

Prejudice, Internalization, and the Accessibility of Personal Standards for Responding to Gay Men

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ABSTRACT. Heterosexual participants who were very low, moderately low, moderately high and very high in prejudice toward gay men reported their personal standards for responding to gay men (i.e., how they believed they should feel or think in an imagined scenario involving a gay man) via computer. As expected, the standards of very low-prejudice individuals were the least prejudiced, the most internalized (i.e., most important and central to the self), and the most accessible (i.e., reported most quickly). Regression analyses revealed the predicted relation between accessibility and internalization, such that the more internalized the standard the greater its accessibility. A significant quadratic trend for prejudice revealed that accessibility decreases with increasing prejudice, except that at very high levels of prejudice

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accessibility begins to increase. Implications for prejudice reduction for both low- and high-prejudice individuals are discussed. [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <getinfo@haworthpressinc.com> Website: <<http://www.HaworthPress.com>> © 2002 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]

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In the present research, we define personal standards as prescriptions for how one should respond to members of a stigmatized group in a number of specific situations. For example, a heterosexual may hold personal standards for responding to gay men that prescribe treating gay men with respect and/or not feeling uncomfortable in their presence. Personal standards are similar to what Carver and Scheier (1981, 1982, 1990) have called “programs” or program-level standards. In their self-regulation model, a program “specifies a course of action, but with many of the details left blank (Carver & Scheier, 1990, p. 15). Program-level standards are influenced by higher-order principles or attitudes, but they are not identical to those principles or attitudes. For example, the principle that one should be polite and kind will influence the program-level standard that one should hold the door open for an elderly person. Likewise, these standards are not identical to behavioral intentions, which specify what one expects to do or would do in a given situation. Personal standards, in contrast, prescribe what one should do in a given situation.

Personal standards have been assessed in previous research by presenting heterosexual individuals with a series of scenarios similar to the following one:

Imagine that one afternoon you turn the television on to a popular talk show. Soon you realize that the topic is homosexuality, and the guests include two gay male couples, a heterosexual couple, and various “experts.” After realizing that the subject of the talk show is homosexuality, should you become disgusted?

The extent to which an individual agrees or disagrees that they should become disgusted reveals, in part, his or her personal standards concerning how one should respond to gay men.

A substantial body of evidence now exists showing that when low- and high-prejudice individuals are presented with this kind of scenario, they respond in both quantitatively and qualitatively different ways (Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Monteith, 1993; Monteith, Devine, & Zuwerink, 1993; Monteith & Voils, 1998; Zuwerink, Monteith, Devine, & Cook, 1996). First, as one would expect, low- and high-prejudice individuals (identified by their scores on a self-report attitude scale) report different standards for how they believe they should respond to members of various outgroups (e.g., gay men, Blacks). Low-prejudice individuals report personal standards that basically prohibit prejudiced thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Monteith et al., 1993) toward outgroup members. High-prejudice individuals, on the other hand, report standards that prescribe more prejudiced responding (e.g., one should feel uncomfortable around gay men).

Second, findings indicate that failing to live up to one's standards results in qualitatively different affective reactions for low- compared to high-prejudice individuals. For example, if low-prejudice individuals say that they should not feel disgusted that the talk show is about gay men, but then recognize that they actually would feel disgusted, this discrepancy leads to feelings of guilt and self-criticism. In addition, such discrepancies instigate self-regulatory processes (e.g., heightened self-focus, slowing of responses) aimed at avoiding discrepancies in the future (Monteith, 1993). Indeed, low-prejudice individuals for whom a discrepancy has been made salient are able to avoid a subsequent prejudiced response more than low-prejudice individuals for whom a discrepancy has not been made salient (Monteith, 1993). High-prejudice individuals, in contrast, typically experience only general discomfort (e.g., tension, uneasiness) in response to their discrepancies, but not the more specific affect of guilt and self-criticism. And unlike their low-prejudice counterparts, discrepancies among high-prejudice individuals do not result in self-regulation aimed at reducing the likelihood of subsequent prejudiced responses (Monteith, 1993).

Third, it is typically observed that low- compared to high-prejudice individuals report that their personal standards are more important to them; low-prejudice individuals are more committed to their standards, and their standards are more central to their self-concepts (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith et al., 1993; Zuwerink et al., 1996). In other words, their personal standards are more internalized than those reported by high-prejudice individuals. In sum, low- and high-prejudice individuals have different standards for how they believe they should respond to members of various outgroups, failing to live up to these standards re-

sults in qualitatively different affective reactions, and these standards are internalized to differing degrees (for more detailed summaries see Devine & Monteith, 1993; Monteith, Zuwerink, & Devine, 1994).

The goal of the present research was to substantiate another important difference between low- and high-prejudice individuals: the extent to which personal standards are brought to mind quickly and easily (i.e., accessible). Much recent work has examined whether prejudice predicts the degree to which stereotypes and/or negative affect are automatically associated with target groups (e.g., Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995; Lepore & Brown, 1997; Wittenbrink, Judd, & Park, 1997). In contrast, we examine the accessibility of personal standards that provide guidelines for how to treat members of stigmatized groups. This issue is important for understanding the psychological process of prejudice reduction for individuals who are motivated to reduce their prejudice (Devine, 1989; Devine & Monteith, 1993) because the activation of nonprejudiced standards may be a necessary first step for responding without prejudice (Devine & Monteith, 1993; Fazio, 1986, 1990b).

In the attitude literature, Krosnick (1989) has shown that attitude accessibility is greater for individuals who consider their attitudes to be personally important. Specifically, those who report being concerned about the issue, who care about the issue, and who consider it to be personally important are faster to report their attitude about that issue. Similarly, Powell and Fazio (1984) reported a significant positive correlation between attitude extremity and accessibility. More extreme attitudes were more accessible. These effects may be caused, in part, by the repeated expression of personally important attitudes or values (Powell & Fazio, 1984; Roese & Olson, 1994). In any case, the well-known relation between attitude importance and accessibility (see also Fazio, 1995) suggests that personal standards, too, will be more accessible the more internalized they are. That is, standards that individuals are committed to and consider to be important and self-defining should be highly accessible from memory. In general, then, we expect to find that low-prejudice individuals, who typically have internalized their standards to a greater degree, will be faster to report those standards than high-prejudice individuals.

In the present research, however, we consider more fine-grained distinctions within both low- and high-prejudice groups. First, the importance of distinguishing between very low- and moderately low-prejudice groups has been demonstrated by Devine, Evett, and Vasquez-Suson (1996). In this research, prejudice was measured using the Heterosexual Attitudes Toward Homosexuals (HATH) scale (Larsen, Reed, & Hoffman, 1980). Very low- and moderately low-prejudice participants were the

same in their motivation to respond to gay men without prejudice. That is, these groups found it equally personally important to respond without prejudice. However, moderately low-prejudice individuals were more anxious and concerned about their ability to successfully convey their nonprejudiced attitudes to a gay interaction partner. Given their equal motivation to respond without prejudice, we should expect that very low- and moderately low-prejudice individuals will have internalized their standards to a similar degree. However, consistent with differences in their self-perceived ability to convey nonprejudiced attitudes, we could expect to observe differences in the accessibility of their standards. For example, one reason for the anxiety and lack of confidence that moderately low-prejudice individuals have in interactions with gay men could be that their standards do not come to mind fast enough—leaving them anxious and unsure of how to respond in an immediate situation. On the other hand, their anxiety may lead them to respond more slowly and hesitatingly in interactions with gay men. In either case, one should expect moderately low-prejudice individuals to be slower to report their personal standards for how to respond to gay men than their very low-prejudice counterparts.

Second, we distinguished among moderately high- and very high-prejudice individuals. We have found that within our predominantly White, heterosexual college student samples, individuals report only low to moderate levels of prejudice toward Blacks (e.g., Devine et al., 1991). Regarding gay men, however, we typically observe the entire range of very low- to very high-prejudice scores. And in open-ended questionnaires (e.g., Devine et al., 1996), very high-prejudice individuals are not at all reticent to express their extreme antipathy toward gay men. Thus, we considered the possibility that very high-prejudice individuals would not only report the most prejudiced standards, but also be more committed to their prejudice than their moderately high-prejudice counterparts. In other words, they may have internalized their high-prejudice standards to a greater extent than moderately high-prejudice individuals. To the extent that a correlation exists between internalization of personal standards and accessibility, we could expect the standards of very high-prejudice individuals to be more accessible than their moderately high-prejudice counterparts.

Study Overview

Individuals at varying levels of prejudice toward gay men participated in the study. Scenarios were presented and individuals indicated their personal standards for how they should respond in each scenario

on a computer, which recorded their response times. Standards were reported for gay-related scenarios and for control scenarios having to do with study and health habits. These control domains were chosen to be similar to the gay-related scenarios in that they would be personally relevant domains in which college students could have clear standards that they could potentially violate. However, these domains should be unrelated to participants' prejudice level.

We predicted a prejudice effect on gay-related scenarios but not on the study- or health-related scenarios. For gay-related scenarios, we expected very low-prejudice participants to report the least prejudiced standards, the greatest internalization, and be the fastest to report their standards. We also expected a positive correlation between internalization and accessibility, such that the more internalized the standard, the more accessible the standard. Thus, very high-prejudice participants may have more accessible personal standards for responding to gay men than their moderately high-prejudice counterparts.

METHOD

Participants and Design

Heterosexual participants (46 women and 35 men) were selected on the basis of their degree of prejudice toward gay men, as measured by the Heterosexual Attitudes Toward Homosexuals (HATH) scale (Larsen et al., 1980). This scale requires respondents to rate their agreement (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree) with 20 statements concerning homosexuals (e.g., "Homosexuals should be accepted completely into our society," "Homosexuality is immoral"). The HATH scale was given to a pool of introductory psychology students at the beginning of the semester. The groups selected were Very Low-prejudice (HATH range: 20-32; $n = 21$), Moderately Low (HATH range: 33-46; $n = 20$), Moderately High (HATH range: 73-86; $n = 20$), and Very High (HATH range: 87-100; $n = 20$). All participants were recruited over the telephone by an experimenter blind to prejudice level. Participants were given extra credit in exchange for their participation and were unaware of why they were selected. The design was a 4 (Prejudice Level: Very Low, Moderately Low, Moderately High, Very High) \times 3 (Scenario Type: Gay-related, Study-related, Health-related) mixed factorial, with Scenario Type as a within-subjects factor.

Procedure—Part 1

All instructions were presented on the computer, and the experimenter read them while participants followed along. Introductory comments explained that the focus of the study was on issues of general interest and concern for many students. Some issues, they were told, have to do with interacting with stereotyped group members (e.g., gay men), some with health-related issues, and others with study habits. Participants were asked to respond honestly and openly to questions regarding their personal standards in each of these three domains. No indication was given that the computer would record their response times or that quick responses were desirable.

Following the introductory comments, instructions regarding personal standards explained,

Often times we set up personal standards or guidelines for evaluating our own behavior or responses in various situations. Sometimes these situations involve other people, sometimes they do not. In both cases, we usually phrase our guidelines in terms of how we believe we SHOULD respond or behave in various situations. Based on your OWN PERSONAL STANDARDS for how you should respond, consider the following situations. When you think about personal standards, think about your personal thoughts about how you should respond, not about what others think or expect.

Following these remarks, participants were given step-by-step instructions regarding the procedure. Each trial began with a “get ready signal” (i.e., *****) presented for 3.5 seconds. Then the scenario appeared for a fixed amount of time (see Appendix), followed by the simultaneous presentation of the response statement and a 7-point disagree/agree scale. Participants indicated their level of agreement with the response statement by typing in a number between 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree) on the computer keyboard. The computer recorded both participants’ response and their response latency, which was measured from the onset of the response statement and scale until the subject typed in a response. Each participant completed three practice scenarios followed by 12 experimental trials. Order of experimental trials was randomized for each participant.

Four scenarios were presented in each of the three domains (see Appendix). Response statements were matched for overall length across

the three domains. That is, the total number of words in all four gay-related response statements was 43, study-related response statements totaled 45 words, and health-related response statements totaled 43 words. Within each domain, two statements were worded in terms of how one should respond and two in terms of how one should not respond.

A pilot study was conducted to determine the amount of time each scenario should be presented. Nineteen participants (9 low-prejudice and 10 high-prejudice) read each of 12 scenarios presented randomly on the computer. They were instructed to read each scenario for understanding and to press the spacebar when finished. There was no prejudice effect on reading times ($F < 1$); therefore, they were averaged across all participants. In the main experiment, the presentation time for each scenario was equal to its mean reading time plus 1/2 its standard deviation (see Appendix).

Procedure—Part 2

Following the computer task, participants were given a questionnaire concerning only the issue of how people respond to gay men. They were reminded of each of the four gay-related scenarios and were asked to think about their own personal standards (i.e., the standards they had just reported on the computer) in answering the questions. Participants were asked three questions designed to provide an index of the internalization of their personal standards (Devine et al., 1991): (1) How important is it to you to respond to gays in ways that are consistent with your own personal standards? (2) How committed are you to trying to respond to gays in the ways that you indicated you personally should respond to them? and (3) How central to your self-concept (i.e., your view of yourself as a person) is responding to gays in ways that are consistent with your personal standards? Responses were made on 7-point scales (1 = not at all important/committed/central; 7 = very important/committed/central).¹ Following completion of the study, participants were fully debriefed, thanked, and dismissed with extra credit.

RESULTS

Overview

Response latency data were somewhat positively skewed. Skewness ranged from .90 to 2.67 across the 12 scenarios. Therefore, these data

were log transformed before analysis (Fazio, 1990a; Ratcliff, 1993). All significance testing was conducted on transformed data, but for ease of presentation, non-transformed means are reported. Further inspection of the data revealed an outlier (> 3 SDs above the mean) in the distribution of response-latencies for gay-related scenarios; therefore, it was dropped from all analyses. The final sample size was 80 ($n = 20$ per prejudice level).

Personal Standards (Shoulds)

An effect of prejudice on should scores was expected for gay-related scenarios but not for either the study- or health-related scenarios. To test this prediction, a Prejudice \times Scenario Type mixed-model analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on should scores using a 4-item index for each domain.² These indexes were computed by averaging the responses across each of four scenarios, after reverse scoring when necessary. The reliability of the gay-related should index was good (Cronbach's alpha = .89). Reliability was moderate to poor for the study-related should index (Cronbach's alpha = .51) and the health-related should index (Cronbach's alpha = .40). The analysis yielded a significant interaction, $F(6, 152) = 22.40$, $p < .001$. Simple effects analysis revealed no prejudice effect for either the study-related index, $F(3, 76) = 1.12$, ns, or the health-related index, $F(3, 76) = 1.58$, ns. The prejudice effect was significant for the gay-related scenarios, $F(3, 76) = 66.11$, $p < .001$. As expected, the more prejudiced one's attitude toward gays, the more prejudiced one's personal standards for responding to gays (see Table 1).

Given the poor reliabilities for the study- and health-related indices, we examined should scores for individual items in these domains using one-way multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs).³ The analysis of study-related scenarios suggested no multivariate effect for prejudice, $F < 1$, and none of the univariate ANOVAs in this domain approached significance. For the health-related scenarios, the multivariate effect for prejudice was again nonsignificant, $F(12, 225) = 1.60$, $p < .10$, and none of the univariate ANOVAs were significant (p 's ranged from .07 to .57). Therefore, we conclude with confidence that there were no prejudice effects in either of these control domains.

Internalization

Next, we examined the extent to which personal standards for responding to gays were internalized. The one-way ANOVA on this in-

TABLE 1. Means (and Standard Deviations) for Personal Standards as a Function of Prejudice and Scenario Type^a

| | Prejudice Level | | | |
|--------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Very Low | Moderately Low | Moderately High | Very High |
| Gay | 1.30 a (0.61) | 2.14 b (0.85) | 4.06 c (1.12) | 5.33 d (1.30) |
| Study | 3.93 a (1.17) | 4.48 a (1.07) | 4.53 a (1.09) | 4.29 a (1.26) |
| Health | 3.71 a (1.08) | 3.76 a (1.07) | 4.34 a (0.79) | 4.04 a (1.12) |

^a Within rows, means not sharing a subscript differ at $p < .05$ by Tukey's HSD.

dex (Cronbach's $\alpha = .78$) revealed a significant prejudice effect, $F(3, 76) = 8.12, p < .001$. Very low-prejudice participants reported the highest degree of internalization of their personal standards for responding to gays ($M = 6.05, SD = 0.96$), whereas moderately high-prejudice participants reported the lowest ($M = 4.22, SD = 1.04$). Mean comparisons (Tukey's HSD) showed that, as expected, the moderately low-prejudice group ($M = 5.35, SD = 1.29$) did not differ significantly from the very lows. The very high-prejudice group ($M = 5.03, SD = 1.30$) did not differ significantly from either the moderately low- or the moderately high-prejudice groups.

Response Latencies

As was the case for personal standards, a prejudice effect was expected on response latencies for gay-related scenarios but not for either the health or study scenarios. To test this prediction, indices were computed by averaging response latencies (in milliseconds) across the four scenarios within each domain. Cronbach's alphas revealed moderate reliability in each domain (gay = .69, study = .63, health = .58).

The Prejudice \times Scenario Type mixed-model ANOVA revealed the expected interaction, $F(6, 152) = 4.67, p < .001$. Simple effects analysis revealed no prejudice effect for the study-related index, $F(3, 76) = 1.37, p < .26$, or for the health-related index, $F(3, 76) = 1.96, p < .13$. The prejudice effect was significant, as expected, for the gay-related index, $F(3, 76) = 7.76, p < .001$. Mean comparisons (see Table 2) revealed that the very low-prejudice participants were the fastest to report their personal standards compared to the other three groups, which did not differ from

TABLE 2. Means (and Standard Deviations) for Response Latencies (in Milliseconds) as a Function of Prejudice and Scenario Type^a

| | Prejudice Level | | | |
|--------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | Very Low | Moderately Low | Moderately High | Very High |
| Gay | 5,189 a (964) | 7,584 b (2,678) | 8,051 b (2,057) | 7,055 b (2,477) |
| Study | 6,894 a (2,390) | 6,511 a (1,381) | 7,478 a (2,676) | 6,126 a (2,019) |
| Health | 6,387 a (1,983) | 7,226 a (1,878) | 7,033 a (2,395) | 6,127 a (1,859) |

^a Within rows, means not sharing a subscript differ at $p < .05$ by Tukey's HSD.

each other. Analysis of the individual items comprising each index revealed no multivariate or univariate effects for prejudice in either the study or health domains (both multivariate F 's < 1 ; univariate p 's ranged from .09 to .95). The multivariate prejudice effect for the gay-related scenarios was significant, $F(12, 225) = 2.96$, $p < .001$. The univariate effect of prejudice was significant for all four scenarios (p 's ranged from .05 to .001). Thus, results based on individual items are consistent with results based on an analysis of the indexes. We conclude that prejudice is unrelated to response latencies within the two prejudice-irrelevant domains, whereas it is significantly related to the speed with which prejudice-relevant personal standards are reported.

In addition to these primary analyses, we also conducted an analysis of covariance that yielded similar results. Specifically, after covarying response latencies to the prejudice-irrelevant domains, the prejudice effect on gay-related scenarios remained significant, $F(1, 75) = 9.08$, $p < .001$. Again, very low-prejudice participants were fastest to report their personal standards regarding how to respond to gays (adjusted $M = 5,369$) compared to the moderately low-, moderately high-, and very high-prejudice participants (adjusted M 's = 7,434, 7,607, and 7,468, respectively). We also examined the extent to which individuals were faster to report their personal standards regarding gays than their standards in the other two domains (see Fazio, Herr, & Olney, 1984, for a similar strategy). We computed a latency difference index by subtracting the average response latency in the two irrelevant domains from the response latency to the gay scenarios. Negative numbers indicate faster reporting of personal standards for responding to gays. The ANOVA revealed a significant prejudice effect, $F(3, 76) = 8.72$, $p < .001$. Very

low-prejudice participants were faster to report their standards regarding gays than their standards in the other domains ($M = -1,244$). Moderately low-, moderately high-, and very high-prejudice participants were somewhat slower to report their standards regarding gays (M 's = 715, 796, and 928, respectively). None of the latter groups differed significantly from each other.

Internalization and Accessibility

We expected internalization of personal standards for responding to gay men to predict the accessibility of those standards. Consistent with this expectation, the correlation between internalization and response latency was $-.33, p < .01$. An inspection of the means reported in Table 2, however, suggests that at very high levels of prejudice individuals are somewhat faster to report their personal standards regarding gays, relative to moderately high-prejudice individuals. This pattern is consistent with the internalization means. To test the significance of this curvilinear pattern and the extent to which internalization predicts response latencies to gay scenarios, we conducted a hierarchical regression analysis.⁴

In the first step of the regression, an index comprising the average response latencies to study and health scenarios was entered as a covariate along with internalization scores and the linear component of prejudice (i.e., HATH scores). The squared component of HATH was entered in the second step.⁵ The results revealed a significant effect for prejudice, $F(1, 76) = 6.70, p < .05, \beta = .217$, and internalization, $F(1, 76) = 6.63, p < .05, \beta = -.216$. As expected, response latencies increased as prejudice increased and decreased as internalization increased. The quadratic component of prejudice also proved to be significant, $F(1, 75) = 7.43, p < .01$ (R^2 change = .04, total $R^2 = .589$). As expected, response latencies increased as prejudice increased, except that at very high levels of prejudice, response latencies decreased (see Table 2). This significant quadratic trend is consistent with the internalization data and suggests that the more internalized one's standards, the more accessible they are.

DISCUSSION

We found, as expected, that very low-prejudice participants reported the least prejudiced personal standards for responding to gay men, fol-

lowed by moderately low-, moderately high-, and very high-prejudice participants. In addition, the very low-prejudice participants had internalized their standards to the greatest degree and were fastest to report those standards. Regression analysis showed that both prejudice level and internalization predicted accessibility. As predicted, the greater the internalization of the standard, the greater its accessibility. In addition, the greater the prejudice, the less accessible the standard—except that at very high levels of prejudice accessibility increased.

In addition, we showed these effects to be domain-specific. Thus, we did not expect, nor did we find, that prejudice was related to prejudice-irrelevant personal standards in the areas of health and study habits. Although the reliabilities of the personal standards indexes in these control domains were poorer compared to the gay-related standards, analyses of individual items revealed no significant prejudice effect in either control domain. Further, because there is no theoretical reason to expect attitudes toward gay men to predict personal standards regarding the health issues and study habits employed in this study, we feel confident that even with better reliabilities, we would still find no relation between prejudice and personal standards in these control domains.

In general, our results are consistent with findings from the attitude literature showing that the more extreme and/or personally important one's attitude, the more accessible it is (e.g., Fazio, 1995; Krosnick, 1989; Powell & Fazio, 1984). The present research represents an important extension of this literature. We showed that the accessibility of specific, program-level standards for how to respond to gay men is influenced by the degree to which the standard is internalized (i.e., important, central, self-defining). Further, we showed that accessibility is influenced by the extremity of one's general attitude toward gay men (as measured by the HATH scale).

The present research also provides an important addition to recent research on the automatic activation of stereotypes. In this literature, a fundamental concern has been whether or not stereotypes are automatically activated and whether such automatic activation is related to explicit measures of prejudice (e.g., attitude scales such as the HATH). To date, the evidence is mixed (e.g., Devine, 1989; Fazio et al., 1995; Lepore & Brown, 1997; Wittenbrink et al., 1997). This concern over automatic stereotype activation is important in large part because of its implications for whether an individual can control and/or reduce his or her own prejudice. For example, if stereotypes are automatically activated, this may lead to biased overt responses, even if an individual is motivated to respond without prejudice. Such an inevitability would not

be welcome news to someone explicitly desiring to respond in a nonprejudiced manner. In an important recent study, Moskowitz, Gollwitzer, Wasel, and Schaal (1999) have shown that automatic stereotype activation is not necessarily inevitable. In their research, individuals with chronic egalitarian goals (i.e., individuals who desire to respond to outgroup members in a fair and nonstereotypical way) did not evidence automatic stereotype activation, even when the operation of conscious control processes were ruled out.

Our research adds to this literature by considering, if you will, the other side of the coin in this automaticity debate. Rather than asking questions about the automatic activation of stereotypes, we have asked a question regarding how quickly personal standards for how to respond to outgroup members come to mind. We have shown that such standards, or program-level guides for responding (Scheier & Carver, 1990), can come quickly to mind—at least for those who consider those standards to be important and self-defining. Of course, our methodology was not intended to address the issue of whether such standards are automatically activated. Further research will be required to address this issue. Nonetheless, our results do show that personal standards are most accessible for very low-prejudice individuals who have internalized those standards to a great degree. In conjunction with research suggesting that automatic stereotype activation is not inevitable (Moskowitz et al., 1999), these findings lead to the optimistic conclusion that prejudice is not inevitable.

Individual Differences in the Prejudice-Reduction Process

Devine and her colleagues (Devine, 1989; Devine & Monteith, 1993; Devine et al., 1996; Monteith, 1993; Monteith et al., 1993) have argued that the prejudice reduction process involves establishing and internalizing nonprejudiced standards and then learning to inhibit stereotypic responses so as to respond consistently with one's standards. Consistent with this analysis, the present results suggest that highly internalized standards may not be sufficient to produce highly accessible standards. Despite similar degrees of internalization, the standards of moderately low-prejudice participants were less accessible than their very low-prejudice counterparts, suggesting that moderately low-prejudice participants have not made as much progress in learning to respond consistently with their nonprejudiced standards.⁶ Indeed, prejudice reduction is a process that probably requires repeated efforts to bring the nonprejudiced standard to mind (see Roese & Olson, 1994) and then responding consis-

tently with that standard. Our findings suggest that moderately low-prejudice participants have more work to do to reduce their prejudice.

Similarly, our findings imply that moderately low-prejudice individuals will be particularly prone to discrepancies. Fazio (1986, 1990b) has argued that attitude accessibility may be an important factor moderating attitude-behavior consistency. Particularly when the situation requires a quick, spontaneous response, attitude accessibility may determine the extent to which that response is consistent with one's attitudes (e.g., Schuette & Fazio, 1995). Likewise, if one's standards for how to respond to gay men are readily accessible, one is more apt to respond consistently with those standards. Very low-prejudice people, then, should be most likely to respond consistently with their standards. Moderately low-prejudice individuals, in contrast, should be more prone to discrepancies.

This analysis is consistent with recent findings on discrepancy proneness involving prejudice toward Blacks (Monteith & Voils, 1998). In this research, discrepancies were positively correlated with prejudice toward Blacks. Within the low-prejudice group, those who scored higher on the Attitudes Toward Blacks scale (Brigham, 1993) were more prone to discrepancies. These results, along with the current findings, suggest that moderately low-prejudice individuals may be most prone to discrepancies because their standards are not highly accessible. Thus, when these individuals find themselves in an intergroup situation that requires relatively quick responding, they may be less able to bring the nonprejudiced responses to mind quickly compared to their very low-prejudice counterparts. Instead, they are more likely to be influenced by the relatively more accessible stereotype (Devine, 1989).

Monteith and Voils (1998) observed a similar correlation between prejudice and discrepancies among relatively high-prejudice individuals. That is, discrepancies were more likely among very high-prejudice individuals. This correlation appears to be at odds with the present accessibility findings, which suggest that moderately high-prejudice individuals should be more prone to discrepancies than their high-prejudice counterparts. This apparent inconsistency is easily resolved by considering the target outgroup used in the research. We have consistently observed that our college samples are more willing to report extremely prejudiced attitudes toward gay men, whereas prejudiced attitudes toward Blacks are more moderate (e.g., Devine et al., 1991). Thus, the very high-prejudice group examined in the present research typically does not have an exact counterpart in research regarding Blacks. If we assume that groups typically identified as "high" in prejudice toward

Blacks are comparable to our moderately high-prejudice group, the apparent inconsistency dissolves. Instead, both studies suggest that individuals moderately high in prejudice toward gay men or Blacks should be particularly prone to discrepancies.

We are not entirely sanguine about the implications of our findings for those who are very high in prejudice toward gay men. The data suggest that a subset of our sample is willing to report very high-prejudiced attitudes and standards toward gay men. Further, these individuals are quite committed to those high-prejudice standards and able to think of them fairly quickly. Such findings do not suggest a straightforward way to encourage prejudice reduction among such individuals. Perhaps intervention strategies would be better aimed at individuals with moderately high-prejudiced attitudes and personal standards.

A starting place for such intervention could be in terms of individuals' self-conceptions. Both classic and contemporary scholars of prejudice have assumed that most Americans have egalitarian ideals and self-conceptions (Allport, 1954; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Katz & Hass, 1988; Monteith & Walters, 1998; Myrdal, 1944; Rokeach, 1973). Giving empirical backing to this assumption, Monteith and Walters (1998) have recently demonstrated that participants at all levels of prejudice toward Blacks consider themselves to be egalitarian persons who believe in the principles of democracy. Given their likely proneness to discrepancies, moderately high-prejudice individuals should be encouraged to consider the self-relevant implications of responding with more prejudice than their standards indicate is appropriate. Encouraging these individuals to acknowledge the inconsistency between their egalitarian ideals and their specific responses toward gay men and lesbians may instigate self-regulatory processes aimed at reducing such inconsistencies (Carver & Scheier, 1990; Monteith, 1993).

However, a caveat is necessary. Monteith and Walters (1998) found that low-prejudice participants were more likely than their high-prejudice counterparts to construe egalitarianism in terms of equal opportunity and acting to protect the rights of all people. To the extent that individuals high in prejudice toward Blacks endorsed this construal of egalitarianism, they had less prejudiced standards. High-prejudice individuals who construed egalitarianism in terms of the Protestant Work Ethic (i.e., getting only what one works for) had more prejudiced personal standards (Biernat, Vescio, Theno, & Crandall, 1996). Nonetheless, path analysis showed that for participants at all levels of prejudice, construing egalitarianism as equal opportunity led to a sense of moral obligation to live up to one's personal standards regarding how to re-

spond to Blacks. Thus, encouraging individuals to acknowledge the inconsistencies between their egalitarian ideals and their specific responses should be effective in motivating change only if egalitarianism is construed in terms of equal opportunity for all.

In sum, we suggest that an effective strategy for promoting prejudice reduction among moderately high-prejudice individuals should involve first promoting egalitarianism as meaning equal opportunity for all. Second, these individuals should be encouraged to see the connection between their self-conceptions as egalitarian persons and their personal standards for responding to gay men and lesbians in specific situations. This second step could be accomplished, for example, by an ad campaign that would clearly show how certain behaviors (e.g., not hiring a gay man) are inconsistent with egalitarian and democratic principles. By explicitly reinforcing this connection, moderately high-prejudice individuals may be brought one step closer to regulating their prejudiced responses (Monteith, 1993; Monteith & Walters, 1998).

In conclusion, the present research contributes to the growing psychological literature devoted to understanding the nature of contemporary prejudice. We have shown that very low-prejudice individuals have highly internalized, low-prejudice standards that are highly accessible. These findings are consistent with recent work showing individual differences in the accessibility of egalitarian goals (Moskowitz, Salomon, & Taylor, 2000). The standards of moderately low-prejudice individuals, on the other hand, were not as accessible—suggesting that this group is particularly prone to discrepancies. We are optimistic, however, that they can eventually reduce their prejudice (cf. Moskowitz et al., 1999). As for high-prejudice individuals, our results suggest that some may be very committed to their high-prejudice standards and that those standards can come very quickly to mind. Thus, we suggest that intervention strategies should be aimed at moderately high-prejudice individuals for whom the standard is less well internalized.

NOTES

1. Two exploratory questions asked participants to estimate how much they have thought about their own personal standards toward gays in the past (1 = very little; 7 = a great deal) and how frequently they think about their standards on a day-to-day basis (1 = infrequently; 7 = frequently). No significant effects were observed on either measure, and they are not discussed further.

2. Gender was included as a between-subjects factor in the initial analyses. An unpredicted interaction between gender, prejudice, and scenario type was significant,

$F(6, 144) = 2.95, p = .01$. Simple effects analyses revealed no gender effects for the gay scenarios (p 's $> .42$). However, unexpected interactions between gender and prejudice were obtained for both the study-related ($p = .051$) and the health-related scenarios ($p < .05$). These effects were not consistent across the two domains, nor were they readily interpretable. Further, no additional gender effects were observed in the analyses of the other dependent measures (i.e., internalization and response time; p 's $> .23$). Therefore, gender is not considered further.

3. For all MANOVAs reported, the F statistic is based on Pillai's Trace.

4. Regression, rather than trend analysis, was considered most appropriate because a discrete group representing the middle of the HATH distribution (true moderates) was not employed in this study.

5. The cubic component of prejudice was tested and found to be nonsignificant. Likewise, interaction terms between linear and quadratic components of prejudice and internalization were tested. None were significant.

6. It is possible, of course, that the failure to find a statistical difference between the very low- and moderately low-prejudice participants on the internalization measure simply represents a Type II statistical error. However, this finding replicates similar findings (Devine et al., 1996) and is consistent with the theoretical proposition that adopting and internalizing nonprejudice standards precedes the ability to respond consistently with those standards.

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APPENDIX

Gay-Related Scenarios

1. Imagine that you went to a job interview and found out that the interviewer was gay (4,800 ms). You SHOULD NOT feel uncomfortable about the interviewer being gay.
2. Imagine that you turn on the television one afternoon and find that a talk show is on. The subject for the day is homosexuality, and the panel includes gays, heterosexuals, and various “experts” (10,000 ms). When you realize that the topic of discussion is about gays, you SHOULD become irritated.
3. Imagine that you start working part-time at a restaurant. You work three nights a week, and like the job quite a bit. The managers always schedule two people to work together per shift, and you regularly work with another person named Greg. One day, a couple of months after you start the job, you find out that Greg is gay. (17,600 ms). The next day, you SHOULD NOT feel uneasy about going to work.
4. Imagine that a gay couple moved in next door to you. (3,300 ms). You SHOULD be upset by it.

Study-Related Scenarios

5. Imagine that you received a B on a psychology exam. (3,600 ms). You SHOULD NOT be disappointed.
6. Imagine that it’s midterm exam time, and you just handed in a paper. Instead of studying for your next big exam, you watch television all afternoon (9,200 ms). You SHOULD NOT be annoyed with yourself.
7. Imagine that at the beginning of the semester, you are given a big assignment (it counts for 30% of your grade) in an important class. But you don’t start working on it until 2 days before it’s due (8,600 ms). You SHOULD be upset that you waited so long and now have to work under a lot of pressure.
8. Imagine that it’s the Saturday before final exam week. You have five finals this semester, and two of them are on Monday. You want to do well on your exams so you studied hard Friday night, and had planned to get up early this morning to study. Instead, you oversleep by several hours. (13,600 ms). When you wake up and realize you overslept, you SHOULD be angry with yourself.

Health-Related Scenarios

9. Imagine that you weighed yourself and found you'd gained two pounds over the last week (4,400 ms). You SHOULD NOT be bothered.
10. Imagine that you work out regularly and are in great condition. But in the last few days you haven't worked out at all. When you finally get back to it, you realize that you've lost some of your conditioning. The workout is harder, and you can expect to be sore the next day (12,400 ms). You SHOULD be disappointed with yourself for having skipped those workouts.
11. Imagine that you just had a great work out at the gym, but then you went home and ate a lot of junk food (6,100 ms). You SHOULD be annoyed with yourself.
12. Imagine that you haven't been eating right or getting enough sleep lately, and as a result you end up getting really sick (6,500 ms). When you realize why you got sick, you SHOULD NOT be angry with yourself.

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