

African Americans' and European Americans' Mutual Attributions: Adjective Generation Technique (AGT) Stereotyping¹

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The Katz/Braly line of research is reviewed, along with efforts to improve stereotype measurement. Mutual stereotyping by African Americans and European Americans and in-group bias effects were examined employing the Adjective Generation Technique (AGT). Results showed that each group's conception of the other differed from its own-group conception. Both groups saw European Americans as tending to be inventive, educated, smart, rich, and greedy, but African Americans added corrupt and prejudiced, while European Americans added lazy. African Americans were seen by both groups as tending to be corrupt, funny, friendly, independent, and poor. While mostly African Americans saw their own group as smart and strong, mostly European Americans attributed athletic, humorous, and loud to African Americans. The in-group bias effect was confirmed for both groups in terms of FAVorability and ANXIety values assigned to generated words. However, African Americans showed a stronger bias effect on the FAV measure. The expectation that in-group members would have more constructs applicable to their own group than to the other group was supported only for African Americans. There was also evidence that the powerless know the powerful more than the other way around. Implications for the study of stereotype content, the in-group bias effect, intergroup anxiety, and strength of own group identity are discussed.

Relatively little is known about mutual stereotyping by European Americans and African Americans (Brigham, 1971; Dovidio, Evans, & Tyler, 1986). To meaningfully assess mutual stereotypes in an ongoing fashion, there is a need for a method that reveals the richness of those stereotypes and yet is easy to use so that periodic replication is encouraged. The use of such a measure would facilitate continual review of the content of mutual stereotypes, and any in-group bias reflected in content, as well as the size of one group's bias relative to that of the other group. Contemplating the desired method and its application to theoretical and empirical concerns regarding content and

¹Sincere thanks to Bem Hart and Nancy Hobby for their assistance in collecting some of the data and to Belinda Carr for recruiting additional subjects.

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bias begins with a consideration of the classic Katz Braly line of stereotype research.

The Classic Katz/Braly Studies

In 1932, Katz and Braly (1933) asked 100 European American, Princeton University students to "read through the list of [84 trait labels] and select those which seem to you typical of [e.g., "Negroes"] . . . Write as many . . . [as] are necessary to characterize these people adequately" (p. 282).³ Generally, European Americans were assigned positive traits, and African Americans negative traits. When Gilbert (1951) had 333 European American, Princeton students follow the same procedure, the difference between the groups was less than in Katz/Braly, but attributions to European Americans remained more positive. Karlins, Coffman, and Walters (1969) asked 150 European American, Princeton students to follow the original Katz/Braly procedure and also asked them to rate traits on "favorability." European Americans were cast in a more positive light, as before, but there was a further decline in the difference between the two groups (see Katz & Braly, 1935, for a follow-up of the original study).

Results of the three seminal studies are still having impact today. For example, Dovidio and colleagues use stereotypes drawn from the three classic studies as stimulus words (Dovidio & Fazio, 1991; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991, 1993). Further, concern over the validity of check-lists relative to other methods is still an active issue (Niemann, Jennings, Rozelle, Baxter, & Sullivan, 1994).

Studies Involving Own- and Other-Group Stereotyping by African Americans and European Americans

While mutual stereotyping studies are rare, there are two reasons why the few that have been done are worth considering. First, they show that how European Americans and African Americans view each other is not well understood. Second, problems with the scant research on mutual stereotyping help explain the primitive state of our understanding and suggest the need for new means to examine mutual stereotyping.

In an interesting study, Smedley and Bayton (1978) had African American and European American college students engage in reciprocal stereotyping using the Katz/Braly list, with favorability value assignment to words and

³Reference is made to "ethnicity" to avoid the controversy concerning "race"; see Allen and Adams (1992), Yee (1991), and Yee, Fairchild, Weizmann, and Wyatt (1993).

consideration of social class. Only African American subjects tended to ignore social class in favor of ethnicity as the basis for stereotyping the out-group (also see Bayton, McAlister, & Hammer, 1956). Unfortunately, this study's value assignment procedures involved a serious shortcoming, considered in more detail below, that clouds interpretations of results.

Clark and Pearson (1982) used the Katz/Braly checklist to compare their more contemporary European American and African American college students' responses to those of Bayton's (1941) African American subjects, Katz's and Braly's (1933) European American subjects and Maykovich's (1972) subjects belonging to both groups. Changes over time were interesting, but stereotypes of the groups showed little stability. Unfortunately, data analyses are seriously tainted by a faulty data decoding practice: Most-frequently used words formed the data set for an analysis of favorability-value assignments to words, without regard to how frequently each word had been used (i.e., word values were not weighted by the frequency with which they were used).

Niemann et al. (1994) examined stereotyping of various groups assessed by freely generated words and phrases and found that generated-word stereotypes were more schematic and reflective of subjects' own stereotypes than checklist stereotypes. Unfortunately, much of the data were effectively eliminated when a severe method of data aggregation was employed. Also, mutual stereotyping results were diminished in importance by the small percentage of African American subjects in the sample (25% of the European American sample and 12.4% of the total sample) and the failure to find differences between how one group was described by its own members and how it was described by the other group's members.

Other studies involving both African American and European American subjects include Clark (1985); Clarke and Campbell (1955); Dovidio and Fazio (1991); Dovidio and Gaertner (1991); Jackson, Hymes, and Sullivan (1987); and Leonard and Locke (1988). Like the others reviewed, none of these involved all of the following: recent reciprocal stereotyping, procedurally clean favorability-value assignment, assignment of other values, and formal statistical analysis.

Innovations in the Measurement of Stereotypes

Taking Into Account the Percentage of a Sample Attributing a Trait to a Group

After noting numerous flaws in popular measures of stereotypes, Brigham (1971) offered what appeared to be a more intuitively reasonable and sensitive

measure. Some traits that are highly frequently attributed to members of a group by a sample of subjects are not seen by individual sample members as applicable to all group members, without exception. Accordingly, Brigham proposed that subjects not just select stereotypic traits applicable to group members, but also indicate the percentage of group members who are thought to possess each trait. In several studies (e.g., Brigham, 1973), he was able to show that the percentage measure was a superior predictor of attitude relative to measures based on the exceptionless assumption (also see Brigham, 1985). However, as McCauley and Stitt (1978) noted, the percentage measure was still not a strong correlate of attitude.

Using Bayesian logic, McCauley and Stitt (1978) sought to bolster Brigham's percentage measure. They considered the percentage of target-group members seen to possess a given trait in ratio to the percentage of people in general seen to possess the trait: the diagnostic ratio. While the procedure initiated by Brigham (1971) and refined by McCauley and Stitt appears to represent an advance in stereotype measurement, it has not often been used and certainly has not displaced more traditional methods, probably because it appears more complicated and costly to use than other methods. Methods for assessing stereotypes that are of more recent vintage include measures of perceived extremity of a group's central tendency and measures of perceived variability of group members (e.g., Linville, Fischer, & Salovey, 1989; Park & Judd, 1990; Park, Ryan, & Judd, 1992).

These attempts at improving stereotype measurement have not been the only measurement-refinement efforts in recent years. Researchers have been forced to seek nontransparent means to measure stereotypes and ethnic bias, because changing times, having made the display of negative orientation to out-groups unfashionable, dictate that subjects scrutinize measures and avoid favoritism to their own group when they detect that it is being compared with another group (Dovidio & Fazio, 1991; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991, 1993). Unfortunately, methods to which these and other modern researchers have had to resort have tended to be cumbersome and costly. Accordingly, there is a great need for an inexpensive, uncomplicated, and easy-to-use technique that meets many of the criteria for nontransparency, but still captures the richness of stereotypes.

Freely Generated Words: A Brief History

Finding the origin of "people generating words to describe something or other" would be as difficult as discovering the first use of instrumental conditioning. However, it appears that, in modern times at least, the first significant use in the domain of stereotype research was a study given careful

consideration by Brigham (1971), but largely neglected thereafter. Ehrlich and Rinehart (1965) were ahead of their time in not only recognizing the shortcomings of traditional methods, but in employing a procedure that largely avoids those deficiencies. They had about half of their subjects use the Katz/Brally list and the other half use what they called an "open-ended" format: Subjects "... were merely asked to list all words, adjectives, or traits which they needed to adequately describe each target group" (p. 566). Results showed that subjects who freely generated stereotypic words tended to use different words than subjects constrained by the checklist. Unfortunately, Ehrlich and Rinehart used only White subjects and failed to assign values to words.

The first use of the Adjective Generation Technique (AGT) was in the domain of stereotype research. Using a word-generation method suggested by Allport (1961), Allen (1971) had subjects describe African American and European American communicators of two messages. An analysis involving values assigned to words produced outcomes supporting belief congruence theory (Rokeach, Smith, & Evans, 1960). It appears that this study, conducted during the late 1960s, was the first to both have subjects freely generate descriptive words and to assign values to those words.

Since that initial use, the AGT has been a basic measure in hundreds of studies, many of which are summarized in Allen and Potkay (1983a) and Potkay and Allen (1988). While the AGT has been used in several studies requiring subjects to describe other persons, inanimate objects, or social entities, the bulk of the work has involved self-descriptions. After inspecting hundreds of AGT descriptions, one attribute of describers stands out: candor. Subjects or therapy clients, who almost universally respond anonymously, are willing to use any words in their repertoires to describe themselves or some other target, no matter how extreme the positivity or negativity. Among the hundreds of AGT projects done since the late 1960s, several papers reporting work relating to the AGT have received considerable attention. These include Allen and Potkay (1973, 1977a, 1977b, 1981, 1983b).

Advantages of Freely Generated Adjectives

Several deficiencies of checklists were mentioned by Allen and Potkay (1983a): (a) the words subjects can use are limited to those on the list rather than coming from subjects' vast repertoires; (b) list words come from biases of the list compilers, not from the subjects' own resources; and (c) list use may involve order effects, demand character effects, and social desirability effects. Ehrlich and Rinehart (1965) add that list words, not being subjects' own terms, lack salience for them, as indicated by the fact that many list words are not used

at all. Finally, Esses, Haddock, and Zanna (1994) assert that lists are likely to "prime particular attributes or dimensions" (p. 11), rather than elicit subjects' own attributions

The potential for demand character effects is present when any *stimulus* is presented to subjects. These effects may be *diminished* with use of the AGT, because subjects receive only the simple instruction to "Write down some words to describe something." Further, Allen and Potkay (1979) note that even where demand character might operate, it cannot have effects unless subjects are conscious of the demand and know how to satisfy it. When subjects anonymously generate words and are kept in the dark about how their descriptors will be treated, as in the use of the AGT, demand character effects will be attenuated. In their progressive-relaxation treatment assessments, Fox and his colleagues (Fox, Fox, & Anderson, 1991; Fox & Joy, 1980; Fox, Joy, & Rotatori, 1981; Fox & Oitker, 1980) have found that one of the AGT's most attractive features is its ability to lessen demand character effects. Fox et al. (1981) report that the principal-target client in a progressive-relaxation study revealed in a poststudy interview that she had no awareness that anxiety was being measured. Fox and Oitker (1980) contrasted the low demand of the AGT with "the obvious anxiety-nature of the Spielberger" (p. 854) anxiety measure. In one of the several dissertations using the AGT that were directed by Fox and colleagues, Rodriguez (1994) used six measures based on the AGT. When each was correlated with the Crowne-Marlowe (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964) Social Desirability Scale, only two coefficients were significant and they were quite small (.22 and .27). The average coefficient for the six correlations was .16. When 10 standardized discriminant function coefficients were derived, the only significant result was for an AGT measure (self-anxiety).

Subjects themselves do not rate their own words, because Allen and Potkay (1983a) have shown that doing so institutes demand character and social desirability effects. To demonstrate this problem, they had some subjects rate a long list of words on favorability under conditions that would make it easy for them to spot which self-descriptive words they had contributed to the list. Other subjects' rating circumstances made identification of their own self-descriptive words nearly impossible. Rating distortion was shown only by the group that could readily identify the words they had used to describe themselves: They used mostly 5s and maximum favorable 6s in rating their self-descriptive words, even when those words were objectively very negative (e.g., cruel, hateful, mean). Results of Clark and Pearson (1982) and Smedley and Bayton (1978) may have been contaminated with relatively strong social desirability effects because their rating procedures were essentially identical to those used by subjects of Allen and Potkay who displayed social desirability distortion.

While social desirability effects may induce people to avoid negative portrayals of self-related targets, checklists which omit positive trait labels prevent the expression of positive out-group stereotypes. Of course, lists dominated by negative labels force the expression of negative stereotypes. With AGT use, describers may present their entire conception of an out-group. Under these free and unrestrained conditions, describers may be taken seriously should they make mostly negative attributions to a group, or mostly positive attributions for that matter.

Additional virtues of the AGT and its accompanying list of values include that few materials have to be prepared and given to subjects. With the use of the list in Allen and Potkay (1983a)—and available computer programs—scoring descriptions is an easy, straightforward process (cf. the method used by Niemann et al., 1994). Also, the list's words and values should be attractive to researchers who wish to use words (or trait labels) as stimuli (standard deviations for all words on all dimensions are also listed). Further, Anderson's (1968) 555-word list is included on the more current Allen/Potkay list. Currently there are 2,200 words on the list, each scored on FAVorability, ANXiety, and FEMininity using Anderson's rating method (the range is 0-600, high values being high in FAV, ANX, and FEM).

Some notable researchers have recently employed freely generated words. Esses, Haddock, and Zanna (1993) used freely generated words to examine the complex relationship between values, stereotypes, emotions, and attitudes and to demonstrate when and under what circumstances stereotypes are likely to relate to attitudes. Eagly and Mladinic (1989) like Potkay, Merrens, and Allen (1979) and Potkay, Potkay, Boynton, and Klingbeil (1982) before them, used freely generated words and found highly favorable orientations to women relative to men. Park et al. (1992) had subjects provide 8 to 10 sentences describing business and engineering majors rather than ethnic groups. Relying heavily on freely generated descriptions of groups and subgroups, they examined cognitive representations of in-groups and out-groups.

What Is a Stereotype?

The definition of "stereotype" assumed here is: a trait label that individuals attribute to members of a group when the attributers are free to select any trait word in their descriptive-word-repertoires. On a more conceptual level, a stereotype is a term that individuals freely select from their word repertoires for application to a group's members because they perceive it to represent a trait possessed by group members. This more phenomenological perspective is founded on the belief that people who are free to use any words available to them attribute words to members of a target group that represent their actual

stereotypes of group members. When subjects consider a list of traits, they may attribute an entry to members of a group, even if they would not under other circumstances, especially if they are forced to attribute every trait on the list (e.g., Allen, 1995; Martin, 1987). In such cases, attributions may not represent their stereotypes. However, if they are free to choose trait words, their attributions may reflect their stereotypes, even if they believe that a minority of the target group possesses the trait and no larger a minority than of other groups that could be named. After all, people may attribute a trait because they believe some members of the group possess it to an exemplary degree, not because they believe that many, most, or nearly all have the trait (Allen, 1988a, 1988b). In sum, when people are free to attribute any word from their repertoires, whatever they attribute can be taken as a stereotype from their perspective.

Research Objectives

Issues addressed in this research include the in-group bias effect, a correlate of prejudice that is currently interesting to social psychologists; intergroup anxiety, an important factor in intergroup relations; the role of power in determining the level of knowledge one group has about another group; and the richness of descriptions of in-group and out-group members.

In-Group Bias

Jussim, Coleman, and Lerch (1987), in a review of contemporary conceptions of stereotypes, described "assumed characteristic" theory which holds that "people generally *assume* that in-groups have more favorable characteristics . . . than do out-groups" (p. 537). An earlier literature review established the existence of this in-group bias effect (Brewer, 1979). Extrapolating from the previously indicated evidence that AGT users are candid in expressing views of themselves and others, it is expected that FAVorability values from the Allen and Potkay (1983a) list that are assigned to generated words will reflect in-group bias: Each group's own-group descriptions will be more FAVorable than their descriptions of the other group.

Intergroup ANXIety

Contemporary theory suggests that investigations of anxiety associated with words attributed to the out-group could shed additional light on the stereotyping process. Stephan and Stephan (1985) theorized that intergroup anxiety is composed of a cluster of negative consequences feared by people considering contact with an out-group, including behavioral, cognitive (e.g.,

processing biases), and affective (augmented emotions) consequences. Negative consequences for the self include fear of embarrassment due to one's own or others' behavior. Negative behavioral consequences for the self are illustrated by fear of exploitation or dominance by others. Also associated with intergroup anxiety are fears of negative evaluations by out-group and in-group members. In sum, intergroup anxiety reflects people's apprehensions regarding outcomes of interactions with members of an out-group. These apprehensions should be reflected in anxiety connoted by words attributed to the out-group. In turn, intergroup anxiety is a possible correlate of many reactions generally related to prejudice. For example, Stephan and Stephan found that for Hispanic students, high intergroup anxiety was associated with low out-group contact, stereotyping of the out-group, and assumed dissimilarity with the out-group. Obviously, intergroup anxiety, measured by the anxiety connotation of words (Allen, 1985) attributed to the out-group, has important implications.

According to Depret and Fiske (1993), social power resides in the control that one group exercises over the outcomes of another group. A group is likely to be on the deficit side of a power differential if it is apprehensive about negative evaluations and embarrassment at the hands of another group (also see Fiske, 1993). While members of a group on the positive side of the differential may show low apprehension about evaluations and embarrassment, they will likely fear losing some of their power assets. Thus, compared with groups not involved in power differentials, anxiety associated with words attributed to the out-group should be higher than anxiety associated with own-group words, especially if out-group and in-group are engaged in a struggle for limited sources of power. Because civil rights advances seem imminent to some European Americans, they have reason to be anxious about loss of power to African Americans. On the other hand, African Americans have reason to be anxious about retrenchment and power-source hoarding by European Americans (Depret & Fiske, 1993). Accordingly, an in-group bias effect is expected when ANXIETY values from the Allen and Potkey (1983a) list are assigned to words: Attributions of each group's members to the other's members should reflect more ANX than attributions to own-group members.

Trait Attributions and Relationships to Power

The lack of attention to mutual stereotyping by European Americans and African Americans is specifically manifested in a shortage of information about African Americans' self-attributions and about the content of stereotypes regarding European Americans. More generally, the use of African American subjects in psychological research is declining dramatically, especially in our most revered journals (Coleman, 1993; Graham, 1992). Questions left open

by these data deficits include, "What is the content of stereotypes of European Americans in the eyes of African Americans?"; "Do African Americans' self-stereotypes match European Americans' stereotypes of them?" (Dovidio et al., 1986); and "Do European Americans and African Americans agree on the stereotypes of European Americans?" Should the two groups agree on the stereotypes of European Americans, but disagree on the stereotypes of African Americans, it may be because survival considerations dictate that the relatively powerless must "know" the powerful (match self-attributions of the powerful), but the powerful need not "know" the powerless (do not match self-attributions of the powerless; Deloria, 1969; Fiske, 1993; Park & Rothbart, 1982). Further, this pattern of agreement and disagreement would mean that the stereotypes of European Americans may be stated with some confidence, but the almost exclusive past use of European Americans to define the stereotypes of African Americans may have painted an unrepresentative picture of the latter.

Richness of In- and Out-Group Descriptions

Work on "cognitive complexity" (Linville et al., 1989; Linville & Jones, 1980) suggests that in-group members' conceptions of their own-group may be richer, in the sense of involving more constructs, than their conception of the out-group. As the number of words used in description of a target has been effectively used for a number of purposes (Allen & Potkay, 1983a; Potkay & Allen, 1988), the number of words used to describe the in-group and the out-group were compared under the hypothesis that in-group descriptions would involve more words.

Method

Subjects

Subjects⁴ were 81 European American and 63 African American students enrolled in introductory classes at a midwestern university (students received course credit points for participation).⁵ About 45% of the university's students

⁴The data for African Americans was a composite of data collected earlier (Allen, 1993) and data provided by African Americans during early 1993. This collapsing across data sets is justified by the fact, reported later, that effects for the earlier smaller sample and for the present larger sample are the same.

⁵Gender was not considered here because a preliminary analysis showed no gender effects, and gender information was not provided in the reports of the three classic studies which were the point of departure for the present study. It is noteworthy that the proportion of African American students included in the sample greatly exceeds the proportion in the university's student body and in the population at large.

are from urban areas and 51% are from small-town/rural areas (the remainder are from other countries; information from Western Illinois University Institutional Research and Planning). About 8% of students are African American and 81% are European American (the remainder are "other"). As a index of their representativeness, students from this university have repeatedly voted with the majority in presidential elections. In the town where the university is located, one ward contains all the dorms and most of the private student housing. This ward is 89% students and voted 31% for Bush, 49% for Clinton, and 19% for Perot (information supplied by the McDonough County Court House, Voter Registration Office) in 1992. These figures are comparable to those for the nation as a whole (*Newsweek*, November/December, 1992, p. 10).

Procedure

Nearly three fourths of the subjects were participants in a general data collection in which subjects anonymously responded to several questionnaires beyond the one relevant to the present study. The questionnaire germane to the present study was randomly inserted among the other questionnaires (other subjects performed under similar circumstances, but were presented with only the germane questionnaire). The questionnaire instructed subjects as follows: "Below you will find six labels for six groups that exist in this country. Beneath each label write down five words⁶ to describe the group corresponding to the label. Use only single words. no sentences or phrases. Also, use only words that you would find in a dictionary; do not use words that you made up yourself." Only responses to European Americans ("White American") and African Americans ("Black American") are considered here. All of the words generated by at least 6% of the samples were assigned FAV and ANX values from the list found in Allen and Potkay (1983a).

Results

Mutual Stereotyping by African Americans and European Americans

Table 1 contrasts how African Americans are described by European Americans and by themselves. It is immediately apparent that African Americans stereotype themselves differently and more positively than European Americans

⁶Niemann et al. (1994) do a good job of outlining the problems of "forcing" subjects to generate many words. Further, they show that looking at the first 5 words, or all 10 of the words that they requested from their subjects, made little difference in outcome.

stereotype them. While African Americans tended to view themselves as "smart," "strong," "oppressed," "beautiful," and "intelligent"; European Americans tended to view them as "athletic," "loud," "humorous," "friendly," and "corrupt."⁷

Table 2 shows that African Americans tended to view European Americans more negatively than European Americans see themselves. While European Americans tended to see themselves as "smart," "greedy," "competitive," "friendly," and "arrogant"; a not so positive own-group view, African Americans tended to see them as "corrupt," "prejudiced," "smart," "mean," and "rich," a more negative portrayal.

Table 3 addresses the degree of agreement on the stereotypes of European Americans. The left-most column shows that there is good agreement on five traits, while the center column indicates disagreement on three traits. European Americans infrequently described themselves as "prejudiced" or "corrupt," but they were relatively, frequently described with these terms by African Americans. Table 3 also shows that African Americans tended to view European Americans as "mean," "selfish," and "racist"; but European Americans do not see these traits in themselves. In addition, European Americans tended to see themselves as "arrogant," "friendly," "humorous," "lazy," "intelligent," and "independent"; but African Americans tended not to make these attributions. Thus, if the present European American subjects' attributions are taken as criterion, "lazy" is now a stereotype of European Americans, not African Americans.

Table 4 displays agreements and disagreements about African Americans. Both samples tended to agree that African Americans are "corrupt," "independent," "funny," "friendly," and "poor"; although the percentages are comparatively small, but only African Americans tended to see their own group as "smart" and "strong." Also, "athletic" and "humorous" are more perceptions of

⁷"Corrupt" is one of the few words generated by subjects at high frequency that is not on the Allen/Potkay (1983a) values list. The usual practice for scoring words not on the list is to choose a single, close synonym that is found on the list. However, since "corrupt" was so often generated, values for "wicked," "immoral," and "rotten" were averaged and the result used in all analyses. Only a few of the 84 words found on the original Katz/Brady (1933) list are not found in at least some close variation on the Allen/Potkay list. These were replaced with synonyms in calculating a correlation between Karlins et al. (1969) favorability and FAV ($r = .904$). FAV and ANX are moderately, negatively correlated: $-.36$ to $-.50$ (reported in Allen & Potkay, 1983a). However, these coefficients were produced by using Allen/Potkay list words. As noted by Allen and Potkay (1983a) and Potkay and Allen (1988), in research and clinical practice outcomes, FAV and ANX trends are not closely, linearly related. That observation is further supported by Figures 1 and 2 and by research showing the different course of change in FAV and ANX over 1932, 1951, 1967, and 1990 (reported by Allen, 1993).

Table 1

Percentages of Subjects Using Various Traits to Describe African Americans

| African American subjects | | European American subjects | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 27 | <i>smart</i> | 40 | <i>athletic</i> |
| 27 | <i>strong</i> | 25 | loud |
| 14 | oppressed | 21 | <i>humorous</i> |
| 14 | beautiful | 11 | <i>corrupt</i> |
| 13 | intelligent | 11 | <i>friendly</i> |
| 11 | <i>athletic</i> | 10 | arrogant |
| 10 | <i>friendly</i> | 10 | <i>funny</i> |
| 10 | <i>independent</i> | 9 | <i>independent</i> |
| 8 | <i>corrupt</i> | 9 | Black |
| 8 | determined | 9 | mean |
| 8 | educated | 9 | <i>smart</i> |
| 6 | misunderstood | 7 | musical |
| 6 | emotional | 7 | obnoxious |
| 6 | poor | 7 | prejudiced |
| 6 | <i>funny</i> | 6 | boastful |
| 6 | <i>humorous</i> | 6 | fast |
| 6 | inventive | 6 | moody |
| 6 | powerful | 6 | poor |
| | | 6 | <i>strong</i> |

Note. Italicized words are common to the two lists.

African Americans on the part of European Americans than how African Americans view themselves. Finally, African Americans tended to see themselves as "strong," "smart," "oppressed," "beautiful," and "intelligent," but European Americans did not. It is mostly European Americans who see African Americans as "athletic," "humorous," "loud," "mean," and "musical," the latter being one of the few holdovers from the stereotypes of the Katz/Braly studies.

The In-Group Bias Effect

A first analysis was performed on a variety of dependent variable that is familiar to social psychologists. It provides a bridge to previous research.

Table 2

Percentages of Subjects Using Various Traits to Describe European Americans

| European American subjects | | African American subjects | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 32 | <i>smart</i> | 41 | <i>corrupt</i> |
| 19 | <i>competitive</i> | 24 | <i>prejudiced</i> |
| 19 | greedy | 19 | <i>smart</i> |
| 15 | arrogant | 13 | mean |
| 15 | friendly | 13 | <i>rich</i> |
| 12 | humorous | 11 | selfish |
| 12 | independent | 11 | greedy |
| 12 | <i>inventive</i> | 10 | racist |
| 12 | lazy | 8 | <i>educated</i> |
| 10 | intelligent | 6 | <i>inventive</i> |
| 10 | <i>prejudiced</i> | 6 | <i>competitive</i> |
| 10 | <i>rich</i> | 6 | powerful |
| 7 | conceited | 6 | wealthy |
| 7 | <i>educated</i> | | |
| 7 | egotistical | | |
| 6 | <i>corrupt</i> | | |
| 6 | free | | |
| 6 | happy | | |
| 6 | kind | | |

Note. Italicized words are common to the two lists.

Means over all of the responses produced by each subject is a typical dependent variable. Accordingly, an analysis of AGT subject scores was performed: For each subject, two means, one each for FAV and ANX, were computed over the approximately five values on each dimension that were assigned to the words each subject generated. Mixed ANOVAs were separately performed on FAV and ANX (two levels of describer ethnicity was the between-subjects factor and two levels of target ethnicity was the within subjects factor).⁸

⁸Seventy-nine European Americans and 62 African Americans contributed data to this analysis, as 2 of the former's and 1 of the latter's data were eliminated because descriptions of one or both of the targets could not be scored or were missing.

Table 3

Agreements and Disagreements About European Americans

| Words used by a similar percentage of each sample | Words used by a different percentage of each sample | Words used by one sample, but by <5% of the other |
|---|---|---|
| incentive (12, 6)* | competitive (19, 6)** | egotistical (7, <5) |
| smart (32, 19) | prejudiced (10, 22) | free (6, 0) |
| greedy (19, 11) | corrupt (6, 41) | happy (6, 0) |
| educated (7, 8) | | happy (6, 0) |
| rich (10, 13) | | kind (6, 0) |
| | | mean (<5, 16) |
| | | humorous (12, <5) |
| | | lazy (12, <5) |
| | | intelligent (10, <5) |
| | | racist (0, 10) |
| | | selfish (0, 11) |
| | | independent (12, <5) |
| | | arrogant (15, <5) |
| | | conceited (7, <5) |
| | | friendly (15, <5) |

Note. European American percentages listed first.
* χ^2 not significant. ** χ^2 significant at least at the .04 level.

When AGT scores form the data set, African Americans had higher FAV scores, $F(1, 139) = 18.70, p < .001$ ($M_{Afras} = 323.55; M_{Euros} = 288.58$), but there was no difference on anxiety ($M_{Afras} = 353.54; M_{Euros} = 347.50$). The F s for describer ethnicity were not significant. The interactions were significant, with each group regarding its own group more FAVorably, $F(1, 139) = 36.29, p < .001$ (Euro subjects: $M_{Euros} = 321.57, M_{Afras} = 305.04$; Afra subjects: $M_{Afras} = 347.13, M_{Euros} = 246.54$) and with each group casting the other group in more ANXious terms, $F(1, 139) = 35.62, p < .001$ (Euro subjects: $M_{Euros} = 332.86, M_{Afras} = 362.82$; Afra subjects: $M_{Afras} = 341.71, M_{Euros} = 366.19$). The studentized range posttest for repeated measures showed that while in-group bias on FAV for African American subjects was large and highly significant ($q = 13.82, p < .01$), the bias for European Americans did not reach the conventional ($p < .05$) level of significance ($q = 2.56$ obtained, $q = 2.77$

Table 4

Agreements and Disagreements About African Americans

| Words used by a similar percentage of each sample | Words used by a different percentage of each sample | Words used by one sample but by <5% of the other |
|---|---|--|
| corrupt (8, 11)* | smart (27, 9)** | oppressed (14, <5) |
| independent (10, 10) | athletic (11, 40) | beautiful (14, 0) |
| funny (6, 10) | strong (27, 6) | determined (8, 0) |
| friendly (10, 11) | humorous (6, 21) | educated (8, 0) |
| poor (6, 6) | | intelligent (13, <5) |
| | | loud (<5, 25) |
| | | mean (<5, 9) |
| | | prejudiced (<5, 7) |
| | | musical (<5, 7) |
| | | moody (0, 6) |
| | | fast (<5, 6) |
| | | obnoxious (0, 7) |
| | | arrogant (<5, 10) |
| | | emotional (6, 0) |
| | | misunderstood (6, 0) |

Note. African American percentages listed first.

* χ^2 not significant. ** χ^2 significant at .03 or better.

required). Therefore, both groups showed the in-group bias effect for both FAV and ANX and African Americans are more FAVorably regarded over all.

In view of the emphasis on the *words* subjects generated, the focus hereafter is on an analysis for which observations were values for individual words: The FAV and ANX values of a word generated by subjects of a given ethnicity used to describe a target of a given ethnicity were entered into the appropriate cell of the data matrix the number times the word was used. In effect, word values were weighted by the frequency with which the corresponding words were used, unlike in Clark and Pearson (1982). The FAV and ANX data were submitted to ANOVA with ethnicity of describers and ethnicity of targets as the categorical variables. African Americans were more FAVorably regarded than were European Americans, $F(1, 139) = 27.16, p < .0001$. The ANX values for the two groups were not significantly different.

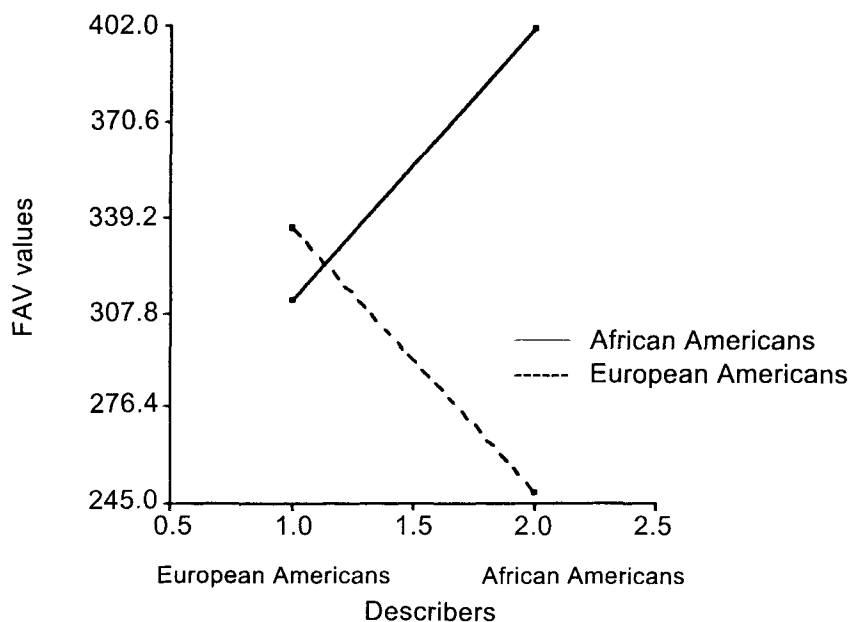


Figure 1. The in-group bias effect for FAV data.

*F*s were not significant for ethnicity of describers. However, *F*s provided support for the in-group bias effect for African Americans and European Americans. Figure 1 shows mean FAV results for the words-analysis data. African Americans described themselves more FAVorably than they described European Americans, and European Americans described themselves more FAVorably than they described African Americans, $F(1, 578) = 49.98, p < .0001$. As Figure 1 also reveals, the in-group bias effect was stronger for African Americans than for European Americans, $F(1, 578)$ for contrast = 26.95, $p < .001$ (Hayes, 1973; comparable results were found with the studentized range test: the in-group bias effect was significant for African American subjects but not for European American subjects).

The bias effect also was displayed by both groups on ANX. As Figure 2 shows, European Americans' descriptions of African Americans reflected more ANXxiety than European Americans' own-group descriptions, while African Americans' descriptions of European Americans reflected more ANXxiety than African Americans' own-group descriptions, $F(1, 578) = 72.61, p > .0001$. Figure 2 also reveals that neither group showed a stronger bias effect than the other (F for contrast < 1).

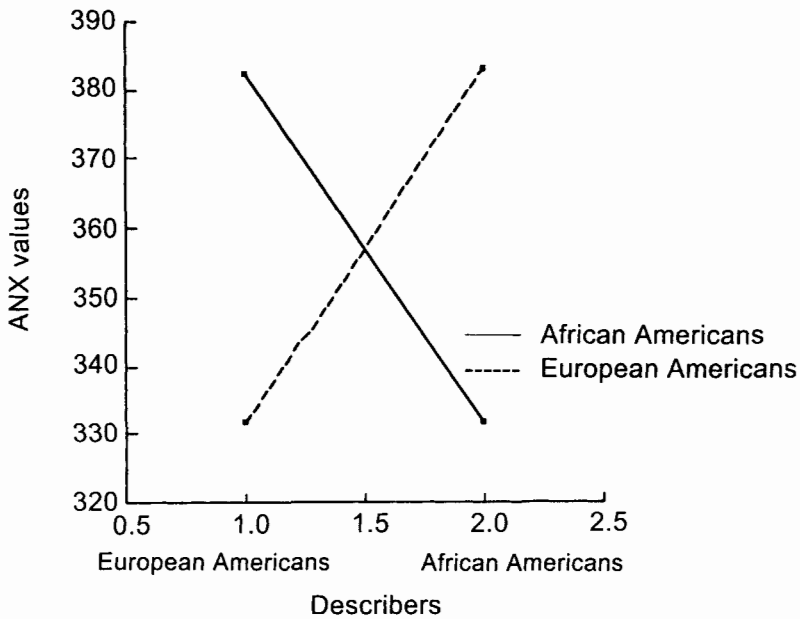


Figure 2. The in-group bias effect for ANX data.

The main effect for FAV, with African Americans being rated higher, and the interactions, with both groups showing the in-group bias effect on both FAV and ANX, were all also shown in an earlier analysis of word values involving fewer African American subjects (see Footnote 4; the in-group bias for FAV was also greater for African Americans in the earlier, smaller sample). These results indicate that the effects reported here are quite stable across a portion and the whole African American sample.

The number of words European Americans and African Americans used to describe their own and the other group were examined. Although subjects had been told to generate five words to describe their own and the other group, there was some variation in the number of words they actually produced. Thus, a 2×2 mixed ANOVA (two levels of describers between subjects and two levels of targets within subjects)⁹ was performed on number of words generated. More words were used to describe African Americans than European Americans by members of both groups, $F(1, 140) = 7.71, p = .006$.

⁹There were 79 European Americans and 63 African Americans contributing to this analysis, as 2 of the former failed to describe one of the targets.

($M_{\text{Afras}} = 4.84$, $M_{\text{Euros}} = 4.68$). Thus, only African Americans had more constructs for use in describing their own group than for describing the other group.

Unfortunately, these results are open to alternative interpretations, because subjects were told to generate only five words, thus limiting their freedom to select as many words as they deemed appropriate. Accordingly, a new sample of 19 African Americans and 19 European Americans was recruited. These subjects were given the same instructions as before, but were told to use as many words as they could produce in descriptions of their own group, the other group, and a distracter group not represented in the sample (distracter data not used). Again, results of a 2×2 mixed ANOVA were in line with expectations only for African American subjects: more words were used to describe African American than European American targets by members of both groups, $F(1, 36) = 8.16$, $p < .01$ ($M_{\text{Afras}} = 7.85$, $M_{\text{Euros}} = 6.92$).

Discussion

Who Determines the Contents of Stereotypes?

The three classic studies in the Katz/Brally line, and most investigations of stereotypes, assume that the content of a group's stereotypes is in the eyes of an out-group beholder, European Americans in the case of stereotypes applied to African Americans. The present data indicate that African Americans make very different attributions to themselves than European Americans make to them. It is only European Americans who display a strong tendency to see African Americans as "athletic," probably at present a strongly assumed "trait" of African Americans, but not a stereotype according to the three classic studies (Table 1). Neither do African Americans tend to see themselves as "loud" and "humorous," also not stereotypes according to the classic studies. The fact that "loud" is not a part of African Americans' own-group descriptions, but is attributed to them by European Americans, may be one of many cases where discrepancies in own-group and other-group attributions to own-group can lead to significant misunderstandings. This kind of misunderstanding, in turn, may be at the heart of many intergroup conflicts. In fact, the contrast between how in-group members see their own group and how out-group members perceive it can say much about the state of relations between the two groups and may specifically highlight sources of harmony and disharmony between the groups (see Gaertner, Mann, Murrell, & Dovidio, 1989, for more on intergroup disharmony).

The attributions to African Americans by European Americans that are reported here could not have been made in 1932, 1950, and 1967 because,

except for "loud," they were not on the Katz/Braly checklist. These new attributions appear now in part because European Americans' view of African Americans has changed with the times and in part due to the license allowed subjects to use any words in their repertoires.

African Americans tended to see themselves as "smart," "strong," "oppressed," and "beautiful." Given the typical definition of "stereotype"—a belief that members of a social group share a certain trait or characteristic (Baron & Byrne, 1994)—one may wonder why only one group's belief is taken into account. Perhaps the content of stereotypes attributed to a group should be defined not just by people who may be antagonistic to the group, but also, in part, by own-group attributions. If the goal is to determine how a group is viewed, as a group, input from in-group as well as out-group members would seem needed.

Do the Relatively Powerless "Know" the Relatively Powerful Better?

Concerning whether the less powerful know the more powerful better than the other way round (Deloria, 1969; Fiske, 1993; Park & Rothbart, 1982), Tables 3 and 4 show that agreement on African Americans and European Americans is equal in terms of number of descriptors that similar percentages of the samples attributed to the groups. The samples agreed that "corrupt," "independent," "funny," "friendly," and "poor" are applicable to African Americans. They also agreed that "inventive," "smart," "greedy," "educated," and "rich" apply to European Americans. However, all agreed-upon descriptors of African Americans were attributed by a distinct minority of both samples, with all five words being attributed by no more than 11% of the samples. By contrast, the agreed-upon descriptors of European Americans were attributed by a more substantial minority of both samples, with two of the five words being attributed by about 20 to 30%. Disagreements on the two groups were reasonable equivalent. Thus, if the criterion for "knowing" an out-group is agreement with that group on descriptors of it, that *European Americans were agreed upon in terms of relatively, frequently attributed words*, which was not the case for African Americans, implies that African Americans know European Americans better than the other way around.

Nevertheless, agreement on the two groups was the same in terms of *number of descriptors that similar percentages of the samples attributed to the two groups*. Therefore, overall, these results provide at best tentative support for the contention that the nondominant group "knows" the dominant group better than the converse. Interestingly, while Deloria (1969) felt that Native Americans *should* know European Americans better than the other way around, he appears not to believe they actually have greater knowledge of European Americans.

The Stereotypes of European Americans

The neglect of stereotypes of "Whites" is evident in textbooks of social psychology. While any social psychology text author can list the assumed stereotypes of African Americans off the top of her or his head, each may well be puzzled should someone merely pose the question, "What are the stereotypes of Whites?" Table 3 shows that both groups tended to see European Americans as "smart," "greedy," "competitive," "friendly," and "arrogant." In addition, African Americans see them as "corrupt," "prejudiced," and "mean."

Here again is a good example of how consulting more than one group about the stereotypes of a given group may be informative. While both groups' perspectives are important, European Americans' view of themselves may tell us much about the self-perceptions of a group in transition. For example, a number of European Americans used "lazy" in reference to their own group, not African Americans, although they formerly applied "lazy" only to African Americans. Knowledge of the content of the stereotypes of European Americans may be viewed as increasing in importance as their representation in the U.S. population changes (Coleman, 1993; Henry, 1993).

In-Group Bias

In these times, if it is clear to European Americans that their beliefs and orientations toward African Americans relative to themselves are being assessed, they may not react differently to African Americans than to their own group or may actually favor African Americans (Allen, 1975, 1994). With use of the usual, highly transparent Likert scale or checklist measures, the most extreme expression they are likely to make is a display of less positivity toward African Americans, not more negativity toward them (Dovidio & Fazio, 1991; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991). Only if measures are indirect, disguised, or otherwise lacking in information potentially cuing subjects that their orientation to their own group relative to another is being assessed is more bias toward the other group than their own group highly likely to be observed (Gaertner, 1973).

Such responses as tone of voice and reaction time readily uncover negativity toward out-groups, because their subtle nature prevents subjects from monitoring them closely enough to prevent bias from leaking through. In Allen and Niss (1990), European American professors showed more warmth of the "leaky channel" voice tone when they addressed students of their own-group compared to addressing African American students. In Dovidio et al. (1986), European American subjects' reaction time data contained clear evidence of negativity toward African Americans. In the current study, subjects generated words after receiving minimal instructions (AGT) and no information about how words would be

scored, if scored at all. While this method may not entail the same high degree of opacity as reaction time and voice tone measures, it is easier and less costly to use and makes a better approximation to nontransparency than more typical methods, especially those that involve value assignment at the time subjects make attributions.

With use of the AGT, both European American and African American subjects showed the in-group bias effect on FAV and ANX. Because both groups were involved and the AGT was employed, these results are particularly compelling support for the continued existence of bias against "other-race" out-groups, despite survey results to the contrary (Dovidio & Fazio, 1991; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991). While FAV or its equivalent has been used in past research, the display of in-group bias effects for anxiety is unique. ANX results suggest that the stereotypes of the out-group will likely connote more anxiety than those of the in-group if the conditions outlined by Stephan and Stephan (1985) are met (especially when the two groups are also contending for limited sources of power).

Other AGT results showed that European Americans were less favorably described overall than African Americans. On the one hand, this result, due in part to absolutely favorable own-group descriptions by African Americans, should add another nail to the coffin of the "Black self-hatred" notion (Cross, 1991). On the other hand, as AGT FAV has often been used as a measure of self-esteem (Allen & Potkay, 1983a; Potkay & Allen, 1988), the relatively low own-group-esteem of European Americans is intriguing.

One can only speculate about the observation that African Americans showed the in-group bias effect on FAV to a greater degree than European Americans. Perhaps African Americans are showing a sort of "circle the wagons" effect brought on by a perceived slowing of their civil rights progress by "obstructionist" European Americans. Adding credence to this possibility is the fact that they soon will yield the title "largest minority" to Hispanics who may subsequently become the focus of civil rights attention (Hess, Markson, & Stein, 1992). This effect may cause them to inflate the favorability of their own-group descriptions and deflate that of the out-group. Alternatively, this display of strong in-group FAV, relative to out-group FAV, may mean that the "Black pride" movement is alive and well and having real impact.

Richness of Attributions to African Americans and European Americans

That in-group members would use more words to describe their own group compared to the out-group was confirmed for African American targets only. Both groups used more words to describe African Americans. These results suggest that "African American" may represent a stronger identity than

"European American."¹⁰ Depret and Fiske (1993) ask the question "How do the powerless cope with a threat to their own-control [over outcomes]" that is posed by the powerful (p. 188)? One answer is that they develop a strong group identity that is recognized not only by own-group members, but by out-group members as well. Such a strong identity may create the high level of cohesion in the face of threat that is needed to effectively counter threat. Again, there is a hint of the "circle the wagons" mentality.

Limitations of the AGT

Part of the advantage of the AGT lies in the simplicity of the technique. When it is used straightforwardly, as in the present case and as described by Allen and Potkay (1983a), valuable information can be extracted at a reasonable cost (cf. the method used by Niemann et al., 1994). However, for the purposes of investigating complex issues such as in-group versus out-group variability, it is more appropriate to use other relatively sophisticated but more costly procedures that are better indexes of differentiation within groups (e.g., Park & Judd, 1990).

Further, while the AGT graphically reveals a person's stereotypes, the words themselves and the FAV and ANX values applied to them do nothing to indicate the strength of the person's stereotypes (i.e., how strongly a subject believes that an attribution is applicable to members of a group). Thus, with use of the AGT, knowing the cognitive salience of a given stereotype for a given person or for all persons under consideration must await the development of a possible but presently unavailable "strength" dimension that would complement FAV and ANX.

A broader question concerns the value of stereotype information collected with use of freely generated words. Using mostly White subjects, Stangor, Sullivan, and Ford (1991) presented results suggesting that a measure of affect does a better job of predicting attitude than a stereotype measure derived from having subjects "think about people from each of the social groups [used as targets in their study] and . . . list any thoughts that come mind . . ." (p. 363). However, a couple of points are worth noting by way of qualifying the Stangor et al. (1991) results. The 'thinking about people' instruction likely generated a complex result that was difficult to meaningfully score, relative to the AGT instruction that produces discrete words, rather than phrases and sentences. Coupled with their global instructions was the use of a data-aggregation procedure and just two raters, as opposed to the many raters used to derive FAV

¹⁰Thanks are due an anonymous reviewer for making this interesting suggestion.

and ANX (Allen & Potkay, 1983a). Second, despite these shortcomings, the authors acknowledge that the "thoughts" measure did a good job of predicting attitude (see the negative affect vs. negative individual stereotype results in their Tables 2 and 3), though not so good as affect. Thus, assuming the value of attitude as a dependent variable (as opposed to other dependent variables, such as behavior), indexes of stereotypes derived from freely produced words may be second to affect in power as a predictor.

This article reports work that included African American subjects in research employing relatively nontransparent procedures and measures that confirmed the in-group bias effect. Results also supported expectations derived from Stephan's and Stephan's (1985) theory of intergroup anxiety, hammered another nail in the coffin of the Black self-hatred notion (Cross, 1991), and revealed own-group favorability among European Americans that is just to the positive side of neutral and lower than that of African Americans. In addition, it raised the issue as to whether the high own-group favorability/out-group unfavorability shown by African Americans is related to a sort of "circle the wagons" mentality on their part, or is evidence that the "Black is beautiful" movement continues to have real impact. Further, it brings research on stereotypes of African Americans up to date and begins the process of defining the neglected stereotypes of European Americans. Finally, it suggests that being on the bottom side of a power differential may create a strong sense of identity on the part of African Americans.

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