Proneness to Prejudiced Responses: Toward Understanding the Authenticity of Self-Reported Discrepancies

Margo J. Monteith and Corrine I. Voils
University of Kentucky

Three studies investigated the authenticity of prejudice-related discrepancies. A comprehensive discrepancy questionnaire was developed (Study 1), which yielded small as well as large discrepancy scores. Study 2 indicated that discrepancy scores were stable, and personality could not account for the relation between discrepancies and their affective consequences. In Study 3, low-prejudice participants responded to jokes about Blacks under high or low distraction. Behavioral validation for self-reported discrepancies was found, such that participants with larger discrepancies evaluated the jokes more favorably under high than low distraction, but participants with smaller discrepancies provided equally unfavorable evaluations in both distraction conditions. Implications for understanding people’s abilities to avoid potentially prejudiced responses and their self-insight into such abilities are discussed.

Although many people profess that they do not harbor prejudice, some of these individuals’ actual responses belie their seemingly good intentions. This is particularly true when people’s self-reported low-prejudice attitudes are compared with subtle, spontaneous measures of prejudice (Dovidio, Kawakami, Johnson, Johnson, & Howard, 1997; Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995) and when prejudiced responses are assessed while participants’ attentional resources are restricted (Gilbert & Hixon, 1991; Pratto & Bargh, 1991). Various explanations have been advanced to account for the inconsistencies between people’s self-reported attitudes and their actual responses. One argument is that people purposefully distort their self-reported attitudes to conceal their true prejudices because prejudice is generally socially unacceptable (Crosby, Bromley, & Saxe, 1980). Another argument is that people truly do hold egalitarian beliefs but also harbor deep-seated prejudices that they are unwilling to recognize consciously (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986). Finally, the rapidly growing body of literature on implicit attitudes suggests that people often are unaware of the influence of prior experiences (e.g., those that make stereotypes highly accessible) on their reactions to members of stereotyped groups (Banaji & Greenwald, 1995; Banaji, Hardin, & Rothman, 1993; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). This research suggests that people may genuinely endorse nonprejudiced attitudes at the conscious level and not suspect that they hold stereotypical biases at the same time.

Each of these analyses suggest that people either will not or cannot provide explicit reports that correspond to their actual, prejudiced responses. However, perhaps explicit measures can have greater predictive utility if they are designed to assess the prejudice-related inconsistencies to which people are prone. If asked, people may have the self-insight necessary and be forthcoming enough to provide explicit reports indicative of their propensity for engaging in prejudiced responses.

The possibility that people are aware of and willing to report such inconsistencies has been the basis of recent research investigating prejudice-related discrepancies. This research follows from Devine’s (1989) analysis of the automatic and controlled components of stereotyping and prejudice, which suggested that low-prejudice people (i.e., according to explicit reports on attitudinal questionnaires) may be prone to a conflict between their consciously endorsed nonprejudiced beliefs and their persisting stereotypical responses. A variety of studies have documented that many people do, in fact, report that they sometimes respond with greater prejudice than they believe is appropriate (Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Monteith, 1996a, 1996b; Monteith, Devine, & Zuwerink, 1993; Zuwerink, Monteith, Devine, & Cook, 1996). In these studies, participants were asked to imagine themselves in five situations involving members of the stereotyped group. For each situation, participants indicated the extent to which they should have a prejudiced response (e.g., thinking “how typical” upon seeing a young Black woman with several small children) and the extent to which they actually would have such a response. If participants reported that they would respond with greater prejudice than their personal standards suggested was appropriate, they were said to be prone to prejudice-related discrepancies. This research revealed that many low-prejudice individuals report discrepancies and some do not (i.e., some low-prejudice individuals report that they should and would respond in low-prejudice
ways). Furthermore, discrepancy-related research has revealed that low-prejudice individuals experience negative self-directed affect (e.g., guilt and self-criticism) when they realize their actual responses are more prejudiced than their personal standards suggest is appropriate (e.g., Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, 1993; Monteith et al., 1993).

These findings indicated that low-prejudice individuals’ explicit reports point to different levels of perceived success at avoiding prejudiced responses. However, as explained below, there are a number of reasons why past research is not sufficient to establish that self-reported discrepancies are indicative of actual differences in the likelihood of engaging in prejudiced responses. Thus, the primary aim of the present research was to investigate the authenticity of self-reported discrepancies.

Focus of the Present Research

Four characteristics of previous research prevent us from making inferences about the authenticity of self-reported discrepancies. First, previous research has measured discrepancies across only five situations, because the primary aim has been to assess the affective consequences of activating discrepancies rather than people’s general proneness to discrepancies. However, a five-item scale is unlikely to assess people’s general proneness to discrepancies. For example, perhaps people who report that they are not prone to discrepancies in the five situations represented on the discrepancy questionnaire would be prone to discrepancies in other situations. Given this concern, we developed a more extensive discrepancy scale for the present research and examined its properties across four samples. By way of validating the newly developed scale, we also investigated whether activating discrepancies through the completion of this scale resulted in the same affective consequences observed in past research.

Second, previous discrepancy research has not examined the extent to which self-reported discrepancies provided at one time correspond to self-reported discrepancies provided at a later time. If self-reported discrepancies are indicative of people’s actual degree of ability to control their prejudiced responses, there should be stability in the level of self-reported discrepancies across relatively short periods of time. The alternative possibility is that self-reported discrepancies are more a reflection of the effect of situational factors (e.g., current mood state). Given the importance of establishing that discrepancies do not fluctuate across short time periods, we examined the stability of scores on our newly developed discrepancy scale.

Third, previous research has not examined whether self-reported discrepancies reflect personality-related sensitivities to the types of items and situations described in the discrepancy questionnaire or people’s actual ability to avoid prejudiced responses. This seems to be a significant omission, indeed. Whenever one is dealing with socially sensitive topics that require either self-insight or sensitivity to others, the possibility that personality inspires particular response patterns is important to examine. To the extent that certain personality characteristics encourage particular sensitivities to the discrepancy items and, therefore, particular response patterns on the discrepancy questionnaire, people may appear to have different levels of proneness to discrepancies even if they actually do not differ in their proneness.

The present research examined the role of personality in two ways. For one, it investigated whether discrepancies are related to a variety of personality characteristics that may encourage particular response patterns on the discrepancy questionnaire. If present, personality-discrepancy relations could reflect either a response bias or a more substantive relation. For example, people who are socially anxious (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975) may be more prone to violating their low-prejudice personal standards. This is because anxiety taxes cognitive capacity (e.g., Wilder & Shapiro, 1989), and a depletion of cognitive resources increases people’s reliance on stereotypes (Bodenhausen & Lichtenstein, 1987; Gilbert & Hixon, 1991; Kruglanski & Freund, 1983; Pratto & Bargh, 1991). Moderate relations of this nature are to be expected with some personality characteristics.

The other, and arguably more important, question investigated is whether such sensitivities are responsible for what has been assumed to be the natural consequences of activating discrepancies. For example, certain sensitivities may lead individuals to report not only a strong proneness to discrepancies but also strong feelings of guilt. If this is the case, significant relations between self-reported discrepancies and guilt would be an artifact of idiosyncratic reporting tendencies rather than a reflection of people’s actual proneness to discrepancies and experience of discrepancy-associated guilt. We investigated whether personality posed a third-variable problem in this way by examining the relation between self-reported discrepancies and affective consequences while statistically controlling for personality variables that were significantly related to discrepancies.

The fourth and perhaps most important reason why previous research does not speak to the accuracy of discrepancies is that it has not examined the relation between these self-reports and actual behavior. Although people may have the self-insight necessary to accurately detect their discrepant responses and may be forthcoming enough to report them on the discrepancy questionnaire, alternative possibilities must also be entertained. Most important, what people imagine they would do when completing the discrepancy questionnaire may not be what they actually do. This may be particularly true for people who report that they are not prone to discrepancies. On the one hand, the assertion of some people that they effectively and consistently avoid prejudiced responses seems rather remarkable in light of the considerable literature demonstrating the ease with which stereotypes are activated and applied (Banaji & Greenwald, 1995; Banaji, Hardin, & Rothman, 1993; Blair & Banaji, 1996; Devine, 1989; Dovidio, Evans, & Tyler, 1986; Gilbert & Hixon, 1991; Macrae, Milne, & Bodenhausen, 1994; Perdue, Dovidio, Gurzman, & Tyler, 1990; Pratto & Bargh, 1991). Perhaps people who report no discrepancies underestimate their own susceptibility to stereotypical biases or overestimate their ability to control (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977; Wilson & Brekke, 1994). Or, these people may know full well that prejudice is socially unacceptable, and they may simply be reluctant to admit that they sometimes have prejudiced responses (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986). On the other hand, some research has indicated that people may be able to learn to control stereotypical responses (Blair & Banaji, 1996;
types may not be automatically activated among low-prejudice individuals (Lepore & Brown, 1997; Locke, MacLeod, & Walker, 1994; Wittenbrink, Judd, & Park, 1997). Thus, low-prejudiced individuals who report that they are not prone to discrepancies may, in fact, be highly effective at avoiding prejudiced responses.

To investigate the relation between self-reported discrepancies and actual behavior, we presented participants in the present research with a situation in which they could generate preju-
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Study 1

One goal of Study 1 was to develop a comprehensive discrepancy scale to assess discrepancies in across 4 samples, the degree of inconsistency between people's actual responses and their personal standards. We felt that by assessing discrepancies across a broad range of situations, we could achieve a better understanding of people's general propensity to report discrepant responses than was possible with the five-item discrepancy scale used in past research. A second goal was to examine the relation between self-reported discrepancies and a variety of personality characteristics.

Method

Participants

Four separate samples of participants were included in the study. All participants were non-Black undergraduate male and female students who completed the questionnaires for research credit. Participants in Samples 1 (N = 135) and 2 (N = 403) were from the University of Kentucky. Participants in Sample 3 (N = 71) were from Duke University, and participants in Sample 4 (N = 161) were from the University of Wisconsin—Madison.¹

Procedure

The materials were administered to Sample 1 participants in small testing sessions consisting of no more than 15 participants. Participants in Samples 2, 3, and 4 completed the materials during mass-testing sessions that took place at the beginning of the semester. All participants were encouraged to respond openly and honestly, and they were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and could not be linked to them in any way.

All participants completed a 40-item discrepancy questionnaire. The first section consisted of 20 should items (i.e., concerning how participants believed they should respond in a variety of situations involving Blacks). Participants were instructed to rate their level of agreement with each item on scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) and to do so according to their personal beliefs about how they should react to Blacks. The second section consisted of 20 would items. These items were constructed such that each one was intended to correspond with a should item. However, to minimize the possibility that participants would consciously attempt to compare or match their should and would responses, the would items appeared in a random order different from that of the should items. Ratings for the would items were also made on scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Participants were instructed to rate these items on the basis of how they actually would respond in the given situations, regardless of how they thought they should respond.

All participants except those in Sample 4 also completed additional personality measures. Sample 1 participants completed the Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960; α = .79), the Public and Private Self-Consciousness Scale (which yields Social Anxiety [α = .78] subscale scores as well as Public [α = .86] and Private [α = .75] Self-Consciousness subscale scores; Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975), and Self-Monitoring Scale (Snyder, 1987; α = .67). The Social Desirability Scale measures one's need to secure approval from others by responding in a culturally and socially acceptable manner (e.g., "I have never intensely disliked anyone"). The Public Self-Consciousness subscale taps into one's realization of oneself as a social stimulus (e.g., "I'm concerned about the way I present myself"). The Private Self-Consciousness subscale deals with pondering the self (e.g., "I reflect about myself a lot"), and the Social Anxiety subscale deals with anxiety experienced in social situations (e.g., "I feel anxious when I speak in front of a group"). Finally, the Self-Monitoring Scale reflects whether people change their behavior to adapt to different situations (e.g., "In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons"). Two hundred randomly selected participants from Sample 2 completed the Desirability of Control Scale (Burger & Cooper, 1979; α = .77) and the guilt index from Buss and Darke's Hostility-Guilt Inventory (1957; α = .68). The Desirability of Control Scale measures one's motivation to control the events in one's life (e.g., "I prefer a job where I have a lot of control over what I do and when I do it"), and the guilt index of the Hostility-Guilt Inventory deals with guilt experienced over being bad, having done wrong, or having a guilty conscience (e.g., "When I do wrong, my conscience punishes me severely"). Another 189 participants from Sample 2 completed the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975) for assessing Introversion—Extraversion (e.g., "Are you a talkative person?"; α = .85) and Neuroticism (e.g., "Would you call yourself a nervous person?"; α = .83). Participants from Sample 3 completed

¹ We thank Patricia Linnville, Patricia Devine, and Ashley Plant for their help with data collection at Duke University and the University of Wisconsin—Madison.
the Motivation to Control Prejudice Scale (Dunton & Fazio, 1997; \( \alpha = .86 \)), which concerns the extent to which people desire to control their prejudiced reactions (e.g., “If I have a prejudiced thought or feeling, I keep it to myself”).

Results and Discussion

Discrepancy Questionnaire

Because initial analyses revealed that gender was not associated with any significant effects, this variable was excluded from subsequent analyses. The should and would items were reverse-scored as necessary so that higher numbers always reflected greater prejudice. Then each should item was subtracted from the corresponding would item to create discrepancy scores. Should, would, and discrepancy scores were examined to identify the items on which participants performed poorly, judging on the basis of low correlations with other items, restricted ranges, or frequent negative discrepancy scores (i.e., with the should rating being more prejudiced than the would rating). Four should and corresponding would items were eliminated from the discrepancy scale, leaving the 32 items shown in the Appendix.2

Total discrepancy scores were computed by subtracting each should item from the corresponding would item and adding the 16 difference scores together. Also, the should items were summed to form an index, as were the would items. The reliabilities of these indexes did not differ appreciably across the four samples (see Table 1). The reliabilities for the discrepancy index were lower than for the should and would indexes; however, an attenuation of reliability can be expected whenever an index is composed of difference scores (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991).3

Table 1 also provides descriptive information for the discrepancy, should, and would indexes. The mean should scores were comparable across samples, but there was a main effect for sample for both the would and discrepancy scores, \( F(2, 763) = 7.96, p < .001 \), and \( F(3, 762) = 10.44, p < .001 \), respectively. Post hoc tests using Fisher’s least significant difference tests revealed that Sample 4 had significantly smaller would and discrepancy scores than each of the other samples (\( ps < .001 \)). Only speculations can be offered as interpretations. For example, perhaps because a majority of the participants in Sample 4 were from the Midwest (historically, a less overtly prejudiced environment than found in the other samples), they are actually less likely to behave in prejudiced ways, resulting in smaller would and discrepancy scores.

A primary reason for developing this more comprehensive discrepancy scale was to ensure that conclusions about people’s general proneness to discrepancies would not be different from conclusions based on the shorter discrepancy scale used in past research. Of particular concern was the possibility that once a greater number of situations were represented on the discrepancy questionnaire, few individuals would have small discrepancy scores. The distribution of discrepancy scores indicated that this was not the case. For example, approximately 13% of the participants had very small discrep-

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>( \alpha )</th>
<th>( M )</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>( \alpha )</th>
<th>( M )</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>( \alpha )</th>
<th>( M )</th>
<th>SD</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (UK)</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>15.83</td>
<td>11.83</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>31.31</td>
<td>15.57</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>47.14</td>
<td>18.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 (UK)</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>17.25</td>
<td>11.34</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>29.52</td>
<td>11.98</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>47.30</td>
<td>16.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Duke)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>18.67</td>
<td>10.61</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>29.99</td>
<td>10.97</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>49.89</td>
<td>14.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (UW)</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>12.24</td>
<td>9.72</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>28.43</td>
<td>11.08</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>40.60</td>
<td>12.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \( \alpha = \) Cronbach’s alpha. UK = University of Kentucky; Duke = Duke University; UW = University of Wisconsin—Madison.

2 When the 32 discrepancy items were submitted to principal-components analysis, using data from all four samples, four factors were found (identical results were obtained with varimax and oblimin rotations). Factor 1 consisted of items concerning the experience of stereotypical thoughts and feelings (Items 3, 6, 10, 12, and 16 on the should scale). Factor 2 items were related to reactions to interracial interactions (Items 1, 2, 5, 7, and 8 on the should scale). Factor 3 items concerned reactions to interracial relationships and living (Items 4, 9, 11, and 15 on the should scale). Factor 4 included two items (Items 13 and 14) and is not easily interpreted. These findings suggest that the discrepancy scale is multidimensional and raise the question as to whether the different factors are differentially related to personality or have different affective consequences. Thus, we examined the correlations between the various factors and (a) the personality measures used in Study 1 and (b) the affect measures reported in Study 2. The patterns of correlations were highly consistent across the different factors.

3 Because of the restricted reliability of measures based on difference scores, one might favor a different data analytic approach. In our view, the alternative that comes closest to capturing what is of theoretical interest (i.e., the extent to which people’s actual responses are more prejudiced than their personal standards suggest is appropriate) involves computing residual scores. Specifically, participants’ would scores can be predicted using their should scores, and the residual variance can be standardized, saved, and then used in subsequent analyses instead of difference scores. We reanalyzed the data from each of the studies reported herein using this procedure and obtained the same findings. Neither the direction nor the significance of any of the effects differed. Thus, the relatively low reliability of our discrepancy measure did not compromise our findings in any way.
Table 2
Correlations Between Personality Measures and Scores on the Discrepancy, Should, and Would Indexes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Personality measure</th>
<th>Discrepancy index</th>
<th>Should index</th>
<th>Would index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Self-monitoring</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Desire for control</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>Introversion/extroversion</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Private self-consciousness</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Guilt inventory</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>Motivation to control prejudice</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Public self-consciousness</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Social anxiety</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.28**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Social desirability</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td>-.46**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Samples 1 and 2 were from the University of Kentucky; Sample 3 was from Duke University. *p = .059. **p < .001.

Table 2 shows the correlations between discrepancy, should, and would scores and the various personality measures. Discrepancy proneness clearly bears little relation to tendencies to monitor and alter one's behavior depending on one's social environment (i.e., self-monitoring) or to one's desire to exert control in various situations. Discrepancy scores also were not related to introversion, extraversion, or private self-consciousness. In addition, proneness to discrepancies was not related to general proneness to experiencing guilt or worry (i.e., neuroticism). Finally, although there was a tendency for discrepancies to be related to Dunton and Fazio's (1997) Motivation to Control Prejudice Scale, this relation was not significant (p < .12).

Thus, people who are prone to responding with greater prejudice than they deem appropriate are not merely unmotivated to control their prejudice.

In contrast, discrepancy scores were positively correlated with public self-consciousness and social anxiety. Two alternative explanations for these correlations can be advanced. First, people who have a heightened awareness of how others are perceiving them or who experience social anxiety actually may be more prone to the use of stereotypes (see the introduction to this article). Second, these personality tendencies may cause people to realize that they are prone to discrepant responses, although they may not actually be any more prone to discrepancies than other individuals. Therefore, the correlations may be more indicative of reporting biases than of the effect of personality on actual proneness to discrepancies. Consistent with both of these possibilities, public self-consciousness and social anxiety scores (of 5 or less), and 28% had relatively small scores (of 10 or less).4

In addition to assessing people's general proneness to discrepancies, the more comprehensive discrepancy scale has two other advantages. First, because items that tended to yield negative discrepancy scores (i.e., more prejudiced should than would scores) were eliminated, the proportion of negative discrepancy scores is minimized. For example, only 4% of the participants in this study had negative discrepancy scores. In comparison, between 7% and 10% of participants had negative discrepancy scores in previous studies that used shorter discrepancy scales. Discrepancy-related research has typically focused on understanding the effects of positive discrepancies; in fact, negative discrepancies have been routinely discarded from data sets in past research (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, 1996a, 1996b; Zuwerink et al., 1996; see Monteith et al., 1993, for analyses involving negative discrepancy scores). Thus, the newly developed scale may be preferred in future research that examines positive discrepancies. Second, the more comprehensive discrepancy scale yields a greater range of discrepancy scores. Researchers interested in preselecting individuals on the basis of their proneness to discrepancies may prefer the more comprehensive scale, given its greater sensitivity to the extent to which people are prone to discrepancies.

Relation Between Discrepancy Scores and Personality Measures

4 Of course, small discrepancy scores may occur among high-prejudice individuals (who maintain that they should and would respond in prejudiced ways) as well as low-prejudice individuals (who maintain that they should not and would not respond in prejudiced ways). Because our primary emphasis in the present research is on individuals who hold low-prejudice attitudes, we conducted additional analyses to ensure that small discrepancies occur with some frequency among these individuals. Specifically, participants in Samples 1 and 2 also completed the Attitudes Toward Blacks (ATB) scale (Brigham, 1993). Examination of the frequency distribution of discrepancy scores for participants who had relatively low-prejudice scores (i.e., scoring in the lower third of the possible range of ATB scores) revealed a pattern that mirrored the findings for the entire sample. Fourteen percent of the participants had discrepancy scores between 0 and 5, and 31% of the participants had discrepancy scores between 0 and 10.

5 Dunton and Fazio (1997) identified two dimensions related to the motivation to control prejudice. One dimension involved a personal concern with acting prejudiced, and the other involved a restraint from acting prejudiced to avoid disputes with others. We formed indexes to reflect these dimensions and examined their relation with discrepancy, should, and would scores. Correlational analyses revealed just one significant effect: As the personal concern with acting prejudiced increased, participants' should scores became less prejudiced, r(71) = -.38, p = .001.
were positively correlated with \textit{would} scores but not with \textit{should} scores.

In addition, discrepancy, \textit{should}, and \textit{would} scores were all negatively correlated with social desirability. Thus, as the need for approval from others increased, individuals reported smaller discrepancies and less prejudiced \textit{should} and \textit{would} scores. Such correlations may suggest that the greater a person's need for approval, the more likely that person will be to hold relatively low-prejudice standards, to respond in relatively low-prejudice ways, and to bring his or her actual responses in line with his or her personal standards. Alternatively, to the extent that the Social Desirability Scale taps into tendencies to simply report socially desirable responses, the correlations may suggest that individuals' self-reports are biased by a desire to project a socially desirable image when, in fact, the standards and actual responses of individuals who have a high need for approval actually do not differ from those of other individuals.

The possibility that relations between discrepancies and public self-consciousness, social anxiety, and social desirability may be a result of reporting biases raises the larger question of whether these personality tendencies are ultimately responsible for the relation between discrepancy scores and the guilt observed in past research. For example, having a high need for approval may cause people to report both small discrepancies and low levels of guilt. Likewise, being attentive and even anxious with respect to one's social environment may cause people to report both large discrepancies and strong feelings of guilt. One goal of Study 2 was to determine whether such possibilities could be ruled out.

\textbf{Study 2}

There were three primary goals in Study 2. First, we examined the stability of discrepancy scores across time to determine the extent to which self-reported discrepancies are statelike characteristics, or whether they do potentially indicate people's ability to avoid their prejudiced responses. Second, we investigated whether discrepancy activation (as a result of completing the newly developed discrepancy scale) has the same affective consequences that have been observed in past research. These findings would help to establish the predictive validity of the scale but would also be useful in another sense. Specifically, when participants completed the previously used five-item discrepancy scales, they likely made direct comparisons between their \textit{should} and \textit{would} ratings; there were so few items that the extent of "match" was quite obvious, and the \textit{should} and \textit{would} items did not appear in different random orders. Thus, the shorter discrepancy scale used a very blunt procedure for making people aware of their discrepancies, which no doubt increased the likelihood of experiencing discrepancy-associated affect. Using the newly developed discrepancy scale, the present study would reveal whether self-reported proneness to discrepancies was associated with affective consequences under more subtle discrepancy-activation conditions.

Our third goal was to examine whether the discrepancy-affect relations remain significant after controlling for personality characteristics that are correlated with discrepancies. If these relations remained significant, we could rule out the possibility that idiosyncratic sensitivities (e.g., Public Self-Consciousness) are ultimately responsible for the apparent association between discrepancies and affect.

\textbf{Method}

\textbf{Participants}

Several hundred introductory psychology students completed the 32-item discrepancy questionnaire at the beginning of the semester as part of a mass testing session. From this larger sample, 114 non-Black male and female undergraduate students from the University of Kentucky were recruited by phone to complete the study in return for partial credit toward their introductory psychology course. This recruiting took place approximately 6 weeks after the initial completion of the discrepancy questionnaire. Participants were selected randomly from the larger pool, except that efforts were made to ensure that discrepancy scores ranged from relatively small to large (discrepancy range was 0–50, $M = 18.40$, $SD = 10.65$).

\textbf{Procedure}

The data were collected in small testing sessions that included between 5 and 15 participants. The experimenter emphasized the importance of being open and honest and informed the participants that they would place their materials in a slotted box when they were finished, thus ensuring their anonymity. After participants completed a consent form, they were given a packet that included four questionnaires. The order in which the questionnaires appeared was counterbalanced across participants.

One questionnaire included the newly developed discrepancy scale, followed by a 32-item affect scale (examples of items on the affect scale are noted in the Results and Discussion section). As in previous discrepancy research, the instructions on the affect questionnaire informed participants of our interest in their feelings about the consistency or inconsistency between how they reported they should respond to Blacks and how they reported they actually would respond to Blacks. Participants rated the extent to which each affect item corresponded to their feelings using a 7-point scale ranging from 1 \textit{(does not apply at all) to 7 (applies very much)}. The second and third questionnaires consisted of the personality measures that were significantly related to discrepancies in Study 1 (i.e., social desirability, and the Public and Private Self-Consciousness subscales of the Self-Consciousness Scale). The fourth questionnaire was the 20-item Attitudes Toward Blacks (ATB) Scale (Brigham, 1993; $a = .86$). Each ATB item was answered using a 7-point scale ranging from 1 \textit{(strongly disagree)} to 7 \textit{(strongly agree)}. Lower ATB scores correspond to lower prejudice.

\textbf{Results and Discussion}

\textbf{Discrepancy Scale Properties and Reliability}

\textit{Should} ($a = .80$), \textit{would} ($a = .88$), and discrepancy ($a = .72$) scores were computed in the same manner as in Study 1. The relation between participants' scores from this testing session and participants' scores on the same measures completed approximately 6 weeks earlier was examined to assess test-retest reliability. The correlation between the two sets of \textit{should} scores was highly significant, $r(112) = .78, p < .001$, interclass correlation = .76, $p < .001$, as was the correlation between the two sets of \textit{would} scores, $r(112) = .86, p < .001$, interclass correlation = .86, $p < .001$. Moreover, the test–retest reliability
for discrepancy scores was quite respectable, \( r(112) = .65, p < .001 \). This result supports the notion that people's self-reported discrepancies remain stable across relatively short periods of time. Thus, discrepancies do not appear to reflect primarily the effect of situational factors or transient influences on people's beliefs about the extent to which their actual responses will correspond with how they believe they should respond.

**Discrepancy-Associated Affect**

On the basis of the results of a factor analysis performed on the affect ratings, which replicated the results of previous studies (e.g., Devine et al., 1991), we formed five affect indexes by averaging ratings for the relevant items. These indexes are neg-self (e.g., disappointed with myself and feeling guilty; \( \alpha = .89 \)), discomfort (e.g., bothered and uneasy; \( \alpha = .86 \)), positive (e.g., friendly and happy; \( \alpha = .89 \)), down (e.g., depressed and sad; \( \alpha = .87 \)), and neg-other (e.g., irritated and angry at others; \( \alpha = .89 \)).

The relation between discrepancies and affect was examined in a series of hierarchical regression analyses. Each affect index was predicted using participants' discrepancy scores, their prejudice (ATB) scores, and the interaction between these two variables.\(^6\) Main effects were interpreted simultaneously, followed by the interaction. Power polynomial analyses were also performed to examine whether any curvilinear relations between continuous variables emerged, but none were found.

**Primary affect analyses.** The hallmark of previous discrepancy-associated affect findings is that discrepancy activation gives rise to general discomfort and to negative affect directed at the self (e.g., Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, 1993; Monteith et al., 1993). Our results were consistent with these findings, even though the newly developed discrepancy questionnaire is less likely to encourage a comparison of *should* and *would* ratings on an item-by-item basis. First, the regression analysis performed on the discomfort index revealed the expected relation between discrepancies and discomfort, \( F(1, 109) = 19.85, p < .001 (\beta = .41) \), indicating that greater feelings of discomfort were experienced as discrepancy scores increased. A smaller but significant relation between prejudice and discomfort also emerged, \( F(1, 109) = 3.79, p = .054 (\beta = .18) \), such that discomfort increased as prejudice increased. Second, a strong relation between negself and discrepancies was found, \( F(1, 109) = 25.11, p < .001 (\beta = .47) \), such that negative self-directed affect increased as discrepancy scores increased.

Previous research in which prejudice scores ranged from low to high has revealed that although discrepancies give rise to similar levels of general discomfort across all levels of prejudice, greater negative self-directed affect is reported in relation to discrepancies among low-prejudice participants as compared with high-prejudice participants. In contrast, our results did not reveal a significant interaction between prejudice and discrepancies when predicting negself \( (F < 1) \). This finding is sensible, however, because the prejudice scores in the present sample \( (M = 53.36, SD = 16.51) \) were positively skewed. Indeed, three fourths of the sample scored in the bottom third of the possible range of ATB scores, and no participants scored in the upper third of the possible range. Thus, consistent with the findings of Devine et al. (1991, Experiment 1), prejudice and discrepancies do not interact with positively skewed distributions.

We also examined the effect of discrepancies on discomfort and negself independent of the correlations between these two affect measures. Replicating previous research, the analysis in which the effect of negself was partialed from discomfort indicated that the relation between discomfort and discrepancies was no longer significant, \( F(1, 108) = 2.04, p < .16 \). In contrast, when discomfort was partialed out of negself, the main effect for discrepancies remained significant, \( F(1, 108) = 6.53, p < .02 (\beta = .20) \). This points to a unique relation between discrepancies and negself independent of feelings of general discomfort. It is also worth noting that in the analysis in which discomfort was partialed from negself, the Prejudice \( \times \) Discrepancy interaction proved to be significant, \( F(1, 107) = 6.80, p < .01 \). In line with the usual pattern observed, low-prejudice participants with larger discrepancies experienced greater negself \( (\bar{Y} = 3.22) \) than those with smaller discrepancies \( (\bar{Y} = 2.22) \), whereas this difference was less pronounced among the high-prejudice participants \( (\text{large discrepancy } \bar{Y} = 2.28; \text{small discrepancy } \bar{Y} = 2.18) \).\(^7\) Thus, despite our restricted range of prejudice scores, some evidence of the stronger affective consequences of activating discrepancies in individuals with lower prejudice scores was obtained.

**Additional affect indexes.** No significant effects emerged in the analysis of the positive or negother indexes. There was, however, a significant effect for discrepancies in the analysis of the down index, \( F(1, 109) = 6.73, p < .01 (\beta = .26) \), indicating that individuals with larger discrepancies were experiencing more feelings of being down than those with smaller discrepancies.

**Discrepancy-Associated Affect, Controlling for Correlated Personality Characteristics**

As in Study 1, proneness to discrepancies was significantly related to public self-consciousness, \( r(111) = .21, p < .03 \), social anxiety, \( r(111) = .20, p < .04 \), and social desirability, \( r(109) = -.24, p < .02 \). Furthermore, public self-consciousness and social anxiety were significantly related to both discomfort and negself, with the relevant correlations ranging between .23 and .39 \( (ps < .02) \). Social desirability also showed some, but less of an association with discomfort \( (r = -.14, p = .14) \) and negself \( (r = -.17, p = .08) \). Such relations introduce the possibility that these personality characteristics individually or jointly drive the apparent association between discrepancies and affect to some extent, in that they prompt individuals to...

\(^6\) The only significant effect for gender in this study was that females reported somewhat greater feelings of being down than did males, \( F(1, 108) = 3.81, p = .053 (\beta = -.18) \), regardless of their discrepancy and prejudice scores. Therefore, gender was excluded as a variable in all other analyses.

\(^7\) Throughout this research, predicted values were computed by using values falling one standard deviation above and below the means of the relevant variables in the regression equation.
respond in certain ways to both the discrepancy and affect questionnaires.

To examine the extent to which discrepancies and affect were related after controlling for these personality tendencies, we performed the same regression analyses reported in the previous section, this time partialing out each personality characteristic in turn. In no case did controlling for a personality measure substantially reduce the discrepancy–affect relation. For example, consider the affect indexes of greatest theoretical interest: discomfort and negself. Controlling for any given personality variable did not reduce the original (i.e., $\beta = .41$ and $A7$) by more than .07. Even when simultaneously controlling for all of the personality measures, the effect of discrepancies on discomfort remained substantial ($\beta = .36, p < .001$), as did the effect of discrepancies on negself ($\beta = .39, p < .001$). These findings demonstrate that although certain personality characteristics tend to be related to self-reported discrepancies, they do not account for the relation between discrepancies and affect.

Study 3

Study 3 examined whether self-reported discrepancies were indicative of low-prejudice individuals’ actual likelihood of engaging in prejudiced responses that violated their personal standards. Individuals who held low-prejudice attitudes toward Blacks and who varied in their self-reported proneness to discrepancies were preselected for participation in Study 3. (A group of high-prejudice participants was also recruited for comparison purposes.) Participants were led to believe that the research concerned psychological aspects of humor; actually, participants’ prejudiced responses were measured to determine how favorably participants evaluated jokes that employed humor at the expense of Blacks. This task was considered appropriate for assessing proneness to discrepant responses because many low-prejudice individuals have spontaneous, favorable responses to such jokes, even though they believe they should not (Monteith, 1993).

Cognitive load was manipulated while participants evaluated the jokes. If self-reported discrepancies reflect actual proneness to discrepancies, we expected to find that discrepancy-prone participants evaluated the jokes more favorably than discrepancy-not-prone participants did under high cognitive load. In contrast, because even discrepancy-prone individuals should have sufficient time to inhibit prejudiced responses when their cognitive resources are not taxed, we expected equally unfavorable evaluations among discrepancy-prone and discrepancy-not-prone participants in the low-cognitive-load condition.

Method

Participants and Preselection Criteria

Forty-five male and 80 female undergraduate students from the University of Kentucky participated for course credit toward their introductory psychology grade. Participants were recruited by phone across two semesters (approximately 65% during a first semester and the other 35% during a second semester) on the basis of their prejudice and discrepancy scores from large mass survey testing sessions that took place at the beginning of each semester. The relatively low-prejudice participants scored between 26 and 52 ($M = 38.43, SD = 6.71$) on Brigham’s (1993) ATB Scale (possible ATB range = 20–140). The relatively high-prejudice participants scored between 69 and 122 ($M = 84.58, SD = 13.35$).

Although we had intended to preselect low- and high-prejudice participants who varied in their proneness to discrepancies, so few high-prejudice participants scored low on the discrepancy scale (i.e., we had relatively few outright bigots, who said they should and would respond with prejudice toward Blacks) that we were unable to preselect participants for this group. Thus, although low-prejudice participants ($n = 80$) were preselected such that they were relatively discrepancy not prone or discrepancy prone, only discrepancy-prone high-prejudice participants ($n = 40$) were recruited.

A 5-item should–would discrepancy questionnaire (similar to the original discrepancy questionnaire developed by Devine et al., 1991) was used for the mass testing during the first semester of data collection because development of the 32-item questionnaire (i.e., as reported in Studies 1 and 2 herein) was not yet complete. The 32-item questionnaire was used during the second semester of data collection. Within the full samples for each mass survey, discrepancy scores were converted to $z$ scores so that the same preselection criteria could be used across semesters despite the different number of items on the two discrepancy scales. The low-prejudice participants were preselected so that discrepancies varied as a continuous variable and so that a decent and equivalent range of discrepancy scores was represented in the low- and high-cognitive-load conditions.

The range of (standardized) discrepancy scores among low-prejudice participants was $-1.4796$ to $1.9275$ ($M = -0.31, SD = 0.69$). Among high-prejudice participants, not only were discrepancy scores larger, but the upper limit was higher, $-0.1500$ to $4.8822$ ($M = 1.17, SD = 1.19$). Thus, although all high-prejudice participants were prone to discrepancies, some high-prejudice participants were prone to especially large discrepancies.

Design

Cognitive load (low vs. high) was manipulated as a between-subjects variable among the low- and high-prejudice participants. As noted above, discrepancy scores varied as a continuous variable, ranging from very small to moderate among low-prejudice participants and from moderate to very large among high-prejudice participants.

Procedure

Both the experimenter and a confederate were blind to the participants’ prejudice and discrepancy scores. The experimenter greeted the participant and confederate, who posed as another participant, and provided them with consent forms to read and sign if they agreed to participate. The experimenter then explained that the study investigated humor and provided the participant and confederate with a form to read. This form emphasized the positive psychological functions of humor and the paucity of research on what people find funny. It also explained that in an effort to identify different people’s ideas of what is funny, one person would choose and tell jokes from a joke book while the other person would listen to and evaluate the jokes. Finally, the form explained that the joke teller and the joke evaluator would be in different rooms throughout the experiment and would not see each other after the experi-

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*The data from 8 additional participants were eliminated. Four of these participants were highly suspicious and did not believe the cover story. Three other participants indicated that they could not hear the jokes well over the intercom. Finally, data from 1 participant were eliminated because he did not follow the instructions.*
ment, so no one needed to be concerned about whether his or her perceptions of what is funny differ from others' perceptions.

A rigged procedure was used to ensure that the confederate appeared to be selected randomly to be the joke teller. Next, the experimenter provided the confederate with a joke book and told the confederate to select eighteen jokes, with an eye toward achieving variety in the types of jokes. The experimenter then escorted the actual participant to an adjoining room.

Joke evaluation instructions. The experimenter told each participant that the jokes would be told via an intercom system and that the jokes would be evaluated with the use of a computer program. Specifically, participants were told that when the joke teller was ready to tell a joke, he or she would sound the intercom tone. After the joke, another tone would sound, signaling that the joke was over and an evaluation should be provided.

The experimenter explained that joke evaluations were to be made on a "HA-HA meter." Specifically, if participants liked a given joke at all, they were told to press a key marked HA! This caused the HA-HA meter to appear on the screen with one brightly colored section marked HA! Participants could continue to press the HA! key up to six more times, depending on how much they liked the joke, and each time the key was depressed another brightly colored section marked HA! was added to the top of the previous section. Alternatively, if they felt a joke should get fewer than seven HAs, participants were instructed to press a key marked DONE until a different screen appeared on the monitor. Finally, if participants did not feel a given joke deserved even one HA, they could use a key marked BOO! (which caused a large black-and-white BOO to appear on the screen), followed by use of the DONE key until another screen appeared on the monitor.

Cognitive load task instructions. After describing the process for evaluating the jokes, the experimenter noted that people often hear jokes under distracting conditions (e.g., in crowded rooms at parties), and so to simulate such distractions, participants would perform another task while evaluating the jokes. Specifically, between jokes, 18 pictures of objects (e.g., rose, cactus, building) would appear on the monitor. In the low-cognitive-load condition, participants were told to find the object that appeared four times and remember that object. In the high-cognitive-load condition, participants were asked to count the number of pairs of objects on the screen (between three and seven pairs were presented), find the object that appeared four times, and remember both that object and the total number of pairs.

Participants were told that when the joke teller sounded the intercom tone (signaling an upcoming joke), they should press the space bar. This would cause the objects to disappear from the monitor and allow participants to concentrate on the joke. However, the experimenter emphasized that participants should continue to remember the information about the objects while listening to the jokes. To ensure that participants continued to remember the information, the experimenter explained that they would be quizzed about the objects after evaluating each joke. Specifically, after evaluating each joke, a question would appear on the screen. For participants in the low-cognitive-load condition, the experimenter explained that the question would concern which object had appeared four times. Three options would be provided (e.g., "1—cactus; 2—apple; 3—dog"), and participants were to respond by pressing the appropriate number key (i.e., 1, 2, or 3). For participants in the high-cognitive-load condition, the experimenter explained that the same sort of question would be asked on some of the trials, and on other trials the question would concern how many pairs of objects had appeared on the screen. (During the procedure proper, each type of question was asked an equal number of times among the high-cognitive-load participants; which question was asked was randomly determined.)

The experimenter then presented a figure and summarized the procedure as follows: After a 10-s blank screen, a blue screen with objects would appear for 30 s. A tone would then signal the participants to press the space bar, which would result in the presentation of another blank screen. After listening to the joke, participants would hear another tone, evaluate the joke using the HA-HA meter, and then answer the question about the objects. The procedure would be repeated for the next joke. The experimenter walked participants through five practice trials to ensure that the procedure was clear.

The experimenter then supposedly checked to determine whether the joke teller was prepared, started the computer program for the participant, and left the room. Although participants were led to believe that the joke teller was actually telling the jokes, a prerecorded tape of the jokes was used. Eighteen jokes were told, and four of them (told on the 5th, 11th, 14th, and 18th trials) targeted Blacks (e.g., "What do you call a Black with an IQ of 15? Gifted!").

After the joke task, participants completed a series of open-ended questions asking them to describe any jokes they found especially funny, unfunny, or creative and any jokes they especially disliked. This was followed by four questions intended to serve as a check on the cognitive load manipulation (e.g., "How distracting was the object-counting task?" and "How difficult was it for you to remember the information about the objects while you were listening to the jokes?"). Finally, participants responded to an open-ended question asking what they thought the study was about.

The experimenter probed participants for suspicion and performed a thorough debriefing. In addition to explaining the true purpose of the experiment, the experimenter explained how racial jokes perpetuate negative and inaccurate stereotypes about Blacks.

Results and Discussion

Cognitive Load: Errors

Data from the cognitive load task were examined for errors (i.e., incorrect answers to questions about the objects). Overall, the error rate was quite low, with errors occurring on only 1.8% of the trials in the low-cognitive-load group and 3.6% of the trials in the high-cognitive-load group. Removing the data from participants having three or more errors (n = 3) does not change the pattern or significance of any of the results reported below. Thus, no participants' data were discarded on the basis of their error rate.

Manipulation Check

The four items that queried participants about how distracting they found the cognitive load task were averaged to form an index (α = .84). Because there is no theoretical reason to expect discrepancy level to affect ratings on this index (and relevant analyses indicated that it did not have a significant effect), the data were analyzed using a 2 (cognitive load: low vs. high) × 2 (prejudice level: low vs. high) between-subjects analysis of variance.
variance. The only effect that approached significance was a significant cognitive load main effect, \( F(1, 114) = 57.29, p < .001 \). Participants in the high-cognitive-load condition thought the task was more distracting \((M = 4.05)\) than participants in the low-cognitive-load condition \((M = 2.34)\) did.

**Joke Ratings**

The total number of HAs (i.e., across all jokes) was computed, and examination of the distribution of these scores revealed a few participants who were characteristically unimpressed with all of the jokes. In particular, 7 of the 125 participants had HA-HA scores of 6 or less (i.e., out of the possible 126 times the HA key could have been used, it was used 6 times or less). Given these participants' virtually unwavering use of the BOO key, their data were excluded from all analyses reported herein.12

The HA-HA scores for the four jokes about Blacks were summed to form an index \((\alpha = .73)\). A separate index for the nonracial jokes was formed by summing the relevant evaluations \((\alpha = .83)\) so that the index could be used as a covariate in the analysis of the racial joke evaluations. Initial analyses revealed that no significant effects were associated with the nonracial joke evaluations.

The racial joke evaluations were analyzed using hierarchical regression. Recall that low-prejudice participants' discrepancy scores ranged from very small (i.e., not prone to discrepancies) to moderate, whereas high-prejudice participants' discrepancies ranged from moderate to very large. Also, recall that prejudice was not a truly continuous variable (i.e., there was a 17-point difference between the highest ATB score in the low-prejudice group and the lowest ATB score in the high-prejudice group). Thus, we performed analyses on data from the low- and high-prejudice participants separately. Initial analyses indicated that gender was not associated with any significant effects, so it was removed from the regression equation. This left participants' (standardized) discrepancy scores, the cognitive load condition (coded as \(-1 = \text{low cognitive load and } 1 = \text{high cognitive load}\)), and the interaction between these variables as predictors of the HA-HA scores. Each of these variables was entered individually and in succession into the regression equations, and the effect associated with each variable was assessed on the step at which it was entered. The nonracial joke evaluations were entered on the first step to serve as a covariate.

The analysis of low-prejudice participants' HA-HA scores revealed a significant effect for the covariate, \( F(1, 73) = 56.85, p < .001, \beta = .66 \). This simply means that the more positively participants evaluated the nonracial jokes, the more positively they evaluated the racial jokes. More important, the predicted interaction between cognitive load and proneness to discrepancies was significant, \( F(1, 70) = 5.00, p < .03 \). The nature of this interaction is shown in Figure 1. Simple slope analysis (see Aiken & West, 1991) revealed that low-prejudice participants who reported being prone to larger discrepancies evaluated the racial jokes significantly more favorably under high cognitive load than under low cognitive load, \( F(1, 70) = 6.04, p < .02 \). This result is consistent with previous findings showing that when individuals' cognitive capacity is taxed, stereotypical responses are more likely to occur (e.g., Devine, 1989). In contrast, the effect of cognitive load among small-discrepancy participants was not significant \((F < 1)\). Thus, a high cognitive load did not result in more favorable joke evaluations among participants whose discrepancy scores suggested that their actual responses are typically consistent with their low-prejudice standards. This pattern of findings provides behavioral validation of the self-report discrepancy measure. In addition, it underscores the importance of taking into account individual differences in discrepancy proneness when examining whether and under what conditions people will engage in prejudiced responses. Some people appear to be quite adept at avoiding prejudiced responses, and their self-reported ability to avoid their prejudiced responses corresponds to their actual ability.

Overall, high-prejudice participants evaluated the racial jokes much more favorably \((M = 8.42)\) than low-prejudice participants did \((M = 3.63)\), \(r(116) = 5.32, p < .001 \). In contrast to the results for low-prejudice participants, only the covariate was significant in the regression analysis performed on high-prejudice participants' HA-HA scores, \( F(1, 41) = 11.27, p < .01 \). Racial joke evaluations were no more or less positive in

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12 Two of these participants were low in prejudice with relatively small discrepancy scores, 3 were low in prejudice with relatively large discrepancy scores, and 2 were high in prejudice with moderate discrepancy scores. Five of the 7 excluded participants were in the high-cognitive-load group. Although analyses indicated that inclusion of these participants does not alter the pattern of results or change conclusions about which effects are or are not statistically significant (given that these participants did not appear to discriminate among the jokes), we present the results with these data excluded.
the low-cognitive-load condition ($\bar{Y} = 8.50$) as compared with the high-cognitive-load condition ($\bar{Y} = 8.36$), and cognitive load did not interact with discrepancy level. These findings are consistent with previous research (Monteith, 1993; see also Monteith & Walters, 1998) showing that high-prejudice individuals who are prone to discrepancies do not hold prejudice-related standards that are internalized well enough to prompt them to attempt to avoid prejudiced responses.

Additional analyses were performed to rule out a possible alternative explanation for the findings shown in Figure 1. In particular, discrepancy proneness has tended to vary with prejudice level in past research (e.g., Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, 1996a; Monteith et al., 1993), such that participants higher in prejudice have larger discrepancy scores. The same relation between ATB and discrepancy scores was observed among our low-prejudice participants, $r(74) = .31, p < .01$ (as well as among the high-prejudice participants, $r(42) = .35, p < .05$). Given this relation, it is possible that prejudice and not discrepancy level can account for the pattern of findings shown in Figure 1. This possibility was examined in a regression analysis in which participants' ATB scores were entered as an additional predictor, along with their discrepancy scores, cognitive load condition, and all possible interactions among these variables. This analysis indicated that the interaction between cognitive load and discrepancy level remained significant when the effect of prejudice was partialled out, $F(1, 69) = 4.65, p < .04$. Furthermore, no other effects approached significance. A parallel analysis performed among the high-prejudice participants revealed that the only significant effect involving the ATB scores was a main effect, such that the racial jokes were evaluated more positively as ATB scores increased, $F(1, 39) = 6.95, p < .02, \beta = .42$.

**References to Racial Jokes**

Participants frequently mentioned the racial jokes in response to the open-ended questions about their reactions to the jokes. Whereas 60% of the low-prejudice participants wrote that the racial jokes were either unfunny or disliked, only 7% of the high-prejudice participants did so. In contrast, 43% of the high-prejudice participants wrote that these jokes were either funny or creative, whereas only 9% of the low-prejudice participants did so. Logistic regression analyses were performed on these data, using discrepancy level, cognitive load condition, and the interaction between these two variables as predictors. These analyses did not reveal any significant effects. This seems especially noteworthy in relation to the low-prejudice participants: The finding that the majority of low-prejudice participants (regardless of their discrepancy level or cognitive load condition) specified the racial jokes as the most unfunny or disliked is consistent with the notion that thoughtfully generated responses among low-prejudice persons will reflect their personal attitudes (Devine, 1989). This finding stands in contrast to the pattern found for the HA-HA data, in which discrepancy-prone participants experiencing a high cognitive load had relatively favorable reactions to the racial jokes.

We were somewhat surprised that 9% ($n = 7$) of the low-prejudice participants noted that the racial jokes were especially funny or creative. Because neither discrepancy scores nor cognitive load affected this tendency, perhaps the most plausible explanation is simply that a small minority of low-prejudice individuals do not find any harm in racial humor.

**General Discussion**

The present series of studies provides evidence that self-reported discrepancies apparently are authentic and do reflect people’s proneness to engaging in prejudiced responses that violate their personal standards. The discrepancy scale developed in Study 1 and tested across four samples assessed discrepancies across a wider range of situations than had been assessed in previous research (e.g., Devine et al., 1991; Monteith et al., 1993). Even so, we found that some individuals reported that their actual responses are quite consistent with their personal standards for responding to Blacks. Study 2 revealed that discrepancy scores are stable over a relatively short period of time, which is consistent with the possibility that self-reported discrepancies reflect a person’s actual ability to control prejudiced responses and not merely the effects of fluctuating factors. Studies 1 and 2 examined the relation between discrepancies and a variety of personality characteristics. Although discrepancy proneness showed moderate relations with public self-consciousness, social anxiety, and social desirability, discrepancies continued to be associated with affective consequences, even after these personality variables were statistically controlled.

Thus, it does not appear that particular personality characteristics and their associated reporting tendencies can account for the relation between discrepancies and their associated affective consequences.

Finally, and perhaps most important, Study 3 provided behavioral evidence of the relation between self-reported discrepancies and people’s actual likelihood of engaging in prejudiced responses. Just as participants’ self-reports suggested, low-prejudice individuals who reported being prone to discrepancies were more likely to evaluate racial jokes favorably under high distraction than low distraction. However, the distraction manipulation did not affect low-prejudice discrepancy-not-prone participants’ ability to respond to racial jokes in relatively nonprejudiced ways. These findings indicate that individuals are able and willing to provide explicit reports that correspond to their actual prejudiced tendencies or lack thereof. Thus, we believe that researchers interested in examining the relation between implicit and explicit measures of prejudice should take into account not only conscious reports of attitudes but also the extent to which people report being prone to prejudice-related discrepancies.

Although we do not doubt that there are situations in which people fail to realize the potential for activated stereotypes to affect their responses to members of stereotyped groups (see Wilson & Brekke, 1994), people appear to have enough insight into their potential for bias so that self-reported discrepancies reliably predicted the actual likelihood of prejudiced responses under conditions that favored such responses. Future research is needed to determine whether the discrepancy scale has predictive power that extends beyond reactions to jokes. Also, the present results do not indicate whether low-prejudice discrepancy-not-prone individuals had stereotypes initially activated but...
then were able to quickly and effectively inhibit them. In other words, we do not yet know whether discrepancy-not-prone persons do not experience stereotype activation or whether they are highly effective at controlling the potential influence of activated stereotypes on their responses.

**On Being Discrepancy Prone**

The theoretical analysis underlying discrepancy-related research is that well-learned stereotypical associations can be automatically activated even among low-prejudice individuals, giving rise to prejudiced responses that conflict with their low-prejudice beliefs (Devine, 1989). Although Devine’s analysis has been questioned because she included stereotypical content in her stereotype priming procedure (rather than just priming the category *Blacks*; see Kawakami, Dion, & Dovidio, 1998; Lepore & Brown, 1997; Wittenbrink et al., 1997), a number of other studies have demonstrated the automatic manner in which stereotypes can be activated among low-prejudice persons, even when the faces of Blacks are presented subliminally (Bargh, Chen, & Burrows, 1996; Chen & Bargh, 1997; Dovidio et al., 1997; Fazio et al., 1995). The present results, showing that many low-prejudice individuals reported discrepancies and responded in ways that violated their low-prejudice standards, are consistent with the notion that stereotypes are automatically activated among many low-prejudice persons.

Our findings also have implications for the interpretation of inconsistencies between low-prejudice, self-reported attitudes and persisting prejudiced responses. Fazio et al. (1995) recently identified a group of individuals who reported low-prejudice attitudes toward Blacks and indicated that they were motivated to control prejudice, but this group also showed evidence of automatic activation of negative associations in relation to Blacks. Consistent with Devine and Monteith’s interpretations of prejudice-related discrepancies (Devine, 1989; Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, 1993), Fazio et al. suggested that these individuals may be motivated by a genuine concern to control their prejudice, but they experience difficulty when attempting to execute this control. An alternative possibility suggested was that these individuals’ self-reported attitudes may be low in prejudice owing to strategic self-presentational strategies designed to conceal truly prejudiced sentiments. In other words, Fazio et al. suggested that people’s self-reported attitudes about Blacks may or may not be trustworthy, and therefore low-prejudice discrepancy-prone individuals may or may not be genuinely concerned about controlling potentially prejudiced responses.

The present findings appear to favor an interpretation in which low-prejudice individuals’ attitudes are considered trustworthy. If people who show evidence of automatic stereotype activation report low-prejudice attitudes simply because they are not willing to admit their prejudice on self-report measures, then these same people should not be willing to admit their prejudice on the discrepancy questionnaire. This was not the case in our research. Of course, the ultimate test of whether discrepancy-prone individuals are the same sort of persons as Fazio et al. (1995) identified will require a direct examination of the relation between self-reported discrepancies and Fazio et al.’s measures.

**On Being Discrepancy Not Prone**

An especially encouraging finding in the present research was that individuals who reported small discrepancies evaluated the racial jokes just as unfavorably under high distraction as they did under low distraction. This finding, coupled with recently emerging evidence suggesting that some individuals are not prone to automatic stereotype activation (Fazio et al., 1995; Kawakami et al., 1998; Lepore & Brown, 1997; Wittenbrink et al., 1997), is encouraging with respect to the prospects of being able to avoid prejudiced responses.

Future research is needed to address the important question of how some individuals can avoid potentially prejudiced responses. According to Lepore and Brown’s (1997) analysis, low-prejudice individuals can avoid prejudiced responses because negative stereotypes are not activated. However, the present findings suggest that establishing low-prejudice attitudes is not sufficient to avoid stereotype activation and use. Perhaps discrepancy-not-prone individuals have learned how to avoid prejudiced responses through practice and effort at controlling such responses. More specifically, the prejudice-reduction process may entail first learning to override stereotypical responses with consciously activated, low-prejudice beliefs (Devine, 1989) and then, through self-regulation, learning how to deautomatize the process of stereotype application and potentially the activation itself (Monteith, 1993). Tooman and Monteith (1997) found that low-prejudice discrepancy-not-prone individuals are just as aware of stereotypes of Blacks as are other individuals, suggesting that the ability to avoid discrepant responses does not result from simply being naive about stereotypes. Their findings also suggested that low-prejudice discrepancy-not-prone individuals have learned to control once-prejudiced response patterns through effort and practice at self-regulation. However, the findings were based on a retrospective self-report method (e.g., assessing whether participants report that they were prone to discrepancies in the past and whether they developed the ability to respond in the ways they currently do across time and with work). Longitudinal research that tracks the progression of prejudice reduction processes across time is clearly needed to obtain a complete understanding of the processes by which people are able to avoid prejudiced responses.

We believe it is important to note that the present research has focused on discrepancies in relation to Blacks only and that the findings may not generalize to other groups. Following the social cognition approach, researchers have tended to assume that all stereotypes operate in a similar manner. For example, Hamilton and Trotter (1986) noted that “the cognitive approach assumes that the fundamental nature and functioning of all stereotypes is the same. As cognitive categories, all stereotypes are assumed to have the same basic structural properties and to influence information processing in the same way” (p. 152). However, some stereotypes are clearly more deeply ingrained than others, so that there is likely to be variability in how easily they are activated and the degree to which people will be prone to discrepant responses. In addition, societal norms vary across groups in terms of the acceptability of stereotype use, which may make self-regulation more or less likely...
to be attempted and, if attempted, more or less successful (see also Monteith, Sherman, & Devine, 1998).

For example, research on gender stereotyping by Banaji and her colleagues has demonstrated equal levels of implicit stereotyping among low- and high-sexist individuals (Banaji & Hardin, 1996; Banaji et al., 1993). Although we do not currently know whether discrepancy-prone and discrepancy-not-prone individuals would be equally likely to show such effects, perhaps gender stereotypes are unique. Fiske and Stevens (1993) have discussed a variety of reasons why gender stereotypes are different from, for example, stereotypes related to race, age, or ability. The strongly prescriptive nature of stereotypes about women, the fact that social norms against the expression of sexism are not as strong as the norms against the expression of some other types of prejudice, and the benevolent nature of many stereotypes about women (Fiske & Stevens, 1993; Glick & Fiske, 1996) may discourage people from being discrepancy prone in their sexist responses or, if prone, from exerting efforts to control their sexist responses.

Conclusions

Discrepancy-related research has relied on self-report methods for assessing the extent to which people may be prone to discrepancies between their low-prejudice standards for responding to stereotyped groups and their actual prejudiced responses. Findings from previous research have suggested that some people are prone to discrepancies and others are not. But the self-report methodology left open a variety of alternative explanations for the prejudice-related discrepancies that people reported. The present research provides support for the authenticity of self-reported discrepancies and, in doing so, suggests that people are generally cognizant of their propensity for stereotypical biases. When people were asked whether they were prone to responding in prejudiced ways that violated their personal standards for responding, they were able to respond in ways that corresponded to their actual behavior. Additional research is needed to identify the possible boundaries of people’s ability to assess their proneness to discrepancies accurately. Nevertheless, we find the present results encouraging because awareness of stereotypical biases is a critical prerequisite to the eventual reduction of such biases.

References

Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (1996). The ambivalent sexism inventory: Dif-
MONTEITH AND VOILS


**Appendix**

*Should–Would Discrepancy Questionnaire*

**Should Instructions.** This questionnaire concerns people's reactions to Blacks. We are not interested in evaluating any single individual, so you can be sure that your answers will be kept completely anonymous. For us to learn anything from this study, we ask that you respond openly and honestly, and that you read the instructions for each part of the questionnaire very carefully.

The following items concern your beliefs about Blacks. We would like you to respond to the following items based on the beliefs that you hold, regardless of whether the way you actually act is always consistent with those beliefs. Please record a number in the space provided in front of each item that best reflects how much you agree or do not agree with each statement. Use "1" to indicate strong disagreement, "7" to indicate strong agreement, and intermediate numbers to indicate intermediate levels of agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should (belief) items</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I should go out of my way to avoid passing a Black person on the street. (14)</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I think that Blacks and Whites should have an equal opportunity to be hired by an employer. (R) (7)</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I believe that I should not think of Blacks in stereotypical ways. (R) (1)</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I believe that interracial couples should be regarded the same as any other couple. (R) (11)</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. If I had a Black classmate, I should assume that he/she is just as capable of completing intellectually challenging tasks as my White classmates. (R) (9)</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I support Blacks in their struggle against discrimination. (R) (16)</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I should react to all supervisors the same, regardless of their race. (R) (6)</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I believe that I should never avoid interacting with someone just because he/she is Black. (R) (5)</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I should not feel uncomfortable about having a Black roommate. (R) (13)</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I should not feel uncomfortable in the company of Black people. (R) (3)</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I do not believe that my neighborhood should be open to Black families. (4)</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I do not believe that Black men typically have criminal tendencies. (R) (10)</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I should not feel uncomfortable shaking the hand of a Black person. (R) (8)</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I believe Black students study as hard as White students. (R) (15)</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I believe that, even if an interracial couple wants to marry, they should not do it. (2)</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I believe that laughing at jokes that play on the stereotype of Blacks is wrong. (R) (12)</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Would Instructions.** Sometimes the way we actually respond in a situation is consistent with our beliefs, and other times we find ourselves acting in a way that is inconsistent with our beliefs. For each item below, we are interested in your initial, gut-level reactions, which may or may not be consistent with how you believe you should react. Please record a number in the space provided in front of each item that best reflects how much you agree or do not agree with each statement. Use "1" to indicate strong disagreement, "7" to indicate strong agreement, and intermediate numbers to indicate intermediate levels of agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would item</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I sometimes have stereotypical racial thoughts.</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I would not be upset if a member of my family married someone of a different race. (R)</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I would feel uncomfortable if I were the only White person in a group of Black people.</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I would not be troubled if a Black family moved into my neighborhood. (R)</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. On occasion, I have avoided interactions with people because they were Black.</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I would feel awkward having a Black supervisor.</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. If I were an employer, I would initially hesitate to hire someone who was Black.</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I would feel uncomfortable shaking the hand of a Black person.</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. If I were choosing a classmate to complete a difficult in-class assignment with me, I would be more likely to choose a White than a Black classmate.</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Appendix continues)
10. If I saw a Black man walking toward me on an empty street, I would feel worried about his intentions. 3.61 1.81
11. Seeing interracial couples doing things together makes me uncomfortable. 2.38 1.76
12. I sometimes laugh at jokes that play on the stereotype of Blacks. 4.11 1.98
13. I would feel uncomfortable if I was assigned a Black roommate. 2.73 1.98
14. If I were walking alone down the street and saw a Black person walking toward me, I would not consider crossing to the other side of the street. (R) 2.66 1.89
15. I would initially assume that a Black student does not take school as seriously as a White student. 2.03 1.49
16. I feel irritated when Blacks claim they’ve been discriminated against. 3.79 1.89

Note. (R) = reverse-scored. Numbers in parentheses following should items represent the corresponding would item.

Call for Nominations: Emotion

The premiere issue of Emotion, the newest journal from APA, will be published in 2001. The Publications and Communications (P&C) Board has opened nominations for the editorship for the period from September 1999 through December 2006.

Candidates should be members of APA and should be available to start receiving manuscripts in the fall of 1999. The successful candidate will assist the APA P&C Board in refining the scope of coverage for Emotion; it is anticipated that this will be a broad-based multidisciplinary journal that includes

- articles focused on emotion representing neuroscience, developmental, clinical, social, and cultural approaches

and

- articles focused on emotion dealing with not only the psychological, social, and biological aspects of emotion, but also neuropsychological and developmental studies.

Please note that the P&C Board encourages participation by members of underrepresented groups in the publication process and would particularly welcome such nominees. Self-nominees are also encouraged.

To nominate candidates, prepare a statement of one page or less in support of each candidate. The members of the search committee are Janet Shibley Hyde, PhD (search chair); Joseph J. Campos, PhD; Richard J. Davidson, PhD; Hazel R. Markus, PhD; and Klaus R. Scherer, PhD.

Address all nominations to:

Janet Shibley Hyde, PhD, Emotion Search Chair
c/o Karen Sellman, P&C Board Search Liaison
Room 2004
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242

The first review of nominations will begin December 7, 1998.