UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX
PSYCHOLOGY

The Social Psychology of Prejudice: C8822
Autumn Term 2013

Module Convenor: Professor Rupert Brown

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Objectives

This advanced level module aims to develop students’ knowledge about prejudice by considering a number of current theoretical, empirical and policy issues within the social psychology of prejudice. Throughout the module there will be a continual emphasis on the application of theoretical models to particular social contexts so as to deepen students’ understanding of the utility and the limitations of these models. By the end of the module students will be expected to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of social psychological processes underlying various forms of prejudice and their reduction
2. Demonstrate a critical appreciation of published material on prejudice and related topics
3. Communicate their knowledge about prejudice effectively both orally and in writing

Level and Duration

The module will last for one term and will be offered to final year Psychology students. It will assume some basic knowledge of intergroup processes gained from 1st and 2nd year core modules.

Assessment and feedback

The module will be assessed through an unseen examination at the start of Term 2 (80%), together with one piece of assessed work (20%). This takes the following form:

A 2000 word review of a novel or autobiography that you have read that deals with questions of prejudice or ethnicity. The aim would be to use the insights gained during this module to assess the author’s portrayal of events and characters in the book. Further notes about this assignment appear at the end of this outline. The deadline for this assignment can be found on Sussex Direct. It should be handed in at the Psychology Office in the normal way.

There will also be two short ‘in-class’ quizzes in seminars 6 & 12, lasting about 15 minutes. These will be a mixture of multiple choice and short answer (note form) questions. They will NOT count towards your final grade however. They have been introduced in response to student suggestions from previous years that some form of ‘revision exercises’ be incorporated into the module to consolidate the knowledge during the module and to provide you with regular feedback on what (and how much) you have learnt. Please take an hour or two to prepare for these quizzes so that you will reap the maximum benefit from them.

There is a forum on the Study Direct site for this module. This is for you to use to raise issues amongst yourselves that you have found particularly interesting or mystifying (!) as the module progresses. I will endeavour to respond to the most relevant of these posts at least once a week.
Teaching Methods

Teaching is through small group seminars. The group will meet weekly with the module teacher for a 2 hour seminar, in which each student (or set of students) takes responsibility for the preparation of particular aspects of that week’s topic. In addition, each week certain students will be asked to bring a contemporary example of prejudice that they found in the previous week’s news broadcasts, papers or other media. Each topic will be concluded by the seminar leader posting a short summary on the module web-page, identifying the main issues covered, summarising the conclusions of the group, and posing some – sometimes provocative – further questions for you to think about. These summaries will be available before the following week’s seminar.

Note, that there are no formal lectures for this module. This therefore puts a higher premium than usual on student preparation and active participation. What you will learn from this module will be in direct proportion to the amount of effort you are prepared to expend engaging with the module materials and the seminar discussions.

Module Texts

The text for this module is my book,


This will be background reading for all seminars. For a useful supplement, I also suggest,


This contains 26 short chapters reviewing all the major sub-topics of prejudice by some of the world’s leading authorities on the subject.

In addition, you will find the following general references of great value as background or more detailed reading for particular topics. With the exception of Allport’s classic and wonderfully readable book (easy and cheap to get on second-hand websites such as abebooks.com), I would not recommend buying them as they are mostly quite expensive.


Seminar Topics and Reading Lists

Below are the seminar readings. For each topic there is an asterisked (*) essential background reading. Everyone should read this as a minimum requirement. Then there are several further readings, usually reports of empirical studies, which will be assigned to individuals to read and report back on to the rest of the group. The lists are extensive partly to ensure that everyone is able to read something for each week, and partly to assist you in preparing assignments. I have tried to ensure that all readings are available electronically through the library’s on-line journals collection or through pdf files located on the module web-site. If you really cannot locate particular references, use your own initiative to find substitute papers on related topics. The Current Periodicals Section of the Library and PsychInfo are good places to browse for these. In other words, “I couldn’t find the reading” is not an acceptable excuse for failing to prepare for a seminar!

The module is organised into two parts. The first focuses on prejudice mainly from an ‘individual’ perspective, where the emphasis is on personality and cognitive processes. The second is more ‘social’ in orientation since the emphasis is on how prejudice stems from and affects intergroup relations.

[A] INDIVIDUAL

1. The prejudiced personality


2. Categorization processes and prejudice

Castano, E. et al. (2002) Who may enter? The impact of ingroup identification on


### 3. Stereotypes and prejudice


### 4. Automatic and controlled aspects of prejudice

*Brown, R. (2010) *Prejudice: its social psychology. 2nd Edition. Ch. 4 (esp. sections 2.2 & 3) and Ch. 7 (section 3).*


For a recent (critical) review and meta-analysis of the IAT and its relationship to other measures of discrimination, see:


5. **Prejudice and the brain**

*Ward, J. (2012) The student’s guide to social neuroscience. Ch 9 (pp. 213-221) and Ch. 10 (pp. 252-254).*


A detailed review of neuroscience and prejudice:


For an insightful analysis of the benefits and limitations of a social neuroscientific approach:


And a critique:


6. **“Modern” forms of prejudice [N.B., in-class quiz this week!]**


[esp. Studies 1 & 2, General Discussion]


For an overview of symbolic racism research, and a critique:


[B] SOCIAL

7. Developmental aspects of prejudice


Also, have a look at this web-link [http://ac360.blogs.cnn.com/2010/05/14/study-white-and-black-children-biased-toward-lighter-skin/](http://ac360.blogs.cnn.com/2010/05/14/study-white-and-black-children-biased-toward-lighter-skin/) for a recreation of the classic doll studies on ethnic preference in young children. There is also a pdf of the original Clark & Clark (1947) to download if you want.

For an overview of age-related trends in prejudice:

8. **Prejudice from the “victim’s” perspective**


For a recent review of stereotype threat research and what it might mean for testing in schools and universities:


9. **Prejudice and intergroup emotions**


For an overview of prejudice and emotions from a particular (evolutionary) perspective, see:

*Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 46*, 1 – 4.

And a more conventional analysis:


**10. Immigration, acculturation and prejudice**

*Brown, R. (2010) Prejudice: its social psychology. 2nd Edition. Ch. 6 (section 1, 4); Ch. 9 (section 3.4).

For general background on acculturation and intergroup relations:


**11. Reducing prejudice through intergroup contact**


For general background on intergroup contact:


And for a strong critique of contact as a means of reducing intergroup inequality:


**12. Prejudice reduction interventions in real-world settings (NB: in-class test this week!)**


For a comprehensive review of prejudice reduction efforts:

Written assignment: guidance notes

Review of a book dealing with themes of ethnicity, prejudice or immigration

You are asked to comment on a book (either fiction or non-fiction) that deals with some aspects of prejudice, ethnicity, or intergroup relations more generally. This may be a book you have yet to read (I’ve provided a sample list of titles below) but you should feel free to choose any other book that you have read or are reading that you think would be interesting and appropriate for the module, subject to my approval. The assignment is to write a book review. The review should not be simply a summary of the plot or the coverage, but rather should bring a social psychologist’s perspective to bear. That is, in preparing your analysis, use what you have learned from this module to comment on the author’s treatment of the phenomena described in the book. What phenomena and events are described in the text that would lend themselves to an interesting social psychological analysis or might generate a set of research questions? How does the author’s perspective chime (or clash) with current social psychological perspectives? In writing the review, you may need to provide a brief summary of the plot and main themes of the book at the beginning, identifying what seem to you to be the most important issues for you to analyse as a social psychologist. Then, in the body of your review, you can highlight particular episodes described by the author and interpret those using social psychological theory and research. You should include references to that work as you would in a more conventional essay, listed at the end as usual.

Length should be around 2000 words, plus references. Some examples from previous years’ assignments are on the module web-page on Study Direct.

Griffin, J.H. (1977) *Black like me.*
Levi, P. (1958) *If this is a man.*
Schlink, B. (1995) *The Reader*
Seiffert, R. (2001) *The Dark Room*