e., to have linked those standards to one’s self-concept) before one feels strong compunction when those standards are violated. As we have found in the domain of prejudice toward gay men and now Blacks, only low prejudiced individuals seem to have established such standards. There may be occasions on which even high prejudiced individuals realize the self-relevant implications of their prejudiced responses, so that they experience a degree of compunction.
However, it appears that among high prejudiced individuals, the occurrence of prejudice without compunction is far more pervasive.

REFERENCES


