



THE PSYCHOLOGY OF  
**PREJUDICE AND  
DISCRIMINATION**

SECOND EDITION

BERNARD E. WHITLEY JR. • MARY E. KITE



# The Psychology of Prejudice and Discrimination

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Australia • Brazil • Japan • Korea • Mexico • Singapore • Spain • United Kingdom • United States

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# Preface

Throughout our academic careers, we have had a keen interest in the study of stereotyping and prejudice. It seemed natural, then, that we should teach our department's course on prejudice and discrimination. When we set out to do so for the first time, however, we ran into a surprise: Although there is vast literature on the topic, there were very few textbooks. In addition, we found that none of the books struck the balance between empirical rigor and readability that we were looking for. Therefore, as so many before us have done, we decided to write our own book; the result is before you. Our goal in writing this book is to provide students with an overview of what psychological theory and research have to say about the nature, causes, and amelioration of prejudice and discrimination. As a result, the book includes somewhat more detailed discussions of theories and selected research studies than do most other textbooks on the topic. At the same time, we have tried to keep our presentation at a level that is accessible to students whose only previous exposure to psychological theory and research has been in an introductory-level course. Feedback from our reviewers and from students in our courses suggests that we have achieved that aim.

## **WHAT'S OUR BOOK LIKE?**

Although our book covers the standard topics included in textbooks on prejudice, we also set the goal of covering what we thought were important topics that had been omitted from earlier textbooks. Thus, because of our emphasis on theory and research, we have included a chapter on the research methods psychologists use to study prejudice and discrimination and how research methodology influences the conclusions drawn about the issues studied. Similarly, with one exception, previous textbooks have overlooked the question of how prejudice develops in children; therefore, we have included a chapter on that

topic. Finally, although psychologists have long understood that attitudes are poor predictors of behavior, previous textbooks have not addressed discrimination as a topic in its own right. We have therefore included a chapter that discusses the nature of discrimination and its relation to prejudice. Other topics distinctive to our book include hate group membership, hate crime perpetrators, and prejudice and discrimination in organizations.

Although we have not formally divided the book into parts, the sequence of the chapters represents a progression across several themes. First, we introduce the nature of prejudice and discrimination (including a brief history of research on the topic), followed by our chapter on research methods. The next several chapters address the psychological underpinnings of prejudice: the nature of stereotypes; the conditions under which stereotypes influence responses to other people; the role of motivation and emotion in prejudice; contemporary theories of prejudice; individual difference variables related to prejudice; the development of prejudice in children; and the social context of prejudice. The next two chapters examine specific forms of prejudice, those based on gender and sexual orientation and prejudice based on age, ability, and appearance. The following two chapters focus on the nature of discrimination and its effects on those who experience it. We conclude with a discussion of prejudice reduction. We realize that every instructor has his or her own outline for how a course should be organized, so we have tried to make each chapter as independent of the others as possible to allow instructors to assign them in the order that best fits their personal goals for the course.

We have written the book for use by junior and senior college students who have had a course in introductory psychology. Although the book takes a psychological approach to the issues of prejudice and discrimination, we have intentionally written in a style that is accessible to students in other fields as well. We did so because we believe that an important educational goal for all students is the understanding of prejudice and discrimination and the processes by which they operate. Therefore, the book is appropriate for courses in psychology but also for courses in such areas as education, social work, business, communication studies, ethnic studies, and other disciplines. Also, in addition to courses on prejudice and discrimination, the book could be used in courses that cover topics such as racism and diversity.

### **WHAT'S NEW IN THE SECOND EDITION?**

The research and theoretical literatures on prejudice and discrimination have advanced dramatically even in the few years that have passed since the first edition of this book was published. Those advances have led us to make revisions throughout the book, including some reorganization of material. These revisions include two new chapters, one on emotions and motivation and the other on prejudice based on age, ability, and appearance. We had commented in the first edition that researchers had in recent decades given relatively little attention to

the role emotional reactions to outgroups plays in prejudice. That situation has changed recently, with a number of theorists and researchers producing exciting new work on the topic. The second new chapter was based on feedback from users, who suggested that we include more information on ability and physical appearance as causes of prejudice. These chapters include both new material and information moved from other chapters. For example, the topics of empathy, intergroup anxiety, and motivation to control prejudice have been moved to the chapter on emotion and motivation, and the topic of ageism is now part of the new chapter on age, ability, and appearance. As a result the topics of gender and sexual orientation are now covered in a chapter to themselves. We have also made other minor adjustments in the placement of material, for example consolidating some of the information in the chapters on stereotyping to reduce redundancy and moving information on reducing prejudice in children to the chapter on children. We have also incorporated new research on all the topics covered in the book, adding about 10 new references per chapter. To keep the book a manageable size, we have also reorganized and trimmed material throughout. Therefore, although the current edition has two more chapters than the first edition, the number of pages remains about the same.

### **CONTINUING FEATURES**

As in the first edition, each chapter begins with an outline to provide students with a cognitive map of its contents, and ends with a summary to provide closure. Within each chapter, key terms are shown in boldface; these terms are included in the glossary and the index entry for each term shows in boldface the page on which it is defined. Each chapter also includes boxes that provide supplemental information, additional examples, or other perspectives on issues. We have also continued to include research on international populations and research that addresses the cross-cultural implications of prejudice and discrimination. A set of questions concludes each chapter. Each set includes factual review questions, designed to integrate topics within the chapter; reflective questions, designed to encourage students to think about how the chapter's contents are relevant to their lives; and more philosophical questions, designed to highlight controversies and help students clarify their positions on those issues.

To assist instructors in course development, we have written an Instructor Manual (available in electronic form from the publisher) that provides a list of resources including key readings, Web sites and handbooks of course-related activities. We also provide a list of video clips, podcasts, television shows and films, including both domestic and international feature films specifically addressing psychological concepts, and a note for which chapter they are relevant. For each individual chapter, we provide suggested classroom activities, assignments, and readings for debate or discussion. We also have created a test bank that includes at least 50 multiple-choice questions for each chapter and have provided at least 20 short answer/essay questions for each chapter. We also have Power

Point slides for each chapter. Please contact your local Cengage Learning representative to obtain a copy of the electronic Instructor Manual and Test Bank. We also invite you to explore the Wadsworth Psychology Resource Center at <http://psychology.wadsworth.com> for material relevant to this course.

We welcome any suggestions you have for improving this book. Please send electronic mail to Bernard Whitley at [bwhitley@bsu.edu](mailto:bwhitley@bsu.edu) or Mary Kite at [mkite@bsu.edu](mailto:mkite@bsu.edu).



## About the Authors



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**Mary E. Kite** is Professor of Psychological Science at Ball State University. Her research focuses on stereotyping and prejudice toward women, gays, and lesbians, and older adults and she has published widely in those areas. She is a past president of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology and currently serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the Midwestern Psychological Association.

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