Psychology of Prejudice and Discrimination
By M. E. Kite and B. E. Whitley, Jr (3rd edn, 2016)
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Reviewed by Maggie Scott

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Mary Kite and Bernard Whitley's textbook, now in its third edition, provides a wide-ranging guide to current research into the psychology of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. Although primarily aiming the textbook at students taking courses in psychology, the authors are keen to stress the usefulness of this material to other disciplines including 'education' and 'communication studies', and assert that the work is accessible to students working in these fields (p. xxvii). Students primarily working on topics in language and linguistics might find Peter Garrett's *Attitudes to Language* (2010) a useful bridge to Kite and Whitley's text. His second chapter, for example, discusses methods of modelling and understanding language attitudes, and references mutually relevant supporting research including Gordon Allport's older but very influential work, *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954).

The third edition of Kite and Whitley's work has been updated to help situate current debates in the context of new research. The closing section of each chapter points readers towards important further reading, such as P. S. Rothenberg's edited collection of essays on *Race, Class and Gender in the United States*, now in its tenth edition (2016). Retained student-friendly features include the use of bold type for keywords defined in the glossary, and the use of emphatic boxes to highlight 'supplemental information, additional examples, or other perspectives' (p. xxvii). Key

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terminology, and questions for further discussion, conclude each chapter. Some restructuring of the book's components has taken place, and the number of chapters has been reduced from fourteen to thirteen through the redistribution and integration of key points from the former Chapter 5, 'Emotions and Motivation' (2010) into pertinent discussions elsewhere. A web-based 'Instructor's Manual' has also been devised, with tutors in mind, and includes suggestions for assessments and classroom activities relevant to each topic. The book will no doubt be, or have been, purchased in its electronic format for many university libraries, but retailing at £85 (paperback), and £205 (hardback), it is quite an expensive item for individual buyers without access to institutional e-book subscriptions.

The introductory chapters provide an overview of current thinking regarding stereotypes and the study of prejudice, and these discussions will be of value to any readers interested in gaining an understanding of such social judgements from a psychological perspective. Chapter 1, 'Introducing the Concepts of Stereotyping, Prejudice and Discrimination', looks at the history of some prejudicial attitudes, noting changes in the use of terminology such as 'race' over time, and contextualising perceptions against colonial and postcolonial realities (p. 6). The chapter uses examples that relate to issues very much alive at the time of writing, including the Black Lives Matter movement, formed in 2013 soon after George Zimmerman was found not guilty of the murder of Trayvon Martin, after fatally shooting him in Sanford, Florida (p. 5). Modern instances of racial tensions provide particularly pertinent frames of reference for undergraduate students, taking place within their lifetimes and discussed on social media, and although any 'current' example in a textbook will eventually become outdated, the immediacy of such social concerns helps to underline the fact that Kite and Whitley's work is cutting edge. Their approach may also encourage students to consider fieldwork that adds to such live debates, becoming empowered researchers and activists.

Chapter 2 focuses on the psychological study of prejudice and discrimination, documenting a wide range of methods and approaches by which such attitudes can be captured and further investigated. The authors helpfully provide warnings that emphasise the strengths and weaknesses of experimental techniques, such as the caveat that Implicit Association Tests 'provide only relative, not absolute, assessments of prejudice' (p. 59). Chapters 3 and 4 examine the construction, activation and application of stereotypes and their social impacts. While drawing on more famous cases such as Ann Hopkins' successful lawsuit against PricewaterhouseCoopers when she was passed over for promotion for sexist reasons (1989), the textbook also discusses more recent research including the finding of Tadmor

et al. (2013) that ‘individuals who engaged in stereotyping [...] showed reduced creativity’ (p. 130).

Chapter 5 observes that since the mid-twentieth century, ‘the nature of prejudice has changed from being, in the words of Pettigrew and Meertens (1995), ‘hot, close and direct’ (p. 57) to being more ‘cool, distant and indirect’ (p. 176), and examines the nature of ‘old-fashioned’ and ‘contemporary’ forms of prejudice. Chapter 6 concentrates on value systems and the relationships between religion, political views, emotions and prejudice, while Chapter 7 reviews the ways in which ‘genetic factors, social learning, [and] cognitive development’ (p. 290) play roles in the development of prejudice during childhood. Social identity theory and the construction of prejudice through the behaviour of groups is examined in Chapter 8. Chapter 9 unpacks the development of discriminatory behaviours from prejudiced attitudes, and leads neatly into Chapter 10’s exploration of the effects of these behaviours and attitudes on their victims. Chapter 11 develops these themes in relation to discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation, and Chapter 12 does the same for discrimination on the grounds of age, ability and appearance.

The concluding chapter, hopefully entitled ‘Reducing Prejudice and Discrimination’, asks whether these social ills are ‘unavoidable’, since they appear to be ‘rooted in normal human psychological processes’ (p. 527). Recognition of one’s own prejudices may provoke ‘stereotype suppression’ (p. 528), and ‘research on stereotype suppression shows that people who are motivated to act in an unprejudiced manner can do so’ (p. 531), so Kite and Whitley argue that change can come from within. They also examine the role of Intergroup Contact Theory and the conditions needed to facilitate groups becoming less prejudiced towards one another through processes of interaction (p. 537). A new section on ‘Media Contact’ (pp. 546–7) discusses the causal relationship between media portrayals of groups and their perception by others, and the recent research that supports this position. The chapter concludes with ‘a number of steps that individuals can take to reduce prejudice in themselves and to influence others’ intergroup attitudes’ (p. 567). The ‘Envoi’ (p. 571) directly entreats readers to use what they have learned in the pursuit of a more inclusive, egalitarian and tolerant society. Few textbooks finish with such an important point.

The areas of the book that deal specifically with issues of language have been revised and partially updated, many points remaining just as pertinent now as for the second edition (2010). Chapter 3 includes a subsection on ‘Language and Stereotype Transmission’, which outlines several instances where the standard language ideology myth results in or supports accent prejudice and discrimination. Examples are drawn from worldwide

contexts, though with an emphasis on the United States. Discussions on the pejorative use of ethnonyms in idiomatic expressions are retained, as is the emphatic box (p. 114) summarising perceptions of accents in Disney films, after Rosina Lippi-Green (1997). While the updated commentaries are welcome, the textbook could have helpfully joined the dots between studies such as Howard Giles and Tamara Rakić's chapter on 'Language Attitudes: Social Determinants and Consequences' in *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Social Psychology* (2014). It would have been useful to also situate such studies within the longer tradition of concerns around language and prejudice. Inclusion of references to such texts as Cameron (2012), Milroy and Milroy (2012), Giles and Powesland (1975) and Mittins *et al.* (1970) would help to point students towards key ideas relevant to language attitudes.

Overall, this is an extremely helpful book for anyone wishing to gain a better understanding of the psychology of all forms of discrimination, and readers of the journal should find much food for thought in this revised and refreshed edition.

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