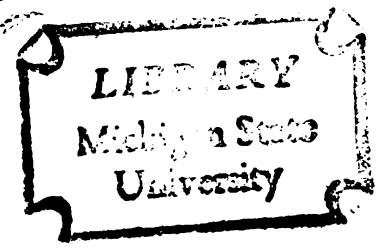


RACE AND SEX AS DETERMINANTS OF
PERCEIVED BELIEF SIMILARITY

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
DALLAS CLAYTON WILLIAMS
1975



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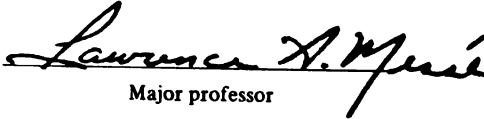
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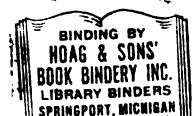
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ABSTRACT

RACE AND SEX AS DETERMINANTS OF PERCEIVED BELIEF SIMILARITY

by

Dallas Clayton Williams

Research in the area of race and attraction has focused primarily on whether or not whites perceived themselves as more similar to other whites than to blacks. The present research extended this work via the examination of three issues: 1) Would blacks perceive themselves as more similar to other blacks than whites would perceive themselves similar to other whites? 2) Would persons of both races make differential inferences of belief similarity as a function of the sex of the other person as well as race? 3) Would blacks differentiate others on the basis of sex less than would whites?

It was expected that because blacks presently are exhibiting a strong sense of solidarity with other blacks, they would perceive themselves as having more in common with other blacks than whites would with other whites. The idea

of solidarity as a variable that affects perceived belief similarity was generated from the premise that American blacks appear to be more homogenous than whites in terms of culture and history.

A 2 (Race of Subject; Black or White) by 2 (Race of Target; Black or White) by 2 (Sex of Subject; Male or Female) by 2 (Sex of Target; Male or Female) design was used to examine the effects of race and sex on perceived belief similarity. The 160 Ss (40 black males; 40 black females; 40 white males; 40 white females) were randomly assigned to one of four conditions of race and sex of target person, depending upon his (her) own race and sex. There were 10 subjects of each race and sex in each of the four conditions.

The primary instrument used in this study was a race-sex questionnaire in which subjects received minimal background information on four hypothetical target persons. Three of the target persons were "fillers" and remained constant across questionnaire conditions. The one remaining target person, presented to the subjects as the third stimulus, was varied systematically in terms of race and sex. For two of the forms this person was identified as

"Michael"; for the remainder of the target was "Barbara." With each condition of sex, the target was identified as either a white or a black. In every case the crucial target person was a "20-year-old" student from the subject's "part of the country."

There were three dependent measures, all in the format of a 9-point scale: perceived belief similarity, areas "in common" (how much the subject judged that he or she had in common with the target) and estimation of potential friendship. The first of three analyses performed on these data was correlational to examine if, as in previous studies (e.g., Bonney, 1946; Loomis, 1946; Newcomb, 1956; Precker, 1952; Richardson, 1940; and Winslow, 1937), there was a direct relationship between similarity and liking, as reflected by a very significant correlation coefficient ($\underline{r} = .78$).

The two remaining analyses performed in this study were both analyses of variance. One ANOVA examined the perceived similarity scores, while the other explored the effects that the independent variables had on subjects' estimates of how much they had in common with the target person. The results of both of these analyses revealed

the following: 1) Race of subject and target interacted to be a determinant of perceived belief similarity for both the perceived similarity and "in common" variables; 2) blacks perceived themselves to be more similar to other blacks than whites did to other whites on both dependent variables; 3) white subjects perceived themselves to be more similar to other blacks than whites did to other whites on both dependent variables; 3) white subjects perceived themselves to be somewhat less dissimilar to blacks than blacks did to whites, a finding that was marginally supported for perceived similarity and strongly supported for the "in common" measure; 4) Ss perceived greater similarity to liked-sexed targets on both dependent variables; and 5) the effect of sex of target was shown to be slightly greater for whites than for blacks with regard to perceived belief similarity but not at all for the "in common" variable. Implications of these findings, especially their generality to other subjects' populations, were discussed.

Dissertation Committee:

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RACE AND SEX AS DETERMINANTS OF
PERCEIVED BELIEF SIMILARITY

by

Dallas Clayton Williams

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Psychology

1975

To Jackie

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people undoubtedly have contributed to the present research. Although all cannot be mentioned, I would like to personally express my sincere thanks to those individuals who have had the greatest impact on the successfulness of this thesis.

I would like to thank my wife Jackie for her confidence and encouragement throughout the course of this thesis. Without her support and dedication this thesis would have been impossible.

I wish to extend my deepest and sincere appreciation to my committee chairman, Dr. Lawrence A. Messé, not only for his invaluable assistance throughout the planning and execution of this study but also for his assistance in analyzing my data.

I would also like to thank other members of my dissertation committee for their helpful suggestions and worthwhile criticisms, Dr. Eugene Jacobson, Dr. Barbara Riemer, and Dr. Charles Johnson.

I am especially thankful to my parents, my two sisters, my mother-in-law and all of my immediate family for their confidence and unceasing moral support over the course of this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank some of my colleagues who I especially consider good people, Shelly Stokes, Gregory "Blood" Price, James Weathers, Calvin Matthews, Anderson Freeman, Grover Croom, and last but not least my office mate Hilton Thomas.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	vii
 Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
Person Perception	3
First Impressions	4
Stereotypes	6
Concept of Autistic Hostility	7
Summary	8
Race Differences and Interpersonal Attraction	8
Identifying Racial Differences.	8
Race and Attraction	10
Race Versus Belief Controversy: Overview	13
Statement of Problem.	16
Summary and Hypotheses.	18
Hypotheses.	21
II. METHOD.	23
Subjects.	23
Instrument.	23
Dependent Measure	25

Table of Contents (cont'd.)

Chapter	Page
Experimental Design	26
Experimental Setting and Procedure.	26
III. RESULTS	28
Results Relevant to Hypothesis I.	29
Results Relevant to Hypothesis II	34
Unpredicted Findings.	36
IV. DISCUSSION.	40
Hypotheses.	41
Unpredicted Findings.	47
Some General Considerations	48
Future Research	50
Conclusion.	52
REFERENCES	53
Appendix	
A. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE	57
B. ONE FORM OF THE RACE-SEX QUESTIONNAIRE. . . .	58

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Summary of ANOVA for Perceived Belief Similarity.	30
2. Summary of ANOVA for Perceived Areas in Common.	31
3. Means Relevant to Effect of Race of Subject and Race of Target.	32
4. Means Relevant to the Race of Subject by Race of Target Interaction.	33
5. Means Relevant to Effect of Sex of Subject and Sex of Target	34
6. Means Relevant to the Effect of Sex of Target for Black and White Subjects Paired with Like-Raced Target.	36
7. Means Relevant to the Sex of Subject by Sex of Target Interaction for Perceived Belief Similarity	37
8. Means Relevant to the Race of Target by Sex of Target Interaction for Perceived Areas "in Common"	38

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

There is nothing more important to us, with the exception of ourselves, than the world of other people. Other people easily are able to influence our joys and satisfactions and can cause us sadness and pain. Consequently, we all are interested in learning about and knowing other people, and we all have very strong convictions about how we, ourselves, come to know and to understand other people.

For the psychologist the problem is one of perception, how we perceive other people and objects in our environment and form impressions of them. The processes by which we gain knowledge about other people and objects have proven to be a set of very complex phenomena, in part because people often employ a variety of techniques in forming impressions about other people. However, a large number of studies (summarized, for example, by Tagiuri, 1969) have shown that people often use stereotypes and

make judgments on the basis of physical stimuli in forming impressions about other people.

In this study, I explored the possibility that people use the physical stimulus of race as a variable for assuming degree of belief similarity. More specifically, I investigated what effects presenting Black and White Ss only with the race and sex of another person had on assumed belief similarity.

The first section of this chapter is a general discussion of impression formation, especially the issue of first impressions, followed by a discussion of stereotypes and the concept of autistic hostility. The second section deals with the literature on identity processes and racial determinants of attraction. It is followed by a brief presentation of the controversy of race versus belief as determinants of friendship. Finally, the last section presents a statement of the problem and develops the hypotheses that were examined in the research.

Person Perception

We perceive persons as unitary entities possessing certain physical and personality characteristics, thoughts and feelings. The attributes of a person vary in several ways. Physical and personality characteristics are relatively enduring properties of the person; thoughts and feelings are more fleeting. Our ideas about other people also vary according to whether they stem from overt, easily observable characteristics and strong emotional states are noticeable, intrusive characteristics of persons. Another's thoughts may be expressed overtly or we may infer them. Perhaps one of the most salient aspects of another is his emotional expression. We typically assume that how a person "looks" reflects some inner emotional or feeling state.

From this information we can readily recognize that some traits are more important than others in forming impressions about other people. A basic assumption in the work by Asch was the presence of so-called central traits in personality impression formation. Asch (1946) expected that one's impression of another person would not be simply the additive total of all the information one has about the other person; rather, one's impression would be a dynamic

product in which some pieces of information would carry more weight than others, and thus modify the whole picture. Asch called such influential characteristics central traits, and he clearly showed that the warm-cold dimension was a central trait that markedly affected the organization of the subject's impressions.

To summarize Asch's findings, when the adjective cold was included in a list of stimulus words only about 10% of the subjects gave responses stating that the target person would also be generous or humorous. In contrast, when the adjective warm was used about 90% of the subjects described the person as generous and over 75% described the person as humorous. Asch considered the stimulus traits as supporting his Gestalt viewpoint, which led him to conclude that whether a given trait was central or peripheral in its impact would depend upon its relationship to its context (i.e., to the other stimulus traits).

First Impressions

To study the effects of first impressions, Luchins (1957a, 1957b) wrote two short paragraphs chronologically describing some of the day's activities of a boy named Jim.

In one paragraph, Jim walked to school with friends, talked with acquaintances in stores (etc . . .). In the other paragraph Jim's activities were just the opposite (i.e., walked home alone, did not talk to acquaintances, etc. . .). More importantly, the first paragraph gave (E) the impression that Jim was an extrovert and the second paragraph (I) gave the impression that Jim was an introverted person. Luchins then combined the two paragraphs either in the I-E order or in the E-I order. In either case the two paragraphs formed a connected chronological narrative; however, they presented conflicting information about Jim. After reading the two paragraphs, subjects were then asked to rate Jim on a personality trait check list. Luchins reasoned that if the information initially given was most important in determining personality impressions, then the E-I order should produce impressions more like the (E) paragraph alone; and the I-E order should produce impressions more like those of the (I) paragraph alone. These results, according to Luchins, would provide support for the existence of a primacy effect. However, the existence of a recency effect would be supported if the second paragraph was found to be more dominant. The results of several experiments, however, were consistent in showing a

large primacy effect. In short, Luchins' results and those of later research, suggest that first impressions are very important in determining our reactions to other people.

Stereotypes

The concept stereotype has received much attention over the past years, and there are almost unlimited types and definitions of this construct. However, stereotype most often has referred to a set of characteristics which we assume fit a certain category of people or groups. In a classic study, Katz and Braley (1933) showed that a group of Princeton students had a clear consensus on which traits characterize various national groups.

Stereotypes and implicit personality theories--inferring complex patterns of personality characteristics from a relatively small number of cues--are inevitable consequences of our needs as perceivers to make sense of the world. We are concerned about stereotypes because they imply so much about other people, and because frequently they imply negative and wrong attributes. Not all stereotypes are negative however. To say that the English are intelligent, Italians artistic, college students

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hard-working could hardly be classified as negative attributes. Given the capacity of most people to process information, stereotypes seem inevitable, although no one would defend them as totally good. Thus, they should be recognized simply for what they are: overgeneralizations. These overgeneralizations are often a result of our tendency to impose stability on our world and the behaviors of others.

Concept of Autistic Hostility

The concept of autistic hostility was first developed by Newcomb (1947). Newcomb asserted that an initial state of hostility protects itself from change by reducing the communication of information capable of changing it. A study by Thibaut & Cowles (1952) showed that initially hostile subjects were less communicative to a standard stimulus person than initially friendly persons. In short, this concept points up the fact that any failure to communicate adequately and fully in the initial stage of any relationship will affect the representativeness of the sample of potential outcomes in the relationship.

Summary

The literature I have reviewed thus far has been concerned with person perception and the mechanisms we use in forming impressions of others. One point this literature attempted to make was that people use multiple variables or mechanisms in forming impressions of others; people form impressions from physical as well as emotional stimuli. In addition, I noted how stereotypes, by definition, influence our impression of other people, and the importance of communicating adequately our openness in the initial stage of any relationship.

The section which follows begins with a slightly different perspective, focusing more on interpersonal attraction and how we use race as a method of typifying other people.

Race Differences and Interpersonal Attraction

Identifying Racial Differences

The perception of people's physical characteristics is an area that has been studied relatively little in social

psychology. This neglect is particularly surprising in view of the great use made of physical appearance in determining degrees of interpersonal attractiveness (e.g., Berscheid & Walster, 1969).

An area that has been studied considerably, mainly because of psychologists' interest in prejudice, is the use of ethnic stereotypes in identifying or classifying other people. One of the most interesting aspects of this area has been the question of whether prejudiced people differ from nonprejudiced people in the ability to identify a particular "disliked" group. The data indicate that prejudiced individuals exaggerate the differences between their own group and the outgroup and underestimate individual differences within the outgroup (Secord, Bevan & Katz, 1956; Seeleman, 1940).

The evidence on this point is inconclusive but there are several critical and relevant findings. First, prejudiced subjects think they are quite good at identifying members of a disliked group (Lindzey & Rogolsky, 1950; Cooper, 1958). Secondly, prejudiced subjects are more likely than other subjects to label a higher percentage of individuals as outgroup members (Siegel, 1954; Sciodel & Austrin, 1957). However, prejudiced persons are probably

no different from nonprejudiced persons in their overall accuracy in identifying the background of other ethnic groups.

Race and Attraction

In a number of studies, friendship choices and attraction rating have been found to be influenced by race (Berkum and Meeland, 1958; Koch, 1946; Mann, 1958). Mann (1958) conducted a study designed to determine the influence of prejudices on (1) the reactions that members of interracial groups had on each other (sociometric choices), and (2) the perceptions that individuals in such groups have of the thoughts and feelings of other group members (sociometric perceptions).

Mann used 78 students enrolled in a graduate course as subjects in his study. Only Black and White Christians were used, and each subject was randomly assigned to a six-man group. The subjects met in leaderless group discussions four times a week over a three-week period. During the second week a Sociometric Perception Questionnaire was administered to each subject. In order to fill out the questionnaire each subject had to indicate his own

sociometric friendship choices among the group members and to predict the friendship choices of each other group member (indicating in this manner the nature of his sociometric perception).

Mann (1958) found: 1) that subjects preferred members of their own race as friends; 2) that older white subjects preferred other whites as friends more than older blacks preferred other blacks; 3) that social preferences of persons who lived in the North showed greater similarity to members of their own race than social preferences of persons who lived in the South; 4) that white subjects were more aware of the social preferences of members of their own race than they were of blacks; and 5) that older black subjects were more aware of the social preferences of whites than older whites were of the social preferences of older blacks.

Another study (Byrne & Wong, 1961) also demonstrated the importance of the interaction between race and racial prejudice. Byrne and Wong gave 73 white subjects a questionnaire with minimal background information about a black or white stranger and asked them to make judgments about him. Attraction was measured by two scales of the Interpersonal Judgment Scale developed by Byrne (1961). On

these instruments subjects (a) indicated their personal feelings of liking or disliking the stranger and (b) rated his desirability as a future work partner.

As hypothesized, highly prejudiced subjects responded more negatively to a black stranger than one identified as white. The prediction that subjects low on prejudice would not respond differentially on the basis of race was not really supported with respect to personal feelings, although they were somewhat less negative to the black target person than were the more prejudiced whites. However, on the work partner variable they did respond more positively to a black stranger than to a white stranger. I interpret this finding to suggest that in general most whites prefer to be friends with a black person up to a certain point (e.g., as a "buddy" on the job) and beyond that point friendship ceases. This issue is somewhat of a digression however, since locating that point for most whites is not a concern of the present study.

What is a concern, though, is the additional finding of Byrne and Wong (1961) that their white subjects perceived their own beliefs to be more similar to the white target than to the black. As noted below, this

result served as the starting point for the present research, which basically was a modification and extension of Byrne and Wong's work.

Race Versus Belief
Controversy: Overview

Which is more important, a person's beliefs or a person's race? Rokeach (1960) proposes a Belief Congruence Theory whereas Triandis's (1961) proposes a Race Congruence Theory. Rokeach argued that white racial attitudes are based more on an assumed dissimilarity of beliefs rather than the objective racial characteristics of blacks. Rokeach, Smith & Evans (1960) stated that "insofar as psychological processes are involved, beliefs is more important than ethnic or racial membership as a determinant of social discrimination." They argued that true racial discrimination implies that the outgroup is discriminated against, but that at the same time, the ingroup is favored, and they provided evidence supporting their argument.

They asked subjects to respond on a nine-point scale indicating how likely they were to become friendly with each of the target persons. The target persons

varied on race (black or white) and on beliefs (eight in all, four general ones, and four relevant ones). They found that subjects preferred to discriminate more on the basis of belief and less on the basis of racial or ethnic group when they were given the opportunity to react to social stimuli differing simultaneously on both characteristics. This relationship held regardless of the region of the country in which subjects were raised.

Countless other investigations have found similar supporting results (e.g., Byrne, Nelson & Reeves, 1966; Byrne & Wong, 1962; Stein, Hardyck & Smith, 1965; and most recently Williams, 1974).

Triandis (1961) noted that belief-congruence interpretation of prejudice was perhaps correct for the attitudinal relation "friendship," but seems less applicable to behaviors sampled over a wide range of social distances, the point that I was making above with regard to the attraction results of Byrne and Wong's (1961) study. Triandis felt that if one considers a wider range of social distances which more accurately reflects the areas in which prejudice operates in the real world, race would be a more important determinant than belief.

Triandis argued that prejudice involved more than non-acceptance as a friend, but it involved negative behavior as well.

To test this hypothesis, he administered a social distance questionnaire consisting of a 100-point scale from willingness to marry a person (0-social distance) to willingness to lynch a person (97-social distance). Triandis used in his study Morris "13-ways to live" as a measure for the belief congruence principle. He told his subjects some unspecified belief of the target person was similar to or different from their own (e.g., same or different religion, occupation, or philosophy). Triandis's results showed that race accounted for about four times as much of the variance in social distance judgments as did belief congruence, although both main effects were highly significant.

Rokeach (1961) responded to Triandis' critique by pointing out the noncomparability of the treatment of beliefs in the two approaches. Rokeach argued that the difference between "name" and "different philosophy" is a difference which psychologically and sociologically makes little difference.

In summary, it would appear that both positions are correct to some extent, and both authors present convincing support for their argument. However, it appeared from reading the literature that most researchers are in agreement more with Rokeach's belief congruence position; stated another way, most literature in this area provides more support for Rokeach's position than for Triandis' race congruence position.

Statement of Problem

Upon reviewing both Rokeach's and Triandis' findings, I came to feel that perhaps too much attention has been focused on trying to "prove" which of the two authors positions better accounts for discriminatory behaviors instead of trying to show when one might be more important than the other.

I contend that both variables are important, but at two different stages in the development of a relationship. I believe that race is a much more important variable than belief in the initial or primary stage of a relationship. It is at this level of interaction that

the beliefs of another person are probably not known to an individual, and this lack of knowledge makes salient stereotypes and other mechanisms that use physical characteristics to make inferences about another person's beliefs. It is in those few "real-life" instances when a person's beliefs are known at this primary stage, that there should be a strong belief effect in friendship formation.

I further believe (and the literature review supports this argument) that because people will make inferences on the basis of so little information (e.g., the "cue" of race) that when confronted with a person who "looks different," they will tend to assume belief dissimilarity, and hence, choose not to get to know the other person's real beliefs. Thus, this argument supports the premise that race is a more important variable at the initial stage of the relationship than are beliefs.

This, then, brings us to the problem on which this research focused. I believe, as a major supposition, that Rokeach was able to generate support for his position because he presented his subjects with both stimuli (e.g., race and belief) simultaneously, and in doing so he forced them to use information that most people in the real world

do not have so readily. Most people in the real world are only given one stimulus at a time, and the stimulus they are more often introduced to first is race, not beliefs. This suggests, then, that typically when a person gets to know another person a serial effect tends to occur, meaning that we have to decide from the race of the other person first whether or not we wish to enter into even a casual relationship with him or her, which then will enable us to uncover his or her beliefs. I believe that most cross-racial interactions reflect this kind of pattern.

Summary and Hypotheses

To summarize, research in the area of race and attraction up to this point has focused primarily on whether or not whites perceive themselves as more similar to other whites than they do to blacks, and what the consequences of this perception are. It seems reasonable now to go beyond this rather narrow focus and to expand the research in this area by (a) examining the impact of other physical cues, such as sex, on perceived similarity, and (b) examining the relationship between physical cues

and perceived belief similarity in nonwhite population. In view of this, the present research explored three issues: 1) if blacks will perceive themselves as more similar to other blacks than whites will perceive themselves similar to other whites; 2) if persons of both races will make differential inferences of belief similarity as a function of the sex of the other person as well as race; 3) if blacks will differentiate others on the basis of sex less than will whites.

It is expected that because blacks presently are exhibiting a strong sense of solidarity with other blacks, they will perceive themselves as having more in common with other blacks than whites will with other whites. The idea of solidarity as a variable that affects perceived belief similarity was generated from the premise that American blacks appear to be more homogeneous than whites in terms of culture and history. If this premise is true, then blacks are not expected to utilize sex as a variable affecting perceived belief similarity of a liked-raced target as much as whites. Further, this perception of solidarity is interpreted to suggest that blacks agree that the problems of black people are common to all blacks, not as individuals, nor as male or female, but as a race.

Danzig (1964) speaking to this point concluded:

What is now perceived as the 'revolt of the Negro' amounts to this: the solidarity of the Negro seeking admission into the white world through usual achievement has been replaced by the organized Negro insisting upon a legitimate share of his group of the goods of American society (p. 43).

To amplify this point, the perception of the problems of Afro-Americans are "group" problems and the rights and privileges of all blacks, therefore, depend upon the status of the "group" to which they belong and not necessarily the sex or other characteristics of individual members of that "group." Finally, this form of homogeneity and black ideology has made blacks more race conscious and less sex conscious with regard to other blacks.

However, this general position should not be interpreted to suggest that blacks are becoming anti-white, but to suggest instead that they are becoming more pro-black. Interpreted in this context being pro-black means that blacks recognize a need to show commonality within themselves because America has failed to develop a social system consistent with her democratic ideals of equality and brotherhood for all its citizens.

Hypotheses

This research was designed to examine the extent to which people use race and sex as variables for assuming belief similarity. The specific hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis I: Based upon the works of Byrne and Wong (1961), it was predicted that race of Ss and target would interact to determine perceived belief similarity (i.e., Ss would perceive the beliefs of the same-raced target person as more similar to themselves than different-raced targets.

Moreover, given the premise that blacks perceive themselves to be more homogeneous in their culture and beliefs than whites, two corollary hypotheses also were generated.

- Ia) That blacks would see themselves as more similar to other blacks than whites would to other whites.
- Ib) That whites would see themselves less dissimilar to blacks than blacks would to whites.

Hypothesis II: From the perspective that persons use other visual external cues in addition to race to predict the internal states of others, I hypothesized that people would also make belief similarity judgments on the basis of same or different sex (i.e., liked-sex target

persons would be seen as more similar than opposite-sex target persons).

Moreover, given the assumption of greater perceived homogeneity of beliefs in blacks, the following corollary hypothesis also was generated.

- IIa) That sex of target would be more of a determinant of perceived similarity for whites than for blacks (i.e., within like-raced targets, whites would see themselves as less similar to someone of the opposite sex than would blacks.

Chapter II

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects were 160 (40 black males; 40 black females; 40 white males; 40 white females) students recruited from Lansing Community College who received money for participating in the research. All Ss were recruited by chance by two female (one black, one white) recruiters. The specific recruitment procedure that was used is presented below in the section on experimental setting and procedure.

Instruments

Two questionnaires were constructed to test the hypotheses. The first questionnaire was a background information questionnaire. Aside from its main purpose of getting demographic information, this questionnaire also

was designed to appear to focus on finding out how much international traveling of any kind these subjects had done. However, this part of the questionnaire was not of any major importance but served only to aid in disguising the true purpose of this study. This questionnaire is presented in Appendix A.

The second, and most relevant, questionnaire was designed to test the hypotheses. This was a race-sex questionnaire (one form of which is presented in Appendix B) by which subjects received minimal background information on four hypothetical target persons. Three of the target persons were "fillers" and remained constant across questionnaire conditions. The one remaining target person, presented to the subjects as the third stimulus, was varied systematically in terms of race and sex. For two of the forms, this person was identified as "Michael"; for the remainder the target was "Barbara." Within each condition of sex, the target was identified as either a white or a black. In every case the crucial target person was a "20 year-old" student from the subject's "part of the country." Ten subjects of each race and sex were randomly assigned to the conditions of race and sex of the target.

Dependent Measures

As indicated in Appendix B, subjects were asked to rate each target person on six, nine-point scales. Of interest--the other scales and target people being "fillers"--were subjects' responses to the scales measuring (1) perceived belief similarity, (2) potential liking, and (3) perceived commonality (Questions 1, 3, and 6, respectively) for the third target person. The major dependent measure was the subjects' response to the perceived belief similarity scale. However, two other variables also seemed relevant. First, the measure of potential liking was relevant because I thought that it was important to demonstrate that, as in past studies, the Ss in this research saw a relationship between perceived belief similarity and the potential for friendship. Second, I thought that it would be useful to examine a variable--how much the Ss estimated they had in common with the target--that had some component in common with perceived belief similarity but also was more general in its focus.

Experimental Design

This study employed an experimental design whose dimensions were 2 (Race of Ss; Black or White) by 2 (Race of Target; same as or different from S) by 2 (Sex of Ss; Male or Female) by 2 (Sex of Target; same as or different from S).

Experimental Setting and Procedure

As noted above, all potential participants were approached by one of two female recruiters. The only restriction placed upon the recruiters, in terms of whom they approached, was that they were told not to solicit the participation of persons who appeared to be foreign. Subsequent analysis of relevant items on the demographic information questionnaire indicated that, in fact, only Americans participated. Of course, the recruiters were unaware of the condition to which a given subject would be assigned. After they introduced themselves to a potential subject the recruiters asked if he or she would like to earn one dollar for participating in a behavioral-motivational study, which the recruiters explained would

take about 15 minutes to complete. If the person agreed to participate then he or she was directed by the recruiter to the testing area. The testing area was a regular classroom, located a short distance beneath the school cafeteria.

After each participant had reached the testing site, he or she was given at random one of the four possible forms of the questionnaire discussed above. The participant was reminded to read carefully all instructions located at the top of the page before answering any questions. In addition, the subject was told that the second questionnaire contained several statements concerning four people, and that he or she was to make judgments about each individual as seriously and as quickly as possible, since the researchers were interested in first impressions. The subject was told further that if any part of the instructions or task was not clear, the participant could raise his (her) hand and one of the experimenters would come and answer any question.

Chapter III

RESULTS

Before proceeding with any discussion of the results found in this study, it is useful to restate the design that was employed; it was a 2 (race of Ss: black or white) by 2 (sex of Ss: male or female) by 2 (race of Ts: same as or from different subject) by 2 (sex of Ts: same or different), with 10 subjects per cell.

The first of three analyses performed in this study was correlational to examine if, as in previous studies (i.e., Bonney, 1946; Loomis, 1946; Newcomb, 1956; Precker, 1952; Richardson, 1940; and Winslow, 1937), there was a direct relationship between perceived similarity and potential liking. As expected, the results did support past research since there was a direct relationship between similarity and liking as reflected by a very significant correlation coefficient ($r = .78$).

The second and third analyses performed in this study were both analyses of variance. The first ANOVA,

performed on the perceived similarity scores (Item 1 on the questionnaire), however, was the most crucial analysis in terms of examining the major hypotheses. The second ANOVA was a supplementary analysis performed on the perceived "in common" scores (Item 6 on the questionnaire) as a result of having found statistically supportive results for perceived similarity. Both analyses which are summarized in Tables 1 and 2, respectively, are explored in greater detail below, mainly in terms of the hypotheses.

Results Relevant to Hypothesis I

Hypothesis I predicted that race of the subjects and the target would interact to be a determinant of perceived belief similarity. As Tables 1 and 2 show this effect, the race of target (same as or different from the subject) main effect, was highly significant for both dependent variables. The means relevant to these two effects are presented in Table 3. They indicate that subjects perceived themselves both to be more similar in beliefs and to have more in common with like-raced others.

TABLE 1

Summary of ANOVA for Perceived
Belief Similarity

	<u>df</u>	<u>Ms</u>	<u>F</u>
Race of Subject (A)	1	2.50	1.70
Sex of Subject (B)	1	0.40	< 1
Race of Target (C)	1	490.00	334.10***
Sex of Target (D)	1	14.00	9.55**
A x B	1	0.40	< 1
A x C	1	14.40	9.82**
A x D	1	0.40	< 1
B x C	1	2.50	1.70
B x D	1	8.10	5.52*
C x D	1	0.90	< 1
A x B x C	1	4.90	3.34
A x B x D	1	0.10	< 1
A x C x D	1	0.90	< 1
B x C x D	1	0.00	--
A x B x C x D	1	0.00	--
Error	144	1.47	

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

TABLE 1

Summary of ANOVA for Perceived
Areas in Common

	<u>df</u>	<u>Ms</u>	<u>F</u>
Race of Subject (A)	1	0.10	< 1
Sex of Subject (B)	1	2.30	1.24
Race of Target (C)	1	406.40	218.90**
Sex of Target (D)	1	18.90	10.18*
A x B	1	2.20	1.18
A x C	1	18.90	10.18*
A x D	1	1.00	< 1
B x C	1	3.90	2.10
B x D	1	0.00	
C x D	1	33.30	17.94*
A x B x C	1	3.30	1.78
A x B x D	1	1.10	< 1
A x C x D	1	2.80	1.51
B x C x D	1	0.30	< 1
A x B x C x D	1	1.10	< 1
Error	144	1.86	

*p < .01

**p < .001

TABLE 3

Means Relevant to Effect of Race
of Subject and Race of Target

Dependent Measure	Race of Target	
	Same as <u>S</u>	Different from <u>S</u>
Perceived Similarity	7.58	4.08
Perceived Areas "In Common"	7.56	4.38

Note.--Scores potentially could range from 1 to 9.

Hypothesis Ia predicted that white subjects would perceive themselves to be less dissimilar to blacks than blacks would to whites. Hypothesis Ib predicted that blacks would perceive themselves to be more similar to other blacks than whites would to other whites. Thus, I expected a significant race of subject (black or white) by race of target (same or different) interaction. Tables 1 and 2 indicate that this was the case for both dependent measures. The relevant means presented in Table 4 and appropriate individual comparisons indicated that both corollary hypotheses were supported. The race of target effect was stronger for black subjects ($t = 15.13, 12.72$ for belief similarity and "in common," respectively) than

TABLE 4

Means Relevant to the Race of Subject
by Race of Target Interaction

Dependent Measure	Race of Target	
	Same as <u>S</u>	Different from <u>S</u>
<u>Perceived Similarity</u>		
Black Subjects	8.00	3.90
White Subjects	7.15	4.25
<u>Perceived Areas "in Common"</u>		
Black Subjects	7.92	4.05
White Subjects	7.20	4.70

Note.--Scores potentially could range from 1 to 9.

it was for whites ($t = 10.72, 8.20$, for belief similarity and "in common" respectively). Moreover, whites saw themselves as less similar in their beliefs and having less in common with white targets than did blacks with black targets ($t = 3.13, 2.37$, for belief similarity and "in common," respectively), and whites saw themselves as less dissimilar to blacks than blacks did to whites ($t = 1.29, 2.13$, respectively).

Results Relevant to
Hypothesis II

Hypothesis II predicted that subjects would perceive greater similarity with like-sexed targets. This hypothesis, as Tables 1 and 2 indicate, was supported since the main effect of sex of target (same or different) was significant for both dependent measures. Moreover, the relevant means, presented in Table 5, were in the predicted direction.

TABLE 5

Means Relevant to Effect of Sex
of Subject and Sex of Target

Dependent Measure	Sex of Target	
	Same as <u>S</u>	Different from <u>S</u>
Perceived Similarity	6.12	5.52
Perceived Areas "in Common"	6.31	5.62

Note.--Scores potentially could range from 1 to 9.

Hypothesis IIa predicted that the effect of sex of target (same or different) would be greater when a white subject was paired with a white target than when a black subject was paired with a black target. A conservative test of this hypothesis requires a significant race of subject by race of target (same or different) by sex of target (same or different) interaction for support--since, with liked raced targets, white subjects were expected to generate a stronger sex of target effect than were black subjects--but as Tables 1 and 2 indicate, this was not the case for either dependent variable. Winer (1971, p. 384), however, suggests that individual comparisons should be performed, no matter the significance of the overall effect, when specific hypotheses are being tested. Thus individual comparisons were performed on the relevant means, which are presented in Table 6.

The test performed on the perceived similarity scores supported the hypothesis since same-sexed targets were seen as significantly more similar in white subject-target pairs ($t = 1.82$, $p < .05$) but not in black subject-target pairs ($t = .52$). However, the tests performed on the secondary variable of perceived areas "in common" did

TABLE 6

Means Relevant to the Effect of Sex of Target for Black and White Subjects Paired with Like-Raced Targets

Race of Subject-Target Pair	Sex of Target	
	Same as <u>S</u>	Different from <u>S</u>
<u>Perceived Similarity</u>		
Black Subjects and Targets	8.10	7.90
White Subjects and Targets	7.50	6.80
<u>Perceived Areas "in Common"</u>		
Black Subjects and Targets	7.60	8.25
White Subjects and Targets	7.30	7.10

Note:--Scores potentially could range from 1 to 9.

not support hypothesis IIa. Thus, while somewhat supportive, findings relevant to this prediction were not strong.

Unpredicted Findings

Table 1 indicates that the sex of subject by sex of target interaction for perceived similarity, although not predicted, was significant. Table 7, which presents

TABLE 7

Means Relevant to the Sex of Subject by Sex of Target
Interaction for Perceived Belief-Similarity

Sex of Subject	Sex of Target	
	Same as <u>S</u>	Different from <u>S</u>
Male	5.83	5.70
Female	6.40	5.35

Note.--Scores potentially could range from 1 to 9.

the relevant cell means, indicates that the sex of target effect was stronger for female subjects than it was for males.

Tests of simple effects confirmed this inference: the sex of target simple main effect for males did not approach significance ($F = .31$), but it was significant for females ($F = 15.00$, $p < .01$); likewise, females saw themselves as more similar to female targets than males did to male targets ($F = 4.12$, $p < .05$). Thus, it appears that sex was a more salient variable for females than it was for males, especially with regard to this variable's effect on perceived similarity.

Table 2 indicates that, although not specifically predicted, the race of target (same or different) by sex of target (same or different) interaction was significant for perceived areas "in common" (but not for perceived similarity). Table 8 presents the means relevant to this effect.

TABLE 8

Means Relevant to the Race of Target by Sex of Target
Interaction for Perceived Areas "in Common"

Race of Target	Sex of Target	
	Same as <u>S</u>	Different from <u>S</u>
Same as <u>S</u>	7.45	7.68
Different from <u>S</u>	5.17	3.58

Note.--Scores potentially could range from 1 to 9.

Table 8 indicates, and tests of simple effects confirmed, that this interaction was due primarily to the result that there was a sex of target effect only when subject and target were of different races ($F = 27.60$; $p < .001$). Thus, for same-raced pairs, subjects perceived that they had at least as much in common with a target of

the opposite sex as they had with a target of the same sex. When the target was of a different race, however, subjects perceived that they had more in common with targets of the same sex.

Chapter IV

DISCUSSION

In summary, the results of this study revealed the following: 1) that race of the subject and target interacted to be a determinant of perceived belief similarity; 2) that blacks perceived themselves to be more similar to other blacks than whites did to other whites; 3) white subjects perceived themselves to be somewhat less dissimilar to blacks than blacks did to whites; 4) that Ss did perceive greater similarity to a liked-sexed target; and 5) that the effects of sex of target was shown to be somewhat greater for whites than for blacks, especially with regard to perceived belief similarity.

In addition to these findings, a correlational analysis revealed, as earlier studies have shown (Bonney, 1946; Loomis, 1946; Newcomb, Precker, 1952; Richardson, 1940; and Wislow, 1937), that there is a direct relationship between perceived similarity and liking.

Hypotheses

The first hypothesis predicted that race of Ss would interact to determine perceived belief similarity, i.e., Ss would perceive the beliefs of the same race target person to be more similar to themselves than different race targets. This hypothesis was supported for both the perceived similarity and "in common" variables. These findings are consistent with other studies which have shown that people do use systematically the race of the target when assessing perceived similarity (e.g., Byrne & Wong, 1961; Mann, 1958). The present research extended the findings of these studies, however, because it demonstrated that this effect operates--in fact, it operates even more strongly--for black persons as well as for whites.

More importantly, this study helps to place in perspective the findings of Rokeach (1961) that beliefs are more important than race under those conditions in which beliefs are known. I reasoned that this difference is largely due to Rokeach providing his subjects with information about both the belief and the race of the target simultaneously, a set of circumstances that probably

does not occur in the real world very often. Thus, the present findings support indirectly the premise that race is a primary variable in the sequential sense, since people appear to make inferences about other people's beliefs based solely on this information. Interpreted in this fashion, there is further support for the premise that in order for most cross-racial relationships to develop, a serial effect has to occur, i.e., that people first have to be open-minded and receptive in the initial stage of the relationship in order to get to know the other's beliefs. Otherwise, the relationship will terminate at this initial stage, since people will tend to assume dissimilarity of beliefs across races. I further reasoned that it is important to communicate beliefs clearly in the initial stage of a potential relationship because when people are physically different from oneself, as in the case of cross-racial encounters, the relevance of others' social standards tend to be ambiguous. Thus, one is likely to be afraid that his or her behavior will be unacceptable, thereby making him or herself uneasy, anxious and defensive, because he or she does not know what is expected or how to behave.

Hypothesis (Ia, which had not been investigated previously, predicted that blacks would see themselves as more similar to other blacks than whites would to other whites. This prediction also was strongly supported for both dependent variables. The results of this research, thus, support the generalization that blacks are perceived to be somewhat more homogeneous in their beliefs and culture than are whites.

More importantly, the author attributes the findings that support Hypothesis Ia to a greater level of black awareness on the part of blacks about themselves and what it means to be black. One must recognize that black people in this society are in the midst of an identity crisis, the origin of which lies in a reaction against a set of historical roots, that is, a number of dehumanizing social forces such as "plantation culture," "slave society," and "racial etiquette." Having been involuntarily brought from Africa and placed within the ethos of these social forces it took until today for Afro-Americans to feel free enough to search for their true cultural identity, where they came from, and who they were.

Thus, today's blacks have begun to accept themselves and their people, in part through a newfound

self-acceptance and assertiveness that are so clearly manifested in the ideas they are beginning to have about themselves, both as individuals and as a race. Thus, blacks see themselves as more of a people than do whites, who appear to feel less of a need to explore and understand the degree of similarity in their own cultural roots.

Hypothesis Ib, which predicted that white subjects would report themselves to be less dissimilar to blacks than blacks would to whites, was marginally supported for perceived similarity and strongly supported for perceived areas "in common."

Given the somewhat tenuous support for this prediction, it could be that these results are largely due to a race difference in concerns with the social desirable or permissible response to the stimulus questions. Whites might have felt more constrained and therefore, less "free" to express their felt dissimilarity to blacks than did blacks toward white targets. On the other hand, it could be that these findings reflect a "real" difference in such perceptions; i.e., blacks, because of the recent rise in feelings of awareness and solidarity towards other blacks, might be more influenced by the dissimilar race of the white target than whites are by the race of

the black target. Thus, today the issue of race might be more salient for blacks than for whites, especially within the college student population.

Hypothesis II predicted that people also would make belief similarity judgments on the basis of same or different sex; i.e., like-sexed target persons would be seen as more similar than opposite-sex target persons. This prediction was supported for both dependent variables. These findings, which essentially replicate and extend the results that supported the first hypothesis, demonstrate that people will use a number of external physical characteristics to help them make generalizations about others. These characteristics probably are those that are related to ascribed status in our society.

Hypothesis IIa predicted that the sex of the target would be more of a determinant of perceived similarity for whites than for blacks, i.e., within like-raced targets, whites would see themselves as less similar to someone of the opposite sex. This hypothesis received only marginal support; for perceived similarity, individual comparisons--but not the test of the overall interaction--revealed a significant sex difference for white subject-target pairs that was absent for black

subject-target pairs that was absent for black subject-target pairs. This effect did not occur at all for the "in common" dependent variable.

It could be that white subjects perceived less difference across sex as a function of perceived areas "in common," possibly because common areas might suggest compatibility and white males perceived themselves equally as compatible to white females as black males did to black females, irrespective of differences in perceived belief similarity.

The support that was found for Hypothesis IIa probably reflects the same issue that was discussed in connection with the findings that were relevant to Hypothesis Ia, namely the salience of a common cultural and racial identity that appears to be present in blacks, at least those in the college population. This salience, which is absent in whites, would serve to moderate any effects of sex differences on perceived similarity in blacks, i.e., as stated blacks, view the problem of black people as problems common to all blacks, irrespective of sex.

Unpredicted Findings

One unpredicted finding revealed that the effect of the sex of target on perceived areas "in common" was only present when subject and target were of a different race. This finding suggests again that subjects perceived areas "in common" as reflecting compatibility within like-raced pairs; however, for cross-raced pairs subjects perceived that they had more in common with the same sexed target. Thus, it appears that when issues such as sexuality and courtship in general are constrained by current social conventions--that is, under cross-race pairings--areas "in common" seems to be subject to the same sex effects as was perceived belief similarity. It is only when issues of courtship, etc. . . ., appear more acceptable that such sex differences attenuate for perceived areas "in common."

A second unpredicted finding revealed that the sex of subject by sex of target interaction was significant for the perceived similarity variable (but not for the perceived "in common" variable). The effects of belief similarity on sex of target was found to be stronger for female subjects than it was for males.

This finding is consistent with the findings that are relevant to hypothesis Ia and the idea, expressed earlier, of an increase in consciousness based on common oppression leading to an increased perception of belief similarity. In this case, there might be a greater identification and awareness of common predicament based on a reaction by women to their disadvantaged sex role.

Some General Considerations

Although both main effects for race of target and sex of target were found to be significant for both dependent variables, it is interesting to note that on both dependent variables, the race of target main effect was much stronger than the main effect for sex of target. This difference probably reflects a difference in the salience of the two physical cues, i.e., members of our society appear to be much more influenced by race than they are by the sex when making judgments about similarity of beliefs between themselves and others. This finding is reasonable within the perspective that the oppression of women as a status has for the most part been more subtle,

whereas oppression of blacks has been more extreme and overt. Thus, it would seem reasonable to find greater salience of racial rather than sexual cues, given the greater strength of past reactions to race.

A plausible explanation for why Hypothesis IIa was only marginally supported concerns the order of presentation of the stimuli, which can be seen in Appendix B. I reasoned that because the critical stimulus person (Barbara or Michael) was presented third, preceded by two stimulus persons of different nationalities than their own, that this order made subjects more conscious of the commonality between themselves and the critical target, who also was an American--a fellow student from their part of the country. Thus, this order appears to have generated a conservative test of the hypotheses and it seems to have affected the sensitive, more complicated interactions involved in hypothesis Ib and IIa. What was marginally supported might have been even stronger had not the critical stimulus followed the two foreign stimulus targets. This suggests that perhaps placing a "filler" American stimulus person before the dependent measure might possibly produce the expected outcome more strongly

for these variables than did the instrument used in the present study.

Future Research

A major criticism of the experimental approach leveled by those both within and outside psychology concerns the artificiality or reactivity of the typical research laboratory and the impossibility of determining the adequacy of the generalizations based upon results of experimental social psychological research. Many critics of social psychological experimentation have argued that the individual typically used in psychological research, the college sophomore, is perhaps the poorest choice possible from the viewpoint of generalization of findings. In fact, it has been stated in the past that there is nothing more dissimilar to the "man in the street" than the college sophomore.

Barclay et al. (1971) have presented a detailed account of the stresses and strains seemingly inherent in university life, and it would be surprising if those exposed to these forces were not quite different from those

who were not, e.g., the average college sophomore is more intelligent than the typical man on the street; he is usually more healthy, he is more concerned with the social forces operating on his physical and social environment; he is more sensitive to the various communication media surrounding him and is thus better informed about the factors of importance to his life, and plays a greater and more active role in exerting influence upon these factors.

Finally, another concern of many critics of experimentation is not simply that a sample from an unusual population is typically employed in experimental social research, but rather that the responses of any individual conscious of the fact that he is under observation is expected to respond differently than someone not possessing that information.

In summary, it appears that the criticism raised concerning experimental social research validity can only be answered by further research. In view of criticism I suggest that future research in this area be oriented toward expanding in the three following general areas:

- 1) that a non-student population be used to determine if there are any significant differences due to age and educational level;
- 2) construct a more elaborate design to

include some form of unobtrusive testing; and 3) examine if there are any comparative differences due to geographical location (e.g., North versus South).

Conclusion

Obviously, for any empirical question, there is never an end to additional research that could be done. This point, however, should not overshadow the strong, perhaps important findings that were generated in this study: That American college students are race conscious, blacks more than whites; American college students are sex conscious, females more than males. Since the awareness of such physical cues has implications for friendship formation, these findings lead to the conclusion that, as noted above, participants in first encounters, especially those that involve cross-race or cross-sex pairing, must make a concerted effort both to communicate clearly their own beliefs and to reserve judgment about the other person's beliefs. Without this effort, people will not judge others as individuals and therefore many potential rewarding friendships will never occur.

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APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Background Information

Part I

Please fill out the following information.

Initial: _____ Date: _____
 Last First Middle

Age: _____ Sex: _____ Race: _____

City & State of Birth: _____ Country _____ Major _____

Year in School: _____

Section 2. Please fill out the following information as accurate as you can and please be as specific as possible with your answers. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, however, all questions must be completely answered.

1. What is your father's occupation? _____
2. What is your mother's occupation? _____
3. In what state of the U.S. were you raised? _____
5. Have you ever done any traveling within the U.S.? If so, where (specify) _____
6. How many children are in your family?
 1. only child _____
 2. two _____
 3. three _____
 4. four or more _____
7. Have you ever done any international traveling?
If so, where (specify) _____
8. If you could do some traveling, where would you go? _____

When you have finished all questions, please look to the front of the room and wait for further instructions.

APPENDIX B

ONE FORM OF THE RACE-SEX QUESTIONNAIRE

Please read all statements carefully and make your appropriate judgment on the scales below each question.

Gretchen a thirty-eight year old sales woman from Hamburg, Germany.

How similar do you feel Gretchen's beliefs are to yours?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very similar

How successful do you think Gretchen is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very successful

If you met Gretchen in real life how likely do you think that you would become friends?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very likely

How outgoing do you think Gretchen is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very outgoing

How intelligent do you think Gretchen is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very intelligent

How much in common do you think you have with Gretchen?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
nothing at all						great deal in common		

Please read all statements carefully and make your appropriate judgment on the scales below each question.

Jose, a thirteen-year-old student from Mexico City.

How similar do you feel Jose's beliefs are to yours?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very similar

How successful do you think Jose is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very successful

If you met Jose in real life how likely is it, do you think, that you would become friends?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very likely

How out-going do you think Jose is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very out-going

How intelligent do you think Jose is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very intelligent

How much in common do you think you have with Jose?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
nothing at all						great deal in common		

Please read all statements carefully and make your appropriate judgment on the scales below each question.

Barbara, a twenty-year-old black college student from your area of the country.

How similar do you feel Barbara's beliefs are to yours?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very similar

How successful do you think Barbara is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very successful

If you met Barbara in real life, how likely is it, do you think, that you would become friends?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very likely

How out-going do you think Barbara is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very out-going

How intelligent do you think Barbara is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all								very intelligent

How much in common do you think you have with Barbara?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
nothing at all						great deal in common		

Please read all statements carefully and make your appropriate judgment on the scales below each question.

*Alan, a fifty-year-old motion picture director
living in Southern California.*

How similar do you feel Alan's beliefs are to yours?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all							very similar	

How successful do you think Alan is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all							very successful	

If you met Alan in real life how likely is it, do you think, that you would become friends?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all							very likely	

How out-going do you think Alan is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all							very out-going	

How intelligent do you think Alan is?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
not at all							very intelligent	

How much in common do you think you have with Alan?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
nothing at all in common						great deal in common		

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