

Racial Prejudice as a Moderator of Stereotype Rebound: A Conceptual Replication

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The present experiment was a conceptual replication of M. J. Monteith, C. V. Spicer, and G. D. Tooman (1998, Experiment 2), with procedural modifications and a different target group (i.e., Blacks rather than homosexuals). Prior to exposure to a Black speaker, 84 White college students received instructions to suppress stereotypic thoughts or no such instructions. A memory task then assessed immediate and delayed recall of Black stereotypic, White stereotypic, and nonstereotypic words. Paralleling M. J. Monteith et al. (1998), after suppressing Black stereotypes high (but not low) prejudice participants exhibited increased accessibility of Black stereotype words (i.e., stereotype rebound) on the immediate recall task ($p < .05$). No stereotype rebound occurred for delayed recall. Implications of stereotype rebound effects are considered.

Although the desire to rid the mind of unwanted thoughts is an important human tendency (see Wegner & Pennebaker, 1993), deliberate attempts to suppress a thought can paradoxically increase its accessibility (Wegner & Erber, 1992; see Wegner, 1994 for a review). With respect to stereotypic thoughts, for example, there is evidence that attempts to suppress one's biases can result, at least temporarily, in the subsequent *hyperaccessibility* of the stereotypes, termed the "rebound effect" (Macrae, Bodenhausen, & Milne, 1998; Macrae, Bodenhausen, Milne, & Jetten, 1994; Monteith, Spicer, & Tooman, 1998).

One of the most prominent theoretical explanations of this effect has been forwarded by Wegner (1994; Wegner & Erber, 1992). Wegner proposed that mental control involves two distinct and simultaneously occurring processes, the

operating process (which strives to substitute a replacement thought for the unwanted thought) and the ironic monitoring process (which scans consciousness for traces of the unwanted thought). The ironic process thus monitors for signs that the operating process has failed its function. Considering that the operating process presumably demands cognitive resources and conscious attention for its operation, increased cognitive demands (Wegner, 1994) or decreased attention to suppression goals (Macrae et al., 1994) can interfere with the operating process. Because ironic monitoring processes are automatic and operate with little effort, they are largely unaffected by such concerns. Moreover, because ironic monitoring presumably primes unwanted thoughts, these thoughts become hyperaccessible, and hence more likely to impinge on social judgment and other cognitive processes (Macrae et al., 1994).

Despite general evidence in support of stereotype rebound effects, this line of research typically has not examined the role of individual differences. Nevertheless, as Monteith et al. (1998) have argued, individual differences in prejudice may be a critical moderating factor. Specifically, people with low-prejudice attitudes may be personally motivated to avoid stereotypic thoughts (e.g., Devine,

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Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Monteith, 1993), have practice at suppressing these thoughts (Kawakami, Dovidio, Moll, Hermsen, & Russin, 2000), and have alternative egalitarian thoughts readily available to replace the unwanted thoughts (Devine & Monteith, 1993; Moskowitz, Salomon, & Taylor, in press; Wegner, Schneider, Carter, & White, 1987). Consequently, people low in prejudice may not demonstrate stereotype rebound effects. In contrast, because highly prejudiced people readily activate stereotypic thoughts (Kawakami, Dion, & Dovidio, 1998; Lepore & Brown, 1997), tend not to be internally motivated to control their biases (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, 1993; Plant & Devine, 1998), and are unlikely to have egalitarian thoughts to replace stereotypic thoughts, they may be particularly likely to show stereotype rebound effects.

A study by Monteith et al. (1998, Experiment 2) tested this reasoning. Participants were asked to suppress or not suppress stereotypes of homosexuals before moving on to a memory task. After an initial practice trial containing only nonstereotypic words to establish a baseline for individual differences in memory, participants performed a series of eight more trials in which stereotypic and nonstereotypic words were displayed briefly (6 s) on a projection screen. Participants were given 45 s following the presentation of each list to write down as many of the words as they could remember. Greater recall reflects the greater silence and cognitive activation of the words (see Fyock & Stangor, 1994; Macrae, Bodenhausen, Milne, & Wheeler, 1996). The results supported the hypothesis: highly prejudiced, suppression-induced participants showed a recall advantage for words stereotypically associated with homosexuals compared to high prejudice controls and low prejudice suppression and control participants.

The present study was designed as a conceptual replication of the Monteith et al. (1998, Experiment 2) research on recall of stereotypic words, focusing on racial stereotypes rather than stereotypes of homosexuals. As Monteith et al. (1998) proposed, stereotype rebound effects may be qualified by the target group being considered. In particular, stereotype suppression effects may differ between "social groups for which there are not strong personal or social norms against stereotyping (e.g., skinheads, male construction workers, yuppies, and politicians)" and "other groups for which there are much stronger personal and social concerns over the application of stereotypes" (p. 358). Whereas the Monteith et al. (1998) research examined stereotype accessibility for homosexuals, our research explored stereotype rebound effects by White participants concerning Blacks. Our experiment differed in three additional

ways. First, in addition to the use of nonstereotypic words as controls for Black stereotypic words, we included a set of White stereotypic words as another control stimuli set. Second, we used a different task during the suppression instructions, where participants viewed a videotaped speech containing arguments for and against affirmative action, under the pretense that we were interested in their reactions to the speech (Monteith et al. [1998] had participants write essays on homosexuals; see also Macrae et al. [1994]). Third, we included a delayed recall task approximately 15 minutes after the immediate recall task, where participants were asked to freely recall as many of the presented words as possible.

In the present experiment, participants viewed a videotape of a Black speaker under the belief that the researchers were interested in participants' evaluations of the videotape. Following the procedure of Monteith et al. (1998; see also Macrae et al., 1994), participants were instructed to suppress their stereotypes about Blacks during the presentation or no mention was made of stereotypes. In a second, allegedly unrelated study, participants were administered a memory task similar to that of Monteith et al., with word recall coming immediately after the presentation of each list. In the Monteith et al. (1998) study, the pattern of recall for words stereotypically associated with homosexuals was compared to the pattern for nonstereotypical words. In our study, the pattern of Black stereotype word recall was compared to two control sets of words: nonstereotypic words and White stereotypic words. After completing some filler measures and a prejudice measure, participants were administered a delayed free recall task to explore the duration of stereotype rebound effects.

The primary goal of the present research was to explore further the moderating effects of individual differences in prejudice on stereotype rebound effects within a context that has traditionally been associated with stronger norms against the expression of bias (i.e., racial attitudes and stereotypes) than the context used by Monteith et al. (1998), which examined attitudes toward and stereotypes of homosexuals. Although it is possible that because most White Americans are aware of the strong traditional norms against bias by Whites toward Blacks (Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997) and are already well-practiced in suppressing their biases (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998), stereotype rebound effects may not occur in this context. Alternatively, because the conditions specified by Monteith et al. (1998) that could produce moderating effects for level of prejudice apply to the context of race, stereotype rebound effects may occur, but primarily for highly prejudiced Whites and not

for those low in prejudice. In particular, high prejudice-scoring Whites, compared to low prejudice-scoring Whites, are more likely to exhibit automatic stereotype activation about Blacks (Kawakami et al., 1998; Lepore & Brown, 1997; Wittenbrink, Judd, & Park, 1997) and have lower motivations to respond without prejudice (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, 1993; Plant & Devine, 1998).

Based on the reasoning of Monteith et al. (1998, Experiment 2), we posited that when asked to suppress Black stereotypes, high prejudice participants would show evidence of stereotype rebound, reflected in a relatively high recall of Black stereotype words. Such increased recall of stereotypic words is presumed to reflect greater stereotype activation. As in Monteith et al. (Experiment 2), recall of Black stereotypic words following stereotype suppression by high prejudice participants was predicted to be greater than recall of these words by high prejudice control participants who did not receive suppression instructions and recall by low prejudice people in either experimental condition. Given that our participants were instructed specifically to suppress Black stereotypes, however, this pattern of word recall was expected to be limited to Black stereotypic words, and not extend to White stereotypic or nonstereotypic words. That is, an Instruction (Suppress vs. Control) \times Prejudice (Low vs. High) \times Word Type (Black Stereotypic vs. White Stereotypic vs. Nonstereotypic) interaction was expected. Due to the short-lived and often transient nature of accessibility effects (Higgins, Bargh, & Lombardi, 1985; Srull & Wyer, 1980), it was also expected that these effects would dissipate over time.

METHOD

Participants

Eighty-eight introductory psychology students ($M = 18.5$ years of age) at a liberal arts college in the northeastern United States participated for research credit. Four of these participants reported their race as African American and were not included in the subsequent analyses. Of the remaining 84 participants, 32 were men and 52 were women.

Design

A 2 (Instruction: Suppress vs. Control) \times 2 (Prejudice: Low vs. High) \times 3 (Word Type: Black Stereotypic vs. White Stereotypic vs. Nonstereotypic) design was employed, with repeated measures on the last variable. Participants were randomly assigned to instruction conditions.

Procedure and Materials

Participants in our study were tested in groups of 5 to 15, with each person seated at a desk and facing a television screen. Prior to signing consent forms, participants were led to believe that they would be participating in several studies; in reality, each of the "studies" was part of one investigation.

"Study 1" was entitled "Listening Perspectives." All participants were given the following instructions, in both verbal and written forms:

In a few minutes, you are going to watch a videotaped presentation on the topic of affirmative action. When the presentation is finished, you will complete a questionnaire that will ask you about your opinions and beliefs.

To manipulate Instruction, some participants were subsequently asked to suppress their stereotypes of Blacks, whereas no instructions were given for the control group. Specifically, based on the procedure employed by Macrae et al. (1994) and Monteith et al. (1998), participants in the *Instruction Suppression Condition* were also given the following information:

Psychological research has established that our impressions and evaluations of others are consistently biased by stereotypes. So, *you should actively try to avoid thinking about the speaker in stereotypic ways.*

Participants in the *Instruction Control Condition* were not asked to suppress their stereotypes. All participants in a given testing session were assigned to the same Instruction condition. At this point, participants viewed the videotaped speech on affirmative action delivered by a Black male confederate of similar age as the participants. The speech was approximately 3.5 min in length and contained a number of arguments that were favorable and unfavorable toward affirmative action. In support of the cover story, following the speech participants completed a questionnaire assessing their evaluations of affirmative action, the speech, and the extent to which the speech influenced their attitudes.¹

At this point, "Study 2," entitled the "Memory Task," was introduced. In a manner similar to that of

¹ Responses to these items (7-point rating scale, ranging from -3 to +3) did not vary as a function of experimental condition. When each variable was subjected to a 2 (Instruction: Suppress vs. Control) \times (Prejudice: Low vs. High) analysis of variance, no 2-way interactions were found ($p_s > .132$, $\eta^2 < .028$). A main effect of Prejudice indicated that high prejudice participants ($M = -0.14$, $SD = 1.44$) were less favorable toward affirmative action than were low prejudice participants ($M = 1.00$, $SD = 1.43$), $F(1, 81) = 11.42$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .124$.

Monteith et al. (1998), participants were informed that the researchers were investigating short-term memory and expected to find high levels of performance because college students typically have well-developed long-term memory. Written instructions explained the nature of the task, and participants were encouraged to ask questions if they required more information.

In a procedure adapted and modified from Monteith et al. (1998) designed to assess stereotype accessibility, nine lists of words were presented on the television screen.² If stereotype suppression paradoxically primes (or makes salient) the stereotype, we would expect that encoding and retrieval of these words would be facilitated under suppression conditions (see Fyock & Stangor, 1994; Macrae et al., 1996; Monteith et al., 1998, Experiment 2), particularly for highly prejudiced participants. Each list consisted of 12 words, and was presented for 6 seconds. After this interval, participants were given 45 s to jot down any words that they could remember. A tone sounded 43 s into this writing interval to notify students to lift their head to attend to the next list of words.

Based on pretesting with independent samples drawn from the same participant pool, sets of words were identified as Black stereotypic (i.e., significantly more strongly associated with Blacks than with Whites), White stereotypic (i.e., significantly more strongly associated with Whites than with Blacks), or nonstereotypic (not significantly more associated with either group). The first list of 12 words presented to participants contained only nonstereotypic words (e.g., tense, gossipy) and served as a baseline measure of recall. Across the 8 key trials, participants were exposed to 16 Black stereotype words (8 positive: musical, rhythmic, loyal, humorous, sensitive, charming, religious, athletic; 8 negative: poor, angry, criminal, ignorant, hostile, mad, lazy, aggressive), 16 White stereotype words (8 positive: intelligent, independent, ambitious, industrious, educated, responsible, wealthy, progressive; 8 negative: boastful, stubborn, materialistic, conventional, boring, stuffy, uptight, greedy), and 62 nonstereotype words (e.g., fat, candid, bizarre).³ These words appeared at

random locations across trials, with the same stimulus materials presented to all participants. A booklet was administered for participants to provide their responses, with each the recall of each list completed on a separate page.

After completing a series of filler measures taking approximately 10 minutes (ostensibly as part of another study), participants were asked to complete, as part of a study on Social Opinions, Brigham's (1993) Attitude Toward Blacks Scale. Responses to this scale formed the basis of classifying participants as low or high in prejudice. Participants were asked to fill out a form in which they were asked to indicate their reactions to the studies, were probed for suspicions, and were thanked for participation. Participants were debriefed at the conclusion of the study.

RESULTS

The first set of analyses examined the properties of the prejudice measure used in the present study, the Attitudes Toward Blacks Scale (Brigham, 1993). The next set of analyses was designed to test whether the results provided a conceptual replication of the Monteith et al. (1998) homosexual stereotype rebound effects with stereotypes of Blacks on an immediate recall task. The final set of analyses explored the duration of stereotype rebound effects on a delayed free recall task.

Attitudes Toward Blacks

Brigham's (1993) Attitude Toward Blacks Scale consisted of 20 statements in which respondents indicated their agreement with each of 20 statements of item on 5-point rating scales (1 = *disagree strongly*, 5 = *agree strongly*; $M = 1.91$, $Med = 1.84$, $SD = 0.47$). The scale demonstrated good reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$). In addition, a subset of the participants ($n = 28$) completed a pretesting version of this questionnaire 4-6 weeks earlier. The scales showed strong test-retest reliability, $r(26) = .80$, $p < .001$. Among this subset of participants, scores were also stable across the two testing periods. A 2 (Instruction: Suppress vs. Control) \times 2 (Time: Pretest and Posttest) analysis of variance, with repeated measures on the last factor, revealed no significant effects. The mean level of prejudice was equivalent for the pretest ($M = 2.04$, $SD = 0.56$) and posttest ($M = 2.01$, $SD = 0.53$) measures ($p > .75$, $\eta^2 = .003$), and comparable for the suppression and control conditions. Overall, these results for this subset of participants suggest that the experimental instructions did not influence the ratings of prejudice. For the main tests of the hypotheses, participants were classified as low ($n = 42$) or high

² These stimuli materials were prepared on and recorded on an iMac computer. Videotaping the materials enabled participants to be tested in groups and simplified the procedure.

³ Although participants were exposed to 64 nonstereotype words, only 62 of these words were used due to an error in the experimental procedure. Specifically, the word "cheerful" was presented twice, so it was excluded from the analysis. The authors can be contacted for a list of these words.

Table 1: Comparison of the Monteith et al. (1998, Experiment 2) and Present Findings: Proportion of Stereotype and Nonstereotype Words Recalled as a Function of Prejudice Level and Instruction Condition

Word Type	Control		Suppress	
	Low Prej	High Prej	Low Prej	High Prej
Monteith et al. (1998)				
Homosexual Stereotype	.34	.31	.34	.42
Nonstereotype	.40	.40	.44	.41
Present Findings				
Black Stereotype	.34	.33	.33	.42
White Stereotype	.31	.36	.30	.28
Nonstereotype	.35	.37	.33	.34

Note. Top panel adapted from Monteith et al. (1998, Experiment 2). Low Prej = Low Prejudice, High Prej = High Prejudice.

($n = 42$) on the basis of a median split on the posttest scores.

Immediate Recall Task

Following the procedure of Monteith et al. (1998, Experiment 2), recall scores were computed as the proportion of words recalled related to the total possible words recalled for that word type. The three word types used in the present study were Black stereotypic words ($n = 16$), White stereotypic words ($n = 16$), and nonstereotypic words ($n = 62$). Preliminary analyses revealed no systematic effects associated with the sex of the participant. Consequently, this factor was not considered in subsequent analyses. The primary analyses of recall scores was patterned after the analyses of Monteith et al. (1998). Specifically, we conducted a 2 (Instruction: Suppress vs. Control) \times 2 (Prejudice: Low vs. High) \times 3 (Word Type: Black Stereotypic vs. White Stereotypic vs. Nonstereotypic) analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), with Word Type as a repeated measure. In the interest of reducing individual variability in recall ability, the covariate was the number of words recalled correctly from the practice list, as recommended by Monteith et al. (1998).

There was a significant effect of the covariate on recall, $F(1, 79) = 7.36, p = .01, \eta^2 = .085$. With respect to the independent variables, the 2 \times 2 \times 3 ANCOVA demonstrated a Instruction \times Word Type interaction, $F(2, 158) = 4.70, p = .01, \eta^2 = .056$. Recall in the Suppress condition was higher than in the Control condition for Black Stereotypic Words ($M_s = .38$ vs. $.33$), but somewhat lower for White Stereotypic Words ($M_s = .29$ vs. $.33$) and for Nonstereotypic Words ($M_s = .34$ vs. $.36$). However, this effect was moderated

by participants' level of prejudice. Consistent with the results of Monteith et al. (1998, Experiment 2), an Instruction \times Prejudice \times Word Type interaction was obtained, $F(2, 158) = 3.82, p = .02, \eta^2 = .046$. The means for the present study and the comparable means from Monteith et al. (1998) are presented in Table 1.

Following the Monteith et al. (1998) analysis strategy, analyses were next performed separately for Black Stereotypic Words, White Stereotypic Words, and Nonstereotypic Words. We predicted that suppression instructions would increase recall for Black Stereotypic Words compared to control instructions, but primarily for high prejudice participants and not for low prejudice participants. Thus for Black Stereotypic Words, an Instruction \times Prejudice interaction was expected, with participants in the High Prejudice/Suppress condition showing uniquely high levels of recall compared to the other three conditions. In contrast, no such interaction was predicted for White Stereotypic Words or for Nonstereotypic Words.

The test of the Instruction \times Prejudice interaction pattern for the Black Stereotypic Words revealed a marginally significant effect consistent with predictions, $F(1, 79) = 3.26, p = .08, \eta^2 = .040$. The pattern of means is displayed in the lower panel of Table 1. Again following the Monteith et al. (1998) analysis strategy, Fisher's Least Significance Difference test revealed that, as expected, high prejudice participants in the Suppress condition recalled a higher proportion of Black Stereotypic Words ($M = .42, SD = .13$) than did high prejudice participants in the Control condition ($M = .33, SD = .09, p < .05$) or low prejudice participants in the Suppress ($M = .33, SD = .12, p < .05$) or the Control condition

($M = .34$, $SD = .14$, $p < .05$).⁴ Additional analyses considering the valence of the Black stereotypic words indicated similar patterns for positive and negative Black stereotype words, with the Instruction x Prejudice x Valence interaction not approaching significance, $F(1, 79) < 1$, $p = .59$, $\eta^2 = .004$.

A similar test of the Instruction x Prejudice interaction with White stereotypes as the dependent measure showed, as anticipated, no significant interaction ($p > .13$, $\eta^2 = .028$). The only effect that approached significance was a marginally significant main effect for Instruction, $F(1, 79) = 3.58$, $p = .06$, $\eta^2 = .043$. Participants in the Suppress condition ($M = .29$, $SD = 0.11$) tended to recall fewer White stereotypic words than did those in the Control condition ($M = .33$, $SD = 0.10$).

Testing the Instruction x Prejudice interaction for the Nonstereotype Words also showed no interaction ($p > .76$, $\eta^2 = .001$). A significant effect was found for the covariate, $F(1, 79) = 5.57$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .066$. In addition, a marginal main effect of Instruction revealed higher recall of nonstereotypic words in the Suppress condition ($M = .34$, $SD = .06$) than the Control condition ($M = .36$, $SD = .05$), $F(1, 79) = 3.84$, $p = .05$.

Overall, the pattern of results we obtained for words either associated with Black stereotypes (i.e., Black Stereotypic Words) or not (White Stereotypic and Nonstereotypic Words) closely parallels the results obtained by Monteith et al. (1998, Experiment 2) for words stereotypic or nonstereotypic of homosexuals.

Delayed Recall Task

The last task of the experimental session required participants to recall any of the words from the Memory Task completed earlier in the experiment. This task thus differed from the initial memory task in that there was a 15-minute delay between presentation and recall, and the words could be recalled in any order (i.e., there were no list-specific recall requirements).

Paralleling our analyses for the immediate recall measures, we subjected the proportions of words

recalled on the delayed recall task to a 2 (Instruction: Suppress vs. Control) x 2 (Prejudice: Low vs. High) x 3 (Word Type: Black Stereotypic vs. White Stereotypic vs. Nonstereotypic) ANCOVA, with the covariate being the number of words recalled correctly from the practice list. The results revealed no significant covariate effects, main effects, or interactions ($ps > .13$, $\eta^2s < .026$).⁵ Similarly, a focused test of the Instruction x Prejudice interaction for recall of Black Stereotypic Words only on the delayed recall measure did not approach significance ($F < 1$). Indeed, recall across conditions was quite low (low prejudice control $M = .09$; low prejudice suppress $M = .08$; high prejudice control $M = .11$; high prejudice suppress $M = .09$). Thus, there was no evidence of a stereotype rebound effect on this delayed recall measure.

DISCUSSION

Despite some procedural differences and the focus on responses to a different social group (i.e., Blacks rather than homosexuals), the results of the present study provide a conceptual replication of the work of Monteith et al. (1998, Experiment 2). We found support for the hypothesis that individual differences in prejudice moderate the extent to which stereotype suppression results in subsequent stereotype hyperaccessibility. On the immediate recall task, highly prejudiced Whites who were earlier instructed to suppress Black stereotypes were significantly more likely to recall such stereotypes than were highly prejudiced Whites in the control condition or than low prejudice Whites under either experimental condition. These effects were generalizable across positive and negative Black stereotype traits. In contrast to the effects for Black stereotypes, no Instruction x Prejudice effects were observed for White stereotypic words or nonstereotypic words.

Our finding of results similar to those of Monteith and her colleagues despite procedural differences, such as having participants suppress their stereotypes about a Black speaker as they evaluated the speech rather than having participants write a passage on "a day in the life" of a member of the group (see also Macrae et al., 1994, Experiments 1-3; Monteith et al., 1998, Experiments 1 & 2) or describe a photographed person (Macrae et al., 1998, Experiments 1-6) suggests the methodological robustness of suppression manipulations. The fact that our pattern of results for recall of racial stereotypes closely parallels Monteith et al.'s findings using homosexual

⁴ Monteith et al. (1998) recommend that words with a high degree of recall across conditions be removed from analysis. When we removed words with recall greater than 65%, we obtained virtually the same results. For example, the words "aggressive" and "athletic" were highly recalled, and when removed from the analysis, the pattern was the same as when the words were retained. That is, the high prejudice suppression cell ($M = .38$, $SD = .17$, $p < .05$) was still significantly greater than the high prejudice control cell ($M = .27$, $SD = .11$, $p < .05$), the low prejudice suppression cell ($M = .27$, $SD = .16$, $p < .05$), and the low prejudice control cell ($M = .27$, $SD = .16$, $p < .05$).

⁵ The 3-way interaction was not close to statistical significance, $F(2, 156) = 1.07$, $p = .35$, $\eta^2 = .014$.

stereotypes (see Table 1) speaks to the generalizability of their conclusion concerning the moderating influence of level of prejudice on stereotype rebound.

Nevertheless, future research might still productively consider the conditions under which level of prejudice is a more or less important moderating factor. Monteith et al. (1998) suggest that level of prejudice may be important because high prejudice people may show automatic stereotype activation, whereas low prejudice people do not (Kawakami et al., 1998; Lepore & Brown, 1997; Wittenbrink et al., 1997); because high prejudice people do not have strong internal motivations to respond without bias, whereas low prejudice people do (Devine et al., 1991; Monteith, 1993; Plant & Devine, 1998); and/or because high prejudice people are less well practiced at suppressing bias than are low prejudice people due to their different sensitivity to norms against prejudice toward a particular social groups. These possibilities are likely to be conceptually related and thus pragmatically difficult to disentangle. For example, because low prejudice people are sensitive to social norms against bias and have internalized these norms, they may practice suppressing stereotypes more regularly and consistently than do high prejudice people, ultimately leading to differences in automatic stereotype activation between low and high prejudice people (see Kawakami et al., 1998; 2000). This reasoning suggests, however, that – at least when level of prejudice is determined on a relative basis such as a median split – prejudice may be a stronger moderating factor for stereotype rebound for groups for whom there are strong and widespread norms against bias (e.g., Blacks) than for groups for which negative attitudes are more acceptable (e.g., skinheads). In the former case, the motivation and practice of low prejudice people may limit the initial automatic activation of stereotypes; in the latter case, bias may be more open and accepted, and both relatively low- and high-prejudice scoring people may chronically exhibit stereotype activation and, consequently, exhibit stereotype rebound effects after suppressing these thoughts.

Our finding that stereotype suppression patterns for the immediate recall task were not found on a different and delayed recall task is also of interest. As others have suggested, it appears as though stereotype hyperaccessibility following suppression may be relatively short-lived and ultimately amenable to conscious goals and motivations (Fiske, 1989). As an alternative to a cognitive view of the dissipation of stereotype activation over time, Liberman and Förster (2000) suggest a motivational interpretation. Specifically, they propose that “expressing” (or employing) a

stereotype after suppression satisfies a motivational need for such expression, reducing the subsequent magnitude of stereotype hyperaccessibility and rebound. From this perspective, participants in the present study may have satisfied such a need during the immediate recall task, diminishing the impact of the stereotype accessibility during the delayed task. Future research could explore the motivational and cognitive underpinnings of these rebound effects. In either case, the finding that rebound effects may be relatively short-lived does not detract from the importance of the phenomenon. Indeed, many brief social events can have longer-term consequences. For example, Henderson-King and Nisbett (1996) found that Whites who encountered a single Black person behaving in an inconsiderate way increased the activation of stereotypic thoughts and reduced their willingness to interact with another Black person. Similarly, stereotype rebound may be reflected, at least within a limited time period, in actual social behaviors, such as determining physical proximity to an outgroup member (Macrae, Bodenhausen, et al., 1994, Experiment 2). Intergroup contact is a critical factor in reducing social biases (Pettigrew, 1998), and thus the immediate cognitive and behavioral consequences of stereotype rebound may translate into actions (or inactions) that have more extended consequences on intergroup attitudes. Thus, understanding the nature of stereotype rebound effects and the moderating role of level of prejudice can help elucidate sequences of thoughts and actions that can shape intergroup relations in subtle, perhaps unconscious, but undoubtedly significant ways.

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