

APA Resolution on Prejudice, Stereotypes, and Discrimination

Whereas prejudices are unfavorable affective reactions to or evaluations of groups and their members, stereotypes are generalized beliefs about groups and their members, interpersonal discrimination is differential treatment by individuals toward some groups and their members relative to other groups and their members, and institutional discrimination involves policies and contexts that create, enact, reify, and maintain inequality (Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson, & Gaertner, 1996; Eagly & Diekmann, 2005; Fiske, 1998; Lott & Maluso, 1995; Mio, Barker-Hackett, & Tumambing, 2006; Myers, 2005; Nelson, 2005; Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999); and

Whereas interpersonal and institutional discrimination against any group is counter to respect for basic human rights to dignity, equality, and liberty (United Nations High Commission on Human Rights, 1997; United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948); and

Whereas the American Psychological Association expressly opposes prejudice (defined broadly) and discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, physical condition or social class (American Psychological Association, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Conger, 1975); and

Whereas as psychologists we respect the dignity and worth of all people and are committed to improving the conditions of individuals, groups, and society (American Psychological Association, 2002); and

Whereas as psychologists we are aware of and respect cultural, social, and personal diversity, including (but not limited to) those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status (American Psychological Association, 2002); and

Whereas manifestations of prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination may vary over time and context (Diekmann & Eagly, 2000; Devine & Elliot, 1995; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Jackman, 1994; Karlins, Coffman, & Walters, 1969; Schaller, Conway, & Tanchuk, 2002); and

Whereas psychological science has revealed that modern forms of prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination may be automatic, unconscious, and unexamined; can be ambiguous and difficult to detect in individual instances; and include ambivalent mixtures of positive and negative emotions that can result in paternalistic or envious reactions to social groups (Blair, 2001; Clausell & Fiske, 2005; Crosby, 1984; Cunningham, Nezlek, & Banaji, 2004; Darley & Gross, 1983; Devine, 1989; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004; Dovidio, Kawakami, Johnson, Johnson, & Howard, 1997; Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995; Fiske, 1998; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Glick & Fiske, 2001; Greenwald et al., 2002; Levy & Banaji, 2002; Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005; Mitchell, Nosek, & Banaji, 2003; Morrison & Morrison, 2002; Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam, & Lalonde, 1990); and

Whereas overt, blatant, and hostile forms of prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination co-exist with modern and with less overt forms (Benokraitis & Feagin, 1995; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004; Duckitt, 2001; Fiske et al., 2002; Green, Glaser, & Rich, 1998; Green, Strohovitch, & Wong, 1998; Herek, 1992; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995; Sears & Henry, 2003; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Swim, Hyers, Cohen, Fitzgerald, & Bylsma, 2003; Wilson & Schooler, 2000); and

Whereas prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination are directed most commonly at members of stigmatized groups (historically groups low in structural power, including groups defined by gender, ethnicity, race, social class, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical or psychological impairments, immigration status, or language), including individuals who

are members of multiple stigmatized groups (e.g., older women) and members simultaneously of stigmatized and nonstigmatized groups (e.g., gay men) (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Altemeyer, 1996; Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Herek, 2002; Fiske et al., 2002; Lott, & Bullock, 2001; Staub, 1996); and

Whereas prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination have the potential to particularly harm individuals who are members of groups that are afforded less societal power to counteract the negative effects of such discrimination (Fiske, 1993; Herek, Gillis, Cogan, & Glunt, 1997; Johnson & Lecci, 2003; Major et al., 2002; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002; Sidanius & Veniagas, 2000); and

Whereas members of groups with high power in one context may find themselves as members of stigmatized groups in other contexts (Constantine, 2001; Linville, 1982; Quinn, 2005; Shih et al., 1999); and

Whereas individuals who are members of nonstigmatized groups enjoy significant privileges that members of stigmatized groups do not (Aronson, et al., 1999; Hacker, 1992; Hurtado, 1997; McIntosh, 1989; Walton & Cohen, 2003); and

Whereas standards of normative behavior derived from the behavior of nonstigmatized groups can lead to the creation and promotion of institutional discrimination (Feagin & Feagin, 1978; Haney, Banks, & Zimbardo, 1973; Jones, 1997); and

Whereas prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination have been shown to have adverse cognitive, affective, motivational, and behavioral effects for targets of discrimination, particularly those who are members of stigmatized groups, including heightened vigilance; stereotype threat; distress such as anger and anxiety; depressive, anxious, and somatic symptoms; lowered aspirations and reduced effort (Frale, Blackstone, & Scherbaum, 1990; Jennings, Geis, & Brown, 1980; Klonoff, Landrine, & Campbell, 2000; Klonoff, Landrine, & Ullman, 1999; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996; Landrine et al., 1995; Mendoza Denton et al., 2002; Schmader, Major, & Gramzow, 2001; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Swim, Hyers, Cohen, & Ferguson, 2001); and

Whereas prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination can be internalized by stigmatized groups' members and can become manifested in reactions such as self-blame for their stigmatized state, acceptance of unfavorable or repressive stereotypes, self-objectification, and associated psychological consequences (e.g., eating disorders), and diminished psychological well-being (e.g., self-esteem among some groups) (Clark & Clark, 1939, 1947; Crocker, Cornwell, & Major, 1993; Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Harrison & Frederickson, 2003; Frederickson & Roberts, 1997; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Kaiser, Major, & McCoy, 2004; Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003; Meyer, 2003; Rudman & Heppen, 2003; Sinclair, Huntsinger, Skorinko, & Hardin, 2005); and

Whereas prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination have negative effects on intergroup relations, fostering distrust, and promoting threat (Crocker, Luhtanen, Brodnax, & Blaine, 1999; Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, & Hodson, 2002; Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002; Hebl, Foster, Mannix, & Dovidio, 2002; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Plant & Devine, 2003; Shelton & Richeson, 2005; Stephan & Stephan, 1985; Terrell & Terrell, 1981; Vorauer, Cameron, Holmes, & Pearce, 2003; Word, Zanna, & Cooper, 1974); and

Whereas discrimination that is indirect, passive, and occurs by virtue of omission, as well as blatant discrimination, can create hostile environments, including a climate of rejection, fear, anxiety, and insecurity, for both individuals and the target group as a whole (Feagin & Sikes, 1994; Fitzgerald & Ormerod, 1993; Fitzgerald, Swan, & Fischer, 1995; Neimann & Dovidio, 2000; Rudman & Borgida, 1995; Waldo, 1999); and

Whereas prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination can result in the loss of life, profound social, economic, and psychological consequences through violence, ethnic conflict, and genocide (Dutton, Boyanowsky, & Bond, 2005; Dyregrov, Gupta, Gjestad, & Mukanoheli, 2000; Kessler, 2000; Krippner & McIntyre, 2003; Mautino, 2001; Newman & Erber, 2002; Pham, Weinstein, & Longman, 2004; Staub, 1996; Veale & Doná, 2003); and

Whereas the American Psychological Association has recognized the profound psychological consequences for hate crimes motivated by prejudice (American Psychological Association, 1988, 2005a); and

Whereas prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination have been shown to create and maintain historical and contemporary disparities in the areas of education, economics, law, politics, housing, security, and health (Armstead, Lawler, Gorden, Cross, & Gibbons, 1989; Blascovich, Spencer, Quinn, & Steele, 2001; Institute of Medicine, 2003; Jackson, et al., 2004; Lott, 2002; Mays, Coleman, & Jackson, 1996; McNeilly et al., 1996; National Center for Health Statistics, 2004; Office of the Surgeon General, 1999; Panel on Methods for Assessing Discrimination, 2004; Pettigrew, 2004; Steffen, McNeilly, Anderson, & Sherwood, 2003; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson, 2003); and

Whereas institutional discrimination is manifested in lack of representation of disadvantaged groups in power positions, lack of access to resources that promote social mobility, and the promotion of the deindividuation and dehumanization of targets thereby creating social contexts and social roles that encourage discriminatory behavior (Apfelbaum, 1999; Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, Lickel, & Kowai-Bell, 2001; Bullock & Lott, 2001; Catalyst, 2003; Congressional Quarterly, 2005; Fine, 2004; Frable et al., 1990; Jackson, & Inglehart, 1995; Jones, 1997; Lane & Wegner, 1995; Pinel, 1999; Shelton, 2003); and

Whereas individuals who are members of multiple oppressed groups may experience unique, additive, or even multiplicative negative consequences from discrimination (Bowman et al., 2001; Espin, 1993, 2005; Greene, 1994, 1997; Greene, & Boyd-Franklin, 1996; Lowe & Mascher, 2001; Miller & Meyers, 1998; Quinn, 2005); and

Whereas prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination have been shown to affect negatively children's psychological well-being and behavior (Nyborg & Curry, 2003; Simons et al., 2002); and

Whereas prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination potentially harm perpetrators' own mental and physical health by interfering with their cognitive functioning; prolonging their stereotypes, hostility, suspicion, vigilance, and intergroup anxiety; which results in depriving them of skills and relationships with groups they disparage; preventing their organizations from full access to available human capital; and creating restrictive roles and intragroup competition for status even within nonstigmatized groups (Iazzo, 1983; King & King, 1997; Richeson et al., 2003; Richeson & Shelton, 2003; Richeson & Trawalter, 2005; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004; Thompson, Gisanti, & Pleck, 1985; Thompson, Pleck, & Ferrera, 1992); and

Whereas being a member of a stigmatized group can result in the added stress of needing to be attuned to the possibility of encountering discrimination, particularly if one has a hidden stigma (Frable et al., 1990; Shelton, 2003; Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001); and

Whereas options for coping with prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination force targets of discrimination to choose among coping responses that have associated psychological costs (e.g., possibly revealing stigma), negative evaluations when reporting discrimination, and psychological or practical costs for complying with discrimination

(e.g., rumination and negative self-evaluations); leaving prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination often unnamed and unchallenged (Kaiser & Miller, 2001; Swim & Thomas, 2005); and

Whereas participation in demographically diverse settings, such as groups with mixed racial/ethnic or gender group composition, has the potential to bestow advantages such as preparing individuals to be better citizens in a multicultural democracy, improving educational and economic opportunities for stigmatized individuals, decreasing prejudice against outgroup members, increasing complex learning, increasing group creativity, and consideration for varied points of views that clearly illuminate the benefits of diversity (Antonio et al., 2004; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Gurin, Nagda, & Lopez, 2004; Nemeth & Nemeth Brown, 2003; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005; Sommers, in press);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Psychological Association condemns expressing prejudice, employing stereotypes, and engaging in discrimination in all their forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the American Psychological Association will:

1. call upon psychologists to educate themselves about the various and evolving manifestations of prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination;
2. call upon psychologists to eliminate actions and procedures that perpetuate prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination in research, practice, training, and education;
3. call upon psychologists to examine further the deleterious effects of prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination upon both targets and perpetrators through research, practice, training, and education;
4. call upon psychologists to use findings from relevant psychological research on prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination to inform their research, practice, training and education with members of diverse populations;
5. call upon psychologists to develop effective interventions against prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination;
6. support the government's continuing collection of demographic and other statistics that bear upon discrimination;
7. call upon psychologists to use findings from relevant psychological research to inform anti-prejudice, anti-stereotyping and anti-discrimination positions in public and organizational policy;
8. call upon psychologists to use findings from relevant psychological research to advocate anti-prejudice, anti-stereotyping, and anti-discrimination positions in organizations and public policy at local, national, and international levels;
9. promote the effective engagement and advancement of diverse populations to pursue careers in psychology in order to achieve representation that reflects this diversity in all areas and levels of the profession;
10. achieve diverse representation at all levels of APA activities and governance;
11. urge gatekeepers of information dissemination (e.g., educators and editors) to pursue diverse representation in content and among reviewers and authors; and
12. call upon psychologists to be vigilant about the various manifestations of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination; to speak out against stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination; to educate the public about stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination and their impact on individuals, groups and society; and to combat expression of intolerant stereotypes, prejudices, or discriminatory acts among individuals and institutions.

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