

THE NATURE OF
PREJUDICE

UNABRIDGED

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CONTENTS

PART I. PREFERENTIAL THINKING

CHAPTER 1. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?	3
Two Cases	4
Definition	6
Is Prejudice a Value Concept?	9
Functional Significance	12
Attitudes and Beliefs	13
Acting Out Prejudice	14
Notes and References	15
CHAPTER 2. THE NORMALITY OF PREJUDGMENT	17
The Separation of Human Groups	17
The Process of Categorization	20
When Categories Conflict with Evidence	23
Personal Values as Categories	24
Personal Values and Prejudice	25
Summary	27
Notes and References	27
CHAPTER 3. FORMATION OF IN-GROUPS	29
What Is an In-Group?	31
Sex as an In-Group	33
The Shifting Nature of In-groups	34
In-groups and Reference Groups	37
Social Distance	38
The Group-Norm Theory of Prejudice	39
Can there Be an In-group without an Out-group?	41
Can Humanity Constitute an In-group?	43
Notes and References	46
CHAPTER 4. REJECTION OF OUT-GROUPS	48
Verbal Rejection	49
Discrimination	51
Conditions of Physical Attack	57
Riots and Lynching	59
The Essential Role of Rumor	63
Notes and References	65

CHAPTER 5. PATTERNING AND EXTENT OF PREJUDICE	68
Prejudice as a Generalized Attitude	68
What Imperfect Correlations Mean	73
How Widespread Is Prejudice?	74
Demographic Variations in Prejudice	79
Notes and References	80
PART II. GROUP DIFFERENCES	
CHAPTER 6. THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF GROUP DIFFERENCES	85
Would Differences, if Discovered, Justify Rejection?	87
The Well-Deserved Reputation Theory	87
Methods of Studying Group Differences	88
Types and Degrees of Differences	95
The Interpretation of Differences	103
Notes and References	104
CHAPTER 7. RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIFFERENCES	107
Why Race Is Emphasized	107
True Racial Differences	110
Cultural Relativity	115
National Character	116
Who Are the Jews?	119
Conclusions	125
Notes and References	126
CHAPTER 8. VISIBILITY AND STRANGENESS	129
The Young Child	130
Visible Differences Imply Real Differences	131
Degrees of Visibility	132
The Condensation of Attitudes around Visible Cues	135
Sensory Aversion	136
Discussion	138
Notes and References	140
CHAPTER 9. TRAITS DUE TO VICTIMIZATION	142
Ego Defenses	143
Obsessive Concern	144
Denial of Membership	145
Withdrawal and Passivity	146
Clowning	147
Strengthening In-group Ties	148
Slyness and Cunning	150
Identification with Dominant Group: Self-hate	150

Aggression against Own Group	152
Prejudice against Out-groups	153
Sympathy	154
Fighting Back: Militancy	155
Enhanced Striving	156
Symbolic Status Striving	157
Neuroticism	158
The Self-fulfilling Prophecy	159
Summary	160
Notes and References	161
PART III. PERCEIVING AND THINKING ABOUT GROUP DIFFERENCES	
CHAPTER 10. THE COGNITIVE PROCESS	165
Selection, Accentuation, Interpretation	166
Directed and Autistic Thinking	167
Cause and Effect Thinking	169
The Nature of Categories	170
The Principle of Least Effort	173
The Dynamics of Cognition in the Prejudiced Personality	174
Conclusions	175
Notes and References	176
CHAPTER 11. LINGUISTIC FACTORS	178
Nouns That Cut Slices	178
Emotionally Toned Labels	181
The Communist Label	183
Verbal Realism and Symbol Phobia	186
Notes and References	187
CHAPTER 12. STEREOTYPES IN OUR CULTURE	189
Stereotypes versus Group Traits	189
Stereotype Defined	191
Stereotypes concerning the Jew	192
Stereotypes concerning the Negro	196
Comparison of Jewish and Negro Stereotypes	199
Mass Media and Stereotypes	200
Stereotypes Change in Time	202
Notes and References	204
CHAPTER 13. THEORIES OF PREJUDICE	206
Historical Emphasis	208
Sociocultural Emphasis	211
Situational Emphasis	213

Psychodynamic Emphasis	214
Phenomenological Emphasis	216
Emphasis on Earned Reputation	217
Final Word	218
Notes and References	218

PART IV. SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS

CHAPTER 14. SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND CULTURAL PATTERN	221
Heterogeneity	221
Vertical Mobility	222
Rapid Social Change	224
Ignorance and Barriers to Communication	226
Size and Density of Minority Groups	227
Direct Competition and Realistic Conflict	229
Exploitative Advantage	233
Social Regulation of Aggression	234
Cultural Devices to Ensure Loyalty	236
Cultural Pluralism vs. Assimilation	238
Summary	240
Notes and References	240
CHAPTER 15. CHOICE OF SCAPEGOATS	243
Meaning of Scapegoat	244
Historical Method	246
Jews as Scapegoats	247
Reds as Scapegoats	253
Scapegoats for Special Occasions	257
Summary	259
Notes and References	259
CHAPTER 16. THE EFFECT OF CONTACT	261
Kinds of Contact	262
Casual Contacts	263
Acquaintance	264
Residential Contact	268
Occupational Contact	274
Pursuit of Common Objectives	276
Goodwill Contacts	278
Personality Differences	279
Conclusion	280
Notes and References	281

PART V. ACQUIRING PREJUDICE

CHAPTER 17. CONFORMING	285
Conformity and Functional Significance	285
Social Entrance Ticket	286
The Neurosis of Extreme Conformity	288
Ethnocentric Pivots in Culture	289
Basic Psychology of Conformity	291
Conflict and Rebellion	294
Notes and References	296
CHAPTER 18. THE YOUNG CHILD	297
Child Training	298
Fear of the Strange	300
Dawn of Racial Awareness	301
Linguistic Tags: Symbols of Power and Rejection	304
The First Stage in Learning Prejudice	307
The Second Stage in Learning Prejudice	309
Notes and References	310
CHAPTER 19. LATER LEARNING	312
Conditioning	313
Selective Perception and Closure	315
Learning by Subsidiation	317
The Need for Status	319
Caste and Class	320
Subsidiation of Attitudes to Caste and Class	323
Conclusion	324
Notes and References	324
CHAPTER 20. INNER CONFLICT	326
Prejudice with and without Compunction	326
Theory of "An American Dilemma"	329
The Inner Check	332
How the Conflict is Handled	334
Notes and References	339

PART VI. THE DYNAMICS OF PREJUDICE

CHAPTER 21. FRUSTRATION	343
Sources of Frustration	343
Frustration Tolerance	347
Responses to Frustration	348
Further Discussion of the Scapegoat Theory	349
Meaning of Psychodynamics	352
Notes and References	353

CHAPTER 22. AGGRESSION AND HATRED	354
Nature of Aggression	354
The Problem of "Drainage"	357
Aggression as a Trait of Personality	359
Social Patterning of Aggression	360
The Nature of Hatred	363
Notes and References	366
CHAPTER 23. ANXIETY, SEX, GUILT	367
Fear and Anxiety	367
Economic Insecurity	370
Self-Esteem	371
Sexuality	372
Guilt	377
Notes and References	380
CHAPTER 24. PROJECTION	382
Jealousy	382
Extropunitiveness as a Trait	383
Repression	384
Living Inkblots	385
Direct Projection	387
The Mote-Beam Mechanism	389
Complementary Projection	390
Conclusion	391
Notes and References	392
PART VII. CHARACTER STRUCTURE	
CHAPTER 25. THE PREJUDICED PERSONALITY	395
Methods of Study	395
Functional Prejudice	396
Ambivalence toward Parents	397
Moralism	398
Dichotomization	400
Need for Definiteness	400
Externalization	404
Institutionalism	404
Authoritarianism	406
Discussion	407
Notes and References	408
CHAPTER 26. DEMAGOGY	410
Sample Materials	410
The Program of the Demagogue	414

The Followers	418
The Demagogue as a Person	419
Paranoid Bigotry	421
Notes and References	423
CHAPTER 27. THE TOLERANT PERSONALITY	425
Early Life	426
Varieties of Tolerance	428
Militant and Pacifistic Tolerance	429
Liberalism and Radicalism	431
Education	432
Empathic Ability	434
Self-insight	436
Intropunitiveness	437
Tolerance for Ambiguity	438
Personal Values	438
Philosophy of Life	440
Notes and References	442
CHAPTER 28. RELIGION AND PREJUDICE	444
Realistic Conflict	444
Divisive Factors in Religion	446
Do Religious Groups Differ in Prejudice?	449
Two Kinds of Religiosity	451
The Case of Simon Peter	453
Religion and Character Structure	455
Notes and References	456

PART VIII. REDUCING GROUP TENSIONS

CHAPTER 29. OUGHT THERE TO BE A LAW?	461
A Brief History of Legislation	462
Types of Legislation	464
Does Legislation Affect Prejudice?	469
Legislation and Social Science	474
Summary	476
Notes and References	477
CHAPTER 30. EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS	479
The Research Approach	481
Formal Educational Programs	483
Contact and Acquaintance Programs	488
Group Retraining	491
Mass Media	493

Exhortation	495
Individual Therapy	495
Catharsis	496
Notes and References	499
CHAPTER 31. LIMITATIONS AND HORIZONS	501
Special Obstacles	502
The Structural Argument	504
Positive Principles	507
Imperatives of Intercultural Education	510
Final Word on Theory	514
Final Word on Values	515
Notes and References	519
INDEX OF NAMES	520
INDEX OF SUBJECTS	526

THE NATURE OF
PREJUDICE

J. H. Fichter, S. J., for calling this treatment to his attention. The definition is more fully discussed by the REV. JOHN LAFARGE, S. J., in *The Race Question and the Negro*, New York: Longmans, Green, 1945, 174 ff.

4. Cf. R. M. WILLIAMS, JR. The reduction of intergroup tensions. New York: *Social Science Research Council*, 1947, Bulletin 57, 37.

5. H. S. DYER. The usability of the concept of "Prejudice." *Psychometrika*, 1945, 10, 219-224.

6. The following definition is written from this relativistic point of view: "A prejudice is a generalized anti-attitude, and/or an anti-action toward any distinct category or group of people, when either the attitude or the action or both are judged by the community in which they are found to be less favorable to the given people than the normally accepted standard of that community." P. BLACK AND R. D. ATKINS. Conformity versus prejudice as exemplified in white-Negro relations in the South: some methodological considerations. *Journal of Psychology*, 1950, 30, 109-121.

7. N. W. ACKERMAN AND MARIE JAHODA. *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder*. New York: Harper, 1950, 4.

8. Not all scales for measuring prejudice include items that reflect both attitudes and beliefs. Those that do so report correlations between the two types of items of the order of .80. Cf. BABETTE SAMELSON. *The patterning of attitudes and beliefs regarding the American Negro*. (Unpublished.) Radcliffe College Library, 1945. Also, A. ROSE, *Studies in reduction of prejudice*. (Mimeograph.) Chicago: American Council on Race Relations, 1947, 11-14.

9. Aware of the world-wide problem of discrimination, the Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations has prepared a thorough analysis of *The main types and causes of discrimination*. United Nations Publications, 1949, XIV, 3.

CHAPTER 2

THE NORMALITY OF PREJUDGMENT

SEPARATION OF HUMAN GROUPS—PROCESS OF CATEGORIZATION—WHEN CATEGORIES CONFLICT WITH EVIDENCE—PERSONAL VALUES AS CATEGORIES—PERSONAL VALUES AND PREJUDICE—SUMMARY

Why do human beings slip so easily into ethnic prejudice? They do so because the two essential ingredients that we have discussed—*erroneous generalization* and *hostility*—are natural and common capacities of the human mind. For the time being we shall leave hostility and its related problems out of account. Let us consider only those basic conditions of human living and thinking that lead naturally to the formation of erroneous and categorical prejudgment—and which therefore deposit us on the very threshold of ethnic and group antagonism.

The reader is warned that the full story of prejudice cannot be told in this—or in any other—single chapter of this book. Each chapter, taken by itself, is one-sided. This is the inevitable defect of any *analytical* treatment of the subject. The problem as a whole is many-sided, and the reader is asked, while examining one facet, to hold in mind the simultaneous existence of many other facets. Thus, the present chapter presents a somewhat "cognitive" view of prejudgment. For the time being, many ego-involved, emotional, cultural, and personal factors that are simultaneously operating are, of necessity, held in suspense.

The Separation of Human Groups

Everywhere on earth we find a condition of separateness among groups. People mate with their own kind. They eat, play, reside in homogeneous clusters. They visit with their own kind, and prefer to worship together. Much of this automatic cohesion is due to nothing more than convenience. There is no need to turn to out-groups for companionship. With plenty of people at hand to choose from, why create for ourselves the trouble of adjusting to new languages, new foods, new cultures, or to people of a different educational level? It requires less effort to deal with people who have similar presuppositions. One reason for the gaiety and joy of college class reunions is that all members are the same age, have

the same cultural reminiscences (even to the old popular songs they all love), and have essentially the same educational history.

Thus most of the business of life can go on with less effort if we stick together with our own kind. Foreigners are a strain. So too are people of a higher or lower social and economic class than our own. We don't play bridge with the janitor. Why? Perhaps he prefers poker; almost certainly he would not grasp the type of jests and chatter that we and our friends enjoy; there would be a certain awkwardness in blending our differing manners. It is not that we have class prejudice, but only that we find comfort and ease in our own class. And normally there are plenty of people of our own class, or race, or religion to play, live, and eat with, and to marry.

In occupational situations we are much more likely to have to deal with members of out-groups. In a stratified industry or business, management must deal with workers, executives with janitors, and salesmen with clerks. At machines, differing ethnic clusters may work side by side, though they almost certainly take their recreation in their own more comfortable groups. Contact at work is seldom sufficient to overcome psychological separateness. Sometimes the contact is so stratified that the sense of separateness is intensified. The Mexican worker may grow jealous of the greater ease of life enjoyed by his Anglo employer. The white workman may fear that the Negro helper stands ready and eager to advance and take the white man's job. Foreign groups have been imported into an industrial level to do menial work, only to arouse fear and jealousy in the majority group when they start to rise in the occupational and social ladder.

It is not always the dominant majority that forces minority groups to remain separate. They often prefer to keep their identity, so that they need not strain to speak a foreign language or to watch their manners. Like the old grads at a college reunion, they can "let down" with those who share their traditions and presuppositions.

One enlightening study shows that high school students representing American minorities display even greater ethnocentrism than do native white Americans. Negro, Chinese, and Japanese young people, for example, are much more insistent upon choosing their friends, their work companions, and their "dates" from their own group than are white students. It is true that they do not select "leaders" from their own group, but prefer the non-Jewish white majority. But while agreeing that class leaders should come from the dominant group, they then seek the greater comfort of confining their intimate relations to their own kind.¹

The initial fact, therefore, is that human groups tend to stay apart. We need not ascribe this tendency to a gregarious instinct, to a "consciousness of kind," or to prejudice. The fact is adequately explained by the principles of ease, least effort, congeniality, and pride in one's own culture.

Once this separatism exists, however, the ground is laid for all sorts of psychological elaboration. People who stay separate have few channels of communication. They easily exaggerate the degree of difference between groups, and readily misunderstand the grounds for it. And, perhaps most important of all, the separateness may lead to genuine conflicts of interests, as well as to many imaginary conflicts.

Let us take one example. The Mexican worker in Texas is sharply set off from the Anglo employer. He lives apart, speaks a different language, has a totally different tradition, and attends a different church. His children, very likely, do not attend the same school as do the employer's children; nor do they play together. All the employer knows is that Juan comes to work, takes his money, and departs. He notes that Juan is irregular in his work, seems indolent and uncommunicative. Nothing is easier than for the employer to assume that this behavior is characteristic of Juan's entire group. He develops a stereotype concerning the laziness, improvidence, and undependability of the Mexicans. Then if the employer finds himself inconvenienced economically by Juan's irregularity, he has grounds for hostility—especially if he believes that his high taxes or financial troubles are due to the Mexican population.

Juan's employer now thinks "all Mexicans are lazy." When he meets a new Mexican he will have this conviction in mind. The prejudgment is erroneous because (1) not all Mexicans are alike; (2) Juan was not really lazy but had many private values that caused him to behave the way he did. He liked to be with his children; he observed religious holy days; he had repairs to make on his own house. The employer is ignorant of all these facts. Instead of saying, as he logically ought, "I do not know the reasons for Juan's behavior because I do not know either him as a person or his culture," the employer disposed of a complex problem in an oversimplified way, attributing to Juan and his nation an attribute of "laziness."

Yet the employer's stereotype grew up out of a "kernel of truth." It was a fact that Juan was a Mexican and was irregular at his work. It may also have been a fact that the employer had had similar experience with other Mexican workmen.

The distinction between a well-founded generalization and an

erroneous generalization is very hard to draw, particularly by the individual who himself harbors the generalization. Let us examine this issue more closely.

The Process of Categorization

The human mind must think with the aid of categories (the term is equivalent here to *generalizations*). Once formed, categories are the basis for normal prejudgment. We cannot possibly avoid this process. Orderly living depends upon it.

We may say that the process of categorization has five important characteristics.

(1) **It forms large classes and clusters for guiding our daily adjustments.** We spend most of our waking life calling upon pre-formed categories for this purpose. When the sky darkens and the barometer falls we prejudge that rain will fall. We adjust to this cluster of happenings by taking along an umbrella. When an angry looking dog charges down the street, we categorize him as a "mad dog" and avoid him. When we go to a physician with an ailment we expect him to behave in a certain way toward us. On these, and countless other occasions, we "type" a single event, place it within a familiar rubric, and act accordingly. Sometimes we are mistaken: the event does not fit the category. It does not rain; the dog is not mad; the physician behaves unprofessionally. Yet our behavior was rational. It was based on high probability. Though we used the wrong category, we did the best we could.

What all this means is that our experience in life tends to form itself into clusters (concepts, categories), and while we may call on the right cluster at the wrong time, or the wrong cluster at the right time, still the process in question dominates our entire mental life. A million events befall us every day. We cannot handle so many events. If we think of them at all, we type them.

Open-mindedness is considered to be a virtue. But, strictly speaking, it cannot occur. A new experience *must* be redacted into old categories. We cannot handle each event freshly in its own right. If we did so, of what use would past experience be? Bertrand Russell, the philosopher, has summed up the matter in a phrase, "a mind perpetually open will be a mind perpetually vacant."

(2) **Categorization assimilates as much as it can to the cluster.** There is a curious inertia in our thinking. We like to solve problems easily. We can do so best if we can fit them rapidly into a satisfactory category and use this category as a means of prejudging the solution. The story is told of the pharmacist's mate in the Navy who had only two categories into which he fitted every ailment

that came to his attention on sick call: if you can *see* it put iodine on it; if you *can't*, give the patient a dose of salts. Life was simple for this pharmacist's mate; he ran his whole professional life with the aid of only two categories.

The point may be stated in this way: the mind tends to categorize environmental events in the "grossest" manner compatible with the need for action. If the pharmacist's mate in our story were called to task for his overcrude practice of medicine, he might then mend his ways and learn to employ more discriminated categories. But so long as we can "get away" with coarse overgeneralizations we tend to do so. (Why? Well, it takes less effort, and effort, except in the area of our most intense interests, is disagreeable.)

The bearing of this tendency on our problem is clear. It costs the Anglo employer less effort to guide his daily behavior by the generalization "Mexicans are lazy," than to individualize his workmen and learn the real reasons for their conduct. If I can lump thirteen million of my fellow citizens under a simple formula, "Negroes are stupid, dirty, and inferior," I simplify my life enormously. I simply avoid them one and all. What could be easier?

(3) **The category enables us quickly to identify a related object.** Every event has certain marks that serve as a cue to bring the category of prejudgment into action. When we see a red-breasted bird, we say to ourselves "robin." When we see a crazily swaying automobile, we think, "drunken driver," and act accordingly. A person with dark brown skin will activate whatever concept of Negro is dominant in our mind. If the dominant category is one composed of negative attitudes and beliefs we will automatically avoid him, or adopt whichever habit of rejection (Chapter 1) is most available to us.

Thus categories have a close and immediate tie with what we see, how we judge, and what we do. In fact, their whole purpose seems to be to facilitate perception and conduct—in other words, to make our adjustment to life speedy, smooth, and consistent. This principle holds even though we often make mistakes in fitting events to categories and thus get ourselves into trouble.

(4) **The category saturates all that it contains with the same ideational and emotional flavor.** Some categories are almost purely intellectual. Such categories we call concepts. *Tree* is a concept made up of our experience with hundreds of kinds of trees and with thousands of individual trees, and yet it has essentially one ideational meaning. But many of our concepts (even *tree*) have in addition to a "meaning" also a characteristic "feeling." We not only know what *tree* is but we *like* trees. And so it is with ethnic categories. Not only do we know what Chinese, Mexican, Lon-

doner mean, but we may have a feeling tone of favor or disfavor accompanying the concept.

(5) *Categories may be more or less rational.* We have said that generally a category starts to grow up from a "kernel of truth." A rational category does so, and enlarges and solidifies itself through the increment of relevant experience. Scientific laws are examples of rational categories. They are backed up by experience. Every event to which they pertain turns out in a certain way. Even if the laws are not 100 percent perfect, we consider them rational if they have a high probability of predicting a happening.

Some of our ethnic categories are quite rational. It is probable a Negro will have dark skin (though this is not always true). It is probable that a Frenchman will speak French better than German (though here, too, are exceptions). But is it true that the Negro will be superstitious, or that the Frenchman will be morally lax? Here the probability is much less, perhaps even zero in significance if we compare these groups with other ethnic groups. Yet our minds seem to make no distinction in category formation: irrational categories are formed as easily as rational.

To make a rational prejudgment of members of a group requires considerable knowledge of the characteristics of the group. It is unlikely that anyone has sound evidence that Scots are more penurious than Norwegians, or that Orientals are more wily than Caucasians, yet these beliefs grow as readily as do more rational beliefs.

In a certain Guatemalan community there is fierce hatred of the Jews. No resident has ever seen a Jew. How did the Jew-is-to-be-hated category grow up? In the first place, the community was strongly Catholic. Teachers had told the residents that the Jews were Christ-killers. It also so happened that in the local culture was an old pagan myth about a devil who killed a god. Thus two powerfully emotional ideas converged and created a hostile prejudgment of Jews.

We have said that irrational categories are formed as easily as rational categories. Probably they are formed *more* easily, for intense emotional feelings have a property of acting like sponges. Ideas, engulfed by an overpowering emotion, are more likely to conform to the emotion than to objective evidence.

An irrational category is one formed without adequate evidence. It may be that the person is simply *ignorant* of the evidence, in which case a misconception is formed, as defined in Chapter I. Many concepts depend on hearsay, on second-hand accounts, and for this reason category-misinformation is often inevitable. A child in school is required to form some general conception of, say, the

Tibetan people. He can take into consideration only what his teacher and textbook tell him. The resultant picture may be erroneous, but the child has done the best he can.

Much deeper and more baffling is the type of irrational prejudgment that *disregards* the evidence. There is the story of an Oxford student who once remarked, "I despise all Americans, but have never met one I didn't like." In this case the categorization went against even his first-hand experience. Holding to a prejudgment when we know better is one of the strangest features of prejudice. Theologians tell us that in prejudgments based on ignorance there is no question of sin; but that in prejudgments held in deliberate disregard of evidence, sin is involved.

When Categories Conflict with Evidence

For our purposes it is important to understand what happens when categories conflict with evidence. It is a striking fact that in most instances categories are stubborn and resist change. After all, we have fashioned our generalizations as we have because they have worked fairly well. Why change them to accommodate every new bit of evidence? If we are accustomed to one make of automobile and are satisfied, why admit the merits of another make? To do so would only disturb our satisfactory set of habits.

We selectively admit new evidence to a category if it confirms us in our previous belief. A Scotsman who is penurious delights us because he vindicates our prejudgment. It is pleasant to say, "I told you so." But if we find evidence that is contradictory to our preconception, we are likely to grow resistant.

There is a common mental device that permits people to hold to prejudgments even in the face of much contradictory evidence. It is the device of admitting exceptions. "There are nice Negroes but . . ." or "Some of my best friends are Jews but . . ." This is a disarming device. By excluding a few favored cases, the negative rubric is kept intact for all other cases. In short, contrary evidence is not admitted and allowed to modify the generalization; rather it is perfunctorily acknowledged but excluded.

Let us call this the "re-fencing" device. When a fact cannot fit into a mental field, the exception is acknowledged, but the field is hastily fenced in again and not allowed to remain dangerously open.

A curious instance of re-fencing takes place in many discussions concerning the Negro. When a person with a strong anti-Negro bias is confronted with evidence favorable to the Negro he frequently pops up with the well-known matrimonial question: "Would you want your sister to marry a Negro?" This re-fencing is adroit. As soon as the interlocutor says, "No," or hesitates in his

reply, the biased person can say in effect, "See, there just is something different and impossible about the Negro," or, "I was right all along—for the Negro has an objectionable essence in his nature."

There are two conditions under which a person will not strive to re-fence his mental field in such a way as to maintain the generalization. The first of these is the somewhat rare condition of *habitual open-mindedness*. There are people who seem to go through life with relatively little of the rubricizing tendency. They are suspicious of all labels, of categories, of sweeping statements. They habitually insist on knowing the evidence for each and every broad generalization. Realizing the complexity and variety in human nature, they are especially chary of ethnic generalizations. If they hold to any at all it is in a highly tentative way, and every contrary experience is allowed to modify the pre-existing ethnic concept.

The other occasion that makes for modification of concepts is plain *self-interest*. A person may learn from bitter failure that his categories are erroneous and must be revised. For example, he may not have known the right classification for edible mushrooms and thus find himself poisoned by toadstools. He will not make the same mistake again: his category will be corrected. Or he may think that Italians are primitive, ignorant, and loud until he falls in love with an Italian girl of a cultured family. Then he finds it greatly to his self-interest to modify his previous generalization and act thereafter on the more correct assumption that there are many, many kinds of Italians.

Usually, however, there are good reasons for maintaining the grounds of prejudice intact. It takes less effort to do so. What is more, we find our prejudgments approved and supported by our friends and associates. It would not be polite for a suburbanite to disagree with his neighbors about admitting Jews to the local country club. It is comforting to find that our categories are similar to those of our neighbors, upon whose goodwill our own sense of status depends. How pointless for me to be perpetually reconsidering all my convictions, especially those that form the groundwork of my life, so long as that groundwork is satisfactory to me and to my neighbors.

Personal Values as Categories

We have been arguing that rubrics are essential to mental life, and that their operation results inevitably in prejudgments which in turn may shade into prejudice.

The most important categories a man has are his own personal set of values. He lives by and for his values. Seldom does he think about them or weigh them; rather he feels, affirms, and defends

them. So important are the value categories that evidence and reason are ordinarily forced to conform to them. A farmer in a dusty area of the country listened to a visitor complain against the dust-bowl character of the region. The farmer evaded this attack on the place he loved by saying, "You know I like the dust; it sort of purifies the air." His reasoning was poor, but it served to defend his values.

As partisans of our own way of life we cannot help thinking in a partisan manner. Only a small portion of our reasoning is what psychologists have called "directed thinking," that is, controlled exclusively by outer evidence and focused upon the solution of objective problems. Whenever feeling, sentiment, values enter we are prone to engage in "free," "wishful," or "fantasy" thinking.² Such partisan thinking is entirely natural, for our job in this world is to live in an integrated way as value-seekers. Prejudgments stemming from these values enable us to do so.

Personal Values and Prejudice

It is obvious, then, that the very act of affirming our way of life often leads us to the brink of prejudice. The philosopher Spinoza has defined what he calls "love-prejudice." It consists, he says, "in feeling about anyone through love more than is right." The lover overgeneralizes the virtues of his beloved. Her every act is seen as perfect. The partisan of a church, a club, a nation may also feel about these objects "through love more than is right."

Now there is a good reason to believe that this love-prejudice is far more basic to human life than is its opposite, hate-prejudice (which Spinoza says "consists in feeling about anyone through hate less than is right"). One must first overestimate the things one loves before one can underestimate their contraries. Fences are built primarily for the protection of what we cherish.

Positive attachments are essential to life. The young child could not exist without his dependent relationship on a nurturant person. He must love and identify himself with someone or something before he can learn what to hate. Young children must have family and friendship circles before they can define the "out-groups" which are a menace to them.³

Why is it that we hear so little about love-prejudice—the tendency to overgeneralize our categories of attachment and affection? One reason is that prejudices of this sort create no social problem. If I am grossly partisan toward my own children, no one will object—unless at the same time it leads me, as it sometimes does, to manifest antagonism toward the neighbor's children. When a person is defending a categorical value of his own, he may do so at the expense

of other people's interests or safety. If so, then we note his hate-prejudice, not realizing that it springs from a reciprocal love-prejudice underneath.

Take an example from anti-American prejudice. It has been a long-standing condition among many cultivated Europeans. As long ago as 1854 one of them described the United States with contempt as "a grand bedlam, a rendezvous of European scamps and vagabonds."⁴ The abuse was so common that in 1869 James Russell Lowell was moved to chide the European critics in an essay entitled "On a certain condescension in foreigners." But the same type of criticism is still current.

What lies at its root? In the first place, we can be sure that before there was criticism there was self-love—a patriotism, a pride of ancestry and culture, representing the positive values by which the European critics live. Coming to this country they sense a vague threat to their own position. By disparaging America they can feel more secure. It is not that initially they hate America, but that they initially love themselves and their way of life. The formula holds equally well for Americans traveling abroad.

A student in Massachusetts, an avowed apostle of tolerance—so he thought—wrote, "The Negro question will never be solved until those dumb white Southerners get something through their ivory skulls." The student's positive values were idealistic. But ironically enough, his militant "tolerance" brought about a prejudiced condemnation of a portion of the population which he perceived as a threat to his tolerance-value.

Somewhat similar is the case of the lady who said, "Of course I have no prejudice. I had a dear old colored mammy for a nurse. Having grown up in the South and having lived here all my life I understand the problem. The Negroes are much happier if they are just allowed to stay in their place. Northern troublemakers just don't understand the Negro." This lady in her little speech was (psychologically speaking) defending her own privileges, her position, and her cosy way of life. It was not so much that she disliked Negroes or northerners, but she loved the status quo.

It is convenient to believe, if one can, that all of one category is good, all of the other evil. A popular workman in a factory was offered a job in the office by the management of the company. A union official said to him, "Don't take a management job or you'll become a bastard like all the rest of them." Only two classes existed in this official's mind: the workmen and the "bastards."

These instances argue that negative prejudice is a reflex of one's own system of values. We prize our own mode of existence and cor-

respondingly underprize (or actively attack) what seems to us to threaten it. The thought has been expressed by Sigmund Freud: "In the undisguised antipathies and aversion which people feel towards strangers with whom they have to do, we recognize the expression of self-love, of narcissism."

The process is especially clear in time of war. When an enemy threatens all or nearly all of our positive values we stiffen our resistance and exaggerate the merits of our cause. We feel—and this is an instance of overgeneralization—that we are wholly right. (If we did not believe this we could not marshal all our energies for our defense.) And if we are wholly right then the enemy must be wholly wrong. Since he is wholly wrong, we should not hesitate to exterminate him. But even in this wartime example it is clear that our basic love-prejudice is primary and that the hate-prejudice is a derivative phenomenon.

While there may be such things as "just wars," in the sense that threats to one's values are genuine and must be resisted, yet war always entails some degree of prejudice. The very existence of a severe threat causes one to perceive the enemy country as wholly evil, and every citizen therein as a menace. Balance and discrimination become impossible.⁵

Summary

This chapter has argued that man has a propensity to prejudice. This propensity lies in his normal and natural tendency to form generalizations, concepts, categories, whose content represents an oversimplification of his world of experience. His rational categories keep close to first-hand experience, but he is able to form irrational categories just as readily. In these even a kernel of truth may be lacking, for they can be composed wholly of hearsay evidence, emotional projections, and fantasy.

One type of categorization that predisposes us especially to make unwarranted prejudgments is our personal values. These values, the basis of all human existence, lead easily to love-prejudices. Hate-prejudices are secondary developments, but they may, and often do, arise as a reflex of positive values.

In order to understand better the nature of love-prejudice, which at bottom is responsible for hate-prejudice, we turn our attention next to the formation of in-group loyalties.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. A. LUNDBERG AND LEONORE DICKSON. Selective association among ethnic groups in a high school population. *American Sociological Review*, 1952, 17, 23-34.

2. In the science of psychology the processes of "directed thinking" and "free thinking" have in the past been kept quite separate. The "experimentalists," traditionally so-called, have studied the former, and the "dynamic psychologists" (e.g., the Freudians) the latter. A readable book in the former tradition is GEORGE HUMPHREY, *Directed Thinking*, New York: Dodd, Mead, 1948; in the latter tradition, SIGMUND FREUD, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*. New York: Macmillan, transl. 1914.

In recent years there is a tendency for "experimentalists" and "dynamicists" to draw together in their research and in their theory. (See Chapter 10 of this volume.) It is a good sign, for prejudiced thinking is not, after all, something abnormal and disordered. Directed thinking and wishful thinking fuse.

3. See G. W. ALLPORT, A psychological approach to love and hate. Chapter 5 in P. A. SOROKIN (ED.), *Explorations in Altruistic Love and Behavior*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1950. Also, M. F. ASHLEY-MONTAGU, *On Being Human*. New York: Henry Schumann, 1950.

4. MERLE CURTI. The reputation of America overseas (1776-1860). *American Quarterly*, 1949, 1, 58-82.

5. Important relations between war and prejudice are discussed in H. CANTRIL (ED.), *Tensions That Cause Wars*. Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1950.

CHAPTER 3

FORMATION OF IN-GROUPS

WHAT IS AN IN-GROUP?—SEX AS AN IN-GROUP—THE SHIFTING NATURE OF IN-GROUPS—IN-GROUPS AND REFERENCE GROUPS—SOCIAL DISTANCE—THE GROUP-NORM THEORY OF PREJUDICE—CAN THERE BE AN IN-GROUP WITHOUT AN OUT-GROUP?—CAN HUMANITY CONSTITUTE AN IN-GROUP?

The proverb *familiarity breeds contempt* contains considerably less than a half-truth. While we sometimes do become bored with our daily routine of living and with some of our customary companions, yet the very values that sustain our lives depend for their force upon their familiarity. What is more, what is familiar tends to become a value. We come to like the style of cooking, the customs, the people, we have grown up with.

Psychologically, the crux of the matter is that the familiar provides the indispensable basis of our existence. Since existence is good, its accompanying groundwork seems good and desirable. A child's parents, neighborhood, region, nation are given to him—so too his religion, race, and social traditions. To him all these affiliations are taken for granted. Since he is part of them, and they are part of him, they are good.

As early as the age of five, a child is capable of understanding that he is a member of various groups. He is capable, for example, of a sense of ethnic identification. Until he is nine or ten he will not be able to understand just what his membership signifies—how, for example, Jews differ from gentiles, or Quakers from Methodists, but he does not wait for this understanding before he develops fierce in-group loyalties.

Some psychologists say that the child is "rewarded" by virtue of his memberships, and that this reward creates the loyalty. That is to say, his family feeds and cares for him, he obtains pleasure from the gifts and attentions received from neighbors and compatriots. Hence he learns to love them. His loyalties are acquired on the basis of such rewards. We may doubt that this explanation is sufficient. A colored child is seldom or never rewarded for being a Negro—usually just the opposite, and yet he normally grows up with a loyalty to his racial group. Thoughts of Indiana arouse a glow in the breast of a native Hoosier—not necessarily because he