

Prejudice Against Citizens with Right-aligned Political Views in Western Cosmopolitan Cities, and Possible Interventions

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Abstract

Prejudice against citizens with right-aligned political views in western cosmopolitan cities was explored, and possible interventions proposed. Literature and theories were reviewed, with social psychological and sociological theories compiled that explain the reasons for this prejudice and an intervention to solve this problem. Scientific research in social sciences is dominated by bias from left-aligned researchers in social psychology and psychology. Dysfunctional scientific processes prominent in this area of sciences are due to the sacralization of social science. A significantly small percent of social and personality psychologists identify as politically conservative. A significant amount of errors and distortions were found in sociology textbooks. Media and corporation biases toward left-aligned political views were found, and right-aligned individuals are out-group members in cosmopolitan cities. Inoculation by media assignments and critical literacy education is proposed, that could prevent school students from being influenced by stealth messages and propaganda. Media campaigns targeting the full spectrum of political views is proposed, that could help reduce biases of citizens. A family and community health class is proposed, that could improve student's psychological, family, and social health. Youth and adult clubs are proposed, that could help reduce animosity between social groups, and promote solidarity and community health.

Keywords

Psychology, social psychology, political psychology, sociology, quantitative sociology

Introduction

The Theoretical explanation of prejudice against citizens with right-aligned political views in Western Cosmopolitan Cities, since these cities are left-aligned by majority (Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2014), includes Social Identity Theory, Attribution Theory, Balance Theory, and Scapegoat Theory. In Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner 1986), members of a group experience identity threats of various forms, such as other groups devaluing their group competence, or when other groups question the moral behavior of their group. Many researchers in social psychology have argued that the political right attracts domineering and authoritarian personalities (Jost et al. 2003). Some recent theorists have argued and demonstrated that biases against people with opposing ideological beliefs exist across the political spectrum (Brandt et al. 2014).

Theoretical Explanation

Left-aligned people are prejudiced against right-aligned groups to the same degree as right-aligned people are prejudiced against left-aligned groups (Chambers et al. 2013). A specific moral agenda, that is portrayed as fighting the demographic prejudices of conservatives, has created distortions in scientific practice (Lilienfeld 2010). Portraying prejudice as being only against left-aligned groups is a large blind spot (Pronin et al. 2002) in the psychology of prejudice, caused by social psychologists having mostly left-wing world views (Forgas et al. 2016). To describe the cause of the dominating left-aligned sociology and social psychology views, Winegard 2017 proposed the Paranoid Egalitarian Meliorist model of Bias (PEM). The PEM model predicts that certain areas of social science are sacralized because they potentially challenge egalitarianism. Thus, the normal self-correcting mechanisms of science do not function correctly, due to sacred values (Cohns 2016). A moral community treats these sacred values as possessing transcendental significance, and cannot be traded or compared with other values, even if it would pursue truth (Tetlock 1994, Atran et al. 2007). Paranoia is the feeling of being threatened, even though it is not true (Blaney 1999). Egalitarianism is the belief that the treatment of all individuals and groups should be equal under law, and that they should be given relatively equal opportunities Gompertz 1824. Meliorism is the belief that, by working and planning together, humans can change the world for the better and stop suffering.

Jonathan Haidt argued, at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) (Winegard et al. 2015) that social psychology was dominated by liberal psychologists, and that very few psychologists were political conservatives or willing to admit they were, possibly a cause of bias in the field (Inbar and Lammers 2012). Inbar and Lammers 2012 found that most psychologists identify as left aligned, and socially liberal. Haidt's speech initiated research that included a Brain and Behavioral Sciences article,

written by scholars who had been gathering attention to the biases in social sciences (Duarte et al. 2015). Inbar and Lammers 2012 also found that just 6% of social and personality psychologists identified as conservative. Gross and Simmons 2007 found that professors in the social sciences are more liberal than professors in other subjects, and more liberal on social than economic issues. Geher and Gambacorta 2010 found that women's studies sociology scholars were more likely to believe that nurture caused male and female differences, instead of nature being the cause. Horowitz et al. 2014 found that even though many sociologists believed intellectual ability differences were at least partially caused by genetics, they did not think sex differences in certain skills were even partially caused by genetics.

Winegard et al. 2014 examined 12 popular sex and gender textbooks, coded their evolutionary psychology presentations, and found that all 12 textbooks included numerous errors and distortions, describing evolutionary psychology as a rigid, patriarchal system of thought. It was also found that psychology textbooks had less errors than sociology textbooks, possibly due to the sacralization of sociology being more apparent than other social sciences (Martin 2016). Ceci et al. 1985 found that, in Internal Review Board applications, proposals that hypothesized reverse discrimination were approved less often than traditional discrimination (Sullivan 2004). In many left-aligned protests, protestors have been seen holding signs that say "F*** the Tories" (Tobin 2020), "Good night white pride" (Hernandez 2018), "Check yourself, your white privilege is showing" (Xinhua 2020), and even burning cop cars (Garcia 2020, Lee 2020). Left-aligned groups hate nationalists because they believe nationalists are the main powers against (Eren-Webb 2012). Overwhelmingly biased research and information in social psychology and sociology (Mohler 2011), as well as Instagram (Burrell et al. 2019, Jiang et al. 2019) along with left-aligned anti-right protests, have created a culture of animosity in western cosmopolitan cities, towards right-aligned groups and individuals. In 1995, it was found that reporters add to this problem, due to their political views having been far more left-aligned (61% self-reported liberal) than the national populations (20% self-reported liberal) (Dautrich and Dineen 1996).

Attribution theory describes how an individual attains a cognitive mastery of their environment's causal structure (Kelley 1967). Trafimow and Trafimow 1999 found when honest people were not "allowed" to lie, it made it easier for them to make an unambiguous correspondent inference for lies. When there are not enough clear standards for people, they look for information from others, in order to make the appropriate attributions (Festinger 1954). With an abundance of information given to people in western cosmopolitan cities, attributions can be decided by the people or groups in power. People with power, who evaluate their personal power in social interactions, usually put their energy into the relationship between their personal constraint attempts and the actor's behavior. The amount of the person in power's power will decide the nature of the overshadowing information (Gilbert 1985).

Balance Theory describes how when we see conflicting evidence concerning topics, we more often balance their valences (Heider 1958). The feeling of belonging is an important principle of social perception, which consists of a tendency to think there is relatedness

between parts of a group. People search for consistency between people, e.g., in a person's actions and themselves, or between family members. When people group others, they use many factors, such as the things they own, their nationality, and how they interact with others (Heider 1958). Heider brought four aspects of belonging to liking, which are that people like people who are similar to them, interact with them, are familiar with them and share beliefs or goals with them. People perceive in relation to objects and ideas associated with them, not only their personal characteristics. An individual who shares property, beliefs, and goals with other people will like those other people, and liking other people causes convergence with their property, beliefs, and goals (Standen et al. 2014). The shared property, beliefs, goals, and even nationality of people in western cosmopolitan cities creates a consistent relatedness between young people and the already formed groups, causing them to conform into the almost uniform belief system of those groups. This convergence does not always include newly arrived or somewhat isolated individuals or groups, causing dislike for the outgroup individuals and groups (Riek et al. 2006).

Rambaran et al. 2015 found, in the interaction between friendships and antipathies of adolescents in middle schools, that friendships were formed or maintained when two adolescents disliked the same person (shared enemy hypothesis) that friends tended to agree on whom they disliked (friends' agreement hypothesis), that the adolescents disliked the friends of their enemies (reinforced animosity hypothesis) and became or stayed friends with the dislikes of dislikes (enemy's enemy hypothesis). These interactions show that right-aligned individuals that lack convergence to left-aligned dyads and groups will be considered as members of outgroups, therefore the animosity of the in-groups will cause prejudice towards these right-aligned individuals and their groups (Brewer 1979, Johnson et al. 2012).

Scapegoat theory describes how people tend to blame their problems on others, which often causes them to feel prejudice towards the individuals or groups they blame (Girard 1989). Groups that have significantly different morals, such as left-aligned and right-aligned groups, view each other in a contemptuous, dismissive, and condescending way. This does not allow for compromise, mutual respect, or social policy agreement (Richardson and Manglos 2013). Children from unhealthy families (Miller et al. 1985) usually rebel against their parents, and specifically their parent's political views, which leads unhealthy families with right-aligned parents to have left-aligned children (Greydanus et al. 1997), and promotes prejudice from left-aligned people from unhealthy families towards right-aligned groups and individuals.

Theoretical Intervention

Critical Literacy Taught in Schools

Inoculation theory describes how attitudes and beliefs are defended against persuasion and influence, by pre-exposure to a weak version of a future threat, in a similar way to how vaccines work (McGuire 1961). Weak versions of political views that are not right-aligned could be presented to right-aligned groups via online and social mediums. Front groups

(Mayer 2007) are organizations that claim to have one agenda, but in reality, serve another party or interest of rare mention or hidden sponsorship. Stealth messages (Harrison 2013) can distort the viewers' ideas of important political issues and manipulate information. When hidden behind front groups, politicians, special interest groups, and corporations damage the health of debates about important topics. Inoculation strategy potential for decreasing the deceptive front group message influence has been explored (Harrison 2013, Pfau et al. 2007). In schools, students aged 12 and up could be tasked with the Fake News Game, where participants create a news article about a strongly politicized issue, in a misleading way, for specified goals, with article types such as click bait, alarm, denial, and conspiracy theory. Research using this task has shown that it decreased the persuasiveness and reliability perceived of fake news articles (Roozenbeek and van der Linden 2019). Students could be taught critical literacy (Locke and Cleary 2011), which would allow them to analyze what they see and read, instead of viewing information automatically as truth, and not be victims of front group stealth messages or political propaganda. Students could be taught that even if other nations or media sources consider their political view as extreme, they do not need to be concerned. Sidanius and Lau 1989 and Milbrath and Goel 1977 found that the more politically sophisticated people are, the more extreme their political attitudes will be. This was also explored and supported by Bagley et al. (Anonymous 1979). Tesser and Conlee 1975, Tesser and Leone 1977, Tesser 1978 found that the more people thought about topics, the more polarized their attitudes become. Nidorf and Argabrite 1970 found that cognitive complexity correlates with attitude extremity, and Dubois and Cohen 1970 found that intelligence is negatively correlated to field dependence (Witkin et al. 1962). These results are given great credibility, due to their latent dimension being measured by using multiple and independent indexes, which, in a large amount of studies in this area, has rarely been the method (Sidanius and Lau 1989).

Assessment of Success

The intervention success of the proposed media inoculation of students, Fake News Game, critical literacy, online and social media campaign, social structure stability improvement through family and community healthy class and youth/adult clubs, gender education, and confidence education of national views could be determined by surveying cosmopolitan high-schools and the public, every year. The first survey could be performed before the intervention is carried out. The survey could ask each individual how they view right-aligned people, as two questions in a scale from 1-5. The first question could be "How similar do you view right-aligned people to you?" The scale in the answer to first question could start from 1, listed as "A person who has the same views as me," 2 as "A person who has similar view as me," 3 as "A person who might or might not have the same views as me," 4 as "A person who has unsimilar views as me," and 5 as "A person who has completely different views as me." The second question could be "How do you feel about right-aligned people?" The scale in the answer to this second question could start from 1, listed as "Love," 2 as "like," 3 as "neutral," 4 as "dislike," and 5 as "hate." If the averages of the survey responses improve, decreasing in the direction of 5 towards 1, this could prove a successful intervention as well as a permanent new system.

Media Campaign

Confirmation bias (Peterson 1960) describes how people search, interpret, and remember information in a way that defends, confirms, or strengthens their views. Due to this bias, online searches and social media viewing of left-aligned people will be primarily left-aligned material, thus right-aligned online and social media could target the tags, apps and websites that include the online searches and social media associated with views across the political spectrum.

Mental Health Improvement

Structural Functionalism Theory describes structural design for the complex system of society, as society is a complex system made up of parts, that working together, promote solidarity and stability (Durkheim 1974). Mental disorders rise due to the instability in social structures (Hoche 1910). The amount of mental disorders in the national population, which have been linked to bullying (Islam et al. 2020) and dysfunctional families (Crittenden et al. 1991, Allen 2010), can be decreased by ensuring and promoting stability in the social structures (Frank 1944). A decrease in the amount of the population with mental disorders will further decrease the amount of dysfunctional families, thus decreasing the amount of mental disorders (Beardslee et al. 2011).

Family and Community Health Class

Structural Balance Theory describes a group's network of feelings, and over time, the network changes into certain structural forms (Rawlings and Friedkin 2017). A mandatory class in schools for children under 18 years could include guided meditation, essay writing, education in family/society morals, tradition, local/national history, partner choice, community health, and gender complimenting lessons. The guided meditation could be used to imagine their family and peers in good situations. The essay writing could be about writing from the point of view of their family and peers. Students could be taught how to choose partners, and how health is important in families (Kraepelin 1974). Gottfredson 2013 found that the fact that there are genetically influenced cognitive differences is largely not thought of, since it goes against cosmic egalitarianism, thus many social scientists are disgusted, angered with, and hostile towards this fact. To change this popular view, the partner choice education could include that the health of their community is more important than personal greed (Rüdin 1910), and that intelligence is highly heritable (between 40% and 80%) and is a strong predictor of people's life outcomes (Hernstein and Murray 1994).

Equity Theory determines if both relational partners receive a fair distribution of resources by finding the ratio of contributions and benefits for each person (Adams 1963). For fathers, but not mothers, the mother's amount of housework increased relationship satisfaction. For mothers, but not fathers, mother's perceived appreciation from fathers increased relationship satisfaction (Newkirk et al. 2017). The gender complimenting education for students could include complimenting attributes, like boys learning survival, physical work, shooting, woodwork, and girls learning gymnastics, singing, sewing, and cooking, in order for the children to see that specializing in those certain skills will

compliment other's specialisms. This could show them that the family unit will function more efficiently, just as any efficient team needs individuals with different specialisms. Students could be also taught that men who stay with their wife throughout pregnancy can develop even better commitment to their wife. Sternberg 1986 proposed the Triangular Theory of Love, which describes a relationship in three components, which are intimacy, passion, and commitment. Fernández-Carrasco et al. 2019 found that by the end of pregnancy, men reached higher commitment levels than before gestation, although women maintained their levels throughout the pregnancy.

Youth and Adult Clubs

Optimal Distinctiveness Theory describes in-group and out-group differences, stating that people want an optimal balance of inclusion and distinctiveness in their social groups (Brewer 1979). By encouraging subgroups to focus on their shared category, subgroup relations could be improved (Hornsey and Hogg 1999). By city and government subsidized creation of youth clubs and adult clubs for girls, boys, men, and women, subgroups of society could be promoted to focusing on shared categories. These clubs could include the learning of skills listed in the proposed family and community health class, receiving group badges for learning skills, performing community service, holding meetings for school clubs, town wide meetings and events, and national meetings and events, with nature camps and competitions. In multiple studies, Bovermann et al. 2019a, Bovermann et al. 2019b found that individual badges felt less interesting and enjoyable than team awards.

A possible formula to use for the government and cities to use, which includes the material and immaterial contributions from the group to group members, and from group members to the group, could be

$$p_i^h(C) = N_i q_i S_i (g_o + g_i(i_i) S_i) \times (r_i^h) / ((\sum_{k=0}^h (H_i)) (r_i^k N_i^k))$$

$$r_i^h = q_i + r_i o_i^h$$

$N_i q_i$ is the sum of all material and immaterial contributions available for group G_i . $S_i \leq 1$ provides a measure for the reliability with which the members make their contributions. $g_o + g_i(i_i) S_i$ contains modifications of a pure redistribution of the contributions. The first term $g_o \leq 1$ expresses diminution of the payoff of administration costs. The second term represents an immaterial or material increase of the payoff by group activities. This term is proportional to the potential (saturated) total influence (i_i) and to the solidarity S_i putting this influence into effect. The coefficient g_1 calibrates the effective total influence (i_i) S_i . The last factor, containing the payoff share coefficients r_i^h, r_i^k , is denoted as the payoff-distribution. It determines the share received by a member of the group G_i with status h . The share coefficient r_i^h itself consists of the status-independent term q_i and a term proportional to the obligations $r_i o_i^h$, where r_i is a reward coefficient (Weidlich 2006).

The proposed clubs would promote interdependence in relationships. Interdependence Theory describes interpersonal relationships as a process of people who interact

influencing each other's experiences (Kelley and Thibaut 1978). When individuals who are avoidant are faced with high interdependence situations, they minimize other people's control over them by usually choosing defensive and self-protective options. These individuals try to protect their independence, and act in ways that risk them to the inability to form enhanced pair outcomes (Holmes 2002).

Structural Balance Theory describes a group's network of feelings, over time, the network changes into certain structural forms (Rawlings and Friedkin 2017). In a study by Wooldridge 2003, it was found that in 61 % of the trials, participants chose to cooperate with alters of the same country, while they cooperated with alters of the rival country in only 39 % of the trials. Chiang et al. 2020 found similar results, that people are more likely to cooperate with an ingroup alter (probability = 0.62) than an outgroup one (probability = 0.34). Greene 2004 found that regression models that demonstrated partisan social identification can substantially explain why most citizens tend to view their own party positively and the other negatively. Greater social identification leads to a perception of greater differences between the relevant in-group favoritism, the heightened preference for one's own party.

Discussion

The intervention success of the proposed media inoculation of students, Fake News Game, critical literacy, online and social media campaign, social structure stability improvement through family and community healthy class and youth/adult clubs, gender education, and confidence education of national views could be determined by surveying cosmopolitan high-schools and the public, every year. The first survey could be performed before the intervention is carried out. The survey could ask each individual how they view right-aligned people, as two questions in a scale from 1-5. The first question could be "How similar do you view right-aligned people to you?" The scale in the answer to first question could start from 1, listed as "A person who has the same views as me," 2 as "A person who has similar view as me," 3 as "A person who might or might not have the same views as me," 4 as "A person who has unsimilar views as me," and 5 as "A person who has completely different views as me." The second question could be "How do you feel about right-aligned people?" The scale in the answer to this second question could start from 1, listed as "Love," 2 as "like," 3 as "neutral," 4 as "dislike," and 5 as "hate." If the averages of the survey responses improve, decreasing in the direction of 5 towards 1, this could prove a successful intervention as well as a permanent new system. The proposed intervention of media inoculation of students, Fake News Game, critical literacy, online and social media campaign, social structure stability improvement through family and community healthy class and youth/adult clubs, gender education, and confidence education of national views is a wise approach to the problem, as it is supported by significant prior research, but it could take several years to become successful. Side effects may include an opposition from the majority of the populations in the cosmopolitan cities, such as protests, media criticism, and emigration of people who disagree. The strength of the intervention could overcome the opposition to it, although it could draw largely negative perceptions from

populations of cosmopolitan cities that do not implement the intervention. The delay in intervention success could demotivate certain groups and individuals, but as it would become policy, demotivation or opposition would not undermine intervention success.

The proposed intervention is supported by significant prior research, but it could take several years to become successful. Side effects may include an opposition from the majority of the populations in the cosmopolitan cities, such as protests, media criticism, and emigration of people who disagree. Further research could be performed that focuses on the ethics and opposition to this intervention. The strength of the intervention could overcome the opposition to it, although it could draw largely negative perceptions from populations of cosmopolitan cities that do not implement the intervention. The delay in intervention success could demotivate certain groups and individuals, but as it would become policy, demotivation or opposition would not undermine intervention success.

Conclusions

After reviewing the literature and theoretical explanations for the problem of prejudice against right-aligned citizens in cosmopolitan cities, Social Identity Theory, Attribution Theory, Balance Theory, and Scapegoat Theory were found to be the theories of causes for this problem. The theoretically based solutions included media assignments and critical literacy education, media campaigns targeting the full spectrum of political views, a family and community health class, and creating youth and adult clubs.

Conflicts of interest

No financial support was received by the author from any organization for the submitted work. The author has no financial relationships at present or within the previous three years with any organizations that might have an interest in the submitted work. The author has no other relationships or activities that could appear to have influenced the submitted work.

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