Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination
Our Beliefs About “Others”

• Use heuristics to quickly organize information
  o **Stereotype**: Belief held about groups or certain types of people. Standardized & simplified based on assumptions.
  o **Prejudice**: Adverse judgment or opinion about groups or types of people.
  o **Discrimination**: Actions used to oppress groups of people that are based upon prejudicial beliefs.
What’s so bad about stereotypes?

• **Stereotype Threat** (Steele & Aronson)
  o Knowledge of a stereotype about one’s group leads to behaviors fulfilling the stereotype
    • Women and math
    • African Americans and achievement tests
What’s so bad about prejudices?

• Automatic, implicit
  
  "Every man has reminiscences which he would not tell to everyone but only his friends. He has other matters in his mind which he would not reveal even to his friends, but only to himself, and that in secret. But there are other things which a man is afraid to tell even to himself, and every decent man has a number of such things stored away in his mind."
  Dostoyevsky

• Research suggests our behavior is influenced by our non-conscious cognitions

• Persist even if overt discrimination is absent
Prejudice as Self-Image Maintenance

- Fein and Spencer, 1997
- Self-image threats increase prejudiced evaluations of others
- Engaging in prejudiced evaluations of others makes us feel better about ourselves
- Method
  - Threaten self-image (+/- feedback)
  - Make appraisals of Jewish or Italian Catholic woman or gay or straight man
Results

*Figure 1.* Rating of candidate's personality as a function of self-affirmation condition and ethnicity of the candidate. Higher numbers indicate more favorable evaluations.

*Figure 2.* Rating of target on stereotype-relevant traits as a function of feedback and implied sexual orientation of the target. Higher numbers indicate greater stereotyping.
Results – Self-Esteem

![Diagram showing change in state self-esteem as a function of feedback and ethnicity of the job candidate. Higher numbers indicate greater increase in state self-esteem.]

*Figure 4.* Change in state self-esteem as a function of feedback and ethnicity of the job candidate. Higher numbers indicate greater increase in state self-esteem.
Racism

- **Racism**: belief that race is related to other human traits and characteristics producing inferiorities and superiorities that justify the system of privilege and oppression

  - Overt racism
    - Ex: slavery, segregation
  - Covert racism
    - Ex: “Most incarcerated men are people of color”...‘They’ are dangerous.
  - Institutional racism
    - Ex: health care
Micro-Aggressions

- Brief and everyday slights, insults, indignities and denigrating messages sent to people of color by well-intentioned White people who are unaware of the hidden messages being communicated. (D.W. Sue 2010)

  - “You’re so articulate.”
  - “You speak good English.”
  - Clutching purse; crossing street
  - Confederate flag display
Effects of Racism

Effects of covert racism and micro-aggression more harmful due to their *invisibility*.

- (a) assail the mental health of recipients,
- (b) create a hostile and invalidating work or campus climate,
- (c) perpetuate stereotype threat,
- (d) create physical health problems,
- (e) saturate the broader society with cues that signal devaluation of social group identities,
- (f) lower work productivity and problem solving abilities,
- (g) be partially responsible for creating inequities in education, employment and health care.
White Privilege

“invisible knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks.” ~McIntosh

Allow Whites to take “detours” regarding anti-racism

Colorblind
How to Address Racism

• Ill Doctrine

• What can be done to reduce stereotypes and prejudice?