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*Digital Comprehensive Summaries of Uppsala Dissertations  
from the Faculty of Social Sciences 38*

# Intergroup Relations

*When is My Group More Important than Yours?*

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ACTA  
UNIVERSITATIS  
UPSALIENSIS  
UPPSALA  
2008

ISSN 1652-9030  
ISBN 978-91-554-7113-2  
urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-8502

Dissertation presented at Uppsala University to be publicly examined in IV, Universitetshuset, Uppsala, Tuesday, April 1, 2008 at 13:15 for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The examination will be conducted in Swedish.

**Abstract**

Batalha, L. 2008. Intergroup Relations. When is My Group More Important than Yours? Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. *Digital Comprehensive Summaries of Uppsala Dissertations from the Faculty of Social Sciences* 38. 67 pp. Uppsala. ISBN 978-91-554-7113-2.

Intergroup relations are characterised by favourable and unfavourable biases. Towards one's own group these biases are mostly favourable – ingroup favouritism. Research has, however, shown that outgroup favouritism, that is, the preference for a group to which the person does not belong, also permeates intergroup relations. Several theories such as social identity theory, social dominance theory, and system justification theory offer explanations of the dynamics of intergroup relations and biases. Despite not strictly being a theory of intergroup relations, right-wing authoritarianism also offers an explanation of intergroup bias by accounting for prejudice and ethnocentrism. Likewise, ideological conservatism has been shown to influence intergroup relations.

Based within these theories, this dissertation attempts to explain the social-psychological mechanisms regulating in- and outgroup favouritism. More specifically, Study I examines issues of power and legitimacy in relation to social perception and gender. Studies II and III examine the relationships between social psychological variables and affirmative action, which is aimed at diminishing inequalities between social groups. Together, the studies showed that gender plays a role in intergroup bias, both as an independent variable and as an object of social discrimination. Conservative ideologies predicted ingroup favouritism, but variably. Attitudes towards affirmative action were influenced by the way this issue is semantically framed. The results are discussed in relation to the theories of intergroup relations exposed above and the pertinent issue of attitude ambivalence in understanding outgroup favouritism.

*Keywords:* Attitude ambivalence, intergroup bias, ingroup favouritism, outgroup favouritism, ethnic prejudice, social identity, social dominance orientation, system justification, conservatism, sexism, prejudice

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ISSN 1652-9030

ISBN 978-91-554-7113-2

urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-8502 (<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-8502>)

Cover illustration “Tug of War” by Brian Jones

# List of Papers

- I        Batalha, L., Akrami, N., & Ekehammar, B. (2007). Outgroup favoritism: The role of power perception, gender, and conservatism. *Current Research in Social Psychology*, 13, 38-49.
  
- II        Batalha, L. (2007). *Affirmative action: The role of ideological context, self interest, and conservative ideologies*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
  
- III       Batalha, L., Ekehammar, B., & Akrami, N. (2007). *Affirmative action: The relationship with stereotyping, recipient's gender, and sexism*. Manuscript submitted for publication.



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# Abbreviations

<b>AA</b>	Affirmative Action
<b>LM</b>	Legitimizing Myth
<b>LM-HA</b>	Hierarchy-Attenuating Legitimizing Myth
<b>LM-HE</b>	Hierarchy-Enhancing Legitimizing Myth
<b>SCT</b>	Social Categorization Theory
<b>SDO</b>	Social Dominance Orientation
<b>SDT</b>	Social Dominance Theory
<b>SIT</b>	Social Identity Theory
<b>SJT</b>	System Justification Theory
<b>RWA</b>	Right-Wing Authoritarianism



# Introduction

The social world is engendered through reciprocal interactions between individuals and society. This complex interplay between psychological and societal forces insures that both players influence each other and contribute to what they are. To complicate things further, society is not just a series of institutions, norms and rules, it is also a collection of individuals that are associated with different social groups that do not necessarily stand on an equal footing in relation to each other or to societal institutions.

Social relations are very often marked by conflict. Different groups have different social positions, often with conflicting interests and values. A desire to preserve or to change the order of things by one group will almost inevitably lead to conflict with other groups. These social conflicts can be more or less severe and can range from the minor to the horrendously destructive. Social relations are, however, not just about conflict. Just as much as we see proof of antagonism, we also witness the capacity to care for and help others, regardless of their group membership.

Human psychology is complex, and while some people fight against regimes or social systems that they find unjust, others are content to accept the way things are. The reasons why some people lend themselves to the barricades while others acquiesce to the system are many. As humans involved in a range of daily battles, we take recourse to an array of psychological devices that help us make our way through, sometimes with consideration for others, and sometimes less so.

This dissertation examines these issues and attempts to discern psychological factors that contribute to the maintenance of unequal intergroup relations. In Study I, issues of power and legitimacy are examined in relation to social perception and gender. Studies II and III examine the relationships between social psychological variables and social policies that are aimed at diminishing inequalities between social groups.

## Intergroup Relations

People belong to a variety of social groups, including those referring to their gender, ethnicity, profession, religion, language, etc. These groups can be more or less inclusive. For example, an ethnic group will include both men and women who will, in turn, belong to different professional and social

groups. Thus, there are higher-order group memberships that incorporate less inclusive social groups.

Intergroup relations are normally understood as the interaction between people belonging to, and identifying with, different social groups (Tajfel, 1982a). Because these social groups typically differ in social power and status there is an endemic risk for conflict. Conflicting group interests lead to *intergroup biases* that can range from stereotyping and prejudice to manifest discrimination. There is a generally tendency to evaluate one's own group (the ingroup) or its members more favourably than members of outgroups to which one does not belong (Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002). This kind of intergroup bias is known as *ingroup favouritism*. *Outgroup favouritism*, or the tendency to show preference for the outgroup is, however, also an occurring phenomenon (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The study of intergroup relations has played a central role in our understanding of the motivational and perceptual processes that govern people's responses to members of outgroups. Several theoretical approaches have, to varying degrees, been successful in explaining intergroup relations. They have offered accounts ranging from the personal to the group level.

## Theories of Intergroup Relations

### Social Identity and Self-Categorization Theory

One of the most encompassing theories of intergroup relations is social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel, 1982b; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). SIT is mainly concerned with social identity or intergroup behaviour (acting in terms of group) rather than with personal identity or interpersonal behaviour (acting in terms of self). It offers a group level analysis of intergroup relations and bias.

SIT regards social behaviour as falling somewhere on a continuum from interpersonal to intergroup. That is, people act either in terms of self or in terms of group (Turner & Reynolds, 2004). However, neither of these behaviours is likely to occur in a pure form in real life. People's behaviour is unlikely to be fully determined by their group membership or to be completely independent from it. In fact, experimental evidence shows that the self and the ingroup are linked to each other (Smith & Henry, 1996), suggesting that social behaviour is an expression of both individuality and individual-as-group-member. Social identity is primarily derived from people's group memberships. SIT postulates that in relevant intergroup situations, and where group membership is salient, people will act as members of their groups rather than as individuals on the basis of their personal characteristics.

One basic idea in SIT is that social comparisons between groups serve to establish a positive ingroup distinctiveness. Consequently, positive social identity affects personal identity in a positive manner (Turner & Reynolds, 2004). One of SIT's empirically established postulates is people's tendency to think of their ingroup as better than other groups, that is, to display ingroup favouritism. Early experiments conducted within the minimal group paradigm (e.g., Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971) pointed to the pervasive tendency toward ingroup bias even in the absence of group conflict. This is because group members feel better about themselves after engaging in group discrimination (Lemyre & Smith, 1985). That is, their self-esteem is enhanced through positive social identity.

Peoples' self-perception determines whether they act at an interpersonal or intergroup level. According to Turner and Reynolds (2004), people's self-perception varies from perceiving oneself as an individual (personal identity) or as a member of a group (social identity). People move along the interpersonal-intergroup continuum and categorize themselves in individual or collective terms depending on the context. Group behaviour is possible when social identity rather than personal identity becomes salient. This is the core of self-categorization theory (SCT; Turner, 1999, Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). This theory postulates that different levels of self-categorization lead to a self-perception that varies between personal and social identity. As self-categorization becomes more social, the self becomes depersonalized, meaning that personal characteristics play a less important role in intergroup relations.

Whereas SIT bases identity upon the interpersonal-intergroup continuum, SCT attempts to explain why and when a situation is construed as interpersonal or intergroup by examining how people conceive of themselves. Within this theoretical context, identity is not stable but a contextual and fluid phenomenon. Interestingly, when the self is categorized it is also stereotyped. Just like social categorization leads to the stereotyping of outgroups, the self is also perceived stereotypically on the basis of self-categorizations.

## Social Dominance Theory

Another prominent theory of intergroup relations is social dominance theory (SDT; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). It attempts to understand how hierarchical social relations are formed and maintained. SDT adopts both a group and an individual approach to intergroup relations. It adopts a group level approach as far as it postulates that society is stratified mainly along three social group lines: age, gender, and an arbitrary set system, which includes social groups formed on the basis of, for example, race/ethnicity, class, or religion (Pratto, Sidanius, & Levin, 2006). These group constellations differ in social power and material resources. SDT proposes that the experience of intergroup rela-

tions differs among the three systemic groups and also among dominant and subordinate groups. Consequently, intergroup bias is not consistent across social groups. For example, high-status groups tend to show ingroup favouritism, whereas low-status groups display this tendency to a lesser degree. This is dubbed the *behavioural asymmetry hypothesis* (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999, p. 227). That is, members of high-status groups display intergroup behaviours that are beneficial to themselves more often than members of low-status groups do.

A central tenet of SDT is that behavioural asymmetry is accomplished through the endorsement of *legitimizing myths* (LMs). These may be either hierarchy enhancing (HE-LM) or hierarchy attenuating (HA-LM). LMs are ideologies, stereotypes, attitudes, or values that promote either the maintenance of group-based social inequality (HE-LMs) or greater levels of social equality (HA-LMs) (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Classic examples of HE-LMs are a belief in a just world, the protestant work ethic, and racism and sexism. HA-LMs are illustrated by examples, such as universal human rights, feminism, and socialism.

Social dominance orientation (SDO; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994) is a central construct in SDT. It assesses differences in an individuals' desire for group-based dominance and inequality. SDT is mainly examined through this theoretical tool, which gives the theory an individual approach to the study of intergroup relations. For example, SDT proposes that various forms of prejudice and social discrimination are due to ideological hegemony that promotes social hierarchy and prevents social equality. These ideological values differ both between individuals and between groups, and they are predicted by levels of SDO.

One hypothesis that has been derived from these ideas is that people high in SDO display more HE-LMs and that those low in SDO display more HA-LMs. Research findings have substantiated this hypothesis, revealing that social dominants endorse more HE-LMs than low dominants (Quist & Resendez, 2002; Sidanius, Pratto, & Rabinowitz, 1994). Moreover, HE-LMs have been found to be positively associated with group attachment for members of high-status groups. There is a lower or even negative association for members of low-status groups. In contrast, HA-LMs have been found to be negatively associated with group attachment among high-status groups. This association is attenuated or even reversed among low-status group members (Levin, Sidanius, Rabinowitz, & Federico, 1998).

Men, as a group, score higher in SDO than women as a group, and people belonging to dominant groups are, in general, higher in SDO than subordinates (Pratto et al., 2000; Sidanius, Levin, Liu, & Pratto, 2000). Men and women also vary in their SDO depending on their degree of gender identification (Dambrun, Duarte, & Guimond, 2004; Wilson & Liu, 2003). Moreover, SDO also seems to vary depending on the situation. For example, the difference in SDO between low- and high-status Jews disappears when they

identify as Israelis in conflict with Palestinians (Levin & Sidanius, 1999). That is, when Jews identify with a higher-order social group they all become members of the same group with a common enemy, which seems to influence their levels of SDO. In addition, people employed in hierarchy-attenuating professions score lower on SDO than those employed in hierarchy-enhancing positions (Sidanius, Pratto, van Laar, & Levin, 2004). Furthermore, the difference in SDO between arbitrarily set groups increases depending on the size of the status/power gap between the groups (Levin, 2004; Sidanius et al., 2000). Together, this suggests that SDO is not stable but, at least to some extent, contextual.

To explain the variation in SDO between and within groups, Pratto et al. (2006) proposed that SDO is influenced by five broad forces. In addition to group position, gender, and social context, as shown above, they included personality and socialization. Empirical evidence exists showing that SDO is negatively related to personality variables like *openness*, *agreeableness* and *tender-mindedness* (Akrami & Ekehammar, 2006; Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, & Birum, 2002). The developers of SDT have proposed that socialization into religious doctrines, traumatic life experiences, multicultural experiences, and education, are all socializing factors that can influence individual levels in SDO (Pratto et al., 2006). However, socialization is an hypothesis that has yet to find empirical support.

## System Justification Theory

A third theory of intergroup relations is system justification theory (SJT; Jost & Banaji, 1994), which departs from the notion that ingroup favouritism is not a pervasive phenomenon and that subordinates do not endorse ingroup favouritism as easily as dominants (Rudman, Feinberg, & Fairchild, 2002). Instead, they internalize beliefs that serve to maintain the status quo, even though it may be detrimental to their own group's interests. SJT adds a new ingredient to the study of intergroup relations by identifying conditions under which group members support actions or beliefs that run contrary to their group interests.

According to SJT, the ideas of the dominant tend to be adopted by the dominated (Jost & Banaji, 1994). In this context, SJT re-launches the old Marxist concept of *false consciousness* that is believed to be necessary in order to account for system-justification (Jost & Banaji 1994). False consciousness occurs when members of disadvantaged groups engage in ideological legitimization of the very system that deprives them from rights that they are entitled to (Jost, Burgess, & Mosso, 2001). According to Jost and Banaji (1994), potential triggers of system-justification beliefs are the lack of class-consciousness, isolation of deprived groups from one another or low levels of identification with the ingroup.

But why would people engage in system justification? For high-status groups, a simple answer is that they benefit from maintaining the *status quo* and their high status. The same does not apply to low-status groups. Justification of a social system that is detrimental to the self or the ingroup's welfare causes psychological conflicts with ego- and group-justification motives (Jost, Pellham, Sheldon, & Sullivan, 2003). In order to account for these conflicts SJT is influenced by dissonance theory, and suggests that in order to reduce ideological dissonance, people defend the legitimacy of the social system so that a positive image of that system can be maintained. This is done at the cost of derogating the self or the ingroup (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost & Hunyady, 2002). Disadvantaged people engage in system justification despite the costs because system-justifying ideologies serve a palliative function (Jost & Hunyady, 2002). That is, by legitimizing the system people feel better about the *status quo* and their position within it.

Research findings have provided evidence for the system justifying functions of varied ideologies (e.g., Jost & Burgess, 2000; Jost & Thompson, 2000; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). There is evidence that endorsing system-justifying beliefs is associated with enhanced motivation and performance, and decreased stress (Tomaka & Blascovich, 1994), a reduced sense of personal vulnerability (Lambert, Burroughs, & Nguyen, 1999), higher life aspirations and goals (Mirels & Darland, 1990), higher self-esteem and lower depression (Lipkus, Dalbert, & Seigler, 1996). This is in line with the argument that system justifying ideologies are an effect of motivated social cognition (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003).

## Strengths and Weaknesses of the Reviewed Theories

SIT and its offshoot, SCT, offer a well-developed theory that accounts for both the emergence and variation of intergroup relations and bias. They demonstrate, for example, how the salience of group membership can cue intergroup behaviours differently depending on the social context. A difficulty with SDT and SJT is that neither offers an elaborated account of group-based variations in the development of group membership and intergroup bias. SIT, on the other hand, has been criticized for not seriously considering the occurrence of outgroup favouritism and for not offering any deeper understanding of the development of group identity and why people adopt one social identity over another (Reicher, 2004). For example, members of the same social group can differ in their attachment and identification to the group. Moreover, group cohesion may differ between societies.

SDT fills a gap left by SIT, accounting for individual differences in intergroup relations and bias, and by including an analysis of societal factors in producing intergroup bias. SDT highlights the role that social institutions play in shaping the beliefs and behaviours of individuals. Sidanius and col-

leagues argued that it is not only individuals that hold HE-LMs or HA-LMs, institutions can also play hierarchy attenuating or enhancing roles. SDT is an ambitious theory as it attempts to explain intergroup bias at all three levels: individual, group, and societal. However, it succeeds best at the individual level, or at least, this is the level that research has concentrated on.

Of the three theories described above (see Figure 1), SJT is the one that best accounts for outgroup favouritism among low-status groups and the one that pays most attention to societal inequalities as determinants of the acquiescence to the *status quo* among members of low-status groups. However, the theory fails to explain the occurrence of resistance among members of disadvantage groups.

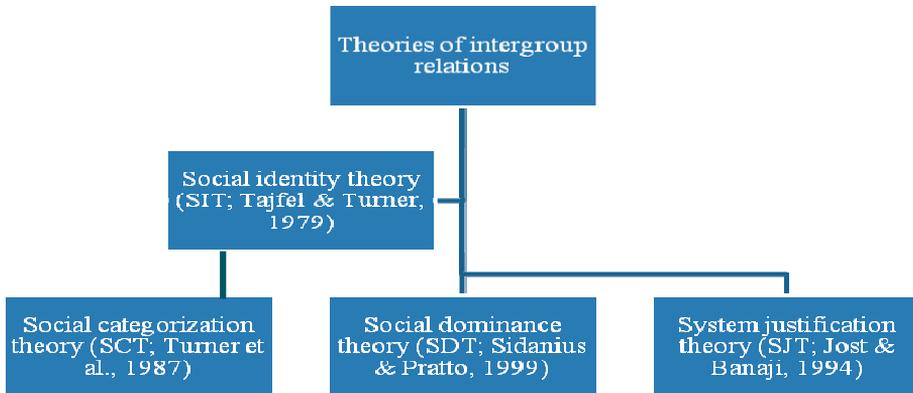


Figure 1. Theories of intergroup relations.

## Authoritarianism, Conservatism, and their Relationship with Intergroup Attitudes

From a psychodynamic, rather than an intergroup perspective, the theory of the authoritarian personality (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950) was one of the first to attempt to explain intergroup bias in the form of prejudice. This theory was advanced in the wake of World War II in order to explain the Nazi atrocities. It aimed to explain prejudice and ethnocentrism in general and anti-Semitism in particular. The authoritarian personality was seen as a pathological personality structure that is prone to prejudice. In brief, this personality is hypothesized to result from strict and punitive parenting that gives rise to resentment and hostility towards authority. This hostility is repressed and displaced and finds expression in anti-democratic beliefs (originally sampled by the F[ascist]-scale).

The F-scale initially attracted enormous interest, but this soon declined as methodological flaws became obvious. The original F-scale was constituted by nine traits. Later work revealed that these traits did not covary sufficiently and that they were incoherent and inconsistent. This led Altemeyer (1981) to conclude that in its original form this scale lacked construct validity. Findings obtained with the F-scale, therefore, were rendered as revealing something, but no one knew what. Altemeyer found, however, that three of the original traits correlated substantially. These were *conventionalism*, *authoritarian submission*, and *authoritarian aggression*.

Subsequently, Altemeyer (1981) reworked the concept, kept these three original traits in a scale, renamed it Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) and gave it a more cognitive-learning base rather than the original psychoanalytic. The authoritarian personality was defined as conventional, holding aggressive feelings towards “deviant” targets, and as being submissive towards authorities.

Whilst being distinct constructs, RWA and conservatism are associated with each other (Cornelis & Van Hiel, 2006; Crowson, Thoma, & Hestevold, 2005; Jost et al., 2003). Different forms of conservative values predict racism (Cornelis & Van Hiel, 2005; Sears & Henry, 2003) and homophobia (Whitley, & Lee, 2000). Similarly, research conducted into authoritarianism and intergroup relations revealed that RWA is associated with generalized prejudice (Ekehammar, Akrami, Gylje, & Zakrisson, 2004), diverse forms of racism (Van Hiel & Mervielde, 2005), sexism (Whitley, 1999), and unethical decisions (Son-Hing, Bobocel, Zanna, & McBride, 2007). Moreover, empirical finding also indicate that RWA predicts attitudes towards egalitarian values such as openness and diversity in universities (Peterson, Doty, & Winter, 1993) and affirmative action policies (Sibley & Liu, 2004).

## The Relationship between RWA and SDO

Whereas some studies show a strong relationship between RWA and SDO others do not. Research shows that the association between the two variables is strongest in societies with a clear left-right political continuum (Duriez, Van Hiel, & Kossowska, 2005; Mirisola, Sibley, Boca, & Duckitt, 2007; Roccato & Ricolfi, 2005). This suggests that SDO and RWA have ideological undertones.

Studies conducted in left-right political environments, show that SDO and RWA combined, largely explain the tendency for people to prefer unequal social systems. Both predict prejudice (e.g., Altemeyer, 2004; Ekehammar et al., 2004; Whitley, 1999). However, empirical findings suggest that these variables relate to prejudice differently (Duriez & Van Hiel, 2002; Whitley, 1999). Whereas RWA seems to be associated with cultural conservatism, SDO is associated with economic conservatism (Duriez & Van Hiel, 2002). This suggests that RWA and SDO have separate roots.

Despite this, these variables have a common association with conservative and hierarchical values. All these findings led Altemeyer (1998) to suggest that social dominants produce authoritarian social systems with the help of right-wing authoritarians. However, whereas RWA primarily refers to submissive attitudes toward authorities, SDO refers to dominance in relation to outgroups. It has, therefore, been suggested that RWA may be best conceptualized in terms of intragroup relations, whereas SDO should be seen in terms of intergroup relations (Duckitt, 1989; Kreindler, 2005).

## RWA and SDO: Personality Variables or Ideological Attitudes or Both?

Attitudes are evaluations that express either favour or disfavour in relation to particular people or groups. Attitudes are seen as psychological tendencies and can therefore be regarded as a state that can last for shorter or longer periods of time (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). There is some controversy as to whether RWA and SDO are personality (Altemeyer, 1998), or attitudinal variables based on motivational goals that are influenced by particular social worldviews (Duckitt, et al., 2002) or group dynamics (Duckitt, 1989; Kreindler, 2005). The expression of RWA has been suggested to be dependent on the authority in question (Duckitt et al., 2002; Kreindler, 2005). There are indications that SDO is conditional on the saliency of the social group (Huang & Liu, 2005). Moreover, the relationship of both SDO and RWA with other intergroup variables has been shown to be dependent on the experimental context (Lehmiller & Schmitt, 2007).

It is theoretically and empirically important whether a concept is constructed as a personality or an attitude variable and it has consequences for how studies are designed and interpreted. If conceived as a personality parameter, a variable tends to be used as an independent factor, whereas if it is conceived as an attitude variable it may be used as a dependent factor. Empirically, RWA and SDO have been used both as dependent and independent factors. As personality variables, RWA and SDO have been demonstrated to predict racism (Altemeyer, 1998; Ekehammar et al., 2004). As flexible attitude variables, there is evidence that RWA and SDO predict prejudice as a function of self-categorization (Verkuyten & Hagendoorn, 1998) and that they may predict intergroup attitudes depending on the intergroup context (Lehmiller & Schmitt, 2007). SDO also functions as a mediator of social position in causing prejudice (Guimond, Dambrun, Michinov, & Duarte, 2003; Schmitt, Branscombe, & Kappen, 2003). Studies also show that levels of SDO may be dependent on gender socialization (Foels & Pappas, 2004) and group status (Levin, 2004).

Despite the evident connections of SDO and RWA with social-psychological variables there is also robust evidence that these variables are

associated with basic personality (Akrami & Ekehammar, 2006; Duckitt et al., 2002). Akrami and Ekehammar (2006) have shown the empirical connections of RWA and SDO with the Big-Five personality factors and facets. Whereas RWA is associated with the factor *openness to experience* and the facets *values* and *ideas*, SDO is associated with the factors *agreeableness* and *openness to experience*, and the facets *tender-mindedness* and *values* (Akrami & Ekehammar, 2006).

In a similar fashion, Duckitt et al. (2002) suggest that these variables express motivational goals based on personality variables and worldviews. Whereas authoritarianism is caused by *social conformity* accompanied by a *belief in a dangerous world*, social dominance is caused by *tough-mindedness* and a belief in the *competitive jungle*. This hypothesis has generated empirical work showing that RWA is negatively associated with attitudes towards groups perceived as threatening, whereas SDO is negatively associated with attitudes towards groups perceived as competing with the ingroup (Duckitt, 2006). Moreover, RWA and SDO are related to different domains of prejudice. Whereas RWA relates to the domains of prejudice that refer to “dangerous” groups, SDO is related to the domains that refer to the derogation of groups (Duckitt & Sibley, 2007). Thus, RWA and SDO are probably better conceived as both personality and social-psychological variables and are best predicted by models that integrate both these psychological parameters (see Akrami, 2005).

## How We Perceive Others

People live in a complex social reality. In a world of overwhelming stimuli people take recourse to categorical representations. Categorical thinking simplifies person perception and makes the world more manageable. This thinking is based on the social categories that the object of perception belongs to (e.g., gender, ethnicity, age). One drawback of social categorization is that categorical distinctions transform continuous variables into discrete ones. Consequently, this distinction minimizes differences within the category and maximizes differences between categories. The organization of people into different categories contributes to the development of mental representations that, eventually, become stored in the perceiver’s long-term memory (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2001).

In social cognition, categorical thinking is viewed not only as a normal psychological process, but as a necessary one (Allport, 1954; Fiske, 2005). A category encompasses all the information that perceivers have about various social groups. In an encounter with a member of a certain group, categorical information about members of that group is activated, inducing the perceiver to make inferences about the target that may or may not be true. Thus, mostly, we understand new people in terms of old beliefs.

There are, however, indications that perception of others may run along a continuum from pure category-based perception to more individuating processes (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990). The process of forming an impression of others can require more or less effort. Degrees of difficulty range from category-based impression formation, requiring minimal effort, to diagnostic-based impression formation, that requires that the perceiver pay attention to the target and her or his behaviour before making a judgment. Importantly, regardless of how individuated we perceive others, impression formation always begins with category-based processes (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990). Moreover, categorized others are also perceived as either competent-incompetent or warm-cold (Fiske, Xu, Cuddy, & Glick, 1999; Glick & Fiske, 2001). An example of a competent but cold attribute is “intelligent”. A warm but incompetent quality is exemplified by the term “good-natured” (Fiske et al., 1999). Whether a member of a category is perceived as competent-incompetent or warm-cold is dependent on the social structural relationships between groups. For example, the perception of the outgroup as being in either a competitive or cooperative relationship with the ingroup is fundamental in forming competent-incompetent and warm-cold impressions of the outgroup. High-status groups are generally perceived as competent but cold and low-status groups tend to be perceived as incompetent but warm.

Perception of others leads inevitably to judgments and evaluations. How we judge and evaluate outgroups has been a long-standing theme in social psychology. In intergroup relations these issues have mostly focused on stereotypes and prejudice, which are believed to ultimately lead to social discrimination.

## Stereotypes and Stereotyping as Social Perception

Since its inception by Lippman (1922), the study of stereotypes has ranged through several different conceptualizations. Stereotypes have been regarded as rigid, over-simplified and selective representations (Lippman, 1922), as erroneous products of pathological personality (Adorno et al., 1950), as exaggerated beliefs associated with categories (Allport, 1954), as products of intergroup relations (Sherif, 1967), as products of generalized cognitive processes that unintentionally produce error (Hamilton, 1981), and as shared beliefs shaped by group membership and intergroup relations (Tajfel, 1981). Clearly, all these conceptualizations have followed different research paradigms, from personality (Adorno et al., 1950) to cognition (Hamilton, 1981) and intergroup relations (Sherif, 1967; Tajfel, 1981). It is evident that these paradigms have paralleled historical social events (cf. Duckitt, 1992). Thus, the shifts in focus are not just a product of an accumulation of research, where a better theory leads on from where an older one fell short. They are also a product of shifts in the overall social structure and socio-historical events of their time and of the challenges to these forces.

Most contemporary social psychologists agree that stereotypes are beliefs about characteristics, attributes, and behaviours of members of specific social groups, and are theories about how and why these attributes go together (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). They are based on cognitive and psychological processes that help people to orientate in the face of group life (Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994). One consequence of social stereotypes is that they reify group differences. As representations of groups, they have therefore begun to be considered, not just as individual beliefs, but also as ideological representations in that they serve to justify societal arrangements and dominant world views (Augoustinos & Walker, 1998; Jost & Banaji, 1994). This dimension of stereotypes takes into account their societal nature and points to their dual ontology. That is, stereotypes are simultaneously individual and social.

Whereas stereotypes are normally viewed as more static beliefs about categories (but see Blair, 2002; Diekmann & Eagly, 2000; Garcia-Marques, Santos, & Mackie, 2006), stereotyping is the process through which people attribute characteristics to others based on their social group membership. Thus, traditionally stereotypes have been seen as cognitive representations, whereas stereotyping has been viewed as the mental activity. The attempts made to re-conceptualize stereotypes and stereotyping so that their social ideological nature is taken into account (e.g., Augoustinos & Walker, 1998) have led to the understanding of stereotypes as cognitive, affective and symbolic representations of social groups. Stereotyping is then the resulting activity of these interactions (Augoustinos & Walker, 1998).

There is strong evidence for the fluidity of stereotyping (e.g., Blair, 2002; Diekmann & Eagly, 2000; Garcia-Marques et al., 2006). But alongside this fluidity there is even more striking evidence of the consensus, stability, and continuity of stereotypes (Haslam, Oakes, Reynolds, & Turner, 1999; Haslam et al., 1996). According to Oakes et al. (1994), the stability and continuity of stereotypes stem largely from the stability of intergroup relations. This highlights the question of accuracy. Are stereotypes generally the result of accurate or distorted perceptions of social groups?

According to the proponents of the “kernel of truth” theory, the accuracy of stereotypes can be assessed by validating stereotype content in terms of the “true” characteristics of individual group members (e.g., Judd & Park, 1993). Others argue that group rather than individual attributes are represented in stereotypes (Oakes et al., 1994). Still others argue that stereotypes are political and ideological weapons that serve to position, subjugate and dominate some groups (Wetherell & Potter, 1992). Viewed this way, stereotypes are neither true nor false but a reflection of the nature of intergroup relations in a particular socio-historical time and location.

Whereas the two first perspectives can be understood as essentializing stereotypes at the individual and group levels, respectively, the third renders them as fluid by nature. None of these approaches to the study of stereotypes

is by definition wrong. However, because scientific results find their way into the public domain they may have consequences at an individual and at a broader societal level. It makes a difference whether people understand stereotypes as essential or fluid. Whereas essentiality may lead to a reinforcement of stereotypic associations, fluidity may lead to a loosening of automatic associative networks. In the long term, these individual understandings may have broader social effects.

## Prejudice as an Outcome of Biased Social Perception

Stereotypes and prejudice are associated with each other and both predict social attitudes (Schütz & Six, 1996). Whereas stereotypes and stereotyping are mostly regarded as cognitive products, prejudice is seen as denoting the affective component in intergroup relations (Fiske, 1998). Once emphasizing antipathy toward outgroups, the study of prejudice has moved on to encompass more subtle types of biases like paternalistic attitudes, such as benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Thus, a more inclusive understanding of prejudice defines it as affective reactions (positive or negative) people have toward other people based on their social group memberships (Schneider, 2004). There are, however, indications that prejudice is more an expression of ingroup preference rather than outgroup hostility (Brewer, 1999). Furthermore, whereas ingroup affiliation does not necessarily engender outgroup hate, it does provide a fecund ground for outgroup hostility to flourish. Most intergroup relations are also about power relations and the competition for scarce material resources. These factors provide a contextual basis for antagonistic group relations and conflicts. They also underlie and influence the nature of ingroup formation and identification and, ultimately, prejudice.

Ethnicity and gender are the most easily identifiable characteristics of a person. These are also the social categories that, culturally and historically, have suffered the most from negative prejudices. In many societies women have a long tradition of being subjugated by men. Ethnic minorities have also generally been subordinate to the ethnic majority (Scott, 1986; Finzsch, 2005). Thus, gender and ethnic prejudices can be said to be part of a “collective un/consciousness” and so the suppression of gender and ethnic prejudice is not so easily achieved. One important factor to consider in all this is that people will generally find themselves in more than one social position at a given time, or have multiple social identities that intersect in eliciting or attenuating prejudiced attitudes in other people.

Like stereotyping, the study of prejudice has been conducted mostly from either the individual (e.g., Altemeyer, 1981; Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), cognitive (e.g., Macrae, Milne, & Bodenhausen, 1994; Fiske & Taylor, 1991) or group perspectives (e.g., Bobo, 1999; Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). However, attempts have been recently made to integrate these factors in order to understand how prejudice is engendered

(Akrami, 2005). The empirical evidence suggests that prejudice is better explained when various factors, such as personality, social group identification and membership are considered together.

## Implicit and Explicit Prejudice

Attitudes have traditionally been measured in the form of self-reports using paper and pencil. That is, participants answer questionnaires that tap their attitudes towards a certain issue. This requires the participants to be their own observers with all the biases this necessarily entails. As an attitude, the measurement of prejudice has therefore followed this methodology. The discontentment with the biases entangled in direct measures has led researchers to introduce the terms *implicit* and *explicit* into the psychology of attitudes (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). The terms were adopted from cognitive psychology and more specifically from work on implicit and explicit memory. Explicit memory implies conscious and intentional recollection of an event. Implicit memory, on the other hand, refers to people's performance on a task that is influenced by prior events even though people are not aware or have no explicit memory of those events.

Despite the usefulness of the terms, some social psychologists caution against the use of the designations implicit and explicit attitudes. Because there is no evidence that an individual expressing an implicit attitude lacks awareness of this, researchers suggest that we should instead speak of implicit/direct and explicit/indirect *measures* of attitudes (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Fazio & Olson, 2003). In this sense, what is outside awareness is the attitude being assessed even though people may be aware of having that attitude. Thus, results on prejudice that are obtained through indirect measures should not necessarily be understood as an indication that people are unaware of their prejudice. They may or may not be aware of it. The advantage of measuring prejudice in this fashion is that biases such as social desirability and political correctness can be avoided as people are not aware of what is being measured. For ease of expression and because in the literature the terms *implicit* and *explicit prejudice* have standard usage, these terms will also be used in this dissertation. They are, however, meant to denote *implicitly/indirectly* and *explicitly/directly measured* prejudice. Although indirect measures were not used in this dissertation, it is important to clarify this distinction as the existence of implicitly held attitudes highlights the difficulties inherent in attitudinal change.

## Social Discrimination

As previously noted, stereotypes have traditionally been understood as category-based beliefs, or as cognitive phenomena. Prejudice has been understood as the affective reaction to members of outgroups based on stereotyp-

ing. Discrimination is regarded as the acting out of stereotyping and prejudice and involves the use of category information to justify behaviours or procedures towards other people (Schneider, 2004). Social discrimination can be regarded as a continuum from the more subtle forms, such as verbal discrimination (e.g., derogatory jokes about outgroups), through avoidance and segregation, to physical attack and ethnic cleansing.

Although discrimination is mostly regarded as a result of stereotyping and prejudice, this is not always the case. It can also be a direct result of unequal social structures that are historically rooted in any society with a history of discrimination against various social groups (see Crosby & Cordova, 1996). Thus, even though an individual may not be prejudiced toward a certain group they still end up discriminating against the group because of prejudiced and discriminatory structures embedded in the society. This highlights the complexity of prejudice and discrimination. It also suggests that the diminishment of individual prejudice or a rise in equal opportunity politics may not be sufficient to eradicate group discrimination.

Despite the obvious associations between stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination in the scientific literature there is strikingly little research that examines these connections. This is probably due to the procedural difficulties of examining discrimination in action. There are, however, experimental studies that show that both explicit (Brief, Dietz, Cohen, Pugh, & Vaslow, 2000) and implicit (Ziegert & Hanges, 2005) prejudice predict employment discrimination. Another example from the literature is that aversive racism predicts discrimination against black people in the form of less help given to them than to whites (Saucier, Miller & Doucet, 2005).

## Gender and Ethnicity as Discriminated Categories

As already mentioned, gender and race/ethnicity are two of the “top three” (Fiske, 1998, p. 375) categories, the other being age, that people use to base their judgements, and in the end, to discriminate against others. In work settings, women are evaluated less favourably than men (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989; Eagly, Mladinic, & Otto, 1991), and are generally rated as performing worse than men (Carli, 1991; Wood & Karten, 1986). Similarly, black candidates are discriminated against when there is no clear distinction in the qualifications (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000). It has become a truism that women and disadvantaged ethnic minorities have to outperform men and advantaged ethnic groups, respectively, in order to be perceived as being as good as them. This social perception has found empirical support. Foschi (1996, 2000) has demonstrated that people have different standards for what constitutes competence in women and in blacks and what constitutes competence in men and whites. More specifically, the requirements for competency for men and whites are lower than those for women and blacks, respectively. Members of these latter groups, for example, have to show more proof of

skill than men and whites in order to be considered as competent (Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997).

## Can Social Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination be Reduced?

### Automaticity

There is evidence that stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination are governed by automatic mechanisms (e.g., Bargh & Chartrand, 1999; Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Cunningham, Nezlek, & Banaji, 2004; Fazio, Sanbonmatsu, Powell, & Kardes, 1986). That is, they work outside of people's awareness. However, the automaticity of stereotypes and prejudice may not be inevitable. Research suggests, for example, that stereotyping and prejudice can be contingent on the context and on the individual (Blair, 2002). For example, it has been shown that the extent to which these factors operate is dependent on motivation (Plant & Devine, 1998). Moreover, stereotyping and prejudice can be reduced by making self-control salient (Araya, Akrami, Ekehammar, & Hedlund, 2002) and by activating egalitarianism (Moskowitz, Salomon, & Taylor, 2000). This tendency, however, varies both between and within individuals, depending on an individual's current goals in relation to the cognitive processing of the target. For example, people seem to stereotype more when the target is processed in social categorical terms than when he or she is processed in individual or object terms (Macrae, Bodenhausen, Milne, Thorn, & Castelli, 1997). New techniques using brain imaging have provided direct evidence that prejudice is contingent upon social-cognitive goals (Wheeler & Fiske, 2005). This suggests that reducing automatic stereotyping and prejudice is dependent upon immediate contextual parameters and that an established tendency towards prejudiced expressions can be controlled, but it depends on how the target is cognitively processed.

Social categorization forms the basis of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. Much research supports the automatic activation of categories (e.g., Bargh & Chartrand, 1999; Fazio, et al., 1986). However, as with stereotyping and prejudice, there is empirical research that has revealed that category activation is not unconditionally automatic. Even though people can identify others in terms of their category membership it does not necessarily lead to automatic activation of associated stereotypes. Factors like mental overload, people's long-term attitudes, and temporary goals can block or attenuate activation (Fiske, 2002).

Research into the automaticity of stereotypes and prejudice using indirect methods enables a comparison between implicit and explicit expressions of the same construct. The results are often inconsistent, however. For example, whereas some studies show a dissociation between implicit and explicit prejudice (e.g., Cunningham, Preacher, & Banaji, 2001; Ekehammar, Akrami, & Araya, 2003; Greenwald & Farnham, 2000), suggesting that these are two distinct constructs, others show significant correlations between them (e.g., Kawakami, Dion, & Dovidio, 1998; Lepore & Brown, 1997; McConnell & Liebold, 2001). Recent research shows that attitude importance moderates the relationship between implicit and explicit attitudes and that direct measures are better predictors of behaviour than indirect measures (Karpinski, Steinman, & Hilton, 2005).

## Intergroup Contact

One of the most abiding ideas in intergroup research is the *contact hypothesis* (Allport, 1954). This hypothesis proposes that contact, particularly close and prolonged contact with members of different cultural or social groups, promotes the reduction of prejudice and more positive and tolerant attitudes toward members of outgroups. This proposition is based on the idea that intergroup contact provides direct information regarding the values, behaviours and life-styles of other groups. Personal contact gives information that is based on first-hand experience rather than on preconceived ideas. Recent research demonstrates that intergroup contact is effective in reducing prejudice at an explicit level (Henry & Hardin, 2006) and promotes more positive attitudes toward outgroups (Brown, Eller, Leeds, & Stace, 2007).

At an implicit level, however, a reduction in prejudice seems to occur only for members of low-status groups. Henry and Hardy (2006) showed that the implicit prejudice of African Americans toward European Americans in the US, and of Muslims toward Christians in Lebanon was reduced by close intergroup contact, whereas the reverse did not occur. However, if intergroup contact reduces explicit group prejudice and explicit attitudes are more predictive of overt behaviour, intergroup contact should be promoted.

These results render the contact hypothesis as a promising way forward for intergroup relations. However, there are also strong indications that whereas the perceived attributes of specific group members may change, this change does not easily generalize to the category as a whole (Rothbart, 1996). This lack of generalization is because exemplars that are strongly disconfirming of the category in question are in fact not regarded as members of the category. The less a single member resembles the category, the less it is likely to activate that category. The stereotype of the category is thus left unchanged. Rothbart and John (2000) proposed that category exemplars can contribute to stereotype change only when they are moderately disconfirming of the category. Whilst not disconfirming the contact hypothe-

sis, this research indicates that stereotype change through intergroup contact is a slow and uncertain process.

## Affirmative Action

One means of promoting intergroup contact and, thereby, hopefully the reduction of group stereotyping and subsequent prejudice and discrimination is the implementation of affirmative action (AA) policies. AA refers to voluntary and compulsory undertakings by governments and organizations that promote equal opportunity in employment and education for all people, regardless of social group (Crosby, Iyer, Clayton, & Downing, 2003). AA has the potential to contribute to a permanent and pervasive change in the content of social stereotypes, prejudice, and in the end discrimination (see Gurin, Nagda, & Lopez, 2004; Parker, Baltes, & Christiansen, 1997). Situational stimuli on the other hand may have only a momentary effect and apply only in similar contexts. Even though social discrimination can occur in all settings and situations, access to jobs and education are arenas in which competition over resources is particularly evident. These are also the social situations that have the potential of granting people relative power and it is in these domains where many “battles” over equal rights have taken place. These battles have mostly been between genders and between ethnic groups and have fundamentally been battles over improved access to more powerful positions in public and private arenas.

Whereas *equal opportunity* is based on the view of people as individuals only, that is, race/ethnicity or gender blindness, AA views people as members of demographic groups and therefore calls attention to an individual’s ethnicity or gender. Moreover, equal opportunity policies rely on the belief that fair treatment follows the gaining of the right qualifications. AA departs from the idea that this is not necessarily the case. Proponents of AA contend that more pro-active measures are necessary in order to achieve fair treatment and to come to terms with social discrimination. One such measure is the matching of availability and utilization. In employment, this measure would mean that attempts would be made to assure that the pool of qualified people available in all different social groups matches the number that in reality is employed in professions that require that level of qualification. In education, AA would mean that higher education entities would have to assure that their students’ body is representative of the qualified pool leaving high school in all social categories. And if not, measures should be taken to improve the availability/utilization ratio.

One difficulty with AA is that it contains an inherent dilemma. In order to be able to promote equal opportunity, people must necessarily be categorized into groups. This categorization may, in itself contribute to the perpetuation of group categorization and associated stereotypes and prejudices. It is for this and other reasons, such as the reverse discrimination argument, that AA

has met controversy and opposition. Some argue that the very fact of noticing people's race/ethnicity or gender is in itself an act of racism or sexism. This suggests that equal opportunity policies should be mindful of this and, where possible, avoid such group categorizations.

The stereotyping and categorization literature suggests, however, that category blindness is a delusion. Category blindness is not necessarily synonymous with category fairness. Moreover, if categorization, stereotyping and prejudice often occur automatically, how is it possible to grant that applications to higher education or jobs are given fair treatment? Research shows that people can discriminate against others simply by learning that the other person has an unfamiliar name (Carpusor & Loges, 2006). Even if it was possible to eliminate this type of unfairness when recruiting people for jobs or educational opportunities, embedded socio-structural inequalities remain as hindrances for some.

## Social Power and Status

From an intergroup relations perspective, power can be seen as one group's control over the fate of both the ingroup and the outgroup. Social status is a group's relative position on valued social dimensions, like education, occupation, wealth (Brauer & Bourhis, 2006). Social status is related to power as powerful groups often also enjoy high status. The other way around is, however, not necessarily true. For example, in many European monarchies the regent has high status but no power. Power and status also seem to affect outgroup perception independently of each other (Boldry & Gaertner, 2006).

Research into power and intergroup relations is somewhat contradicting. Whereas some studies show that powerful people tend to stereotype more than powerless people (Fiske, 1993) others show that the powerful, who take responsibility for the welfare of others tend to individuate rather than to stereotype the powerless (Overbeck & Park, 2001). Moreover, power seems to make ethnic prejudice decrease when the power-holder has a communal orientation (Chen, Lee-Chai, & Bargh, 2001). Guinote (2007) suggests that the powerful do stereotype more than the powerless when stereotypes are available. However, when they are not available or when individuating information is important for the task at hand, powerful people process diagnostic information more than the powerless. This suggests that powerful people adapt their behaviour more to the situation they confront at a moment in time, whereas the powerless have more stable social representations that guide them regardless of the situation.

## Legitimacy

In any society, the configuration of intergroup relations is closely associated with the dominant socio-political ideology. Social and political power can be achieved by means of repression but the cost of maintaining this is high and it necessitates a very repressive society. Moreover, it leaves societies vulnerable. Such regimes are likely to breed dissatisfaction, which in turn carries the potential for disruption and insurrection. In order to keep such forces at bay more repression is necessary.

Legitimate authorities are an alternative to repressive or coercive systems. Legitimacy can be seen as a democratic device in that people are to some extent active participants in the legitimating process. Legitimacy is associated with values and norms. There are therefore psychological aspects implicated in the process of legitimating. That is, external controls are replaced by internal ones or self-control. The individual's motivation to justify or legitimize a system is perceived as emanating from her- or himself. People become self-regulating and adopt the obligations and responsibilities associated with those norms as their own. Legitimization can, therefore, be said to be a collective construction of social reality (Johnson, Dowd, & Ridgeway, 2006). Moreover, prior legitimacy may provide a buffer so that losses of legitimacy created by, for example, unfair procedures, may not affect the authority in question (Mueller & Landsman, 2004). Thus, legitimating ideologies are legitimizing myths (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) that lend support to authorities and render them as normative and morally appropriate. Legitimacy provides "a reservoir of support" (Tyler, 2006, p. 381) for authorities and goes beyond immediate self-interest.

Whereas legitimacy on one hand can be seen as a democratic device, on the other it is also a form of power that may enable authorities to have some control over people's behaviour (Tyler, 2006). It may also serve as the basis for oppressive systems and provide justification to harm others (e.g., Milgram, 1975). By authorizing others to make judgments for them, people may relegate their own values to a secondary place that make them less relevant for their conduct. Legitimacy may, therefore, provide a framework within which actions are evaluated as either just or unjust.

The issue of legitimacy is an important one in the study of intergroup relations as the stability of these relations is dependent on whether they are perceived as legitimate or not. Research has demonstrated that low-status group members regard their social position as more acceptable and identify more with their social group when they perceive their status to be a result of a legitimate procedure of the allocation of people into groups (Ellemers, Wilke, & van Knippenberg, 1993). On the other hand, if people perceive their status position as illegitimate, low-status group members show dissatisfaction and competitiveness toward the higher-status outgroup (Ellemers et al., 1993) and display negative bias toward members of outgroups (Hornsey,

Spears, Cremers, & Hogg, 2003). These results highlight the importance of procedural justice in the perception of legitimacy. That is to say, authorities and institutions are perceived as more legitimate when their authority is exercised through procedures that people perceive as fair (Tyler, 2001). Thus, results showing that people accept their lower status if they perceive the allocation to be legitimate can be interpreted as a form of system justification.

## Aims of the Present Thesis

### General Aim

The overarching aim of this thesis is to test how the perception of the legitimacy of social structures and policies is related to outgroup perception, political conservatism, RWA, SDO, individual differences, and ethnicity. The perception of the legitimacy of social structures and the acceptance of power differentials may be the result of the dynamics of different levels of being. Like many other psychological phenomena, how an individual ultimately perceives the social world and intergroup relations is likely to be a result of the interplay of individual cognitive structures, schemas or networks, personality traits, attitudes and beliefs, social identification and identity, and socialization. This dissertation will focus on social, and personality/attitude factors in relation to intergroup relations.

### Research Questions

This dissertation is based on three empirical studies that address the issues referred to above.

Study 1 set out to examine whether legitimate power groups are perceived as more powerful and as having more positive traits than illegitimate power groups; whether men and women differ in their perception of outgroups as more powerful, and whether they attribute traits differently to powerful outgroups. It also examined whether conservatism and social dominance are associated with trait attribution.

Study 2 investigated how ideology influences whether pro-egalitarian policies, such as AA, are perceived as legitimate or illegitimate. It further inquired whether social group membership in terms of ethnicity influences attitudes towards egalitarian policies and whether RWA, SDO, and ethnic prejudice are related to egalitarian attitudes.

Study 3 examined whether different forms of preferential treatment lead to different degrees of stereotypical evaluations and whether it leads social policies to be perceived as more or less legitimate, and individuals to be

perceived as more or less competent. It also examined whether different forms of preferential treatment lead to differential stereotypical evaluations of men and women and whether perceptions of legitimacy and competence favour men more than women. Finally, the question of whether sexism predicts egalitarian attitudes differently dependent on how the egalitarian policies are framed was examined.

## Methods

Several social psychological measures were used in the three studies included in the present dissertation. Some measures were used in more than one study whereas others were used in one study only. Below follows a presentation of all measures.

### Legitimacy

The issue of legitimacy was assessed by direct questions (Study I and III) regarding participants' appraisals of the rightness and fairness of either power differentials (Study I) or employment procedures (Study III). In Study II, legitimacy was assessed through a scale, constructed for the purpose, consisting of four items. Examples of items are: *It is legitimate (right and just) to set aside places for applicants with parents born abroad in order to increase ethnic diversity; A student yields a legitimate (right and just) position regardless of whether he or she is admitted to higher education by means of a affirmative action.* The items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Do not agree at all*) to 7 (*Fully agree*).

### Power

The variable power was measured by a single question asking to what degree participants perceived the outgroup to have control over the ingroup. The answers were given on a 10-point scale ranging from 0 (*No control*) to 9 (*Complete control*).

### Political Orientation

Political orientation was measured through a 10-centimeter line with left and right anchors. Participants marked the line where they stood politically. Marks on the left side indicated left political leaning and marks on the right side indicated right political leaning.

## Right-Wing Authoritarianism

Operationally, right wing-authoritarianism (RWA) is defined by the traits conventionalism, authoritarian submission, and authoritarian aggression. Items measuring these traits constitute the RWA scale (Altemeyer, 1981). In the present thesis RWA was measured with a Swedish short version (Zakrisson, 2005) of Altemeyer's (1981) scale. This scale consisted of 15 items adapted for a Swedish context. Answers were given on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Do not agree at all*) to 7 (*Fully agree*). Some examples are: *Our country needs a powerful leader, in order to destroy the radical and immoral currents prevailing in society today* (agreement indicates high RWA); *Our society would be better off if we showed tolerance and understanding for untraditional values and opinions* (agreement indicates low RWA).

## Social Dominance Orientation

Social dominance orientation (SDO) was operationalized through a 16-item scale originally developed by Pratto et al. (1994). A Swedish translation (Akrami, Ekehammar, & Araya, 2000) of the scale was used in this work. Examples of items are: *Some groups of people are just inferior to others* (agreement indicates high levels of SDO); *We would have fewer problems if we treated all groups equally* (agreement indicates low levels of SDO). Answers were given on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Do not agree at all*) to 7 (*Fully agree*).

## Ethnic Prejudice

Prejudice against ethnic groups was measured with a Swedish scale (Akrami, Ekehammar, & Araya, 2000) adapted from the Modern racism scale (McConahay, 1986). This scale measures a "modern" type of racism in that it taps more subtle and covert forms of racial prejudice rather than blatant forms. Examples of items are: *Discrimination against immigrants is no longer a problem in Sweden* (agreement indicates high levels of ethnic prejudice); *It is easy to understand immigrants' demands for equal treatment* (agreement indicates low levels of ethnic prejudice). Answers were given on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Do not agree at all*) to 7 (*Fully agree*).

## Sexism

Hostility toward women was measured with the Swedish modern sexism scale (Ekehammar, Akrami, & Araya, 2000). This instrument was adapted from Sears' (1988) and Swim, Aikin, Hall and Hunter's (1995) work, and consists of eight items. Some examples are: *Discrimination of women is no*

*longer a problem in Sweden; Women's movements do not fill any function and should be eradicated.* Answers were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Do not agree at all*) to 5 (*Fully agree*).

## Stereotypical Evaluations

Stereotypical evaluations of men and women were measured through the association of a set of adjectives (e.g., nurturing, competitive) with each gender. These adjectives were then evaluated in their positivity/negativity. The associations were marked on a 7-point scale ranging from 0 (*No association with women/men*) to 6 (*Strong association with women/men*). The degree of negativity/positivity was also marked on a 7-point scale ranging from -3 (*very negative*) to 3 (*very positive*). The associations and evaluations were then computed according to the equation:  $[(adj_{male1} \times ass_{male1}) + \dots + (adj_{male10} \times ass_{male10})]/10$  (see this procedure more in detail in Study 3). The final stereotypical evaluation scale ranged from -18 to +18.

# Empirical Studies

## Study I

### Introduction

Intergroup relations are often characterized by asymmetries in power, which to some extent, influence intergroup perception. The perception of these asymmetries as either legitimate or illegitimate may in turn moderate the influence that asymmetrical power relations may have in intergroup perception. This study aimed to investigate whether people would perceive relatively powerful groups as, in fact, more powerful, and attribute positive traits to their members as a function of the perceived legitimacy of their power position.

Women, as a social category are generally in a disadvantaged position compared to men. In a particular situation in which both men and women are members of the same disadvantaged social group, women are likely to find themselves doubly disadvantaged compared to men. We therefore investigated whether this double social disadvantage would affect men's and women's intergroup perception differently, and make them attribute positive traits to an outgroup differently. We predicted that women would perceive the outgroup members as more powerful and attribute to them more positive traits than men.

The ideologies people hold may also influence the way they perceive others. Because SDO is a variable that predicts intergroup relations and is related to political conservatism, we investigated whether these variables are associated with the attribution of traits to a powerful outgroup. It was hypothesised that SDO and political conservatism would be negatively associated with the positivity of the attributed traits.

## Method

### *Participants*

The sample was constituted by 70 participants of which 30 were men and 40 were women. Their ages ranged from 19 to 57 years ( $M = 24.9$  years). Because of missing data in some variables, analyses were based on 68-69 participants.

### *Design and Procedure*

Participants were quasi-randomly assigned to one of the three different experimental conditions that created asymmetries in power between them and a bogus outgroup. In two of the conditions explanations were given as to why the outgroup was in a power position in relation to participants. One of these explanations was *legitimate* ( $n = 21$ ; 9 men, 12 women) and the other was *illegitimate* ( $n = 27$ ; 13 men, 14 women). In the third condition, *no explanation* ( $n = 21$ ; 7 men, 14 women) was given for the outgroup's power position. In each condition, participants answered to questions pertaining to the outgroup's control over the ingroup's outcome, and the outgroup's intelligence and responsibility. Moreover, they were also asked to mark their political orientation on a 10-centimetre line, and to fill in the SDO scale.

### *Measures*

The independent variables were power differential, legitimacy, and gender. The dependent variables were perceptions of power, and attribution of traits. Conservatism and SDO were used as individual difference variables that were correlated with trait attribution.

## Results and Discussion

An overall analysis of variance revealed that the perception of power differed significantly between the three groups ( $\eta^2 = .13$ ,  $p < .02$ ). The group with illegitimate power was the one perceived as most powerful followed by the group for whose power no explanation was given, and lastly the group with legitimate power (see means in Table 1). The difference between the legitimate and illegitimate groups was significant ( $p < .01$ ) whereas these groups did not differ from the no-explanation group.

This result was unexpected as the legitimate group was the one predicted to be perceived as the most powerful. However, this can be interpreted as supporting a particularly pernicious form of system justification. That is, participants may have perceived a group with illegitimate power as more powerful than a group with legitimate power in order to feel better about themselves as SJT predicts.

With regards to traits, there was a multivariate effect of condition on trait attribution, ( $\eta^2 = .09, p < .02$ ). Univariate tests revealed a significant effect on both the trait intelligent ( $\eta^2 = .12, p < .02$ ) and responsible, ( $\eta^2 = .09, p < .05$ ). Dunnett post-hoc tests showed that the no-explanation group differed significantly from the legitimate group with respect to both traits. On the other hand the no-explanation group differed from the illegitimate group with respect to the trait intelligent but not to the trait responsible (see means in Table 1).

Table 1. *Perception of Power, and Trait Attribution as a Function of Experimental Condition.*

Group	Power		Intelligent		Responsible	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Legitimate ( <i>n</i> = 21)	4.29	2.61	6.62	0.86	7.14	1.01
No explanation ( <i>n</i> = 21)	5.38	3.38	5.71	1.55	6.00	1.76
Illegitimate ( <i>n</i> = 27)	6.67	2.06	6.63	1.12	6.30	1.56

The results for trait attribution were somewhat inconsistent as for the trait intelligent the attributions did not differ between the legitimate and illegitimate conditions. However, for both traits the attributions differed significantly between the legitimate and the no-explanation condition. Thus, it seems that for these variables explanation, or lack thereof, was the factor that made a difference to how participants perceived the outgroup. This can be interpreted as though explanations serve a palliative function (Jost & Hunyady, 2002). That is, only the fact that the outgroup's power position was explained was enough for participants to perceive them in a brighter light, regardless of the legitimacy of the outgroup's power.

Gender differences were found with respect to power ( $\eta^2 = .04, p < .04$ ), where women perceived the outgroup as more powerful than did men. There was also a multivariate effect of gender with respect to trait attribution ( $\eta^2 = .13, p < .01$ ). Univariate tests showed that the genders differed with respect to the trait intelligent, where women rated the outgroup as more intelligent ( $\eta^2 = .10, p < .01$ ) than men did, whereas for the trait responsible there was no significant gender difference ( $\eta^2 = .00, p = .94$ ).

The results for power are in line with expectations and support the idea that double membership in two low-status groups (women, powerless group) influence people so that they perceive an outgroup in more favourable terms than when they belong to both a high- and low-status group (men, powerless group). The results for trait attribution are inconsistent as women perceived the outgroup as more intelligent than men did, whereas there was no gender difference regarding the trait responsible. This could be because the outgroup was in fact responsible for the ingroup's outcome – a fact that would not change as a result of gender.

With respect to the relationship of SDO and political orientation with out-group perception, the results revealed that these variables correlated significantly negatively with the trait intelligent (SDO;  $r = -.27, p < .03$ ; Political orientation;  $r = -.33, p < .01$ ). For the trait responsible there was no significant correlation for any of the variables (SDO;  $r = -.10, p = .40$ ; Political orientation;  $r = -.14, p = .24$ ). These results are similar to those for gender. That is, only the trait intelligent was affected by the predictors lending support to the interpretations that the trait responsible was not affected because it was a fact and, therefore, less prone to misperception.

Table 2. *Power Perception and Trait Attribution as a Function of Gender*

Variable	Women ( $n = 40$ )		Men ( $n = 29$ )	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Power perception	6.05	2.75	4.86	2.84
Intelligent	6.68	1.07	5.90	1.37
Responsible	6.48	1.63	6.45	1.43

## Study II

### Introduction

Affirmative action (AA) can be seen as a means of reducing intergroup bias and as counteracting prejudiced attitudes and discrimination of disadvantaged groups. However, this policy is highly controversial because it is, among other things, regarded as carrying the potential to undermine issues of fairness and merit. Departing from a real life situation, a legal case concerning AA in which Uppsala University was involved and was put on trial for, this study examined attitudes toward AA.

The way social issues are framed can influence how people will regard a certain issue. Similarly, group membership, political conservatism, and variables that tap conservative values like, SDO and RWA, and ethnic prejudice are predictive of intergroup behaviour.

This study investigated whether people would perceive AA as more legitimate as a result of how the issue is framed. Moreover, it also investigated whether traditionally disadvantaged groups, like women and ethnic minorities, perceive AA as more legitimate than men and the ethnic majority. Finally, it also examined whether conservative ideologies such as political conservatism, SDO, RWA, and ethnic prejudice predict attitudes towards AA. It was hypothesised that positive and negative arguments towards AA would influence people's attitudes towards the policy in a positive and negative direction, respectively. Moreover, it hypothesized that women and immigrants would display more positive attitudes towards AA than men and

the ethnic majority. Finally, we predicted that political conservatism, ethnic prejudice, RWA and SDO would be negatively associated with attitudes towards AA.

## Method

### *Participants*

One hundred and twenty eight students attending an adult secondary school, 49 men and 79 women, participated in the study. Their ages ranged from 19 to 46 years ( $M = 27.7$  years). Of these, 54 were ethnic Swedes, 22 were second generation immigrants, and 52 were first generation immigrants.

### *Procedure*

Participants read an article arguing either for AA policies, against AA policies, or no article at all. They then answered questions pertaining to the ideas propagated in the articles, and to the debate going on about the legal case of AA at Uppsala University. They also filled in questionnaires tapping SDO, RWA, ethnic prejudice, and a legitimacy scale. Moreover, they were also asked to mark on a 10-centimetre line their political orientation.

### *Measures*

The independent measures were argument, gender and ethnicity. The dependent variable was perception of legitimacy. Correlation coefficients were computed for the relations of legitimacy with RWA, SDO, political orientation, and ethnic prejudice.

## Results and Discussion

Table 3. *Perception of Legitimacy by Argument, Gender, and Ethnicity (SDs within Parentheses)*

Argument	Swedish		Immigrant		Total
	Woman	Man	Woman	Man	
Positive	2.83 (1.53)	4.36 (1.99)	3.89 (1.25)	5.09 (0.90)	4.03 (1.57)
No argument	3.88 (1.49)	3.50 (2.30)	4.21 (1.06)	4.25 (0.00)	3.93 (1.53)
Negative	2.80 (0.93)	3.05 (1.75)	3.50 (1.09)	3.23 (1.34)	3.19 (1.20)
Total	3.40 (1.68)		3.95 (1.24)		

The results showed that issue framing influenced participant's attitudes towards AA ( $\eta^2 = .08, p < .02$ ). People who read a pro-AA argument were the most positive towards AA, followed by the no-argument, and the negative argument (see the total means in Table 3). As expected, the mean obtained for the participants who read a negative argument differed from the mean for

those who did not read any argument ( $p < .05$ ) and those who read a positive argument ( $p < .05$ ). On the other hand, the mean for the participants who read a positive argument did not differ from those who did not read an argument ( $p = .92$ ). One reason for this lack of difference could be that people had knowledge of the ongoing debate, which may have set a ceiling to attitudes toward AA in a positive direction.

As expected, the results also showed that ethnicity had an effect on attitudes toward AA ( $\eta^2 = .04, p < .03$ ), where participants with an immigrant background were more positive than ethnic Swedes (see means in Table 3). Unexpectedly, there was no main effect of gender ( $\eta^2 = .02, p = .16$ ) but an interaction effect of gender and argument ( $\eta^2 = .06, p < .05$ ). Whereas women's attitudes towards the legitimacy of AA did not change as a function of argument, men's did (see Figure 2). Men were significantly more positive towards AA when they read a positive argument. Thus, it was mostly men who caused the difference found for argument.

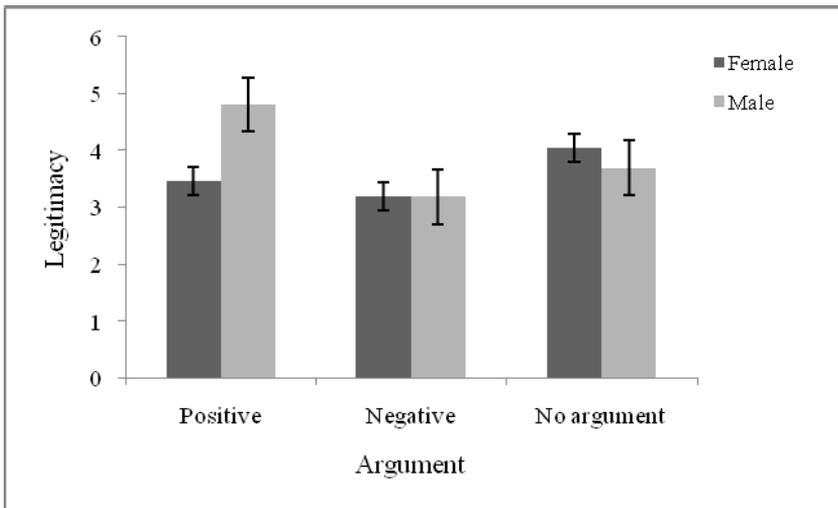


Figure 2. Interaction between gender and argument with respect to legitimacy.

The means also showed that the tendency for both Swedish and immigrant women was to be the most positive towards AA when they did not read any argument. For men, on the other hand, the trend was as expected. Thus, there seems to be coherence in women's attitudes, regardless of their ethnicity. This could be explained by men being more amenable to attitude change in face of an argument than women are (Guinote, 2006). Alternatively, the fact that the complainers in the Uppsala case were women may have had a different influence on female and male participants' perception of the legitimacy

of AA. Female participants may have identified with the female complainers and therefore be less influenced by a positive argument than men.

Research shows that education is related to political conservatism and SDO (Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo, 1996). Further, ethnicity was highly correlated with RWA and SDO in this study. Therefore partial Pearson correlations were computed for the association of RWA, SDO, political conservatism and ethnic prejudice with legitimacy, controlling for ethnicity and education. The results showed that both political orientation and ethnic prejudice seem to predict perception of legitimacy whereas RWA and SDO do not (see Table 4). Political conservatism and ethnic prejudice are not correlated, which suggests that these variables predict attitudes toward AA independently of each other. These results are somewhat puzzling as right-wing authoritarians, who support the maintenance of established values, and social dominants, who are proponents of hierarchical group relations, would be expected to find AA as challenging these values.

Table 4. *Partial Correlations between the Dependent and Independent Variables Controlling for Ethnicity and Education*

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Legitimacy				
2. RWA	-.09			
3. SDO	-.02	.37**		
4. Political orientation	-.20*	.14	.29**	
5. Ethnic prejudice	-.21*	.29**	.48**	.10

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

## Study III

### Introduction

Despite a marked increase in gender equality in Western societies, there are many social arenas where gender parity is still a long way off. AA offers one potential solution. However, AA is perceived by many as unfair, and an illegitimate policy that does not belong in a democratic system. Moreover, recipients are often perceived as less competent, and non-beneficiaries tend to have negative attitudes towards AA recipients. However, the negative perceptions of and attitudes towards the beneficiaries seem to be dependent on how AA is understood. People are negative towards AA when it is apprehended as a quota system, but are more positive when they perceive it to be based on merit. Group-interest also seems to be predictive of attitudes to AA. For example women and ethnic minorities are, generally, more sympathetic towards AA policies. This study therefore investigated whether there

are gender differences in attitudes towards AA and whether men and women perceive the target's competence differently.

Because AA requires that people are categorized into social groups, it is reasonable to assume that it also might have an effect on stereotypical evaluations, particularly in cases where AA is implemented as a group-based policy rather than merit-based. This study aimed, therefore, to examine whether people would stereotype men and women more negatively as a function of how AA is presented. That is, when AA is presented as a policy based on gender only, the stereotypes would be more negative than when AA is presented as gender + merit. We also examined whether AA would be perceived as more legitimate and its targets as more competent if AA is presented as a gender + merit policy. It was also expected that there would be gender differences in stereotypical evaluations.

Attitudes towards AA have mostly been studied with regards to disadvantaged targets (women, ethnic minorities). However, in Western societies the labour market is often gender segregated, where women dominate in some professions whereas men dominate in others. If parity, as policy, is to be consistent, attempts to attain equal numbers in traditionally male dominated professions should be accompanied by attempts to attain equal numbers in female dominated professions. This entails that a non-traditional AA target group (men) would begin to be considered as target of such measures. Given that men, as a social group, are traditionally more privileged, it is likely that when they are the target for AA, they would be stereotyped more positively than women, when AA is a preferential policy based on gender only.

AA is a policy that aims at changing intergroup relations. Prejudice is a strong predictor of intergroup relations. As an expression of a prejudiced attitude, sexism is likely to be predictive of attitudes towards AA that targets gender. However, because the status and power positions of women and men differ, it is probable that sexism would have different predictive value depending on whether the target of AA is a man or a woman and on whether the issue is framed as a preferential policy or in merit terms.

## Method

### *Participants and Design*

In the study participated 125 people, of whom 63 were women and 62 were men. Their ages ranged from 18 to 43 years ( $M = 23.7$  years). The study used an experimental  $2$  (Merit: yes, no)  $\times$   $2$  (Target Gender: female, male) factorial design (see Figure 3). The participants were randomly assigned to the four conditions.

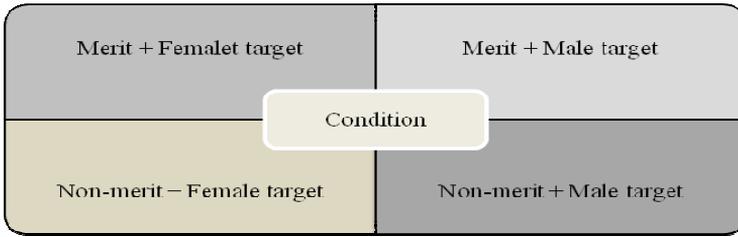


Figure 3. Experimental design.

### Procedure

The experimental manipulation consisted of four slightly different texts. Briefly, the texts presented a case of a company in need of hiring people and expressing an explicit interest in obtaining an equal gender distribution. The texts differed in that when men were overrepresented, women were hired either because of their gender or because of their merit. When women were overrepresented, men were hired either because they were men or because they were merited. Thus the conditions were as follow: 1) Overrepresentation of men  $\Rightarrow$  women hired; 2) overrepresentation of men  $\Rightarrow$  merited women hired; 3) overrepresentation of women  $\Rightarrow$  men hired; 4) overrepresentation of women  $\Rightarrow$  merited men hired.

After having read one of the four texts participants answered questions pertaining to the legitimacy of the procedure and the competence of the hired people. They were also asked to associate ten given adjectives to both women and men and then to rate the adjectives' degree of negativity-positivity.

In order to be able to use the adjectives as stereotypical evaluation measures, the degree of positivity/negativity given to the adjectives was multiplied with the degree of association of each adjective with each of the two genders. The product of each adjective's valence ( $adj$ ) and each gender's association with the same adjective ( $ass$ ) was summed up and divided by ten according to the equations:  $[(adj_1 \times ass_{male1}) + \dots + (adj_{10} \times ass_{male10})]/10$ ,  $[(adj_1 \times ass_{female1}) + \dots + (adj_{10} \times ass_{female10})]/10$ . This procedure provided a single measure of stereotypical evaluations, for males and females respectively, that comprised both adjective association and valence. In the final scale the values possible to obtain ranged between -18 and +18.

### Measures

The independent factors were condition (merit, target gender) and participant's gender. The dependent factors were stereotypical evaluation, target's competence, and legitimacy. Legitimacy was assessed by a single item asking about the legitimacy of the hiring procedure. Correlation coefficients were computed for the association between legitimacy and sexism.

## Results and Discussion

### *Stereotypical Evaluations*

The results regarding stereotypical evaluation showed that women evaluated female stereotypes significantly ( $p < .05$ ) more positively than men did (see means in Table 5). This can be regarded as an expression of self-interest or ingroup favouritism. If this is true one can wonder why men did not show the same pattern. One explanation is that men, assuming that they are a privileged social group, may not feel the same urge to inflate the positivity of their traits.

Table 5. Means (SDs within Parentheses) for Female and Male Stereotypical Evaluations

Participants	Condition				Total
	Merit		Non-Merit		
	Female target	Male target	Female target	Male target	
	Stereotypical evaluations of females				
Female	3.50 (2.34)	3.97 (2.97)	3.15 (1.90)	2.49 (2.32)	3.27 (2.42)
Male	2.45 (2.22)	2.24 (2.14)	2.92 (2.20)	1.96 (1.65)	2.40 (2.05)
	Stereotypical evaluations of males				
Female	2.74 (2.47)	2.02 (2.86)	1.32 (2.67)	1.59 (2.45)	1.94 (2.60)
Male	1.67 (2.39)	1.34 (3.05)	2.67 (2.11)	2.47 (2.67)	2.07 (2.56)

*Note.* The evaluation scores can range from -18 to +18

There were no main effects of merit, AA target or participant's gender on stereotypical evaluations (see means in Table 5), but an interaction effect of participant's gender and merit ( $p < .05$ ) on male stereotyping (see Figure 4). This result showed that women evaluated male stereotypes more positively when AA was based on merit. On the other hand, men evaluated male stereotypes as most positively when AA was based on gender only. This means that the experimental conditions *per se* did not have any influence on stereotypical evaluations. On the other hand, participant's gender interacted with merit in affecting how participants evaluated stereotypes.

The interaction effect of gender and condition for male stereotypes suggests that men show ingroup favouritism only when AA is generally perceived as less legitimate. Men are seldom the targets of AA, by evaluating male stereotypes more positively when AA is based on gender only, they

may be compensating for what they generally may perceive as an unfair policy.

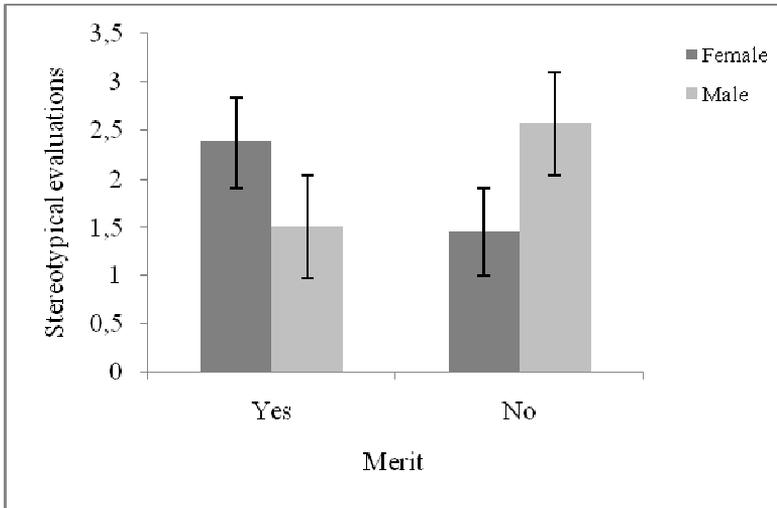


Figure 4. Interaction between merit and participant's gender for male stereotypical evaluations.

#### *Legitimacy and Competence*

There was a multivariate effect of both merit ( $p < .001$ ) and of the target's gender ( $p < .01$ ) on attitudes towards the legitimacy of AA and the targets' competence. Univariate tests showed a significant main effect of merit on perception of legitimacy ( $\eta^2 = .18, p < .001$ ) and on the target's competence ( $\eta^2 = .44, p < .001$ ). A hiring policy based on merit ( $M = 4.38$ ) was perceived as more legitimate than one based on gender ( $M = 2.13$ ). Hired people were also perceived as more competent when they were employed based on merit ( $M = 6.16$ ), rather than on gender ( $M = 4.11$ ). These results indicate that the way AA is framed is important in forming attitudes toward it, and how targets are perceived.

There was also a main effect of target's gender on legitimacy ( $\eta^2 = .06, p < .01$ ) and on competence, ( $\eta^2 = .05, p < .05$ ). The means show that AA was perceived as more legitimate when its targets were female ( $M = 3.98$ ) than when they were male ( $M = 3.15$ ). Likewise, targets of AA were perceived as more competent when they were female ( $M = 5.38$ ) than when they were male ( $M = 4.91$ ). There were no effects of participant's gender on these variables. These results are contrary to expectations and one probable explanation is that they mirror widely shared gender stereotypes, prejudices and attitudes, and beliefs in hierarchical gender relations. That is, women are a

weaker gender that need some help along the way, whereas men can make their own way.

### *Sexism and Legitimacy*

With respect to the relationship between sexism and legitimacy, Pearson correlations revealed that the associations of sexism with legitimacy were strongest when AA targeted women, both when it was based on merit ( $r = -.48, p < .01$ ), and when it was based on gender ( $r = -.43, p < .05$ ). Sexism was not associated with legitimacy when the targets of AA were men. This was true both when AA was based on merit ( $r = -.12, p > .05$ ), and when it was based on gender ( $r = -.07, p > .05$ ). These data suggest an existent prejudice against women but not against men. The strong association between sexism and legitimacy when the targets were women, and the lack of association when the targets were men, suggests that this prejudice is at the service of gender discrimination.

# General Discussion

## Main Findings

In Study 1, the results indicated that the powerful group members were perceived as more powerful when their position was illegitimate. Also, members of the powerful group were attributed with more positive traits when the reason for their power position was explained. Furthermore, women perceived the relative powerful group as more powerful and attributed more positive traits to its members than men did. And finally, Study 1 revealed that conservatism, in the form of political conservatism and SDO, was negatively associated with positive trait attribution.

Study 2 was based on a real life case of AA targeting ethnic minorities. This study indicated that attitudes towards AA are influenced by the way the issue is framed. However, it also suggested that it is men who are most influenced by argument as the attitudes of the women in the study were relatively stable. Group interests also appear to affect whether a situation is perceived as legitimate or not, as the immigrants in this study had a more positive attitude to AA than ethnic Swedes. The study also found that political conservatism and ethnocentrism correlated with negative attitudes towards AA policies.

Building further on AA issues, but this time with gender as the focus, Study 3 showed that both men and women display ingroup favouritism. However, whereas the women in this study displayed positive feelings for the ingroup regardless of the situation, surprisingly, the men displayed ingroup favouritism only in illegitimate situations. In terms of il/legitimacy, the nature of the situation had no effect on men's appraisals of female characteristics. It did, however, for women in terms of the appraisals of male characteristics. A legitimate situation influenced women's assessment of male stereotypes in a positive direction.

These results indicate that in a hiring situation, AA is perceived as more legitimate and its targets as more competent when the selection criteria are based on merit rather than demographics. Moreover, AA appears to be perceived as more legitimate and its targets as more competent when the targets of these policies are women than when they are men. The results also indi-

cate that sexism and the perception of AA as legitimate are negatively correlated when AA targets women, but not when it targets men.

Together, the three studies provide support for the idea that intergroup bias is influenced not only by personally held attitudes, but also by the nature of the intergroup relationships and the type of information received about the social issues at stake. They also show that as a variable, gender both affects intergroup attitudes and is an object of intergroup discrimination. Similarly, legitimacy both affects intergroup relations and is affected by how a social issue is presented.

## Outgroup Favouritism

The results of Study 1 support system justification theory. In this study illegitimate power groups were perceived as more powerful than legitimate ones. Furthermore, illegitimate groups were perceived as more intelligent and responsible when their power positions were explained. This supports the notion that people tend to reinforce the position of an already advantaged group. Although no comparisons were made between the ingroup and the outgroup with regards to the measured variables (power, traits), the tendencies displayed in the data suggest that a form of outgroup favouritism was at play. Research by Brewer (1999) on ingroup bias suggests that ingroup favouritism does not necessarily entail outgroup derogation. A similar phenomenon is likely to occur with respect to outgroup favouritism. That is, outgroup favouritism does not necessarily have to translate into ingroup derogation. Research into this issue is, however, necessary in order to test this proposition.

Further, whereas attributing positive traits to an outgroup is an unequivocal expression of outgroup favouritism, perceiving the outgroup as more powerful is more ambiguous. Given this, it is pertinent to examine the nature of outgroup favouritism. From a SIT perspective, people engage in ingroup favouritism because it enhances their self-esteem (Lemyre & Smith, 1985; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Similarly, SJT proposes that people engage in outgroup favouritism because, ultimately, it serves to protect the self (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost & Hunyady, 2002; Jost et al., 2001). It is not clear how, in SJT terms, the perception of an outgroup as powerful relates to outgroup favouritism. In fact, illegitimate power can instigate feelings of fear, threat, and resentment, which translate into negative feelings towards the outgroup. If outgroup favouritism, at least sometimes, entails negative feelings, it is hard to reconcile this with the role of system justification as having a protective function.

SJT has been accused of being one-sided as its form of outgroup favouritism disregards negative emotional appraisals of the outgroup (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Fiske and colleagues (Fiske, et al., 1999, Glick & Fiske, 2001) have pointed out that high-status group members are often perceived as competent

but cold. Accordingly, the ambivalence approach (Fiske et al., 1999; Glick & Fiske, 2001) suggests that it is possible to accommodate feelings of both admiration and hostility towards an outgroup.

It is not clear from Study I whether the perception of illegitimate power groups as more powerful is an expression of outgroup favouritism or of ambivalent attitudes. The results suggest that SJT should include measures of ambivalent attitudes in order to better explain the phenomenon of outgroup favouritism. Moreover, taking ambivalent attitudes into account may help to explain why in some situations subordinate groups acquiesce and in others resist.

### Ambivalent Sexism as both Outgroup and Ingroup Favouritism

Study 1 showed that women, who were in double lower-status position compared to men, also found the outgroup as both more powerful and more intelligent than men did. This suggests that women display more outgroup favouritism than men and lends support to SJT. By contrast, Study 3 showed that women displayed ingroup favouritism by generally evaluating female stereotypes more favourably than they evaluated male stereotypes. Men, on the other hand, evaluated male stereotypes more favourably only in relation to a policy that the participants considered as less legitimate whereas women evaluated male stereotypes more favourably in relation to a policy considered as more legitimate.

These results need to be understood in light of the context in which they occurred. In Study 1, the higher degree of outgroup favouritism for women occurred in a context where groups differed in power. In Study 3, the context was characterised more by competition over social resources. In a sense, we could say that relative powerlessness is an inherent feature in being female (it goes without saying that this applies only to women as a group in relation to men as group). Gender asymmetries in general and power asymmetries in particular, can be found in most social spheres. Because these asymmetries have deep historical roots it is likely that both women and men have integrated different ways of relating to power. Thus, when women in an asymmetrical power relationship experience an outgroup as more powerful than men do it is likely that both genders are expressing longstanding, ingrained and internalized gender inequalities.

The ingroup favouritism that women displayed in Study 3 can also be understood in these terms. Glick and Fiske (2001) suggested that stereotypes often have an ambivalent character. This can be insidiously harmful, as for example, stereotypes of women can at the same time raise women to a higher realm while also serving to keep them in a socially subordinate position in line with historically established gender roles. Thus, the ingroup favouritism that women displayed in Study 3 could, in fact, be a disclosure of ambivalent sexism (Glick & Fiske 2001) and of system justification. That is,

by evaluating female stereotypes positively women are conforming to a stereotypical picture of females. Ultimately, this form of ingroup favouritism would be serving the status quo.

Interestingly, men displayed ingroup favouritism in a situation that they considered as illegitimate. That is, they evaluated male stereotypes more positively when AA was based on gender only, regardless of the gender of the AA target. Women on the other hand evaluated male stereotypes more favourably in a legitimate condition. One explanation for this could be that a more legitimate situation evokes in women more positive feelings toward male characteristics whereas for men, the same effect is obtained from an illegitimate situation. This is intriguing and raises the possibility that for men an illegitimate situation elicits a self-defence reaction that requires them to attribute the powerful group with more positive male characteristics. Because the evaluation in question was about men, issues of self-protection may not have played a role for women and instead the legitimacy of the situation, which is likely to have been perceived as positive, also elicited positive feelings towards male characteristics.

In Study 3 it was shown that AA is perceived as more legitimate when it targets females than when it targets males, and that females are perceived as more competent than males. This is also in line with an ambivalent approach to intergroup attitudes. The perception of AA as more legitimate when it targets females, and female targets as more competent, can be interpreted as ingroup favouritism from the part of women and as outgroup favouritism from the part of men. However, whereas the attitudes from both men and women are convergent, they probably have divergent motives. For women it is likely that the positive attitudes are an expression of ingroup favouritism or, at least, of self-interest. For men it is more likely to be an expression of ambivalent sexism rather than outgroup favouritism. That is, a favourable posture on the part of men could in fact be an expression of a paternalistic (Glick & Fiske, 2001) attitude that ultimately expresses a desire to maintain unequal gender relations.

At first glance, the fact that men perceived female AA targets as more competent than male targets appears counterintuitive, as competence can be regarded as a quality more commonly associated with men, or members of high-status groups (Glick & Fiske, 2001). However, it is possible that what is at play here is that men perceive male AA targets as negatively reflecting on their gender. Consequently, the targets are likely to be perceived as having a lower status. SIT proposes that status differences reduce the perceived similarity between groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). One possible explanation is that in order to maintain a positive social identity, men regarded the male AA targets as not being representative exemplars of the male category, as their inclusion would entail a threat to men's social status and social identity (cf. Rothbart, 1996).

## The Role of Conservative Ideologies in Intergroup Relations

The results from all three studies lend support to the hypothesis that conservatism in various forms is related to intergroup relations. In line with SDT, Study 1 showed that the more socially dominant and the more politically conservative the participants were, the less they tended towards outgroup favouritism. Dominant groups tend to have higher social status and, consequently, display more ingroup favouritism (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

Study 2 showed that both political conservatism and ethnic prejudice predicted negative attitudes towards AA, a policy aimed at decreasing group inequality. However, in terms of intergroup biases, the same outcome, in this specific situation, have differing meanings. That is, high levels of ethnic prejudice and conservatism may have induced ethnic Swedes to regard AA as less legitimate and in this situation this can be seen as a form of ingroup favouritism. For immigrants, when the same variables predict the same attitude it could instead be regarded as outgroup favouritism.

The associations between sexism and the legitimacy of AA revealed in Study 3 further substantiate these results. Sexism was negatively associated with attitudes towards AA when the policy targeted women but not when it targeted men. This can be interpreted in a similar manner to the results of Study 2. That is, whereas for men attitudes towards AA can be regarded as ingroup favouritism, for women it is likely to be an expression of ingroup derogation. Support for this interpretation comes from the observation that there was no correlation between sexism and legitimacy when AA targeted men. Historically, the social arena has been the domain of men whereas women have generally been more confined to the private sphere. AA is a policy that normally promotes equality in the social/public sphere. This has advantages for women, but not for men as they have always enjoyed access to the social/public sphere. Sexism might have no influence in this “natural” order. Together, the three studies showed that as legitimizing myths, conservative ideologies serve to maintain the *status quo*.

### Legitimacy

The three studies suggest that legitimacy is not only a question of justice and fairness. It is also influenced by personally held beliefs, group interests, and system justifying motives. Study 1 indicates that legitimacy may sometimes be corruptively associated with power, serving social stratification rather than a common good. Study 2 showed that group interests play a role in the appraisal of a system as legitimate or not. It also showed that an argument had the power to change men’s opinion towards the legitimacy of AA more than women’s. This is in line with Guinote’s (2007) proposal that the powerless have more stable social representations whereas the powerful adapt more to the situation. Men, being members of a relatively more powerful

group than women, may feel greater freedom to integrate the information given at one particular moment and form their opinion in the light of it.

Study 3 showed that legitimacy is related to issues of fairness. Study 2 showed, however, that the assessment of legitimacy is influenced by the way social issues are framed. Thus, legitimacy is not a stable phenomenon but rather a social construction, more or less created *in situ*.

## Theoretical Issues

Several intergroup theories and one personality approach were introduced in the beginning of this dissertation: SIT, SDT, SJT, and RWA. The studies were conducted using empirical tools that touch upon aspects of the four theories to varying degrees. Both SIT and SJT postulate that low-status groups frequently derogate the ingroup and display positive feelings towards a dominant outgroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; & Jost & Banaji, 1994). The results from Study 1 indirectly suggest that the phenomenon of outgroup favouritism, theoretically, is not well founded yet. Consequently, “positive” feelings or positive evaluations of an outgroup should be carefully considered. The positive attitudes may contain a seed of ambivalence which, under the right conditions, could contribute to social change.

The work of Fiske and colleagues (Fiske et al., 1999; Glick & Fiske, 1996, 2001) on ambivalent attitudes focuses mostly on the aspects of this phenomenon that serve to maintain the *status quo* (e.g., ambivalent stereotypes and sexism). However, the other side of the ambivalence coin are the negative feelings that, given the right circumstances, may lead to attrition and eventually to social change. Thus, a suggestion is that both SIT and SJT would benefit from including ambivalence in their theoretical frameworks.

SDT proposes that those high in SDO tend to desire the maintenance of hierarchical social group relations (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). In a similar vein, right-wing authoritarians want to maintain established hierarchically normative systems (Altemeyer, 1998). It could be argued, therefore, that people high in these two variables would oppose policies like AA that challenge legitimizing myths, like meritocracy. Study 2 showed that this is not necessarily the case even though it found that ethnic prejudice and political conservatism were related to opposition to AA. One explanation for this may be that AA does not in fact challenge RWA or SDO. This is counterintuitive, however, as legitimizing myths like racism or sexism are examples of ideologies that promote group inequality. Both RWA and SDO were found to be associated with ethnic prejudice and SDO was associated with political conservatism. Although the findings from Study 2 need more empirical evidence to ensure their robustness, they have revealed an interesting element that warrants further investigation in relation to the theories of RWA and SDO.

## Some Methodological Issues

No investigation is ever perfect in scientific research. The methodological limitations of these studies therefore need to be considered. In general, all three studies contained hypotheses that were not confirmed, or had the reverse outcome. Replications would have been desirable to provide more clarity. Time and money limited this endeavour.

With regards to the particular studies, in hindsight it would have been better to have used more than two parameters of outgroup evaluation in Study 1. The aggregation of several variables into a single evaluation instrument would have provided a more reliable measure of outgroup favouritism. Measures of perceived ingroup power and perceived valence of ingroup traits would have provided a means of comparison between the ingroup and the outgroup and may have given more reliable interpretations of in/outgroup favouritism.

Three main points of concern need to be mentioned in relations to Study 2. Firstly, the heterogeneity of the sample in terms of ethnicity makes the results harder to interpret. A drawback of the location chosen for conducting this study was that a majority of participants came from immigrant backgrounds and they were both first and second generation. It was impossible to control for how their cultural backgrounds influenced their responses. When possible, however, this problem was minimized by controlling for ethnicity through partial correlations. Another problem was that some participants may not have had a full understanding of the intricacies of the Swedish language, which may have affected their answers to the questionnaires. The third consideration is with respect to the correlation analysis. A regression analysis with interaction terms would have been preferable. Unfortunately, however, the sample was too small to permit a meaningful regression analysis (see Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998).

The main concern in Study 3 was the measurement of stereotypes. In general, participants did not feel comfortable with rating people based on their gender, which was reflected in many missing values for this variable. This may have given a distorted picture of gender stereotypical evaluations. In these days of political correctness and awareness of the dangers of group categorization, an unobtrusive measure would probably have provided better assessments.

All the three studies made use of convenience or volunteer sampling, which may introduce limitations to the generalisation of the results. Nevertheless, the results do provide indications about the dynamics of intergroup relations. There may also be objections to the assumption that women belong to a subordinate group. Gender was a central variable in Studies 1 and 3. Given that the samples in these studies were taken mostly among university students, it is arguable that women, within this context, may not be regarded as a subordinate group, particularly within the social sciences, where they

dominate in numbers. However, participants' study major was not made salient as a social identity so women's general subordination in society as a whole can be regarded as a valid argument and assumption.

## Implications for the Implementation of AA Policies

The results of Study 2 and 3 suggest that there are some points of concern whenever there is a desire to implement AA policies. The way information about the issue is framed is important. Moreover, in order for it to enjoy acceptance from the wider public, AA policies need to stress that the preference of one demographic group over another is based on merit and not only on social category. Study 3 also gives some indications that AA may reinforce already existent prejudices and stereotypes of underprivileged groups in that this policy seems to be more acceptable when it targets a traditional AA target group than when it targets a non-traditional AA group. Traditional targets are also perceived as more competent than non-traditional ones. On the other hand, the targeting of non-traditional groups may, in the long run, challenge stereotypical social roles.

## Where Do We Go from Here?

The studies integrated into this dissertation provided novel insights into the psychology of intergroup relations and bias. Most important is the indication that research on outgroup favouritism should, when appropriate, integrate measures of ambivalence. Study 1 provided indications that there are reasons to believe that outgroup favouritism is sustained by both positive and negative attitudes and this warrants further examination.

Glick and Fiske's (2001) taxonomy of attitudes consists of the dimensions of warm-cold and competence-incompetence that in turn are dependent on different kinds of group interdependence (cooperation, competitiveness). The interplay of the warm and competence dimensions with the structural relations between groups generate predictable feelings and stereotypes towards the outgroup. On the cooperative side are the combinations warm-competent, which is associated with admiration, and warm-incompetent, which is associated with paternalistic prejudice (Glick & Fiske, 2001). On the competitive side, there are the combinations cold-competent, which elicits envious prejudice, and cold-incompetent, which evokes contemptuous prejudice.

Intuitively, the most pertinent to examine in relation to outgroup favouritism is the combination cold-competent. This combination involves feelings of both admiration and respect and at the same time feelings of envy and resentment and so may be the one with the greatest potential to drive social change. Another relevant area of study would be to examine the effect of outgroup favouritism on the evaluation of the ingroup. That is, does out-

group favouritism entail ingroup derogation or can a similar phenomenon to that reported by Brewer (1999, see p. 20 in this dissertation), with regards to ingroup favouritism, be at play?

AA has been relatively extensively studied from a psychological perspective. However this research has taken place mostly in a North American social and cultural context. Moreover, the targets of AA are normally disadvantaged demographic groups. Study 3 introduced a new element into this research by making use of a non-traditional category as a target of AA, namely men. It showed that targets are regarded differently dependent on their gender. AA research has shown that it sometimes has deleterious effects on its targets. Further research should examine the effects of AA on non-traditional targets in order to determine if the policy has the same effect on these as it does on traditional targets. Moreover, attitudes to non-traditional targets should be examined in relation to other demographic parameters in addition to gender.

### When is My Group More Important than Yours?

In the introduction it was stated that this research attempted to shed light on the socio-psychological factors that contribute to the maintenance of unequal social relations. SIT predicted that outgroup favouritism occurs under certain conditions long before SJT embraced and further developed the idea. Now, it can be stated that this thesis reinforces the idea that ingroup and outgroup favouritism are both in action in the social milieu.

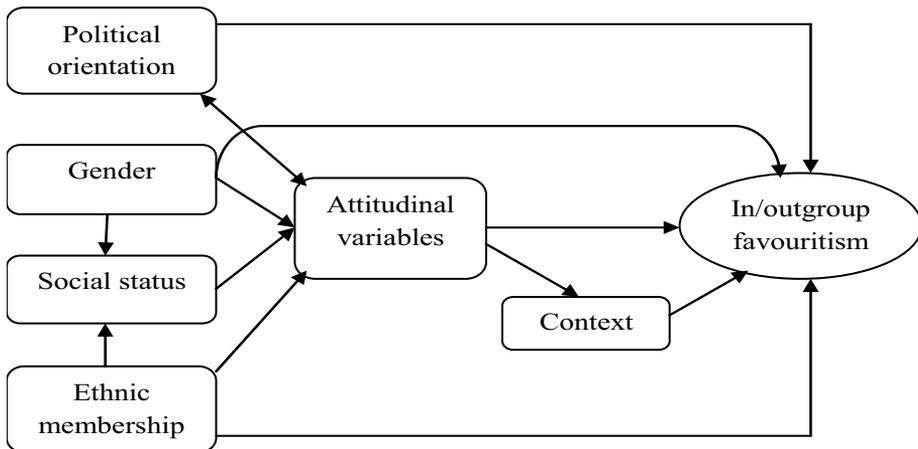


Figure 5. Theoretical model for the study of intergroup bias.

As with most psychological phenomena, intergroup relations are multi-determined. This dissertation provides further evidence of the complexity of intergroup relations and bias and shows that both ingroup and outgroup fa-

vouritism result from a range of factors: the power relations between groups; relative group status; demographics, political orientation, and personality and attitudinal variables.

So to the question, when is my group more important than yours, or, for that matter, when is your group more important than mine? These questions are not easily answered but we can say that if you tell me your gender, your ethnic membership, your social context, your beliefs, political and otherwise, we will be closer to finding an answer. A possible model is illustrated in Figure 5.

According to the proposed model gender and ethnic membership are related to social status. That is, women and ethnic minorities, generally have a lower social status than men and ethnic majorities respectively.

Gender, social status and ethnic membership influence attitudinal variables like SDO, RWA, sexism, and ethnic prejudice. For example, it is likely that a high-status Swedish man will display lower levels of SDO, RWA, and sexism, but higher levels of ethnic prejudice than both high and low-status immigrants of both genders. Here, too, variables not specified in the model are expected to moderate these relationships. Two potential moderators are education and profession as these can enhance or attenuate legitimizing myths (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

The relationship between political orientation and attitudinal variables is more complicated as they can both influence each other. Thus, it is likely that someone that is strongly conservative will also be more social dominant, display higher levels of RWA, sexism and ethnic prejudice. But it is also likely that people, who score high in these variables, also tend to sympathise with conservative political ideologies. It is hard to predict the direction of these relationships as they most probably feed into each other.

Political orientation, gender, and ethnic membership can also either have a direct or indirect influence on in/outgroup favouritism. It is likely that conservatives show more ingroup favouritism than more liberal minded people. In terms of gender and ethnicity it is also likely that men more than women, and people from the ethnic majority more than those from ethnic minorities, would display more ingroup favouritism.

The effect of political orientation, gender, and ethnic membership can also be moderated by attitudinal variables. For example, a more liberal oriented person may show more ingroup favouritism than a conservative if that person is high in SDO. Similarly, men's and women's display of ingroup or outgroup favouritism may be dependent on their degree of sexism and/or SDO. Likewise, the influence of ethnicity on ingroup/outgroup favouritism may be dependent on people's degree of ethnic prejudice and/or SDO. The social context, in turn, can also moderate these relationships. People of the same gender, ethnicity, and of the same political orientation, that hold similar attitudes may still display ingroup or outgroup favouritism depending on the social context. Social status is the only variable in the proposed model

that, by itself, is not expected to have a direct effect on in/outgroup favouritism. Social status is expected to be dependent on attitude variables and the social context in order to explain in/outgroup favouritism.

As described above, the proposed model could contribute to a more unambiguous answer to the question asked in this dissertation. From this model it could be expected, for example, that a strongly conservative Swedish man with high social status and high SDO would display strong tendencies to favour his own social group. The same model also proposes that a high-status Swedish man low SDO would display lower levels of ingroup favouritism or even outgroup favouritism. Here, it is necessary to remember the proposition made earlier in this dissertation that just like ingroup favouritism does not necessarily entail outgroup derogation, outgroup favouritism probably does not need to entail ingroup derogation.

# Sammanfattning

Mellangrupsrelationer kännetecknas av favoriserande eller ofavoriserande evalueringar som individerna gör både i relation till egna och andra grupper. I förhållande till individens egen grupp är dessa oftast fördelaktiga. Detta benämns ingrupsfavorisering. Forskning har emellertid visat att utgruppsfavorisering (favorisering av grupper till vilka individen inte tillhör) också är ett förekommande fenomen i relationer mellan grupper. Flera teorier såsom social identitetsteori, social dominantsteori och "system justification theory" erbjuder förklaringar till dynamiken i relationer mellan grupper. Trots att "right-wing authoritarianism" inte är en strikt teori om mellangrupsrelationer, erbjuder den ändå förklaringar till de evalueringar som kännetecknar relationer mellan grupper genom att fokusera på fördomsfullhet och etnocentrism. På liknande sätt har ideologisk konservatism visats kunna påverka mellangrupsrelationer.

Baserat på dessa teorier försöker denna avhandling förklara de socialpsykologiska mekanismer som reglerar favoriseringen av ingruppen eller utgruppen. Mer specifikt, undersöks i Studie I frågor om makt och legitimitet i relation till social perception och kön. Studierna II och III undersöker relationen mellan socialpsykologiska variabler och positiv särbehandling, vilken är ämnade att minska ojämlikheter mellan sociala grupper. Sammantaget visar studierna att kön har betydelse, både som oberoende variabel och som grund för social diskriminering. Konservativa ideologier predicerar ingrupsfavorisering i varierande grad. Attityder till positiv särbehandling påverkades av hur frågeställningen var semantiskt presenterad. Resultaten diskuteras i relation till de ovanstående teorierna om mellangrupsrelationer samt vikten av attitydambivalens för förståelsen av utgruppsfavorisering

# Resumo

As relações intergrupais são caracterizadas por julgamentos favoráveis ou desfavoráveis por parte do indivíduo em relação aos grupos a que pertencem e não pertencem. Em relação aos grupos a que a pessoa pertence estes julgamentos são geralmente favoráveis—favoritismo endogrupal. A investigação tem, no entanto, mostrado que o favoritismo exogrupal (preferência por grupos a que a pessoa não pertence) também ocorre nas relações intergrupais. Várias teorias tais como a teoria da identidade social, a teoria da dominância social, e a teoria da justificação do sistema oferecem uma explicação da dinâmica das relações e julgamentos intergrupais. Embora não seja estritamente uma teoria de relações intergrupais, a “right-wing authoritarianism” considerara o preconceito e o etnocentrismo oferecendo assim também uma explicação das relações intergrupais. De forma semelhante, estudos tem mostrado que o conservadorismo ideológico influencia as relações intergrupais.

Baseada nestas teorias esta dissertação procura explicar os mecanismos reguladores do favoritismo endogrupal e exogrupal. Mais especificamente, no Estudo I questões de poder e legitimidade foram examinadas em relação à percepção social e ao género. Os Estudos II e III examinaram as relações entre variáveis sociopsicológicas e medidas sociopolíticas (discriminação positiva) destinadas a reduzir desigualdades entre grupos sociais. Tomados em conjunto, os três estudos mostram que o género detém um papel como variável independente e como objecto de discriminação social. Ideologias conservadoras predizem o favoritismo endogrupal de forma variável. Atitudes em relação à discriminação positiva são influenciadas pela forma como as questões são formadas semânticamente. Os resultados são discutidos de acordo com as teorias intergrupais acima expostas e em relação à ambivalência das atitudes na compreensão do favoritismo exogrupal.

# Acknowledgements

Doing a PhD is a long, arduous and ultimately a uniquely rewarding enterprise. In the midst of it, it is difficult to see how it will ever end well. But, seemingly from nowhere a time comes to start knitting the threads together and bit by bit the writing advances and the thesis comes to an end. An end that for me, luckily has entailed a new beginning as it has led to new and renewed understandings, not only of science and theories, but also of the importance of the people around me, that have helped and accompanied me along the way and made the whole thing possible. Therefore, I would like to express my warmest gratitude to Bo Ekehammar, my supervisor. I've said it before, but it does no harm to say it again: Thank you for the patience you have had with me. You have been a role model in my own supervising of students.

I want to also thank Nazar Akrami, my co-supervisor, for always being helpful, even from as far away as Singapore. My friends in the C-corridor, Malin, Simon, Per, Thomas, Clara. A special thanks goes to Jessika for the understanding and because you are Jessika. Special thanks also goes to Vanda for bringing me back the Portuguese language, the warmth, and Pastéis de Belém. I am also thankful to Alexandra Snellman, Helena Grönkvist, Tessa de Witt, Victoria Dennington for being supportive in so many ways. I also wish to thank Ulla-Britt Thorslund and Peter Hammarlund for always being kind and helpful with practical things. Thanks also to all the people at the psychology department that in a variety of ways made this whole thing easier. Thanks also to Nacka församling and to my friends outside academia, Sara Liljeblad, Peter Christensen, Inger Levin, Camilla Wikström and my family in Portugal. Last, but not least I am grateful to Björn Salomonsson, for not giving up on me, and to Brian for having always believed in me, pushed me, comforted me, and loved me. I owe you all so much. THANK YOU!

*Luisa Batalha, February 2008*

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Editor: The Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences

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