

2

Color Lines in the Mind

*Implicit Prejudice, Discrimination,
and the Potential for Change*

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In 1959 John Howard Griffin, a White journalist, traveled through the segregated South as a Black man. He darkened his skin with medication, shaved his hair, and exchanged his privileged White life for the life of a working class Black man (Griffin 1960). The book *Black Like Me* chronicles his experiences as he crosses the color line. Griffin's experiences as a Black man ran the gamut from legal segregation in public spaces, to "hate stares" and intimidation that enforced rigid social customs about "appropriate" interracial interactions, to polite but firm refusal of employment. This was a society in which the color line separating Black from White was rigidly upheld; where bigotry was blatant; and where few people publicly questioned the legitimacy of a race-based hierarchy.

A lot has changed in fifty years. Grassroots social movements dedicated to the civil rights of historically disadvantaged groups have produced far-reaching changes in the laws and policies that govern civil society. These legal changes have also shifted social norms and individual attitudes (Albert and Albert 1984; Chong 1991; Gitlin 1987; Levy 1992; Williams 1987). The notion that prejudice and discrimination against disadvantaged groups, most notably African Americans and other racial/ethnic minorities, is illegitimate and unethical has become an increasingly mainstream philosophy. These changes in American public opinion are clearly reflected in national surveys that reveal racist attitudes have declined steadily over the past few decades (Brigham 1972; Karlins et al. 1969; Kluegel and Smith 1986; Maykovich 1971, 1972; Schuman et al. 1997). In addition to the changed social mores, the color

line in American society today has become vastly more complex than the Black-White divide in the 1950s, as immigration and globalization have changed the racial/ethnic composition of the American population.

Despite optimistic trends in the direction of dismantled legal barriers, greater diversity, and egalitarian attitudes, other evidence reveals glaring structural inequalities that continue to exist in several areas of everyday life—healthcare, housing, education, employment, and the justice system (Daniels 2001; Leonhardt 2002; Portwood 1995; Raudenbush and Kasim 1998; Stohlberg, 2002). One reason for the discrepancy between evidence that *individuals' attitudes* have become more egalitarian and other evidence revealing *structural disparities* may be that, until recently, individuals' attitudes have been measured by relying solely on what people say—their self-reported (or conscious) thoughts and opinions. This heavy reliance on conscious attitude measurement has resulted in the underestimation of the pervasiveness of prejudice in two ways. First, because contemporary social norms frown upon overt expressions of prejudice, people may not be willing to report their attitudes honestly, especially if those attitudes violate social norms (Dovidio and Gaertner 1986; Jones and Sigall 1972). Second, when asked about their opinions about minority groups, people are likely to be vigilant and thoughtful in their responses, whereupon they may draw a sharp distinction between their personal attitudes and societal stereotypes (“Society at large is prejudiced against Group X, but I am not”). But when they are not vigilant, this sharp distinction may become blurry; their personal views and societal views may start to overlap and jointly influence people’s implicit or unconscious judgments and behavior (Banaji 2001; Banaji and Greenwald 1994; Dasgupta 2004; Greenwald and Banaji 1995; Nisbett and Wilson 1977). These reasons prompted social psychologists to develop new theories of unconscious or implicit prejudice and stereotypes and new measurement tools that do not rely so heavily on people’s willingness and ability to accurately report their thoughts and actions (Crosby et al. 1980; Gaertner and Dovidio 1977; Jones and Sigall 1972; see also Nisbett and Wilson 1977).

Attitudes and beliefs are considered to be *unconscious* or *implicit* when people express them without being fully aware of what they are saying and its implications or without having the ability to control and change their responses at will (Bargh 1994, 1997; Greenwald and Banaji 1995). One might ask—how can attitudes be measured without people’s awareness and control? This is a reasonable question given that the most common way to measure attitudes is by asking people to reflect on their opinions and then report how they feel about a particular group or issue using questionnaires or interviews. There is a different way of conceptualizing attitudes: that is, at a basic level an attitude is simply a mental association between a group and a good or bad feeling. These mental associations vary in psychological strength. Some attitudes are strong and therefore “pop into mind” quickly and easily, whereas other attitudes are weak and take longer to come to mind. For example, if a person holds a strong negative attitude toward a group, when she or he sees a member of that group, the negative evaluation should come to mind quickly and automatically. By contrast, if a person holds a

weak negative attitude toward a group, when she or he encounters a group member, the negative evaluation should come to mind much more slowly. In other words, *the speed with which good or bad evaluations come to mind* can serve as an indirect indicator of people's attitudes toward particular groups without researchers having to rely on people's self-reports of how they feel.

People may be implicitly biased in their thoughts and actions even if their explicit attitudes are unbiased. Because individuals are often unaware of their subtle bias and cannot easily correct such thoughts and actions, implicitly biased actions may occur repeatedly, accumulating over time and across individuals. As a result, the negative effects of biased actions may add up quickly to produce large structural disparities in employment, housing, healthcare delivery, treatment by the criminal justice system, etc. Because each instance of bias is subtle, seemingly innocuous, and clearly not explicit bigotry, at face value it appears as though the days of prejudice and discrimination are in the past. But one just has to scratch below the surface to discover that current inequalities on many socioeconomic and sociopolitical indicators may be traced back to many small actions favoring historically privileged groups (White Americans) over less privileged groups (African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and immigrants).

Implicit attitudes are typically measured using computer-driven rapid response tasks that capture the speed with which good versus bad thoughts come to mind when people are shown individuals who belong to particular groups. In one such task, the Implicit Association Test (IAT), participants see faces of individuals (e.g., African Americans and White Americans) and words with good or bad meaning (e.g., joy versus death) flash briefly on a computer screen one at a time (Greenwald et al. 1998). As these pictures and words appear on the screen participants are instructed to group them rapidly by pressing one of two computer keys. In one part of the IAT they are instructed to group together Black faces and good words by pressing the same key and White faces and bad words by pressing a different key. In another part of the IAT, the groupings are reversed: now they are instructed to group Black faces and bad words using one key and White faces and good words using a different key. The basic premise of the IAT is that if participants unconsciously associate bad concepts more strongly with Black than White Americans, then the task in which they have to group together Black with bad and White with good ought to be subjectively easier and yield faster responses than the task in which they have to group together Black with good and White with bad. The difference in the speed of response to these two tasks in terms of reaction time provides a measure of implicit racial preference for Whites compared to Blacks.

Implicit Preference and Prejudice along Color Lines: Research Evidence and Practical Applications

Initial investigations of the nature of implicit prejudice and stereotypes focused entirely on the attitudes held by members of advantaged groups toward members of disadvantaged groups. The primary prediction of this early research was

that individuals who belong to socially advantaged groups would favor their own group at the expense of other (less advantaged) groups in terms of evaluations, judgments, and behavior. This prediction is consistent with social identity theory, which argues that when people strongly identify with their ingroup and when their self-esteem is linked to the perceived worthiness of their ingroup, they will tend to favor their ingroup and sometimes derogate other outgroups (Abrams and Hogg 1988, 1990; Bourhis 1994; Bourhis et al. 1997; Oakes and Turner 1980; Rubin and Hewstone 1998; Tajfel 1981; Tajfel and Turner 1986; Turner et al. 1987).

By now almost a hundred studies have documented individuals' tendency to rapidly associate positive characteristics with ingroups more than outgroups (i.e., ingroup favoritism) as well as the tendency to associate negative characteristics with outgroups more than ingroups (i.e., outgroup derogation). For example, White Americans, on average, implicitly prefer their own group over African Americans. That is, they are faster at associating good concepts (joy, peace) with Whites compared to Blacks; likewise they are faster at associating bad concepts (death, vomit) with Blacks compared to Whites (Dasgupta and Greenwald 2001; Dasgupta et al. 2000; Devine 1989; Dovidio et al. 2002; Fazio et al. 1995; Greenwald et al. 1998; Kawakami et al. 1998; McConnell and Leibold 2001; Nosek et al. 2002; Rudman et al. 2001; von Hippel et al. 1997; Wittenbrink et al. 1997, 2001).

The pervasiveness of implicit bias along color lines is not limited to pure negative evaluations (disliking); it also emerges in the form of group-specific stereotypes. For example, race-based stereotypes link Black men with hostility, danger, and crime; people learn these stereotypes passively through exposure to mass media, peer opinions, etc. Once learned, these stereotypes automatically influence their judgments of Black men in crime-relevant situations. For example, people are more likely to misidentify objects seen for a split second in the presence of Black men as deadly weapons rather than innocuous tools; however, they are more likely to misidentify the same objects seen in the presence of White men as innocuous tools rather than deadly weapons (Correll et al. 2002; Greenwald et al. 2003; Payne 2001). The biasing influence of implicit racial stereotypes on weapon misidentification occurs even when people have the conscious goal to avoid using racial stereotypes to make their judgments, and it occurs regardless of participants' own race (both White and Black Americans show the same effect; Correll et al. 2002; Payne et al. 2002).

These simple laboratory experiments about race-based errors in weapon identification have a clear and disturbing parallel in the real world. Such errors distort people's rapid judgments about who is armed and dangerous and can lead to fatal mistakes such as the fatal shooting of Amadou Diallo, a West African man, in 1999. Four New York City police officers searching for a rape suspect knocked on Amadou Diallo's door to question him. When he came to the door he reached inside his jacket, at which point the officers shot at him forty-one times, hitting him with nineteen bullets. The object Diallo was reaching for

turned out to be his wallet. What led to this tragic incident: were these police officers overly racist or is it possible that their split second decision about what Diallo was pulling out of his pocket was unconsciously triggered by stereotypes linking Black men with crime? The answer to these questions are critical because it determines whether the best way to eliminate such costly human errors involves changing police officers' conscious racial attitudes by instituting sensitivity training or by changing their unconscious associations about race and crime.

These questions have motivated recent research in social psychology. Some preliminary data suggest that race bias in decisions to shoot may be reduced when individuals have more contact with African Americans which is likely to weaken racial stereotypes (Correll et al. 2002), and when they gain extensive practice at making accurate decisions in simulated situations where the race of the suspect is unrelated to the presence of a weapon (Plant and Peruche 2005; Plant et al. 2005). However, other related studies demonstrate that although police officers with extensive training in law enforcement show less implicit race bias in decisions to "shoot" in crime-related simulations compared to civilians from the same community, such bias is not completely erased even in the case of trained police officers (Correll et al., 2005). Thus, the conditions required to completely eliminate error-riddled decisions to shoot remains an open issue for now and is being pursued by several researchers.

Although one might tacitly assume that all individuals who are categorized into a particular racial minority group are equally likely to be targets of implicit stereotyping, recent research reveals that is not the case. Individuals who have more Afrocentric facial features (darker skin color, broader nose, and fuller lips) are more likely to be targets of implicit bias than others who have more Eurocentric facial features (lighter skin color, narrow nose and lips) (Blair, Judd, and Fallman 2004; Blair et al. 2002; Livingston and Brewer 2002). Interestingly, both Black and White individuals with Afrocentric facial features (regardless of their racial group) are unconsciously judged in terms of Black stereotypes compared to other Black and White individuals with Eurocentric facial features (Blair et al. 2002). Feature-based stereotyping occurs even when people are instructed to avoid stereotyping, which suggests that stereotypic beliefs influence first impressions of others without perceivers' awareness and cannot be easily corrected by activating conscious intentions to avoid prejudice.

What might be the consequence of race-based stereotypes of physical appearance in the real world? A recent archival study suggests that such stereotypes may have implicitly influenced sentencing decisions for defendants convicted of felonies (Blair, Judd, and Chapleau 2004). An analysis of a random sample of inmate records in the state of Florida revealed that, although Black and White inmates who had equivalent criminal histories received roughly equivalent sentences, inmates with more Afrocentric features (regardless of their race) received harsher sentences than those with less Afrocentric features even though the felonies they committed were equivalent in seriousness as judged by Florida's ten-point felony rating system. Like the laboratory findings described above, these archival

findings based on real world convictions suggest that racial stereotyping based on the facial features of offenders is a form of bias that is largely overlooked.

Variations in skin color and Afrocentric features among Black Americans also influence individuals' socioeconomic and professional outcomes in life. Sociological research has found that light complexioned African Americans command higher status jobs and higher incomes than their darker complexioned counterparts, even after family background variables are controlled (Hill 2000; Keith and Herring 1991). For example, using a national sample of Black women and men from the National Survey of Black Americans (1979–1980), Keith and Herring (1991) found even after taking into account demographic and family variables such as parental education, parental socioeconomic status, urban/rural differences, age, marital status, etc., African Americans with darker complexions had fewer years of formal education; they were less likely to be employed in high-level professional positions; and they had lower personal and family income than their lighter complexioned peers. Using different methodology, Hill (2000) found conceptually similar results. One explanation for the association between dark complexion and decreased socioeconomic success is that Afrocentric physical appearance may automatically activate negative racial stereotypes about lesser competence in the mind of perceivers which in turn may lead to disparate treatment. This argument is consistent with evidence that darker complexioned African Americans typically report more instances of discrimination than their lighter complexioned peers (Klonoff and Landrine 2000). Analogous to Blair and colleagues' controlled laboratory studies, in many cases, perceivers may be unaware that the presence or absence of Afrocentric physical appearance (rather than race per se) influenced their impressions of Black individuals.

Because of the long history of Black oppression in the United States, not surprisingly most of the research on implicit bias has focused on Whites' implicit bias against Blacks and its implications in the real world. However, as the demographics of the United States became increasingly varied in the twentieth century due to immigration from Latin America and Asia, research ventured into new territory by examining Americans' implicit attitudes toward Latinos, Asians, and immigrants. This research shows that implicit bias is not limited to Whites' attitudes toward Blacks. Rather, White Americans also implicitly favor their own group over Latinos and Asians (Ashburn-Nardo et al. 2001; Devos and Banaji 2005; Ottaway et al. 2001; Rudman et al. 1999; Son Hing et al. 2002; Uhlmann et al. 2002). Specifically, Whites exhibit implicit bias against Latin American facial features and dark skin and show preference for European facial features and light skin. Such preference for "Europeanness" extends beyond esthetic preferences. Specifically, Latinos of European appearance enjoy far better socioeconomic outcomes in the United States than Latinos of native appearance. This socioeconomic difference in the experience of Latinos as a function of skin color was vividly documented in an article in the *New York Times* which described the experience of Cuban immigrants in the United States using as examples two friends of similar socioeconomic background who moved to the United States

at the same time. The person whose appearance was mulatto and others like him experienced greater economic difficulty post-immigration than his friend whose appearance was European and others like him. Such differences in socioeconomic standing are often evident years after immigration (Ojito 2000).

Whites' implicit attitudes toward Asian Americans reveal a different sort of bias that may be labeled, in shorthand, as the perpetual foreigner status. Although a core value in American society explicitly endorsed by most Americans and the bedrock of Anglo-American jurisprudence is the right to equal treatment for all American citizens, such values have not necessarily been internalized at an implicit-level. This is illustrated by people's strong propensity to equate American with White: when research participants are asked to think of who is American, Whites come to their mind more quickly and automatically than Asian Americans. Even when people are shown images of Asian American celebrities (e.g., Connie Chung, Michael Chang) compared to White European celebrities (e.g., Hugh Grant, Katarina Witt), Asian American celebrities are implicitly perceived to be more foreign and less American than their European counterparts (Devos and Banaji 2005). In other words, Asian Americans remain perpetual foreigners in the eyes of American society despite their American nationality. This perpetual foreigner status may explain why Asian Americans are sometimes treated with suspicion about their national allegiance in situations involving perceived threats to national security. Consider the case of countless Japanese Americans who were forced into internment camps during World War II because they were suspected of being potential spies for Japan or the recent case of Wen Ho Lee, a Chinese American scientist at the Los Alamos laboratory who was accused of spying for China but eventually acquitted because of lack of evidence. These examples of implicit anti-Asian bias reveal a different form of negative stereotyping than other types of racial bias described earlier.

The prevalence of implicit preference for groups in power and bias against powerless groups is not limited to the United States. Similar findings have also been obtained in Britain, Germany, and Australia where members of the majority group (White Britons, Germans, and Australians) tend to implicitly favor their ingroup over racial/ethnic minorities such as aborigines in Australia, Blacks in Britain, and Turks in Germany (Gawronski et al. 2003; Lepore and Brown 1997; Locke et al. 1994).

From Implicit Bias in the Mind to Outward Action

In the past two decades, most of the laboratory research on implicit prejudice and stereotypes has revolved around demonstrating that members of majority groups implicitly favor their own group over outgroups even though their explicit or self-reported attitudes often reveal greater support for equality. These findings raise the question: is it possible that implicit biases are merely private thoughts that remain confined to the mind? Or do they affect people's outward actions in ways that are demonstrably harmful? If implicit prejudice and stereotypes do

affect behavior, then it is easier to make the argument that these attitudes are likely to perpetuate social inequities and hierarchies despite tolerant explicit attitudes.

By now at least thirty studies have demonstrated that implicit attitudes influence people's judgments, decisions, and actions in insidious ways. For example, one study found that people's implicit racial attitudes, as measured by a rapid computer task, predicted their later nonverbal behavior (or "body language") toward a Black person (Fazio et al. 1995). The more implicit race bias participants exhibited on the computer task, the less friendly was their body language toward a Black interaction partner: implicitly prejudiced participants smiled less, made less eye contact, and were less comfortable with the Black person compared to less prejudiced participants. Implicit prejudice also correlated with participants' opinions about a particular racially divisive incident in recent American history—that is, the degree to which they attributed responsibility for the 1990 Los Angeles riots that occurred after the Rodney King trial around issues of police brutality to the local African American community. The same participants' explicit racial attitudes, however, did not correlate with their nonverbal behavior or attributions of responsibility. Other related research has demonstrated that the more implicit racial prejudice participants harbor, the more uncomfortable and anxious they appear during interracial interactions as rated both by Black interaction partners and by third party observers (e.g., participants make more speech errors, terminate the conversation more quickly, etc.; Dovidio et al. 1997; McConnell and Leibold 2001).

Understanding the link between implicit prejudice and subtle behavior may shed light on why everyday interracial interactions sometimes go awry with Black and White individuals coming away with very different impressions about their interactions with each other (Dovidio et al. 2002). Dovidio and colleagues found that when Black and White individuals interacted with each other, their opinions about interaction quality were based on very different types of information—Black individuals were more influenced by the subtle cues being communicated by their White partners (i.e., their implicit racial attitudes and nonverbal behavior) whereas White individuals were more influenced by the overt cues they were communicating (i.e., their own explicit racial attitudes and verbal behavior).

Besides nonverbal behavior, implicit race bias in the mind also influences people's behavior in simulated job interviews when they are asked to play the role of employers who are preparing to interview potential job candidates of varying racial backgrounds. Sekaquaptewa and colleagues found that participants who implicitly favored White Americans over African Americans were more likely to ask racially stereotypic interview questions to Black compared to White job candidates during simulated job interviews (Sekaquaptewa et al. 2003). Moreover, implicitly biased racial attitudes also influence how people interpret another person's ambiguous behavior. Implicitly biased people are more likely to use stereotypes to resolve ambiguity and "fill in the blanks" while evaluating a Black person compared to less biased participants (Rudman and Lee 2003, experiment 2).

Collectively, these data suggest that implicit preferences and prejudices are not merely private thoughts that remain confined to the mind. Rather, they affect people's outward actions in ways that may perpetuate and aggravate structural inequalities in situations such as the workplace. If implicit bias in the minds of employers unintentionally emerges in their nonverbal behavior and in the types of stereotypic questions they ask of Black job candidates (Dovidio et al. 1997; Fazio et al. 1995; McConnell and Leibold 2001; Sekaquaptewa et al. 2003), and if those job candidates are finely attuned to such subtle cues (Dovidio et al. 2002), it is reasonable to predict that these job interviews are unlikely to yield job offers from employers or job acceptances from the Black candidates compared to interviews with White candidates. More generally, although the interracial interactions in employment settings may appear to be racially neutral in terms of what people verbalize overtly, there may be an undercurrent of racial bias that is less detectable in everyday situations but that can be clearly measured in controlled studies.

Summary

The first generation of research on implicit attitudes and beliefs has demonstrated that members of historically advantaged groups often unconsciously favor their ingroups over less advantaged outgroups. Moreover, such implicit preferences and prejudices creep into people's behavior. These findings tell a clear story that has been replicated many times. Although this single-minded research focus has been enormously productive in revealing the existence of unconscious bias despite the scarcity of willingly expressed bias, the story is clearly not complete without considering how members of disadvantaged groups perceive their own group. A close inspection of the research reviewed above already contains hints that individuals who belong to disadvantaged groups do not always implicitly favor their ingroup in a manner that is a mirror image of their advantaged counterparts.

Implicit Preference for Outgroups

Social identity theory and most other social psychological theories of intergroup relations posit that people have a strong tendency to favor their ingroup in terms of their attitudes, beliefs, and behavior (e.g., self-categorization theory, Turner et al. 1987; social dominance theory, Sidanius and Pratto 1999; realistic conflict theory, Sherif 1967). While this is often true, people also have other reactions to in- and outgroups particularly in the context of power and status differences between groups. For example, system justification theory argues that people's attitudes and behavior may sometimes reflect the tendency to legitimize existing social hierarchies even at the expense of personal and group interest (Jost and Banaji 1994; Jost et al. 2004). In other words, in the case of individuals who belong to advantaged or dominant groups, their tendency to implicitly favor their ingroup relative to competing outgroups may be jointly influenced by their desire to preserve current social hierarchies (system justifying motive) and the

desire to protect their own self-esteem (ego-justifying motive). In the case of individuals who belong to disadvantaged or subordinate groups, the two motivations work in opposition—the desire to protect self-esteem ought to elicit ingroup favoritism, but the desire to maintain current social arrangements ought to elicit *outgroup favoritism*. Put differently, there may be two independent sources of implicit attitudes. The first source, consistent with social identity theory, relies on group membership. To the extent that people's group membership is a meaningful source of self-beliefs and self-esteem, it should promote implicit preference for the ingroup relative to out-groups. The second source, consistent with system justification theory, is the mainstream culture's imposition of greater or lesser value on particular groups. Thus, for members of disadvantaged social groups, implicit liking for their own ingroup may be attenuated by the negative cultural representation of their group, whereas for members of advantaged groups, implicit liking for their ingroup may be exacerbated by the positive cultural representation of their group.

Consistent with system justification theory, a number of studies have revealed outgroup favoritism (or sometimes, less ingroup favoritism) in the case of disadvantaged groups, especially when people's attitudes and beliefs are assessed using indirect measures rather than self-report measures. For instance, Livingston (2002) measured the extent to which African Americans believe that the mainstream American culture regards their ingroup negatively and examined the extent to which such beliefs correlated with Black participants' implicit and explicit racial attitudes. He found that the more negativity African Americans perceived in the mainstream culture's opinion of their ingroup, the *less* they liked their ingroup at an implicit level, but the *more* they liked their ingroup at an explicit level. In other words, when the mainstream culture's opinion of one's own group is negative, one can reject those negative stereotypes consciously; however, those stereotypes creep into and bias one's unconscious opinions about one's ingroup.

Taking a different approach, Nosek and colleagues (2002) measured a large sample of White and Black participants' implicit and explicit racial attitudes via the Internet ($N > 17,000$). In terms of implicit attitudes, they found that whereas White Americans exhibited strong implicit ingroup favoritism on average and little individual variability, African Americans exhibited no ingroup favoritism on average, but more individual variability. In terms of explicit racial attitudes however, African Americans as a group reported stronger ingroup favoritism than did White Americans (see also Jost et al. 2004). Similar findings were obtained by Spicer (2000) and Ashburn-Nardo and colleagues (2003); in fact, in some of these studies African Americans showed preference for Whites over Blacks implicitly but not explicitly. Along the same lines, as discussed earlier, Black and White participants are equally likely to harbor implicit stereotypes associating African Americans with criminality which is revealed in their tendency to mistakenly "shoot at" Black compared to White fictitious characters in a videogame simulating a police chase. In a nutshell, the research summarized above illustrates that negative societal stereotypes affect African Americans'

unconscious attitudes toward their own racial group in a negative way. Even though they may reject these stereotypes at a conscious level they cannot always do so at an unconscious level.

Even when group distinction is based on ethnicity or, even more simply, skin color, people sometimes implicitly prefer lighter-complexioned *outgroup members* over darker complexioned *ingroup members*. Within one's own group, people often favor lighter-complexioned individuals over darker-complexioned individuals. For example, my colleagues and I examined Hispanic American and Chilean participants' implicit attitudes toward Latinos (their ethnic ingroup) versus Anglos (their ethnic outgroup) and found that at an implicit level, Chileans strongly preferred Anglos over Latinos whereas Hispanic Americans did not favor either group on average. More interestingly, both Hispanic Americans and Chileans strongly (and implicitly) favored lighter complexioned ingroup members (called "*blanco*" in Spanish) over darker complexioned ingroup members (called "*moreno*" in Spanish). Implicit preference for Blancos was evident both among self-identified Moreno as well as Blanco participants in both countries, suggesting that preference for light skin among Latinos is not confined to one particular country (Uhlmann et al. 2002).

The degree of outgroup favoritism manifested by individuals who belong to disadvantaged groups appears to be influenced by several related factors: (1) the greater the power disparity between individuals' ingroup and a comparison outgroup, the less they implicitly like their powerless ingroup and the more they implicitly prefer the outgroup (Rudman et al. 2002); (2) individuals who strongly believe that the mainstream culture's opinion of their ingroup is negative are more likely to implicitly internalize those beliefs (Livingston 2002); and (3) individuals who endorse politically conservative beliefs are less likely to favor their powerless ingroup and more likely to prefer the powerful outgroup (Jost et al. 2004). Each of these factors is likely to produce unconscious preference for powerful outgroups on the part of individuals belonging to less powerful groups.

Can Implicit Bias Be Changed?

The pervasiveness of unconscious bias begs the question: can these preferences and prejudices be changed? If so how? Most of the social science research on prejudice reduction has relied heavily on making people aware of their bias, motivating them to change their attitudes, and relying on their willingness to correct negative attitudes. These interventions may not work quite so easily when it comes to unconscious bias that is expressed when people are least aware and vigilant. So, how can we change implicit bias? This question has grabbed social psychologists' attention over the past few years. This new research suggests that three factors may be able to undermine implicit bias in attitudes and behavior: (1) increasing diversity in people's local or immediate environments; (2) enhancing their intrinsic motivation to be egalitarian; and (3) giving people practice at behaving in an unbiased manner.

Increasing the Diversity of Local Environments Decreases Implicit Bias

My collaborators and I have been exploring the role of local environments in attenuating unconscious bias. We started with the assumption that implicit prejudice and stereotypes are learned associations acquired and reinforced by immersion in mainstream cultural contexts where people observe that members of different groups are unequally located in different types of social roles. Some groups occupy more privileged and admired roles in society whereas other groups occupy less privileged and disliked roles. African Americans and other racial minorities automatically activate negative attitudes because people have learned to associate race with negative roles (e.g., the homeless person, the criminal) rather than positive ones (e.g., the parent, the business leader). These negative associations are learned and reinforced because people are typically immersed in environments where they are more likely to see racial minority groups in marginalized social roles and Whites in admired and valued social roles. As a result, when people think of racial minorities, negative associations pop into mind more quickly and easily than positive associations.

In our research, we asked one broad question: What would happen if we changed the local environment and immersed people in situations that afford more exposure to outgroup members in admired and valued social roles? Local environments may be changed by increasing people's exposure to admired members of disadvantaged groups through the mass media or through personal contact with outgroup members (e.g., friends, co-workers, acquaintances, etc.). To address this question, in one study, we created a situation in the laboratory where some participants were exposed to pictures and biographies of famous and admired African Americans (e.g., Martin Luther King Jr., Denzel Washington, Tiger Woods), whereas others were exposed to similar information about famous and admired White Americans (e.g., John F. Kennedy, Tom Hanks, Peter Jennings), and still others were shown information unrelated to race. We then measured participants' implicit racial attitudes both immediately after the media exposure and again 24 hours later (Dasgupta and Greenwald 2001). We found that participants who had been immersed in an experimental situation where they had repeatedly seen admired African Americans exhibited significantly less implicit race bias compared to others who were in a situation where they had repeatedly seen admired White Americans or non-racial stimuli. The observed reduction in implicit race bias endured even twenty-four hours later. Follow-up research using different types of stigmatized groups (gay men and lesbians) has replicated this basic finding and has also revealed that besides media exposure, personal contact with outgroup members plays an important role in attenuating implicit prejudice. People who had prior personal contact with outgroup members in the form of friends, co-workers, etc., showed substantially less implicit prejudice than others who had little prior contact with outgroup members (Dasgupta and Rivera in press; see also Dasgupta and Asgari 2004).

The power of the situation in undermining implicit racial bias has also been demonstrated in other studies that have revealed conceptually similar findings. For example, people exhibit less implicit race bias when a Black experimenter is present in the laboratory situation than when a White experimenter is present (Lowery et al. 2001). Similarly, people exhibit less implicit race bias when they see Black individuals in a positive social situation (e.g., family gathering, church) than a negative situation (e.g., street corner, gang war). Wittenbrink and colleagues (2001) found that participants who saw a brief video of a Black family gathering showed less implicit bias against African Americans than others who saw a brief video of a gang war where gang members were Black. Likewise, participants who saw Black individuals against the backdrop of a church showed less implicit anti-Black bias than others who saw the same individuals against the backdrop of a graffiti-covered street corner.

Applying these data to the real world, this evidence suggests that if we are serious about erasing implicit prejudice, we should consider changing local environments within institutions such as schools, colleges, businesses, and other workplaces to make them ethnically diverse, with a visible representation of minority groups that are typically invisible in mainstream society. Second, the data suggest that individuals from these groups must be particularly visible in socially valued leadership roles such as teachers, professors, managers, business leaders, medical professionals, and so on, instead of being relegated to devalued roles, which is often the case. Third, creating diverse local environments also has the benefit of enhancing opportunities for person-to-person contact between Whites and ethnic minorities under circumstances in which minority group members are clearly in influential roles rather than subservient roles. Fourth, another environment that can have a powerful effect if it highlights diversity is the mass media because it is often the primary vehicle by which the public learns about who is valued and who is not. Even today, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, we are more likely to see famous and influential public figures who are White (e.g., business leaders, politicians, celebrities, philanthropists, public intellectuals, etc.) in the news than others who are Black, Latino, Native American, or Asian. Similarly, in television shows, advertisements, and films, we are more likely to see lead characters and roles being played by White than non-White actors. Explicit decisions on the part of media executives to give more air time to racial and ethnic minorities in news media, advertisements, TV shows, and films, is likely to go a long way toward increasing the visibility of these groups and creating unconscious associations linking such groups with positive images.

Such changes in the mass media and in social institutions are most likely to happen with a combination of education (i.e., increasing awareness among individuals who control these institutions) together with incentives. If a small number of decision makers diversify the social institutions they control, their actions have the potential to produce large-scale change by affecting the thoughts and actions of all the people who live and work in those institutions.

Increasing Conscious Motivation and Control over Prejudiced Responses Decreases Implicit Bias

Although in general implicit prejudice is not easily derailed by conscious motivation, research suggests that some types of motivation (especially internally driven motivation to be non-prejudiced) can attenuate implicit racial prejudice. In other words, people who are motivated to be non-prejudiced because egalitarian values are important to their sense of self exhibit far less implicit race bias than others who are motivated by the desire to conform to social norms (Devine et al. 2002). Conceptually similar findings have been demonstrated in other studies. For example, people who are consciously committed to egalitarian attitudes do not express implicit negative stereotypes about African Americans compared to others who are less committed to egalitarian attitudes (Lepore and Brown 1997). Similarly, people who are vigilant and who train themselves to suppress negative stereotypes when they pop into mind can, over time, erase implicit bias from their thoughts (Kawakami et al. 2000).

Even when stereotypes and prejudices are automatically activated in the mind, whether or not they will bias individuals' outward behavior depends on how motivated they are to correct their biased actions, and how much control they have over the specific action in question. Just as implicit attitudes have been found to be remarkably malleable (e.g., Dasgupta and Greenwald 2001; Wittenbrink et al. 2001; for a review, see Blair 2002), so, too, behaviors are also quite malleable depending on the extent to which motivation and control are at play. For example, consider people's nonverbal "body language" such as smiling, eye contact, spatial distance, overall friendliness, and so on. Typically, people are relatively unaware of such nonverbal actions and thus don't try to control or correct them. However, this typical response masks a great deal of individual variability in people's vigilance over their own body language as well as that of others. Some people are more aware of nonverbal behaviors and more practiced at controlling and correcting them in real time while others are less adept at behavior correction. In our research we have found that conscious motivation to be egalitarian and practice at controlling one's nonverbal cues prevent implicit prejudice in the mind from leaking into action (Dasgupta and Rivera 2006). Those who are motivated to be egalitarian or who are practiced at controlling their nonverbal behavior do not exhibit behavioral bias. However, others who are less motivated to be egalitarian or less practiced at controlling their nonverbal actions exude negativity in their body language if they harbor biased thoughts.

In a similar manner, people may be able to prevent implicit bias in the mind from influencing their judgments of others if they possess the requisite motivation and control over their responses. Fazio and colleagues have found that White participants' motivation to control prejudice significantly affected whether or not their implicit attitudes affected their judgments of Black individuals (Dunton and Fazio 1997; Olson and Fazio 2004). Specifically, among participants who were not motivated to avoid bias, greater implicit prejudice in the mind produced less positive judgments about Black undergraduate students. However, among

others who were highly motivated to avoid bias, greater implicit prejudice produced more positive judgments of Black students (Dunton and Fazio 1997). In other words, highly motivated participants overcorrected their judgment to prevent bias in their judgments (see also Olson and Fazio 2004).

Applying these data to the everyday settings, this evidence suggests that teaching egalitarian values explicitly can serve as a potential remedy for implicit bias. Although implicit prejudice is typically expressed mindlessly without awareness, people have the capacity to make themselves mindful about their thoughts and actions if they are sufficiently concerned about social equality and sufficiently vigilant about monitoring and correcting their thoughts and actions. If mindfulness and egalitarian values are internalized by individuals from an early age through parents, peers, and teachers, these values are likely to attenuate implicit bias. Moreover, egalitarian values are also learned indirectly when people (both children and adults) are immersed in ethnically diverse environments such as schools, colleges, and universities, which is often the first time that they interact with peers from other ethnic groups.

Conclusion

In the twenty years since the first studies on implicit prejudice and stereotypes we have come to know a few things with certainty. First, societal structure powerfully shapes people's cognitive structure without their conscious awareness. That is, societal inequalities are unknowingly learned and subsequently revealed in individuals' unconscious thoughts and actions even though those individuals may not consciously endorse racist attitudes. Implicit liking for Whites and bias against racial minorities are passively learned if people are immersed in environments where they observe that the individuals who possess and control the distribution of socioeconomic resources are predominantly White and individuals who possess the fewest resources are predominantly Black, Latino, Native American, and Asian. Such observations elicit admiration for Whites and disapproval for minorities, which in turn creates mental associations linking White-and-good and minority-and-bad. These mental associations are revealed in subtle thoughts and actions when people are not mindful. Because implicit bias operates without awareness, biased thoughts and actions occur repeatedly over time without correction in hiring decisions, healthcare delivery, business transactions, delivery of justice, and so on, in ways that favor White Americans over other groups. Here is a simple example: implicit preference for Whites may create greater camaraderie and an easy interaction between a White employer and a White job candidate during a job interview compared to a more awkward or stiff interaction between the same employer and a Black job candidate. Assuming that both candidates are equally qualified for the job, the employer may offer the job to the White candidate using as a tie breaker her overall good feeling from the interview with the White applicant as an indicator of his superior social skills. Given that good social skills are likely to be important for most jobs, such a decision seems reasonable at face

value. However, the employer is likely to be unaware that her good feeling stems from implicit White-good associations rather than something about the White candidate himself. If left uncorrected, such actions are likely to occur repeatedly to create racial disparities between who gets offered good jobs (Whites) and who remains unemployed or under-employed (racial minorities).

A second issue highlighted by the research on implicit and explicit bias is the distinction between casually held egalitarian attitudes that people sometimes express because of their desire to conform to current social norms (e.g., political correctness) versus deeply held egalitarian attitudes that they express because of their personal standards and values about equality. People who report egalitarian attitudes because of political correctness are likely to exhibit implicit bias in their thoughts and actions despite their conscious disavowal of prejudice. However, others who report egalitarian attitudes because of their intrinsic personal standards are less likely to exhibit implicit bias because of greater mindfulness and behavior correction. It is latter form of egalitarianism that is important to convey to children and adults alike. This can be accomplished effectively by creating diverse environments in schools, colleges, and workplaces that provide opportunities for lasting interpersonal contact and friendships across racial boundaries. The casually held form of egalitarianism is ephemeral and unlikely to elicit unbiased behavior when social norms are unclear.

Finally, the research shows that implicit bias functions like an equal opportunity virus that infects both Whites and racial minorities. Specifically, at an unconscious level, members of racial minorities sometimes show implicit bias against their own group whereas White Americans show implicit preference for their own group. This is not surprising: if implicit bias is learned silently by immersion in mainstream culture where most people in influential and admired roles are White, it makes sense that both Whites and non-Whites who inhabit that culture will absorb the same biases and preferences. In contrast, both Whites and non-Whites who inhabit more diversified environments where they see African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and other groups in visibly influential roles are less likely to show implicit bias. In other words, simply belonging to a minority group does not make individuals immune to implicit bias. Rather, it is often the choices people make (e.g., environments they choose to enter or avoid, friends they choose, and media they read and watch) that ultimately determine their implicit attitudes about race.

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Wayne D. Johnson



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WHAT HAPPENED TO RED DEER

Red Deer turned the ball in his hand.

They were yelling in the bleachers now. "Chief! Go home, Chief!"

The ball fit in his palm like a stone. He caught the stitching with his nails, then raised his eyes to the catcher. The catcher thrust two fingers at the ground.

A slider.

Red Deer nodded, coiled himself back, leg raised, stretching, and hurled the ball. The ball went low, looked like a gutter ball, then rose and smacked into the catcher's mitt. The umpire jerked his hand over his head, thumb up, and the batter shook his head.

"Out!" the umpire shouted.

There was a chorus of booing from the bleachers.

Red Deer watched them out of the corner of his eye.

Since the beginning of the game they had jeered, and when the game had gone into overtime, they began yelling "Chief! Go home, Chief!"

He had ridden on the crest of it, letting it carry him through the game. But something was happening now and he didn't know what it was. It was as if something were dissolving in him, dissolving and going flat.

Darius, the coach, walked to the mound from the dugout.

"How's your arm holding up?" he said.

"Okay," Red Deer offered.

"We'll have her licked if you can hang in there."

Red Deer pulled the bill of his cap down.

"Don't mind those sons-of-bitches. They're just a bunch of drunks. You're

pitching like a pro. Just get back in there and kill 'em." Darius slapped Red Deer on the back, then strode past third, up toward the bleachers.

"What the hell are you waiting for, Chief?" the loudest of the drunks yelled from the stands.

A batter stepped up to the plate. He practiced his swing, dipping in mid-stroke and pulling up. He tapped the bat on his shoes and positioned himself. The umpire and catcher squatted; the catcher pointed to the ground with his index finger. Knuckle. Red Deer turned the ball in his hand, found the stitching with his nails again, drew back like the hammer of a gun and hurled the ball. The ball went straight and fast, right down the pipe. The batter uncoiled, the bat scooped down into the ball, there was a loud crack, and the ball went high, up and back into the bleachers, a foul.

"Whoaa, Chief!" the drunks yelled.

Red Deer turned to face the bleachers.

He could see the men who were doing the yelling. They were wearing white shirts and colored ties, and they had brought women with them. Attractive women, who laughed and pushed and when the men yelled laughed into their hands.

"Go home, Chief!" the biggest yelled, standing, a beer in his fist. The woman at his side laughed, pulling at his pants leg.

Red Deer shook his head. He turned to the other side of the field. There his father, Osada, sat with the boy, Bear. A few rows up from them a lot of men from the reservation stood. Red Deer had not asked them to come, and when he had run out onto the playing field, he had been startled to see them. Joe Big Otter had waved and Red Deer had felt something in him sad and old and hurtful.

"Hey! Chief! You missing the Lone Ranger?" There was a cackle of laughter.

The men from the reservation glared across the field.

Red Deer turned the ball in his hand.

He wished the ball were a stone.

He took the sign from the catcher, eyed the batter, drew his body and arm back, and hurled the ball again. The batter swung around, connected, and then it was all moving, Red Deer carried across the field, the ball sizzling by his head, his mitt out, the hard break of the ball against his hand, then opening the mitt and lobbing the ball to first, the baseman reaching, throwing to third, the runner coming on hard, then sliding, the umpire charging, the ball, the baseman, the runner and the umpire all converging there. In the dust, you couldn't see at all.

"Safe!" the umpire yelled, spreading his arms wide at his waist. "Safe!"

An organ broke into a frenzy of scales and the scoreboard flashed. Bottom of the tenth. Six to five, visitor's lead.

Red Deer swung back to the mound.

"Go home, Chief!" the drunks yelled.

The shortstop caught him on the way. The man on third kicked the base, watching the two men.

"Two outs. Anything goes home, okay?"

Red Deer nodded.

"Just give 'em some of the old Buck stuff," the shortstop said. He spit through his teeth and slapped Red Deer on the back.

"Buck!" he said.

But Red Deer was staring off over the bleachers.

In grade school, when they ran the races on the playground, he never pushed himself and still he could beat them all, even the straining, grunting boys who couldn't stand to lose to an Indian.

It wasn't a hard thing to do.

He loved to run, and he ran to school and back home again and wherever else it was he went. Somehow rather than tiring him, as it did the others, it set him free. He loved the feel of the ground under his feet, the trees flashing by, the pumping of his lungs, the pain he pushed through into a solid rhythm that carried him away from everything. If he wanted he would change the rhythm, his legs working harder, the ground beating up with more power, but always the ground carried him; and he was surprised, when one day at school a man watched him run the circumference of the football field, a watch in his hand.

The man stopped Red Deer back of the goalposts, his face swollen with excitement, his thumb held down on the watch. "Wait! Stop there!" he said.

Red Deer had looked back to see where the others were. They weren't around the field yet.

"I can't believe it," the man said.

Red Deer's teacher came over. "Didn't I tell you he was fast?" he said. "Didn't I tell you?"

"Is that as fast as you can run?"

"No," Red Deer said.

"How old are you?"

"Fifteen."

The man held out his hand. "I just can't believe it," he said. "Jim Thorpe couldn't have done that at your age."

The others ran by, breathing hard, and Red Deer stepped into the stream of bodies. Halfway around the field he looked back. The two men were still talking, the man with the watch gesturing with his hands.

Red Deer heaved the ball down the baseline to the catcher.

"No!" the shortstop yelled. "Goddammit! Throw it around the horn."

Red Deer turned to face the shortstop.

"Haven't you ever played baseball?" The shortstop pointed to the second baseman with his mitt, then shook his head. "What the hell is he doing out here?"

Red Deer shrugged his shoulders. They had him on first, and he didn't know what plays to make. He didn't like standing around so much, and they were always yelling at him.

"Hey! Chief!" Joe Fossen, the catcher, yelled. He threw the ball and Red Deer caught it, tossed it to second, and then it went around again.

It was the first time anyone on the team had called him "Chief." It was the first time *anyone* had called him "Chief."

He wasn't sure he liked it.

But he wasn't sure he liked playing baseball either. It hadn't been his idea.

They had called him down to the principal's office not long after the man with the watch had been on the field, and Red Deer had wondered what they had singled him out for now. After the business with his father and the shooting, it seemed the teachers were afraid of him, or afraid that something would happen to them if they had anything to do with him. And the other Indians didn't know what to make of him, either—he was too big for his age, and there was still a general bad feeling on the reservation about the incident. He had gained notoriety without wanting it in any way.

In the office the principal, a short, baldheaded man behind a desk, had asked Red Deer to sit.

"Well, we've got it all fixed," he said.

"Did I do something?" Red Deer said. His heart was pounding. He felt uncomfortable and crossed his legs and uncrossed them, pressing his feet into the floor so his toes curled under.

"We thought you'd want to play baseball," the man said. He adjusted his glasses, then leaned back in his chair.

Red Deer crossed his legs again.

"Joe Bradley's going to be driving up to Kenora just about every day. We thought you'd like to be playing on the team."

Outside the room a typewriter was snapping.

Red Deer didn't know what to say, so he stood. The principal stood with him.

"So what do you think?" he said.

Red Deer pushed his hands into his pockets, then looked over the man's shoulder, through the window. The wind was blowing and the poplars in the schoolyard swayed.

"Okay," he said. "Sure."

The ball came around the horn again.

"Hey Chief!" Sampson, the shortstop, yelled. "For Christ's sake don't just stand there!"

Red Deer caught the ball and carefully set it beside the base bag. He covered the distance between first and shortstop and there Joe Sampson stood, his fists tight at his sides. Red Deer hadn't realized how big Joe was until he got right up to him; he was the only boy on the team that could stand head to head with Red Deer.

"Hey!" the coach yelled.

"Don't call me that," Red Deer said.

"Make me," the boy said. He leaned toward Red Deer, so that Red Deer could smell his breath. 78

The coach headed across the field, then was running. 79

"Make me, *Chief!*" the boy said. 80

It made Red Deer think of his father, Osada, and how the men he had been a guide for had called him "*Chief.*" Sometimes, when Red Deer had been out in the boat with him, he could see Osada was enraged when it happened, and other times he didn't seem to care at all. Sometimes, with the men who had had a sense of humor, he even seemed to like it. 81

"Break it up!" the coach yelled. He was nearly across the field now. 82

"Tonto," the boy said. 83

The word worked like a key in Red Deer's brain, and then as with a stone he hammered at the boy's face, and even when the boy was on the ground and bleeding Red Deer couldn't stop hitting him. 84

They called him "Buck" after that, and they were all a little afraid of him. He got bigger, his shoulders broadening, his legs getting longer. The boy he had beaten didn't come back; his jaw had been broken and one of his eyes damaged. No one said anything about it, but Red Deer felt badly. 85

Somehow they all seemed to feel bad. 86

They drank a good deal and had girl friends and every now and then as they got older a boy would disappear from the team. 87

"Where's Freddie?" Red Deer had asked one afternoon at practice. Freddie had become a friend of his, though a silent one. 88

"Didn't you hear?" 89

"No." 90

"He's not playing anymore. They got him down at the supermarket in Fort Francis." 91

"What the hell's he doing down there?" 92

"Gettin' married, I guess," the boy said, a wry grin on his face. 93

It puzzled Red Deer. And not long after, when he was down in Fort Francis to see Osada, he stopped by the new supermarket to see if Freddie was there. It really was super. Huge. A long, low, cinderblock building with a giant red and blue sign in front. Red Deer stepped through the doors and it was cold inside and smelled of floor wax, like when they had had dances at the old school. The lights were bluish and buzzed and there were three women in yellow dresses at the registers. 94

"Is there a Fred Levine who works here?" 95

The women looked at him suspiciously. 96

"You mean a young guy? Eighteen or so?" the biggest said, tossing her head back. 97

A door opened off to one side and Freddie came out. He was wearing a green apron and had his hair slicked back. 98

"Hey! Freddie!" Red Deer said.

99

Freddie's eye puckered and his eyebrows drew down and then he smiled, too broadly.

100

"Come on back," he said.

101

Red Deer went up the aisle. There were all kinds of beans on the shelves, beans he had never even heard of.

102

"How's it goin'?" Freddie said.

103

He seemed nervous and stood on one leg and then on the other.

104

"How's the team? I heard you guys wupped shit out Fond Du Lac."

105

"Nine to three," Red Deer said.

106

"I heard you were pitchin', too. Is that right?"

107

Red Deer nodded. Something was wrong. Freddie was the one guy who'd gotten the others to lay off the "Chief" stuff, and they had been friends in the way a pitcher and first baseman can be friends if they are both good at it.

108

"So what's this all about, Freddie?" Red Deer said. He was so tall now his head was even with the top shelf.

109

Freddie looked up the aisle one way and down it the other.

110

"You heard, didn't you?" he said.

111

"You're getting married."

112

"That's it," he said.

113

Red Deer braced himself against the aisle divider. "So what about all that other stuff? Chicago and that school down there?"

114

"I'm just makin' some money now. See? Then I can go later."

115

He dusted the shelf Red Deer leaned on, rearranging the cans.

116

"So," Red Deer said.

117

The girls laughed up at the registers.

118

Freddie carefully straightened the cans, his hands shaking. He reminded Red Deer of a squirrel caught in a snare, his eyes wild.

119

"You don't have to get married, you know," Red Deer said.

120

Freddie looked up the aisle again and back.

121

"Look, I gotta go, Buck. I can't just stand around here talking. . . ."

122

A heavy-set man with shiny black shoes stepped around the end of the aisle.

123

"Can I help you?" he said.

124

"Just a minute," Freddie said.

125

"Freddie," the man said.

126

Freddie's face had reddened. "Just let me explain," he said. "It's not what you think. . . ."

127

"It's okay," Red Deer said. Though it was not okay.

128

"Hang on. Just wait a—"

129

The manager was coming up the aisle now. Red Deer could not stand to see Freddie this way.

130

"See you around, Freddie," he said.

131

He didn't toss up the tuft of Freddie's hair the way he always had, and walking across the parking lot in the bright sun, the new gravel sharp under his feet, Red Deer felt a hollow in his chest. 132

It seemed to Red Deer that they were all liars. And he had become a liar, too, though he lied in a different way. He said nothing, or as little as possible. It wasn't that there wasn't anything to say, but to say it would have torn up the fabric of all the lies and Red Deer knew none of them would stand for it. So he pretended he didn't feel the discomfort of the whites around him, or the hatred and bad feeling of the other Indians. It got so the only place he could escape the lies was playing baseball, and for that reason he came to love the game. On the field the ball moved, and they played. He could walk out onto the field, the mitt snug on his hand, and win or lose, he would pitch his best and whether his teammates hated him or not, they needed him up there on the mound. Slider. Curveball. Greaseball. Knuckleball. Fast pitch. He could get his fingers on the fine stitching of the ball and it fit into his palm like a planet. Or a shooting star. It was all a game and he saw the line he wanted the ball to take, up to and past the batter. He got to know the boys on the other teams, how they batted, how they ran. 133

There seemed to be no end to it. It happened so fast he could only do a little at a time, test what his hand could do to the line. But he came along fast, and people knew him. 134

"Let him have it, Buck!" they'd yell from the stands. "Give it to 'im, Buck!" 135

But after the games he went home. If he was near the reservation he stayed at his mother's, even though he didn't like his stepfather. He liked playing with the boy, though. Bear was like a little animal, only smarter, and faster, and they'd tumble in the dirt in the yard and the boy loved to play catch. On hot summer afternoons they listened to Minnesota Twins games on the radio, drinking root beer—Red Deer would buy cases of it—and when the Hamm's commercials came on, sung as though by Indians, with a drum pounding in the background, Red Deer and Bear burst out laughing. 136

It was on one of those afternoons that Red Deer and his stepfather, Joe Big Otter, got to fighting. They were sitting outside the house, drinking under the shade of an umbrella Joe had bought at the supermarket in Fort Francis. 137

"You see a guy there with slicked back hair?" Red Deer said. "Big nose?" 138

"No," Joe said. 139

Red Deer looked up into the umbrella. The umbrella had been on sale. On it Huey, Louie, and Dewey marched with sand buckets, pink, yellow, and candy blue. 140

The Twins were on the radio. 141

"I want to hear a story," Bear said.

"Shhh," Martha Blue Feather said. She reached under Bear's armpit and tickled him.

"What kind of story do you want to hear?" Red Deer said.

"I want to hear a story about cowboys," the boy said.

It made Red Deer sad to hear him say this, and he looked up into the umbrella again and took a sip of his beer.

"Why don't you tell him the one about Litani?" Joe said.

Litani had been shot in the altercation with the marshals, when Osada had gotten the men to take their boys out of the new school. Litani had been Joe's younger brother.

Red Deer did not answer. It was hot and he could tell nothing good would come of this. He noticed how whoever it was who had drawn the ducks on the umbrella had put smiles on their bills. They looked funny holding the pails.

"Tell him that one," Joe Big Otter said. "There's a *cowboy* story."

Red Deer looked across the table. Joe smiled. Martha put her hand on Joe's forearm, gripped him around the wrist.

"You see," Joe said, his drunken eyes on the boy, "there was this proud man—"

"Shut up," Red Deer said.

"He should hear it," Joe said.

"Not the way you're telling it," Red Deer said. He set his beer on the table. He was hoping this would just pass.

Martha pulled at the bottle in Joe's hand. "You've had enough," she said.

"Don't," he said.

"You've had too much. Let go."

"Tell it," Joe said.

Red Deer looked away. He didn't want to tell Bear the story, and he didn't want Joe to tell it either.

"Coward," Joe said.

"Not as big a coward as you with your bottle," Red Deer replied.

Joe stood. The boy's eyes widened. The boy could not understand what they were saying, and when they began to yell, he crawled under the table.

Joe punched Red Deer in the mouth and then Red Deer had Joe by his ponytail and slammed his face into the picnic table. Blood ran down Joe's nose and Red Deer, trying to pull away, got hit in the mouth again. He tried to pin Joe down but Joe was hollering now.

"Your goddamned cowboy—"

Red Deer hit him in the mouth. He felt the teeth give way under his knuckles. Martha's eyes were wide and Joe stumbled back from the table. Martha held her hand to her mouth, and Joe ran inside. Bear was crying under the table. Then Joe swung by the kitchen window with his rifle, and

Red Deer was over the garden fence, out across the field, and he didn't stop running until he was miles out of the reservation.

He didn't tell them where he was staying. He'd made himself a lean-to down by the fish hatchery, and at night he'd swim and catch brown trout, and bake them in the hillside behind the lean-to. He knew he couldn't do this very long, but he also knew something would come up. They were playing a game down in Fort Francis, against a Toronto team, and some big name scouts were supposed to be there. 167

"They're waiting for you," the coach had said. 168

The morning of the game with Toronto Red Deer got up early. He swam in the clean, bitter cold water, then knocked down the lean-to. The fishery people were getting wise to him anyway, and he'd have to find someplace else. He walked into town, spent his last dollar on a plate of eggs and hash browns and coffee. At two he met the others at the school, and then everything was all right. 169

The basement was cool, and they suited up, the others snapping each other with their towels and joking. 170

"Hey! Buckaroo!" one of the boys said, thumping him on the back. 171

Red Deer took his uniform from his locker, set his clothes out as he always did. He dressed quickly, his hands sure, finally pulling the laces of his tennis shoes tight. He reached into his locker for his cleats and swung them over his shoulder. If he could keep it out of his mind, he thought, everything would be fine. 172

The game went terribly. The new first baseman was slow, and Red Deer wished Freddie were there. He missed him now, though it didn't occur to him why. He pitched badly, and he watched the scouts in the bleachers. The two men wore wide-brimmed hats and pointed, nodded, and scribbled on note pads. 173

It seemed it was all coming to a grinding end. 174

They forced their way through a miserable third inning and headed for the dugout. 175

"What the hell is wrong with you?" the coach said. Everyone else in the dugout looked the other way. "Hub? What's going on?" 176

Red Deer stared out across the field. Meyers was up to bat. He swung in short choppy strokes. 177

"Are you listening to me?" the coach said. 178

"I don't know," Red Deer said. 179

The coach slapped his hand on his knees. "Well, you goddamned well better know. Do you have any idea how important this game is?" He lowered his voice. "It's your goddamned baby. They didn't come out here to see Hodges." 180

Beside him Hodges stiffened. 181

Red Deer felt badly that he had heard. He wasn't a good first baseman and he knew it. 181

There was a crack of a bat, and everyone in the dugout stood. Red Deer sat on the bench. 183

"Get up," the coach yelled, but Red Deer wasn't about to. Not like that. 184

On the mound again he couldn't force the ball down the line, and the game had all gone away somewhere. He was tired, dirty, and hungry. He had lost something, and a deep sadness was setting in. It wasn't this damn game, he thought. It was Bear. He'd lost Bear, and he figured he'd lost his mother, too, only now he could see he'd never really had her, and maybe that hurt the worst. 185

A big kid named Donnelly got up to bat, kicking his cleats into the dirt like a rooster. They were leading nine / five into the sixth inning and now their batters were all getting cocky. 186

"Come on, Chief, throw me a fast one," he said. 187

Red Deer looked into the stands, then at the boy. 188

"Come on, Chief," he said. 189

Red Deer tightened his grip on the ball. 190

"Put her right here, Chief," the boy said, tapping the base with his bat. 191

Red Deer found the stitches on the ball, gripped it in his hand. He got a kind of tunnel vision, and when Steadman, the catcher, signalled for him to throw a curve, he shook his head. He knew what to do with this one. He settled onto his legs, then stretched as if to break himself, and when he threw the ball it hissed out of his hand, went low, then broke into the catcher's mitt with a dusty thud. The batter's mouth dropped open. 192

"Steerike!" the umpire called. 193

Red Deer caught the ball, tossed it around the horn. 194

No one said anything. 195

When it was over, and they had won by two runs, Red Deer dropped the ball on the mound and walked to the dugout. 196

"Jesus Christ!" the coach said. "That was really something." 197

Red Deer wiped his face with a towel. He never wanted to play another game like that. He had wanted to kill the boy Donnelly, and had prodded himself along with him, remembering his face and what he had said. And when the boy was up to bat again, and he sensed something dangerous in Red Deer, Red Deer imagined him saying the things he had said over again. 198

He wasn't happy now—he was drained, and felt ugly. 199

The two scouts came down to the dugout. 200

"Hell of a game you pitched." 201

Red Deer nodded. 202

They had turned the lights off on the field and now the dugout was dark but for the light coming in from the parking lot. The bigger man's glasses shone in the dark. 203

"Anything you'd like to say?"

All he wanted now was to be alone.

"I've pitched better," he said. It was what he was supposed to say. And it was true, only now he wished they would leave.

"We'll be getting in touch," the bigger of the two men said.

Red Deer watched them cross the parking lot to the car. The lights came on, and the car crackled out of the lot with the others, dust billowing behind them. Red Deer settled down onto the dirt floor, the cement cool against his sides, the dugout just long enough to hold him. It was all he wanted now.

The rest was easy. It was like falling. A small league team picked him up as a relief pitcher, and then he was playing, and had some jack in his pocket. He traveled a lot, and he forgot about what happened. He learned to forget a lot of things, and he learned how to fight too.

"Hey, Chief," someone would say.

It was like a button they pushed.

He learned to hit first, and hit hard, and it wasn't until later that he got into fights with men bigger than he was. He had his nose broken three times and lost a tooth, a canine, so when he smiled it gave him the look of someone who would take the caps off beer bottles with his teeth for fun.

And on the mound he felt it get bigger in him, like a stone, and he held on to it tighter. He learned to focus it, and he thought of it as being like a train or a bulldozer. All he had to think of was that boy, and it started again.

"Chief," he'd think to himself.

He got to love it, and it was precious.

He found it had all kinds of uses.

On nights when things were going badly, when he felt a slugging in his desire to throw the ball, he could pump himself up with it. It got to be such a thing with him he was afraid he would lose it, and then he nursed it when he wasn't on the field, and soon after he was thrown in jail for nearly killing a man in a bar.

"Don't mess with him," they said.

Red Deer thought it was funny. He was just playing the game. But something had happened, and one night, when he came in from a drunk, he had looked in the mirror in the bathroom of his hotel room and had seen somebody he didn't know staring out at him—a big, fierce-looking Indian with a crooked nose and hard eyes. It scared him so badly that he covered all the mirrors in his room with towels and lay on his bed, his arms pulled tight over his chest.

The morning after, Harvey, his first baseman, had spoken to him in the dugout. It was a hot day at the end of August and Red Deer was tying the laces of his cleats.

His hands shook on the laces.

"You'd better slow down on the sauce," Harvey said.

It occurred to Red Deer to knock Harvey's teeth out, but the look on his face was so concerned that he laughed instead.

"Nothing that doesn't grease the old joints," Red Deer said. 224

Harvey brushed the dirt off his glove. He shook his head. "I'll tell you 225 something," he said. "Just between the two of us."

Red Deer busied himself with his shoes. He didn't want to hear it. 226

"I got an ulcer the size of a half-dollar in my gut," Harvey said, "and if 227 it gets any worse they say they're gonna have to cut some out and sew me up. Now I thought that was pretty funny, until they said it might kill me, see." He put his face down by Red Deer's. "Do you see what I'm saying?"

Red Deer grunted, double-tying his laces, pulling on them. He could 228 hardly control his hands now.

"Hey, do you hear what—" 229

"Shut up, Harve," Red Deer said. There was a buzzing in his brain. He 230 shot to his feet and grabbed Harvey by his shirt and twisted it. "Shut up before I knock out your teeth."

The season ended well enough, and Red Deer got himself a job in a 231 meat packing plant in Ohio, where he had played his last game. He hated the noises and smells at first. He hated the gray walls and the fluorescent lights. He hated his foreman and he hated Vinny, the boy he worked with.

But as with everything else, he learned to shut it out. 232

"Don't you just love it?" Vinny said. They were cutting the heads off 233 pigs. A fine line of blood squirted up Vinny's rubber smock while he cut with the saw.

Vinny smiled. 234

He had a few teeth missing, and Red Deer saw himself in the mirror for 235 a second.

"Cut that shit out, Vinny," he said. 236

But then it was baseball season again, the job and the winter shucked 237 off. He took the train down to Tampa and the tryouts started. The weather was warm and there were birds all over and it was hard to pitch at first.

But it always happened. 238

"Chief," someone said "Tonto." 239

And he was throwing hot again. His arm swollen and hard. He built it 240 up slowly, added Vinny to it, but there were so many now it didn't matter. He didn't even have to think of any specific one, it just came to him in a knotted, hard bundle. A bundle he would spit out his arm and over the bag.

"Jesus," they said. "He throws a real killer-ball." 241

He was throwing like that in his fifth pick-up game. Hurling himself 242 into it, when a scout for the Cleveland Aces spotted him. He'd never been hotter, and like that, a month later he was in Chicago for an exhibition game against the Cubs, and somehow, someone had found out on the reservation and there they were, Osada and Bear and Joe Big Otter and his friends.

The lights burned. 243

A brown bottle sailed up over the netting, turning end over end, flash- 244

ing, and landed on the field. One of the men in the white shirts and colored ties stood.

"Chief! Go home, Chief!" he shouted.

A bat boy ran out to the bottle.

Darius marched to the mound from the dugout, and the umpires came up from the bases.

"What the hell is going on?" Darius said.

Red Deer glanced up into the lights. Everything seemed so bright now, the field an electric green.

"We got a goddamned game goin' on here. You can't just stand the fuck out here and pick your nose. What the hell is wrong with you? Are you on the sauce or what?"

Red Deer kicked at the mound with his cleats.

"Answer me!"

"I don't know," Red Deer said.

"I'm going to put our relief in if you don't get your ass in gear."

Red Deer turned to Darius, looked down into his eyes.

Darius could tell something was wrong.

"I'm not on the sauce," Red Deer lied.

But it didn't matter now. There was no stopping what was opening. It was just a matter of finishing now. He had to finish it.

"I got it," Red Deer said.

"Well, you better have it," Darius said.

He crossed the field to the dugout and climbed down.

Red Deer pushed his mitt on his hand. He remembered what the man with the watch had said:

"Jim Thorpe couldn't have done that at your age."

Red Deer positioned himself on the mound. Now they had done it to him, too.

"Come on, goddammit!" Darius yelled from the dugout.

"Chief! Hey, you! You old lady, Chief!" the man in the stands yelled.

Red Deer felt the anger flare in him.

The batter was holding his hands up and looking into the sky.

The catcher gave him the sign again, and Red Deer jabbed himself with his anger. Now it hardly moved him at all. It was alternately terrifying, and a relief. And when the anger came again, he gripped the ball, stared down the pipe, got his nails on the stitching of the ball, and heaved the ball down the line as hard as he could. The ball floated, dipped, then slammed into the catcher's mitt and the batter coiled around.

"Steeceerike!" the umpire called.

The crowd roared.

The tribesmen stood, and when the others took their seats again, they remained standing. Someone started the others banging their feet on the stands, and the booming got louder, a harsh, crushing banging.

With the tribesmen standing, Red Deer could not see Osada, and he wondered whether he was sitting back there or if he had gone.

"Go home, Chief!" the drunk yelled.

274

Red Deer felt the ball in his hand.

275

The batter swung around, practicing. He stepped up to the plate, and the catcher gave Red Deer two fingers. It pushed out of him now, and he saw the batter grinning there. "Come on, Chief," the batter was saying. "Come on, Chief."

276

Red Deer gripped the ball, a stone.

277

In a flash that burned him, Red Deer saw that he might really do it this time. He saw the ball, hurling down the pipe, no curve, no spin, just hurling, the batter's skull shattering. He could kill him now, and he could call it an accident. It had come to this. And he knew, with absolute certainty, when he stepped onto the mound that he was going to kill the batter. He was going to throw the ball through the side of his head. He would crush him with his hatred, and it would be gone, he would be free maybe, and when he got the signal from the catcher the batter said it again, and Red Deer felt everything in him screaming toward that pitch, the crowd roaring, the blood in his head pounding, and sharper than ever, he saw the line the ball would take, the point where the ball would contact the batter's head, above and back of the ear—it was like tunnel vision, and there was only in front of him the ear and the hair over the man's temple, the ball in his hand, the tremendous power that moved his limbs like iron, threatening to burst him, the crowd roaring like steam and the mound pushing up beneath him. He drew his arm back, then farther, the weight of his rage there compressed, and in an explosion the ball arced around, hard, heavy, and as it shot from his hand, Red Deer caught the stitching with his thumb, and the ball, as though it were on a track, swung wide across the field and smacked square into the batter's startled face.

278

The umpire burst out from behind the catcher.

279

The field came alive, the crowd roaring, and Darius scrambled from the dugout. The batter kicked on the ground, and the umpire tried to hold him down.

280

Red Deer turned his back to it, and tugging at his mitt, walked to the mound. He stared up into the bleachers, at the big man with the bright blue tie, the one who had started it all. The man raised his fist, opened his mouth to shout. Something settled home in Red Deer's chest, found bottom, and he held his eyes on the big man until he turned away. He remembered his father's scream when Litani had been shot, and what the officers had said after the commotion died down.

281

"It was a *terrible mistake*. We're sorry," the man Harris had said.

282

Red Deer drew back the bill of his cap. Without the cover for his eyes the stadium lights were blinding.

283

They were coming up behind him now, he could hear their feet on the dry grass.

284

He remembered his father's face, how when he had screamed it was as

285

though something had shattered in him, and when the noise had stopped and his mouth had closed, something had gone away.

"Buck!" Darius said.

Red Deer turned to face him. He puffed along, swinging his arms, two press men behind him with cameras.

Darius reached out, grasped Red Deer's forearm. "Buck," he said. "Buck, just tell them—"

Red Deer bent low, and as if to confide in Darius, pulled him closer. He could smell the oil in Darius' hair, his aftershave.

"Buck, you gotta—"

"Let go," Red Deer said, his voice quiet and sure as death now. "Let go of my arm, Darie," he said.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. This story uses a *flashback*—that is, it shifts the scene back in time and then comes forward—rather than the more usual form of **EXPOSITION** in which the past is suggested or filled in. How does this affect the usual ordering of the **STRUCTURE** (rising action, climax, falling action, conclusion) of the story?
2. Who is Litani? How do we learn what happened to him? How is the piecemeal presentation of that story related to the story of Red Deer? How is the Litani story relevant to the final episode in the story? What is the meaning of the final sentence of the story?
3. Alcoholism is part of the **STEREOTYPE** of the Native American. How is it used in this story?
4. Red Deer is full of anger. How much seems due to the oppression of Native Americans? to racism? What is the nature of his encounters with whites? Is Red Deer a racist—that is, does he hate whites?