

8

THE POLITICS OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE

Distortions in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations

Lee Jussim, Jarret T. Crawford, Sean T. Stevens, and Stephanie M. Anglin

“Getting it right” is the *sine qua non* of science (Funder, Levine, Mackie, Morf, Vazire, & West, 2013). Science can tolerate individual mistakes and flawed theories, but only if it has reliable mechanisms for correction. Unfortunately, science is not always self-correcting (e.g., Ioannidis, 2012; MacCoun, 1998; Nickerson, 1998). Although the potential political distortion of psychology has been recognized for some time (MacCoun, 1998; Redding, 2001; Tetlock, 1994), calls for corrective action have gone largely unheeded.

This chapter reviews and critically evaluates evidence suggesting that: 1) Liberals are disproportionately represented in social psychology; 2) Pernicious factors (hostile environment, discrimination) contribute to that disproportion; and 3) Some conclusions in intergroup relations are consistently biased in ways that exaggerate support for narratives of bias and oppression. We also identify possible solutions to the problems of political bias in social psychology.

Some preliminary caveats and qualifications may be necessary in order to put this chapter’s claims in context. First, this is not meant to be a balanced or comprehensive review of intergroup relations—it does not focus on everything social psychology gets right, and, instead, focuses quite specifically on erroneous claims and conclusions. Second, it is not even a comprehensive review of the ways in which political biases lead to widely-accepted social psychological conclusions not supported by data. Reviews of how the social cognitive view of intergroup relations sometimes goes wrong can be found in two books published almost 20 years apart (Jussim, 2012a; Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994). How similar problems characterize the social psychology of politics can be found in two recent reviews (Duarte, Crawford, Stern, Haidt, Jussim, & Tetlock, 2015; Jussim, Crawford, Anglin, & Stevens, 2015; see also Eagly, 1995, on how politics distorted conclusions about the existence, size, and importance of gender

differences). Third, we are not claiming that all or even most of the science of intergroup relations is wrong or problematic. Social psychology has provided important and dramatic insights into stereotypes, prejudice, oppression, and sources of inequality. Nonetheless, this chapter shows that when social psychology does go wrong with respect to intergroup relations, it is often in ways that unjustifiably exaggerate support for liberal narratives of oppression over other potential explanations.

How Much Are Liberals Overrepresented in Scientific Social Psychology? And Why Care?

Domination by researchers with *any* narrow outlook risks creating a social psychology riddled with blind spots and biased interpretations (Haidt, 2012; Jussim, 2012b; Prentice, 2012; Tetlock, 1994). Before reviewing ways in which a narrow ideological perspective could distort social psychology, it is worth considering the following question: How diverse is social psychology's ideological distribution?

Compared to What?

Americans have self-identified as about 35–40% conservative, 34–38% moderate, and 19–23% liberal for 20 years (Gallup, 2014). These percentages, however, suffer from two limitations: 1) There is evidence that many people do not fully understand what it means to be liberal or conservative (Converse, 1964; Feldman & Johnston, 2013; Kinder & Sears, 1985; but see Jost, 2006 for an alternative view); and 2) These data are only for the U.S., whereas social and personality psychologists work all over the world. Over a quarter of the members of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology live outside of the U.S. (Inbar & Lammers, 2012). Nonetheless, the American data provides some basis for comparison to the ideological distribution of a large number of social psychologists.

Results from the Only Survey of the Ideological-Leanings of Social Psychologists

It is currently impossible to authoritatively determine the ideological distribution of social psychological scientists because there have been no published reports based on representative samples of research-active social psychologists. The only assessment of social psychology's ideological distribution is a pair of surveys conducted via the listserv of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) (Inbar & Lammers, 2012).

Five hundred and eight of the 1939 participants in the SPSP listserv completed Study 1; 266 completed Study 2. Except for under-representing undergraduates,

the gender, nationality, age, and professional positions of those participating closely corresponded to the distribution in the SPSP as a whole. Participants were asked to rate their ideology on a seven point scale (1=very liberal, 2=liberal, 3=somewhat liberal, 4=moderate, 5=somewhat conservative, 6=conservative, 7=very conservative). Responses were then collapsed into liberal (1–3), moderate (4), and conservative (5–7).

Study 1 found that an overwhelming majority of social psychologists self-identified as liberal on social issues (90.6%, with 5.5% identifying as moderates, and 3.9% as conservatives). Results were somewhat less lopsided for economic (63.2% liberal, 18.9% moderate, 17.9% conservative) and foreign policy issues (68.6% liberal, 21.1% moderate, 10.3% conservative).

Results for the ideological distribution were similar for Study 2, but there was one twist. Inbar and Lammers (2012) also asked respondents to rate their ideology “overall.” Of these participants, 85.2% self-described as liberal, 8.6% as moderate, and 6.2% as conservative. Furthermore, Study 2 was consistent with the conclusion that the ideological disproportion is increasing: whereas 10% of faculty identified as conservative, only 2% of graduate students and postdocs did so, a difference that was statistically significant, $r(234) = .13, p = .044$.

These results appear to bolster the conclusion that social psychologists are overwhelmingly liberal, especially with respect to the social issues that bear on much of social psychology. Furthermore, the distribution seems to be becoming more, not less, extreme. Nonetheless, caution in interpreting their results is warranted on several grounds.

Because we are interested in how politics might distort science, it would be optimal to sample from research-active social psychologists. Certainly, SPSP is one of the main organizations for social and personality psychologists, and many research-active social psychologists are members. But being a research-active social psychologist and a participant in the SPSP listserv are not the same thing. Are research-active social psychologists systematically underrepresented in either the listserv or in SPSP more generally? Although a strength of the Inbar and Lammers (2012) studies was that the samples were indeed demographically comparable to the members of the SPSP listserv, we know of no data that can address this issue.

Another limitation to those surveys is that we cannot tell whether nonliberal social psychologists were underrepresented, which could occur in several ways. Perhaps nonliberal social psychologists are less likely to join SPSP, participate in the listserv, or to complete the survey. We are aware of no data that can address these issues. In the absence of fully representative sampling of some target population of research-active social psychologists, it is impossible to know how successful Inbar and Lammers' (2012) studies were at capturing the ideological distribution of social psychologists (see Skitka, 2012, for similar points).

A second limitation stems from the way in which they combined respondents, including “somewhat liberal” and “somewhat conservative” together into the

categories “liberal” and “conservative.” Although this was, perhaps, reasonable from the standpoint of simplifying their results for presentation, it is unclear what people meant by the “somewhat” modifier. Overall, therefore, the results suggest that social psychology is heavily disproportionately left of center, but the precise extent of that disproportion, and its precise meaning, awaits clarification by additional research.

Studies of Psychology Faculty

One of the earliest surveys of academic psychologists found that 78% identified as Democrats, socialists, or liberals, and 22% identified as Republicans (McClintock, Spaulding, & Turner, 1965). Participants were randomly selected from the APA directory, and were excluded if they were found not to be employed in an academic institution. Secondarily, they also assessed respondents’ attitudes, and found self-identified Democrats were far more liberal than self-identified Republicans. These results were consistent with research suggesting that political elites, especially those with the type of higher education necessary to become a psychologist, do indeed understand that Democrats are generally more liberal than Republicans (something consistent with the conclusions of two classic and otherwise conflicting reviews of lay ideology, Converse, 1964; Jost, 2006).

More recent research has suggested that the disproportion of Democrats to Republicans in psychology has been increasing over time. Although the ratio (D:R) was about 3.5 to 1 in the McClintock et al. (1965) study, it has averaged about 10 to 1 in more recent surveys (Gross & Simmons, 2007; Klein & Stern, 2008a; Rothman & Lichter, 2008). Of course, these are surveys of *psychology* faculty, not social psychology faculty. Nonetheless, the evidence of increasing ideological homogeneity among psychologists is consistent with Inbar and Lammers’ (2012) results showing greater ideological homogeneity among younger than among older social psychologists.

Conclusions Regarding the Ideological Distribution of Social Psychologists

Data fall short of being definitive about the degree of ideological homogeneity within social psychology because no surveys have been based on representative samples of social psychologists, and because most of the studies that have drawn such samples have focused on psychologists generally. Nonetheless, despite their imperfections, multiple sources of evidence consistently point toward the same conclusion: Social psychologists seem to be disproportionately left-wing in their ideological beliefs, and this disproportion appears to be increasing. What might be the causes and consequences of this disproportion?

Pernicious Sources of Ideological Homogeneity in Social Psychology

Many factors can contribute to a disproportion of ideologically left-wing social psychologists. Some may be relatively innocent. For example, people on the left may be more likely to pursue higher education, they may be more attracted than those on the right to careers in scientific research; and they may be particularly attracted to many of the topics central to social psychology (see Duarte et al., 2015, for a review). Less innocent processes, however, also may play a role and are discussed next.

Political Prejudice in General

Prejudice and intolerance have long been considered the province of the political right (e.g., Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Duckitt, 2001; Lindner & Nosek, 2009). Social psychologists have suspected both the existence of a personality type associated with generalized prejudice toward a variety of social groups (Akrami, Ekehammar, & Bergh, 2011), and that this personality type is associated with political conservatism (Roets & van Hiel, 2011). Aspects of right-wing political ideologies (i.e., right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation) correlate with many prejudices (Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). This body of evidence has led to the conclusion that there is a “prejudice gap” (c.f., Chambers, Schlenker, & Collisson, 2013), such that conservatives are more prejudiced than liberals.

More recently, however, theory and new evidence have called this “prejudice gap” into question on several grounds. First, liberals and conservatives both tend to exaggerate their differences, but this tendency is at least sometimes *more* pronounced among liberals (Graham, Nosek, & Haidt, 2013) and among those who care more deeply about the underlying political issues, including liberals (e.g., Chambers, Baron, & Inman, 2006). For example, and probably most relevant to social psychology, Democrats dramatically underestimated (effect size, $d = 1.14$) Republican support for public education and programs designed to reduce inequality. Perceiving more disagreement than actually exists is important because as perceived disagreement increases, unfavorable trait ratings of and anger toward the outgroup increase (Chambers & Melnyk, 2006).

Furthermore, liberals’ moral stereotypes (i.e., beliefs about liberals’ and conservatives’ concerns about purity, authority, ingroup loyalty, harm, and fairness) were least accurate—they *exaggerated* liberal/conservative differences more than moderates or conservatives did (Graham et al., 2013). Exaggerations and excessively unflattering beliefs and attitudes toward one’s ideological opponents are rarely recognized by the perceiver (Haidt, 2012; Pronin, 2007).

Consistent with the results of empirical research on laypeople, social psychological conclusions, too, seem to exaggerate differences between liberals

and conservatives, typically in ways flattering to liberals and unflattering to conservatives. Such phenomena may go a long way toward explaining why: 1) Recent research provides ample evidence that overall levels of prejudice are fairly similar among liberals and conservatives; even though 2) The bulk of empirical research in social psychology has shown that conservatives are more prejudiced. How can both of these claims be true?

Social psychologists have, until recently, disproportionately investigated prejudice against left-wing target groups (e.g., feminists, ethnic minorities, sexual minorities; see Chambers et al., 2013; Crawford & Pilanski, 2013 for further description of these arguments). Thus, target group has been confounded with ideology. This raises at least three general possibilities: 1) The conclusion that conservatives are more prejudiced than liberals would remain intact when right-wing targets were studied; 2) Liberals would be about as prejudiced against right-wing targets as conservatives are against left-wing targets; 3) Liberals would be even more prejudiced against right-wing targets than conservatives are against left-wing targets.

Three independently-working research groups have demonstrated that the weight of the evidence is most consistent with the second possibility. Summarizing these and other studies with similar results, Brandt, Reyna, Chambers, Crawford, and Wetherell (2014) put forward the *ideological conflict hypothesis* (ICH), which argues very simply that people across the political spectrum are prejudiced against ideologically dissimilar targets. The ICH has been supported on the basis of research designs that include an ideologically diverse array of target groups, and across nationally representative as well as student and community samples. The relationship between conservatism and prejudice is not positive and linear (i.e., more conservatism does not always equal more prejudice). Instead, conservatives and liberals are more prejudiced against (Chambers et al., 2013), more politically intolerant toward (Crawford & Pilanski, 2013), and more willing to discriminate against (Wetherell, Brandt, & Reyna, 2013) ideologically dissimilar groups than ideologically similar groups.

This includes social and demographic groups as well as political groups. For example, compared to liberals, conservatives are more intolerant of or prejudiced against Democrats, liberals, and pro-choice activists, but also against atheists and people on welfare. Likewise, compared to conservatives, liberals are more intolerant of or prejudiced against Republicans, conservatives, and pro-life activists, but also against evangelical Christians and rich people (e.g., Chambers et al., 2013; Crawford, Wance, Brandt, Chambers, Inbar, & Motyl, 2014).

Indeed, Chambers et al. (2013) directly compared the ICH and prejudice gap hypotheses by having liberals and conservatives evaluate liberal and conservative Black and White targets. Consistent with the ICH, conservatives liked conservative targets and liberals liked liberal targets, regardless of race. Even more important, conservatives disliked Black liberals as much as liberals disliked Black conservatives, thereby disconfirming the prejudice gap hypothesis. These results

suggest that the typical “prejudice gap” finding regarding social groups, such as ethnic minorities, is at least sometimes explained by ideological dissimilarity. Crawford et al. (2014) found a similar pattern: liberal prejudice against evangelical Christians was comparable to that of conservative prejudice against atheists, and both were driven by perceived ideological dissimilarity.

Furthermore, political intolerance and prejudice occur because ideologically dissimilar target groups are experienced as threatening in a variety of ways (Crawford, 2014; Crawford et al., 2014; Crawford & Pilanski, 2013). These results are doubly important with respect to the main ideas of the present chapter. First, they foreshadow our later section on political distortion within social psychology: Why has social psychology labored under the erroneous conclusion that conservatives are inherently more prejudiced than liberals for so long? Although we cannot know for sure, one possibility is that it did not occur to the (most likely, overwhelmingly liberal) researchers examining sources of prejudice that they were primarily studying prejudice against liberal groups (see Haidt, 2012 for a discussion of ideologically-induced blind spots; see Jussim, 2012a for examples applied to intergroup relations). Or, perhaps, most liberal researchers just do not consider prejudice against conservative targets to be an interesting or important phenomenon.

There are, however, two additional reasons such results are important with respect to the present chapter. First, they raise the possibility that the long-standing social psychological claim of greater prejudice among conservatives reflects the ideology of social psychologists (and the concomitant blind spots, to be discussed later) as much as, or more than, it reflected actual liberal/conservative differences. Second, the ICH pattern of results might have important implications for how we understand social psychologists’ capacity for political prejudice, and how it might influence their conclusions. The strength and replicability of the ICH findings raises the possibility that social psychologists are not immune to political prejudice.

Political Prejudice in Social Psychology

Although political prejudice typically characterizes both the left and the right (Brandt et al., 2014), the rest of this chapter largely ignores the potential for conservative prejudice because, if there is political prejudice in social psychology, the seemingly heavy disproportion of liberals means that such prejudice is likely to manifest primarily as prejudice against conservatives and, more generally, ideas that contest liberal narratives. Are liberal social psychologists prejudiced against conservative colleagues and ideas? Some certainly are, though the prevalence of such attitudes is unclear. Inbar and Lammers (2012, Study 1) asked their respondents whether they believed there was a hostile climate in social psychology for researchers holding their political beliefs. Essentially, liberals said “No,” and conservatives said “Yes” (the correlation between ideology and perceived hostile

climate was .50). Furthermore, the more liberal the social psychologist, the less likely were they to believe that conservatives faced a hostile climate ($r=.28$).

Have liberal social psychologists actually created a climate hostile to nonliberal colleagues? To address this question, Inbar and Lammers (2012, Study 2) asked their respondents how reluctant they would be to invite a conservative colleague to participate in a symposium, whether they would be reluctant to accept papers or fund grants taking a conservative perspective, and whether they would be inclined to select a more liberal over more conservative job candidate when choosing between equally qualified candidates.

The results were eye-opening. Any response above 1 (not at all) on the 7-point scale represents *some* stated willingness to discriminate against conservative colleagues. The proportion of liberal social psychology faculty in their survey declaring at least some willingness to discriminate against conservatives in symposia invitations, grant funding, publication acceptance, and hiring were, respectively, 56%, 78%, 75%, and 78%.

Although Inbar and Lammers (2012) did not set out to test the ICH, their results provide evidence that one of its predictions *does* apply to social psychologists. Specifically, there was clear evidence of liberal prejudice against conservative colleagues in social psychology. Whether these results represent the appalling levels of willingness to engage in political discrimination that it seems, however, is unclear. The studies have sufficient limitations to preclude general statements about the levels of bias against conservatives among research-active social psychologists.

The Political Distortion of Social Psychological Science

We next consider whether political prejudice might manifest, in part, by leading to unjustified scientific conclusions. The evidence reviewed thus far raises the possibility that many social psychologists may be hostile not just to conservative individuals, but also to *ideas, studies, and results* that seem to contest liberal narratives or advance conservative ones. If this is the case *even when those ideas, studies, and results are of equal or greater validity* than those supporting liberal narratives, then some of what passes for conventional wisdom or “established science” in social psychology may not be justified.

Theoretical Bases for Predicting that Political Bias Could Distort Social Psychology

Confirmation Bias/Myside Bias/Motivated Reasoning

A family of related terms has grown around a set of similar phenomena, all of which capture the phenomenon of people privileging information that comports well with their pre-existing beliefs, preferences, attitudes, and morals. Confirmation bias refers to seeking information that confirms one’s beliefs, hypotheses or

expectations (e.g., Nickerson, 1998). Myside bias occurs when people evaluate evidence or test hypotheses in ways biased toward supporting their own attitudes (Stanovich, West, & Toplak, 2013). Motivated reasoning refers to the general phenomena whereby people often seek out, interpret, and evaluate evidence in ways that are partial to their pre-existing views and/or to what they wish to believe (see Kunda, 1990, for a review).

People more easily accept evidence consistent with their existing beliefs than evidence challenging their views (Ditto & Lopez, 1992; Edwards & Smith, 1996; Klaczynski, 2000; Klaczynski & Gordon, 1996; Lord, Ross, & Lepper, 1979). When presented with information challenging their views, people experience negative arousal, which induces effortful processing often aimed at disconfirming the evidence (Munro & Ditto, 1997; Munro, Ditto, Lockhart, Fagerlin, Gready, & Peterson, 2002; Jacks & Devine, 2000; Zuwerink & Devine, 1996). People are largely unaware of the fact that their reasoning is emotionally driven and biased because post hoc rationalization processes provide the illusion of objectivity (Haidt, 2001; Koehler, 1993; Nickerson, 1998).

The Creation of Majoritarian Political/Theoretical Norms

If ideology influences theorizing, then a mere numerical domination by liberals could lead to a scientific zeitgeist disproportionately filled with topics and theoretical explanations interesting and appealing to liberals. These ideas may then become current, easily accessible, default explanations entrenched in the field’s “distilled wisdom,” and, as such, alternative explanations less flattering to liberals may face considerable resistance gaining access to publication and funding. Thus some scientific conclusions may seem to validate liberal perspectives, not because they provide the best theoretical accounts for data, but because liberal-enhancing theoretical narratives are readily accessible and entrenched, and because few members in the field are able to generate superior alternative explanations. Even if they are able, many may be unwilling to do so, recognizing that they may face a particularly difficult uphill battle (i.e., obtaining funding, persuading reviewers and editors to publish) contesting an entrenched view.

And those are the relatively innocent processes. Prentice (2012, p. 516–517) recently succinctly summarized some of the less innocent implications of decades of research on conformity and social norms for the conduct of social psychological science:

ideological homogeneity alone is enough to produce strong liberal norms, which in turn give rise to ... felt pressures to conform to liberal views (Festinger, Schachter, & Back, 1950); a reluctance to express nonliberal views (Miller & Morrison, 2009); an assumption that liberal views are even more prevalent and extreme than they are (Prentice & Miller, 1996); a tendency to explain the field’s liberal bias in terms of the properties of

conservatives, not liberals, that produce it (Hegarty & Pratto, 2001; Miller, Taylor, & Buck, 1991); and, yes, an inclination to derogate and punish PSPs [personality and social psychologists] who express conservative views. (Schachter, 1951)

Exaggeration, Conflict, and Blind Spots

Given that the conduct of science is not immune to many biases (e.g., Inbar & Lammers, 2012; Ioannidis, 2005; Jussim, 2012a; Redding, 2001; Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2011), we see no reason to expect that social psychologists would be *immune* from exaggerating the beliefs of conservatives or from intolerance of beliefs contesting their own. If social psychologists are not immune, then, these findings raise the possibility of a potentially toxic scientific situation in social psychology: 1) Most social psychologists are liberals; 2) Liberals exaggerate the political and moral differences between liberals and conservatives; 3) Doing so is likely to lead to unjustifiably unfavorable views about colleagues believed to be conservatives or whose work contests liberal narratives of conservative deficiencies and of pervasive prejudice; so that 4) It will be far more difficult for research contesting those narratives to see the light of day (publication, funding) than for research supporting those narratives. The potentially problematic consequences of such processes are that: 1) Many widely-accepted conclusions in social psychology that seem to advance liberal narratives may only appear justified because of systematic and possibly pervasive biases in the system that produces social scientific “knowledge”; and 2) It will be far more difficult, and take far longer, to correct flawed scientific conclusions that support liberal narratives than to correct other types of scientific flaws.

Ideologically Biased Reasoning among Scientists?

Even well-intentioned social psychologists may unknowingly contribute to ideological bias through processes that occur outside their awareness. Prominent researchers have recognized the vulnerability of scientists to various forms of confirmation bias, including political ones (e.g., Eagly, 1995; Lilienfeld, 2010). Several lines of research have concluded that most published findings are false, and most published effect sizes are inflated, in large part because of a whole range of confirmation biases (e.g., Fiedler, 2011; Ioannidis, 2005, 2012; Vul, Harris, Winkielman, & Pashler, 2009). We know of only one study to directly examine these processes among social psychology faculty.

Ideological Bias in Social Psychology: An Audit Study

Articles purporting to demonstrate either that anti-war activist college students were psychologically healthier (a liberal-enhancing result) or less healthy (a

liberal-contesting one) than their nonactivist peers were submitted to over 300 psychologists for peer review (Abramowitz, Gomes, & Abramowitz, 1975). Except for the result, all aspects of the papers were otherwise identical. The reviewers were designated as more liberal or less liberal based on a known-groups technique. The reviewers assumed to be more liberal were strongly affiliated with the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI; as reviewers, editors, contributors or fellows); the reviewers assumed to be less liberal were not associated with SPSSI in any of these ways, but were active in similar ways (reviewer, editor, contributor, fellow) of APA Division 8 (Personality and Social Psychology).

Results confirmed the political bias hypotheses: The more liberal reviewers evaluated the manuscript finding that activists were mentally healthier more positively than the manuscript finding they were less healthy. The pattern was weaker but in the opposite direction for the less liberal reviewers.

The most obvious weakness of this method is its indirect means of identifying researcher ideology. Nonetheless, given SPSSI's commitment to left-wing social activism (e.g., Unger, 2011), it seems likely that there was at least some difference between the strength of liberalism of the two groups. That even a weak ideology predictor produced such an effect could mean that ideological biases might often be considerably more powerful than Abramowitz et al.'s (1975) results suggest. However, the study is about 40 years old, and as far as we know, there have been no attempts at replication. Whether such a pattern would hold today is a matter of speculation until the scientific evidence is produced.

Ideological Bias in Internal Review Boards: Another Audit Study

Ceci, Peters, & Plotkin (1985) found a similar pattern among Internal Review Boards, which, presumably, include researchers from many disciplines. Research proposals hypothesizing either “reverse discrimination” (i.e., against White males) or conventional discrimination (i.e., against ethnic minorities) were submitted to 150 Internal Review Boards. Everything else about the proposals was held constant. The “conventional” discrimination proposals were approved more often than the reverse discrimination proposals.

In this study, there was no assessment of research ideology at all. However, given the evidence that professors in the social sciences are overwhelmingly left-wing (see, e.g., Duarte et al., 2014; Klein & Stern, 2008b), the result is consistent with liberal politics biasing judgments of the value of scholarship. Nonetheless, this study was conducted over 30 years ago, and its replicability is unknown.

Ideological Bias: The (Anecdotal) Story of Urvashi's Grant Proposal

Urvashi was an excellent undergraduate working with Jussim and Anglin. For just such students, Rutgers University has a program that provides small grants to

support their research. Urvashi was engaged in a study developing a questionnaire to assess people's willingness to sacrifice advancing science to further their political goals. And so, she submitted a grant proposal. Although 90% or more of the proposals coming out of Jussim's lab have gotten funded in this program, this one was rejected. And the rejection was entirely substantive; the proposal was allegedly unclear, had weak methodology, and did not articulate why the topic was interesting and important.

When Jussim and Anglin re-read the proposal, we concluded that it was excellent except for one fatal flaw. The first page included the following text:

The field of psychology is dominated by liberals (Redding, 2001), and this political homogeneity can be problematic ... In fact, content analysis of all the articles published in *American Psychologist* during the 1990s revealed that 97% had liberal themes (Redding, 2001). Furthermore, recent research suggests many social psychologists would blatantly discriminate based on politics (Inbar & Lammers, 2012) ...

We decided to resubmit the proposal, and do nothing—that is right, nothing—to address the substantive criticisms in the review. We made no changes, except one—we replaced the fatally flawed text with the following:

Science has a long and checkered history of periodically being used and exploited as a tool to advance nefarious right-wing political agendas (e.g., social Darwinism; Nazi eliminationist practices; Herrnstein & Murray's (1994) claims about genetic bases of race differences in intelligence).

The proposal was funded. We were pleased to discover that merely lambasting Nazis and racists improved the (perceived) quality of our methods, the clarity of our writing, and successfully communicated why the work was interesting and important.

This is an anecdote (albeit an anecdote informed by experimental methodology—change just one thing and see what happens). It provides no firm basis for causal conclusions. But it is also what some social scientists call “lived experience” (e.g., Jussim, 2012b; Tappan, 1997). It is a case study consistent with the patterns uncovered in Inbar and Lammers' (2012) survey. Research that contests liberal narratives faces obstacles that simply do not exist for, and are therefore invisible to, those whose work does not contest those narratives.

How Ideological Bias Leads Social Psychology Astray: Questionable Interpretive Practices, Examples, and Remedies

The research reviewed thus far suggests that a plausible case can be made that politically biased social psychological research has likely occurred in the past

and is probably continuing today. Liberals are openly hostile to conservatives; many liberal social psychologists acknowledge hostility to conservative colleagues (Inbar & Lammers, 2012). Laypeople and psychologists alike are subject to all sorts of motivated biases and distortions, including political ones. All of which raises the following questions: In what ways have political biases led to unjustified claims and conclusions in social psychology? What, specifically, has social psychology gotten wrong? What steps can be taken to mitigate the risks of such distortions?

Questionable Interpretive Practices

Political biases can lead to a variety of *questionable interpretive practices* (QIPs). Questionable research practices (Simmons et al., 2011) involve undisclosed flexibility in methods and statistical analyses that will often permit researchers to present unreliable and invalid findings as “statistically significant” and thereby reach unjustified conclusions. QIPs also involve reaching unjustified conclusions, but through a very different route. Even if the methods and statistics are conducted with complete integrity, any one of several systematic biases in interpreting research can *still* produce completely invalid conclusions.

QIPs can be viewed as the specific processes by which researcher confirmation biases influence and distort the conclusions reached. There are many types of QIPs, but in this chapter, we focus on double standards, blind spots, and embedded values.

Double Standards

As a QIP in social psychology, double standards refers to reaching contradictory conclusions as long as both support liberal narratives (see also Redding, 2001). Social psychology has an extraordinary record of revealing such biases in lay judgment (e.g., Altemeyer, 1996; Crawford, 2012; Ditto & Lopez, 1992; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Glick, & Phelan, 2012). They are also fairly common in the conduct and interpretation of social psychological research by social psychologists (see also Duarte et al., 2015; Jussim, 2012a, b; Jussim et al., 2014 for examples beyond those reviewed here).

The Criterion “Problem” in Accuracy but Not Self-Fulfilling Prophecy?

Self-fulfilling prophecies are often discussed in ways consistent with liberal narratives of oppression—as a social process by which stereotypes lead to discrimination and inequality (e.g., Darley & Fazio, 1980; Ross, Lepper, & Ward, 2010; Weinstein, Gregory, & Strambler, 2004). Evidence of accuracy seems to contest those narratives, in part, because self-fulfilling prophecies begin with an erroneous expectation (Merton, 1948), and if the expectation is

not erroneous, the phenomenon does not occur. Similarly, accuracy implies that individual or group differences have some objective social reality to them, thereby seeming to undercut liberal narratives blaming oppression and perceiver biases (see Jussim, 2012a for an elaboration of this analysis). Thus, self-fulfilling prophecies seem to support liberal narratives, and accuracy seems to contest those narratives.

If this analysis is true, then one would expect that social psychologists would generally be more critical of accuracy research than of self-fulfilling prophecy research. This is indeed the case. Many researchers have raised the issue of identifying criteria for assessing accuracy as something problematic (e.g., Fiske, 1998; Jones, 1985; Kruglanski, 1989). There is some validity to such a critique because there rarely is a perfect criterion against which to assess the accuracy of lay judgments. Most criteria have advantages and disadvantages, something accuracy researchers have long recognized (for reviews, see Funder, 1987; Judd & Park, 1993; Jussim, 2012a; Ryan, 2002).

A double standard arises when researchers (often the same ones) write enthusiastically and uncritically about the power and pervasiveness of self-fulfilling prophecies (e.g., Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Jones, 1986; Jost & Kruglanski, 2002) without raising similar issues about criteria. For both self-fulfilling prophecies and accuracy, one must establish correspondence between perceivers' expectation and targets' outcomes. There is a difference in how the correspondence comes about, but there is no difference in the criteria—or in the difficulty in identifying criteria—for establishing whether that correspondence has come about. By routinely raising critical questions about the difficulty in identifying criteria to assess accuracy but not self-fulfilling prophecy, the politically distasteful phenomenon (accuracy) is held to greater critical scrutiny than the politically palatable phenomenon (self-fulfilling prophecy).

The Black Hole at the Bottom of Most Declarations That "Stereotypes Are Inaccurate"

Most scholarly declarations of stereotypes as inaccurate cite either nothing in support of this claim, or cite an article that neither provides nor reviews empirical support for this claim. We next give one example of each, though there are many more (see Jussim, 2012a).

[S]tereotypes are maladaptive forms of categories because their content does not correspond to what is going on in the environment. (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999, p. 467)

The term *stereotype* refers to those interpersonal beliefs and expectancies that are both widely shared and generally invalid (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1981). (Miller & Turnbull, 1986, p. 233)

These are purportedly statements of scientific facts, which typically require *some sort of scientific evidence*. The far less frequent declarations that stereotypes often have considerable accuracy have *always* provided extensive empirical documentation (e.g., Jussim, 2012a; Jussim, Cain, Crawford, Harber, & Cohen, 2009; Lee, Jussim, & McCauley, 1995; Oakes et al., 1994; Ryan, 2002). That scientists can make the "stereotype inaccuracy" claim without *any* scientific documentation (as in Bargh & Chartrand, 1999, above) reflects a serious dysfunction in social psychology.

Miller and Turnbull (1986), in contrast, did provide a reference—Ashmore and Del Boca (1981). However, Ashmore and Del Boca (1981): 1) Reviewed conceptual issues in the study of stereotypes but did not review the empirical evidence that bore on the accuracy question; 2) Concluded that badness should *not* be a defining component of stereotypes.

It is, of course, understandable why those wishing to declare stereotypes inaccurate do not cite research demonstrating pervasive inaccuracy in stereotypes. That is because such research does not exist (Jussim, 2012a; Jussim et al., 2009; Oakes et al., 1994; Ryan, 2002). The real question is why do so many researchers make this claim either without citing anything in support, or citing articles that do not provide such support? Why do so many reviewers and editors allow them to do so? This reflects a pervasive double standard in social psychology, where it takes no evidence to justify declarations of stereotype inaccuracy and extraordinary amounts to justify declarations of stereotype accuracy.

Such behavior raises the possibility that, to at least some degree, the widespread conclusion in social psychology that stereotypes are inaccurate and irrational distortions is not merely an empirical claim, but, for some, a sacred moral value. Deeply held moral beliefs are often primarily intuitive and non-rational, and held with a conviction that not only does not need proof or evidence, but is impervious to both logic and data (Haidt, 2012; Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005). Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Green, & Lerner (2000, p. 854) define a *forbidden base-rate* as "... any statistical generalization that devoted Bayesians would not hesitate to use in their probability calculations but that deeply offends a religious or political community." Imbuing stereotype inaccuracy with such moral beliefs may help explain both the existence of a nearly field-wide blind spot to evidence of stereotype accuracy and why evidence of stereotype accuracy seems to offend some social psychologists (see Jussim, 2012a for a review bearing on both points).

How to Recognize and Avoid Double Standards

There are two simple solutions to avoiding double standards, and one perhaps less simple but probably more constructive for social psychology in the long term. First, if researchers are determined to reach some sort of conclusion in politicized topics, they should: 1) articulate, a priori, their grounds for reaching that conclusion; and then 2) apply those criteria to both their own and others' research

regardless of whether that research supports or contests liberal narratives. For example, one can declare cognitive ability tests to be invalid because they are supposedly culturally biased. In that case, use of them would invalidate research on stereotype accuracy that uses cognitive ability tests as criteria, just as much as it would invalidate research on self-fulfilling prophecies and stereotype threat that uses cognitive ability tests as criteria.

Second, conduct a turnabout test (Tetlock, 1994), which is, colloquially, putting the shoe on the other foot. If one can declare stereotypes *inaccurate* without citations, then one should be able to declare stereotypes *accurate* without citation. We suspect most scientists would object to this state of affairs, as do we ourselves.

Third, seek out collaborations, or at least input, from colleagues with different political values, or, at least, whose research challenges and contests the values and conclusions inherent in one's own research. In theory, this recommendation should apply equally well to scientists whose work supports or contests liberal narratives. In practice, however, the few social psychologists whose research contests those narratives can safely assume that their colleagues, either informally or formally (e.g., grant or journal reviewers and editors) will likely hold them accountable for unjustifiable claims. Scholarship that advances liberal narratives, however, is far less likely to benefit from this accountability process simply because there are far fewer social psychologists motivated to contest such narratives.

Blind Spots

We use the term “blind spot” to refer to the failure to recognize or acknowledge research that contests one's preferred views. Blind spots may be unintentional, and simply reflect lack of awareness or familiarity with an area of research. Blind spots can also be intentional—and may involve purposely ignoring areas of research inconsistent with one's preferred theoretical or political view. Blind spots are a common lay phenomenon (Haidt, 2012; Pronin, 2007), and a growing literature suggests they exist within the social sciences as well (e.g., Duarte et al., 2015; Ioannidis, 2012; Jussim et al., 2015; Redding, 2001). Ideally, social science works, in part, because Dr. X's blind spots differ from Dr. Y's blind spots, so that eventually valid conclusions emerge. However, a political monoculture risks leading to endemic blind spots, two of which are discussed next.

Overlooking Powerful Effects

To date, over 50 high quality studies of stereotype accuracy have been conducted by multiple independent research laboratories. They have examined stereotypes regarding a wide range of groups (including but not restricted to gender, racial, role, and political stereotypes), and a wide range of attributes (such as personality

characteristics, accomplishments, interests, and attitudes—see Jussim, 2012a; Jussim et al., 2009 for reviews; Jussim et al., in press).

Assessing stereotype accuracy is a complex issue beyond the scope of this chapter (see Jussim, 2012a; Jussim et al., 2009). One aspect of stereotype accuracy is correspondence—the correlation of stereotype beliefs with criteria. The average effect size in social psychology is about $r=.20$ (Richard, Bond, & Stokes-Zoota, 2003). Stereotype accuracy correlations for individual perceivers average about .50, and consensual stereotype accuracy correlations (between the mean of a group of perceivers' beliefs and criteria) average about $r=.80$, making stereotype accuracy correlations some of the largest and most replicable effects in all of social psychology.

Stereotypes as discrepancy scores (Judd & Park, 1993) are typically a mix of accurate and inaccurate (Jussim, 2012a). However, discrepancy scores do not readily translate into accuracy effect sizes, so it is not possible at this time to compare the degree of accuracy found in discrepancy scores to typical social psychological effect sizes. Of course, even such mixed findings do not support any general conclusion that stereotypes are inaccurate.

Researchers may have many reasons for not reviewing this evidence. They may be unaware of it or consider it uninteresting. Some prefer to emphasize other aspects of intergroup relations, especially those more obviously related to oppression. Regardless, the continued lack of acknowledgement of what is now an extensive literature demonstrating considerable accuracy in many stereotypes that have been assessed is a glaring and pervasive blind spot in social psychological perspectives on intergroup relations—which one can easily document by reading almost any broad review of intergroup relations published in almost any *Handbook of Social Psychology* or *Annual Review* chapter published in the last 40 years, as well as most other broad reviews.

Overlooking Failed Replications of Classic Bias and Self-Fulfilling Prophecy Studies

Some of the most classic studies in the psychology of intergroup relations and expectancy effects have proven difficult or impossible to replicate. Worse, the existence of failures to replicate has, apparently, gone largely unnoticed, so that both citation counts to the original, possibly irreplicable, studies continue to mount, as do uncritical and enthusiastic acceptance of the original studies' conclusions.

Perhaps the most extreme version of this is how one study of the role of stereotypes in person perception—which has so far proven both irreplicable and inconsistent with almost every other study ever conducted in this area—has captured the imagination of so many social psychologists. Darley and Gross (1983) performed a single study including 70 participants and found no evidence of stereotype bias in the absence of relevant individuating information, but

evidence of such bias in the presence of relevant individuating information. They interpreted this evidence as demonstrating that “stereotypes lead to their own confirmation”—an interpretation that bolsters liberal narratives of oppression by emphasizing the power of stereotypes to distort judgment. As of this writing, this paper has been cited over 800 times according to Google Scholar.

There are several problems, however, with imbuing this study with particular importance. First, Baron, Albright, and Malloy (1995) obtained the original stimulus materials and performed two exact attempts at replication. Both failed. Since 1996 (i.e., starting a year after the Baron et al. article was published), Darley and Gross (1983) has been cited over 600 times, whereas Baron et al. (1995) about 30 times. Since Baron et al.’s (1995) publication, nearly 600 papers have cited Darley and Gross (1983) without even mentioning Baron et al.’s (1995) failures to replicate.

Before concluding that this reflects a political blind spot, we first consider two alternative explanations. One possibility is that Darley and Gross (1983) was published in a higher impact journal (*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*) than was Baron et al. (1995), which was published in *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. Another possibility is that perhaps studies published first have an easier time lodging themselves in researchers’ understanding of some phenomena. First, we note that, even if one or both of these alternatives have merit, they *explain* the blind spot in nonpolitical ways, *but they do not explain it away*. This is still an almost complete failure to acknowledge the failed replications—a failure which, even if it does not *reflect* political bias, still risks producing overstated narratives of oppression.

Furthermore, both alternative explanations fail because, in fact, a study published before Darley and Gross (1983) found *the exact opposite pattern* and has been cited at only about 30% the rate of Darley and Gross (1983) since 1996. Locksley, Borgida, Brekke, and Hepburn (1980) were the first to investigate the role of stereotypes in person perception in the presence and absence of relevant individuating information. They found that, although stereotypes did influence judgments without relevant individuating information, there was no such effect in the presence of relevant individuating information. Like Darley and Gross (1983), this paper was published in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Thus, we can rule out both the “more prestigious journal” and “they have more citations because they got there first” explanations. Locksley et al. (1980) and Baron et al. (1995) essentially found that people engage in approximately rational stereotyping, relying on stereotypes when there is no other useful information, but jettisoning stereotypes in the presence of clear, relevant individuating information. Such a pattern, of course, implicitly contests narratives emphasizing the oppressive nature of stereotypes, whereas the conclusion that “stereotypes lead to their own confirmation” advances such narratives. And this, we suggest, explains the dramatic difference in citations.

This state of affairs is summarized in Table 8.1, which also makes clear that the “rational stereotyping” studies are based on combined samples of almost 500 participants, whereas Darley and Gross (1983) is based on a mere 70. By any scientific standard, the major conclusion justified by these studies is that people rely on stereotypes approximately rationally. And if one finds that surprising, that, we suggest, further attests to the power of liberal narratives to lead to an entrenched view that takes on a life of its own, independent of the field’s own data.

Second, most other studies of which we are aware that has manipulated the amount of individuating information (e.g., Krueger & Rothbart, 1988; Locksley et al., 1980; Locksley, Hepburn, & Ortiz, 1982; see Jussim, 2012a for a review) has found *the exact opposite pattern* as Darley and Gross (1983)—bias is most likely to occur when individuating information is minimal or absent, and often evaporates completely in the presence of clear and relevant individuating information. Although these studies are not exact replications, they are additional failed tests of the hypothesis that (other) stereotypes in other contexts “lead to their own confirmation” and provided additional support for the rational stereotyping hypothesis. None of these papers are cited at anything near the rate of Darley and Gross (1983).

This citation pattern highlights that the problem here is not Darley and Gross (1983), but the wider field of social psychology. It reveals a truly immense blind spot, especially if one considers the number of social psychologists involved in each post-1995 publication of Darley and Gross (1983)—the

TABLE 8.1 Comparison of three studies of stereotypes and person perception.

	Number of Studies	Number of Participants (Total)	Citations (Total; Since 1996)	Main Conclusion
Locksley et al. (1980)	2	325	415; 237	Individuating information readily eliminates stereotyping
Darley & Gross (1983)	1	70	886; 693	Stereotypes act as hypotheses that are tested in a biased manner and lead to their own false confirmation
Baron et al. (1995)	2	161	36; 34	Individuating information readily eliminates stereotyping; two failed exact replications of Darley & Gross (1983)

multiple authors involved in each paper, and the reviewers and editors who permitted it. It is, therefore, no overstatement to declare much of the field complicit in the undue elevation of the conclusion that “stereotypes lead to their own confirmation.”

Other “classics” of the expectancy-confirmation literature suffer from similar problems. For example, Snyder and Swann (1978) performed a series of studies they interpreted as demonstrating that people seek to confirm their social expectations. Unfortunately, however, Snyder and Swann (1978) gave people no option to ask *diagnostic* questions.

Asking diagnostic questions provides targets with maximal opportunity to either confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis, so that asking such questions reflects maximal fairness and rationality on the part of social perceivers and the lowest possible tendency to “seek confirmation.” The lack of such questions was, therefore, a major limitation to Snyder and Swann (1978). When people have been given the opportunity to ask diagnostic questions, they have overwhelmingly asked such questions (e.g., Devine, Hirt, & Gehrke, 1990; Trope & Bassok, 1982, 1983; see Jussim, 2012a for a review). Again, revealing a striking blind spot, Snyder and Swann (1978) has been cited more frequently than *all of these other papers combined*.

Although some effects have fared better than those found by Darley and Gross (1983) and Snyder and Swann (1978), many classics of the stereotype- and expectancy-confirmation literature (e.g., Duncan, 1976; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Snyder, Tanke, & Berscheid, 1977) suffer from replicating difficulties. These replication difficulties should, but rarely do, constrain social psychologists from making strong proclamations about the power of stereotype- and expectancy-confirmation biases, as the following examples illustrate:

[T]he literature has stressed the power of expectancies to shape perceptions and interpretations in their own image. (E. E. Jones, 1986, p. 42)

The thrust of dozens of experiments on the self-fulfilling prophecy and expectancy-confirmation processes, for example, is that erroneous impressions tend to be perpetuated rather than supplanted, because of the impressive extent to which people see what they want to see and act as others want them to act ... (Jost & Kruglanski, 2002, pp. 172-173)

If it is widely believed that the members of some group disproportionately possess some virtue or vice ... one is likely (in the absence of specific legal or social sanctions) to ... deprive or privilege group members in terms of opportunities to ... succeed or fail in accord with the beliefs and expectations that dictated their life chances. (Ross et al., 2010, p. 30)

How to Minimize Blind Spots

Intentional blind spots constitute blatant bias on the part of scholars, and we doubt anything can counter such bias except for a greater diversity of political and theoretical viewpoints in the field. Such diversity increases the chance of scientists being held accountable for such blatant bias during reviews of their papers and grants.

But what about unintentional blind spots? If one is unaware of a literature or failed replication, how can one acknowledge it? Here we offer a simple solution—focus on meta-analyses rather than individual studies, no matter how “classic” or how great a story that individual study makes in the retelling. Meta-analyses involving hundreds of studies and tens of thousands of participants (Kunda & Thagard, 1996; Mazella & Feingold, 1994; Swim, Borgida, Maruyama, & Myers, 1989) demonstrate that the Darley and Gross (1983) pattern of results was quite unusual: 1) Individuating information effects tend to be quite large, averaging about $r=.70$; and 2) Stereotype biases tend to be quite small, averaging about $r=.10$; and the more individuating information there is, the weaker stereotype bias effects.

If the Darley and Gross (1983) pattern of no bias in the absence of individuating information and bias in its presence means that “stereotypes lead to their own confirmation” (as they interpreted it), then doesn’t the opposite pattern indicated by meta-analyses mean that, in general, stereotypes *do not* lead to their own confirmation? Although meta-analyses are not beyond criticism, the burden shifts to researchers who wish to maintain the conclusion that “stereotypes lead to their own confirmation” to justify why they consider one study with 70 participants to be more informative, valid, and reliable than the conclusions based on meta-analyses of hundreds of studies and thousands of participants.

Embedded Values

Liberal values and assumptions can and have become embedded into the theories and methods driving certain areas of research in social psychology and other social sciences. Political values can become embedded into research questions, constructs, and measures, in ways that compromise the ability to answer those questions, the interpretation of those constructs, and the validity of those measures (Sniderman & Tetlock, 1986; Tetlock, 1994; Tetlock & Mitchell, 1993). In this article and elsewhere (Duarte et al., 2015; Jussim et al., 2015) we have described some of the ways that liberal values became embedded into social psychological theory and method. In this final section we focus on symbolic racism² (Kinder & Sears, 1981; Sears & Henry, 2005).

Brief Recap of the Symbolic Racism Controversies

Symbolic racism has proven to be a very controversial construct, as have been the questionnaires intended to measure it. We briefly review one of the key aspects of those controversies below (see Huddy & Feldman, 2009 for an excellent and even-handed full review).

Symbolic racism theories began to emerge in the 1970s and early 1980s, which suggested that because blatant racial discrimination had become illegal and blatant expressions of racism had become stigmatized, racism went “underground” (e.g., Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976). Supposedly, social desirability concerns have caused people to mask their expressions of racism so that it is now expressed in more subtle and covert ways. Specifically, anti-black affect is masked by support for traditional values typically associated with the Protestant Work Ethic: hard work, individualism, personal responsibility, delayed gratification, and sexual repression (Sears & Henry, 2005). Symbolic racism is associated with opposition to busing and affirmative action, beliefs that discrimination is no longer an obstacle for Blacks, that Blacks demand too much from the government, and that Blacks have received more than they deserve from the government (Kinder & Sanders, 1996; Kinder & Sears, 1981; Sears & Henry, 2003; Sears, Hensler, & Speer, 1979; Sears, van Laar, Carrillo, & Kosterman, 1997). It is also associated with negative evaluations of and opposition to Black candidates at the mayoral and presidential levels (Kinder & Sears, 1981; Sears, Lau, Tyler, & Allen Jr., 1980; Sears et al., 1997).

The concept and measurement of symbolic racism, however, have proven controversial (e.g., Sniderman, Piazza, Tetlock, & Kendrick, 1991; Sniderman & Tetlock, 1986). And one of the main bones of contention is that common measures of symbolic racism tap fundamental principles of conservatism. If one is a racist, one will probably oppose affirmative action, busing to achieve integration in schools, and all sorts of social welfare programs. However, one can oppose those programs, not because one is a racist, but because one opposes such government interventions and programs on principle.

The Embedding of Liberal Values in Symbolic Racism Measures?

In short, in addition to partially capturing racism, measures of symbolic racism may have also at least partially captured political ideology. Given that measures of symbolic racism often refer to government policies, they may also partially capture *political prejudice*. Liberals have generally supported government interventions such as affirmative action, busing, and welfare programs. It remains possible that failing to understand or accept conservative principles of individualism, personal responsibility, and meritocracy led to the presumption among (overwhelmingly liberal) social psychologists that opposition to such programs must ipso facto reflect subtle hostility directed toward Blacks.

Disliking liberal policies often goes hand in hand with disliking of and intolerance toward liberals (Brandt et al., 2014). Such an analysis raises the possibility that various symbolic racism scales have been embedded with liberal values that indict conservatives for racism, when, at least sometimes, conservative responses reflect, not racism, but opposition to liberal policies and/or dislike of liberals. Feldman and Huddy (2005, p. 170) summarized this critique extremely well:

Consider the third item in the resentment scale that suggests that if Blacks tried harder they could be just as well off as Whites. A strong individualist would agree with this statement; they would also agree with any other statement that referred to the positive effects of hard work, regardless of the target person's race, gender, or other characteristics. As noted above, Kinder and Sanders (1996) believe that individualism has become entwined with racism so that agreement with the notion that Blacks are unwilling to work hard is a form of racism. But this leaves no room for the expression of general, nonracist individualism.

Symbolic Racism Predicts Generalized Hostility to Social Programs among Conservatives

Consistent with this general perspective, Feldman and Huddy (2005) found that, among conservatives, symbolic racism measures predicted opposition to a scholarship program for both Blacks and Whites. This pattern is clearly inconsistent with the idea that symbolic racism captured racism among conservatives. If it did, it should have predicted greater opposition to the program for Blacks than for Whites. Because it predicted both similarly for conservatives, the scale appeared to capture ideological opposition to social programs more than racism, a result consistent with Chambers et al.'s 2013 findings (described previously) showing that dislike of liberals, rather than racism, explains conservatives' dislikes of African-Americans.

Liberal Symbolic Racism is Racism

Feldman and Huddy (2005) also found that symbolic racism did uniquely predict opposition to the program for Blacks among liberals. That is, liberals high on symbolic racism opposed the program for Blacks more than they opposed the other social programs. Is symbolic racism primarily a phenomenon among liberals? Perhaps. In contrast to conservatives, liberals do not generally hold values that would lead to objections to social programs writ large. Therefore, higher levels of resentment of social programs intended to help Blacks may indeed reflect racism among liberals, even if it does not, or does so more weakly, among conservatives.

Have Embedded Values Reduced the Predictive Validity of Subtle Measures of Racism?

If modern measures of subtle prejudice, such as symbolic racism, are unintentionally measuring political ideology and political prejudice either instead of or in addition to racism, their predictive validity for discriminatory behavior might be compromised. Indeed, meta-analytic evidence shows that the predictive validity of modern questionnaire measures (post-2000) intending to assess subtle forms of racism correlate only $r=.12$ with anti-Black discrimination (Oswald, Mitchell, Blanton, Jaccard, & Tetlock, 2013). This predictive validity is considerably lower than that found in meta-analyses of research on the prejudice–discrimination link conducted mostly before 1980 ($r=.24$). There are many possible explanations for this difference, most of which are beyond the scope of this chapter. Nonetheless, one possibility is that modern measures poorly predict discrimination because, consistent with our embedded values analysis, they are diluted by ideological content, whereas the earlier research relied on blunter, clearer, and less ideologically confounded measures of racial prejudice.

One alternative possibility is simply that behavioral prediction is generally difficult. This, however, is unlikely to explain the low predictive validity of symbolic racism measures for discrimination. Social psychological effects on other behaviors, such as aggression ($r=.24$), helping ($r=.18$), and nonverbal communication ($r=.22$), are often higher (Richard et al., 2003). Issues of unintentional ideological confounding do not arise as readily when predicting aggression, helping, and nonverbal behavior, thereby providing additional, albeit indirect, evidence that something is amiss with modern explicit measures of prejudice.

One argument against such a conclusion is that racism has gone so far underground that only measures that are outside of conscious awareness, such as the IAT, can successfully capture racial prejudice. Indeed, this seemed to be the conclusion that emerged from a relatively early meta-analysis of the ability of the IAT to predict racial discrimination, which found that effect size to be $r=.24$ (Greenwald, Poehlman, Uhlmann, & Banaji, 2009). However, after uncovering and correcting for some very basic errors (including, among others, one confession of fraudulent data and another that the wrong sign had been attached to an IAT–discrimination correlation), a re-analysis of the same studies yielded an effect size of only $r=.15$ (Oswald et al., 2013; see especially their online supplementary materials, which provide details about the source of errors). Thus, an argument that implicit measures would much more strongly predict discrimination is not supported by these data (explaining why the IAT–discrimination links are so low is also beyond the scope of this chapter, but see Blanton and Jaccard, 2008 for a detailed analysis of limitations to the IAT).

It is also worth noting that the pattern of errors uncovered by Oswald et al. (2013) is consistent with a major theme of the present chapter. Specifically, nearly

all of those blatant errors were in the direction of overestimating the size of the IAT–discrimination relationship, thereby overestimating scientific support for conclusions emphasizing the supposed power of implicit and unconscious prejudices to produce discrimination.

How to Recognize and Avoid Embedded Values Biases

Again, a simple, easily applied test is to conduct a turnabout test (Tetlock, 1994). Imagine a counterfactual social psychology field in which conservative political views were treated as “scientific facts” and disagreements with conservative views treated as errors or prejudice. Would a belief that evangelicals have gone too far in their political activities constitute “symbolic religious prejudice”? Embedding ideological values into measures is dangerous to science.

The more difficult solution is to increase the ideological diversity of social psychology. The best solution to scientific blind spots and unintentional distortions are the presence of other scientists who hold *different* blind spots and different values. Furthermore, people are generally much better at spotting biases in *other people* than in themselves (e.g., Haidt, 2012; Pronin, 2008). If there are more social psychologists who do not subscribe to liberal values and worldviews, and who do not suffer liberal blind spots, then blind spots and distortions are more likely to be recognized and rectified earlier, before they unjustifiably become part of the field’s entrenched “knowledge.”

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed evidence regarding three primary issues: 1) the seemingly extreme left-wing ideological homogeneity among social psychologists; 2) the role of hostile environment and political prejudice in contributing to that ideological homogeneity; and 3) QIPs that threaten the validity of social psychological science. Space considerations necessarily limited our ability to review QIPs here. Additional examples in the realm of intergroup relations and self-fulfilling prophecies (Duarte et al., 2015; Jussim, 2012a) and political psychology (Jussim et al., 2014) can be found elsewhere.

In our view, the most important threats posed by political homogeneity and discrimination are to creating a robust, valid, and generalizable social psychology. Nonetheless, regardless of researchers’ personal ideological beliefs, there are many steps they can take to reduce the effects of political biases and QIPs on their conclusions (see Duarte et al., 2015; Jussim et al., 2015 for additional recommendations). We hope most choose to take those steps.

Notes

- 1 We thank Yoel Inbar for providing the raw data on which Inbar and Lammers (2012) was based.
- 2 The theoretical perspectives of symbolic racism, modern racism (McConahay, 1986), and racial resentment (Kinder & Sanders, 1996) have been operationalized similarly and are not strongly distinguished from each other (Sears & Henry, 2005). In the current chapter we collectively refer to these approaches as the symbolic racism perspective.

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9

POLITICAL DIVERSITY IN
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Problems and Solutions

Yoel Inbar and Joris Lammers

Is there a political diversity problem in social psychology? We believe that the answer is “yes.” In what follows, we will try to convince you (assuming that you are part of the politically liberal majority of social psychologists) that social¹ psychology has a remarkable lack of political diversity; that this is harmful to individual scientists, to the validity of our research, and to our credibility as a field; and that we can and should do better.

Social Psychology's Political Diversity Problem

If you are a social psychologist, you probably consider yourself politically liberal (i.e., left-wing). You probably voted for Barack Obama, not Mitt Romney, in the last Presidential election (assuming that you are American). You probably believe that your government should spend more on social welfare programs, intervene to promote the interests of women and racial minorities, and tax the wealthy more heavily. We claim that in this respect, you are much like the majority of your colleagues.

We are, of course, not the first to make this claim. For decades, critics have argued that social psychologists are overwhelmingly politically liberal (Duarte et al., in press; Haidt, 2011; Redding, 2001; Tetlock, 1994). A recent example is a provocative talk given by Jonathan Haidt at the 2011 annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP; APA Division 8). During his talk, Haidt asked any conservatives in the audience to raise their hands. In an audience of more than a thousand, only three hands went up. Haidt also described two other attempts he had made to locate conservatives in social psychology: a web search for “conservative social psychologist,” and asking 30 social psychologists to name a conservative colleague. Combined, these latter two