Lecture Outline
Being the Target of Prejudice

Stereotype Threat
Positive Prejudice

How Prejudice Affects Targets

Stereotype Threat

Consequences of positive prejudice

Stereotype Threat

Premise:
Stigmatized groups are aware of negative stereotypes

This awareness produces “stereotype threat”........

Stereotype Threat

Definition:
Fear that one will be viewed or treated in way consistent with stereotype, or that one will confirm the stereotype
**Stereotype Threat**

Stereotype threat is situationally induced

Arises when target realizes that negative stereotype can explain their behavior or attributes

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**Stereotype Threat Study**

*Steele & Aronson (Study 1, 1995)*

**Purpose:** Test theory of stereotype threat with respect to achievement test performance.

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**Participants:**
- African American
- White

**Procedure:**
- Completed a 30 V-SAT items

**Manipulation:**
- Valid test
- Invalid test (laboratory exercise)

**DV:** number correct on test
**Stereotype Threat Study**  
Steele & Aronson (Study 1, 1995)

### Purpose:
Examined whether stereotyped targets distance themselves from the stereotype when stereotype threat is activated.

![Bar chart showing test scores for African Americans and Whites under valid and invalid test conditions.](chart)

**Distancing Study**  
Steele & Aronson (Study 2, 1995)

### Distancing Study
Steele & Aronson (Study 2, 1995)

### Participants:
- African American
- White

Expected to complete V-SAT items

Rated self-preferences:
- Music: jazz, rap music, classical
- Sports: baseball, basketball, boxing
- Traits: extroverted, aggressive, humorous

Never actually took test
**Distancing Study**  
Steele & Aronson (Study 2, 1995)

**Manipulation:**
- Valid test
- Invalid test (laboratory exercise)

**DV:**
- Extent to which participant rated self consistent with African American stereotype

**Affirmative Action**

**Designed to:**

"overcome the discriminating effect of past or present practices, policies, or other barriers to equal employment opportunity" (EEOC, 1970)

**Affirmative Action**

**EEOC's statement:**

Says that group membership should be explicitly taken into account in hiring decisions

Unspoken assumption that non-discrimination not sufficient to counteract consequences of prejudice and inequality
Untended Consequences of Positive Prejudice

Affirmative action designed to help minorities and underrepresented groups, but could it unintentionally undermine their self-views and job performance.

Affirmative Action Study 1
Heilman, Simon, & Repper (1987)

Purpose:
Examine whether affirmative action damages the self-views of those who benefit from it.

Prediction:
Women who believe they are preferentially selected have less confidence in their ability than those who believe they are selected on merit.

Affirmative Action Study 1
Heilman et al. (1987)

Procedure:
1. Paired with opposite sex confederate
2. Task described; leader more important
3. Answered items assessing ability for leadership role
4. Manipulation occurred........
Affirmative Action Study 1
Heilman et al. (1987)

Manipulation

Merit:
- test scored
- script read
- participant selected on merit

Preference:
- test not scored
- script read
- participant selected on basis of gender

Procedure continued:
5. Performed task
6. Rated self on:
- task performance
- leadership ability
- desire to persist as leader in task 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Leadership ability</th>
<th>Persist as leader</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>5.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>6.59</td>
<td>5.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>6.71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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Men: Selection basis did not influence men's perceptions of performance, leadership ability, or desire to persist as leader.

Women: Selection basis did influence women. Lower perceived performance, and ability, and less desire to remain as leader when preferentially selected. No different from men in merit condition.

Affirmative Action Study 2
Heilman, Rivero, & Brette (1991)

Purpose:
Examine if preferential selection causes women to select easier tasks
Affirmative Action Study 2
Heilman et al. (1991)

Tasks:
- Financial service manager
- Subordinate

Procedures:
- Test assessed managerial skills

Manipulation:
- Merit or preference based selection

Participants then indicated which of two tasks they would most like to do
- Easy task
- Difficult task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Selecting Difficult Task</th>
<th>% Selecting Easy Task</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53%</td>
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</table>

Men: Chose difficult task more often regardless of selection basis

Women: Selection did influence task choice. Women selected easy task more often when preferentially selected. No different from men in merit condition.

Conclusion:
Preferential selection reduces confidence
Preferential selection causes people to select less challenging tasks at work
Affirmative Action: Good or Bad?

Does Affirmative Action always have unintended negative consequences?

No.

When it is based on merit and group membership, many of the bad effects it creates disappear.