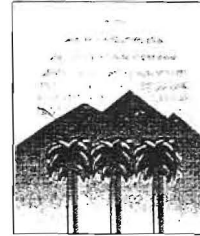


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Prejudice is more common than we think

Researchers at the University of Washington and Yale University have announced the development of a new test to measure people's unconscious prejudice. Dubbed the "Implicit Association Test," results so far show that unconscious prejudice occurs in nine out of 10 people, especially among those who consider themselves prejudice-free.

The researchers, psychology professors Anthony Greenwald of the University of Washington and Mahzarin Banaji of Yale University, have activated a Web site where people can test their levels of prejudice. The test is said to uncover ingrained prejudices and stereotyping that most people have, but do not acknowledge. According to the researchers, most who take the test find themselves shocked afterward. The Web site (<http://>

depts.washington.edu) offers four tests measuring unconscious prejudices of Black vs. White people, old vs young, gender stereotypes, and self-esteem — whether there's an automatic preference for oneself. Such tests, including one administered to 1,300 Yale freshmen, have consistently found that 90-95 percent show unconscious prejudice.

The Washington-Yale test was developed out of earlier established social psychology techniques. Participants are asked to classify as quickly as possible a list of names into those that are most often considered Black, such as Jamal or LaShonda, and

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those most often considered White, such as Chip or Peggy. Next, they are asked to quickly classify a list of words as good in meaning, such as "love" and "happy," or bad, such as "war" or "evil."

Although the two tests appear equally difficult, in nearly all cases, people take longer when grouping Black names and good

words as opposed to grouping White names and good words. This, according to researchers, is an indicator that people have an inherent, unconscious preference for White names. Researchers have noted that the latent prejudices ap-

pear to be stronger among Whites and Asians than Blacks.

Since a description of the test appeared in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, researchers have adopted it as a tool. Among such projects under way is a study of German prejudice between Bavarians and North Germans. Research is under way at Northwestern University into attitudes about people who are overweight. University professor Curtis Harin of UCLA has been using the test in both research and teaching. While there are other tests that demonstrate prejudice, "This is a beautiful, elegant way of showing it because people see it happening themselves," he said.

Greenwald says it is too early to tell whether the test can be used to predict behavior. "It appears these

biases are automatic, but it doesn't mean they can't be overcome." Because of this, researchers caution that the test has the potential for being misused outside the research laboratory. They are especially worried that it could be used to screen people for jobs and to try to probe people's unconscious likes or dislikes.

The goal of the new Web site is not to foster research as much as it is to spread awareness. Banaji and Greenwald want to use the Web site to educate and raise consciousness about prejudice.

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