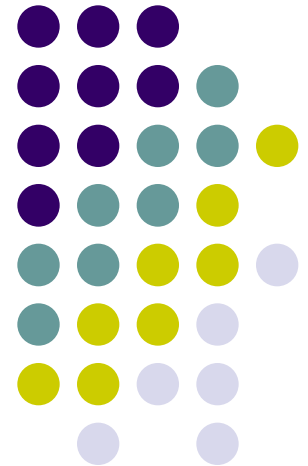# Prejudice: Disliking others
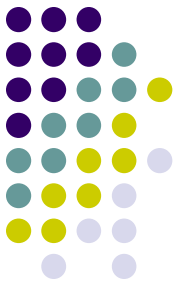
Defining Important Terms

- <u>Stereotypes</u>: Beliefs that associate a whole group of people with certain traits.
  - Sometimes overgeneralized, inaccurate, and resistant to new information
- <u>Prejudice</u>: Negative prejudgment of a group and its individual members.
- <u>Discrimination</u>: Negative behaviors directed against persons because of their membership in a particular group.
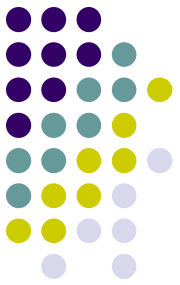
Perceiving Groups: Three Reactions
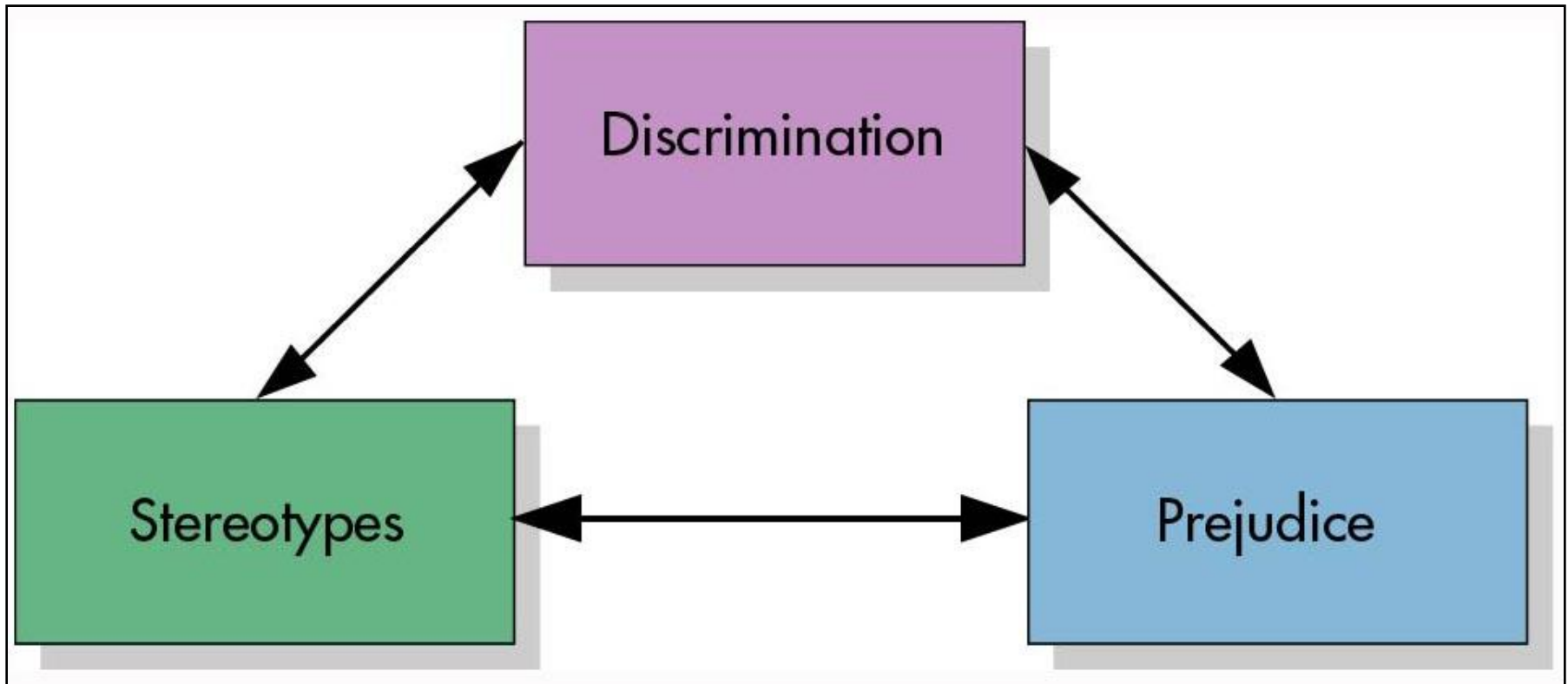
- Racism – An individual's prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behavior toward people of a given race, or
  - Institutional practices (even if not motivated by prejudice) that subordinate people of a given race
- Sexism – An individual's prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behavior toward people of a given sex, or
  - Institutional practices (even if not motivated by prejudice) that subordinate people of a given sex
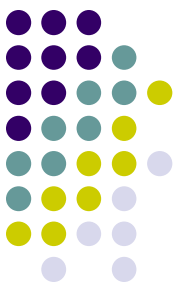
How Stereotypes Form: Social Categorization
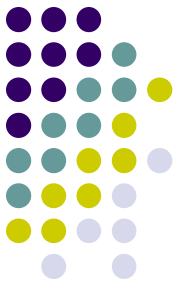
- The classification of persons into groups on the basis of common attributes.
  - Helps us form impressions quickly and use past experiences to guide new interactions.
- Serious drawback: By categorizing people, we often:
  - Overestimate the differences between groups
  - Underestimate the differences within groups.

# How Stereotypes Form: In-groups vs. Out-groups

- Strong tendency to divide people into ingroups and outgroups.
  - Ingroup – a group of people who share a sense of belonging, a feeling of common identity
  - Outgroup – a group that people perceive as distinctively different from or apart from their ingroup
- Consequences
  - Exaggerate differences between ingroups and other outgroups.
  - Ingroup bias
  - Outgroup homogeneity effect

# Why Are Out-groups Seen As Homogeneous?

- Often do not notice subtle differences among out-groups because have little personal contact with them.

- Often do not encounter a representative sample of out-group members.

Are Stereotypes Ever Accurate?
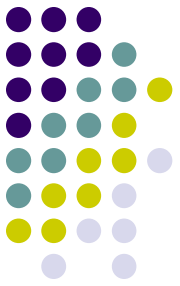
- What is meant by "accurate"?
- Even when based on reality, tend to exaggerate differences and understate similarities between groups.

How Stereotypes Survive: Subtyping and Contrast Effects
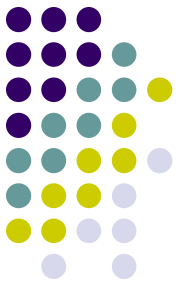
- Stereotypes stubbornly survive disconfirmation through "subtyping."
- If behavior varies considerably from expectations, the perceived difference may be magnified.
  - Contrast effect – tendency to perceive stimuli that differ from expectations as being even more different than they really are

Overcoming Stereotypes

- How much personal information do we have about someone?

  - Individuating information

- What is our cognitive ability to focus on an individual member of a stereotyped group?

- What is our motivation level to form an accurate impression of someone?

- How motivated are we to avoid applying negative stereotypes?

Intergroup Conflict

- Sherif et al.'s (1961) Robbers Cave Study
  - Competition between the two groups of boys led to hostility and conflict.
  - Only through superordinate goals was peace restored between the two groups.
- Simplest explanation for many intergroup conflicts is competition.
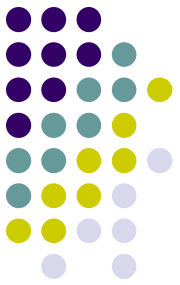
Realistic Conflict Theory

- The theory that hostility between groups is caused by direct competition for limited resources.
    - The competition for resources may be more imagined than real.
    - People may become resentful of other groups because of a sense of relative deprivation
    - Even if one doesn't feel personally threatened, perceptions of threat to one's own group can trigger prejudice.
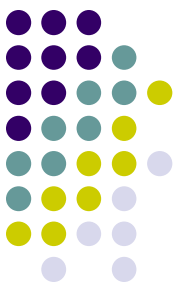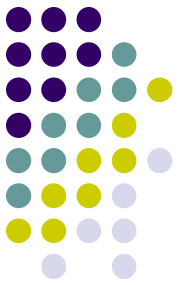
Social Identity Theory

- Our social identity comes from our group memberships and is a sense of who we are in addition to our personal identity
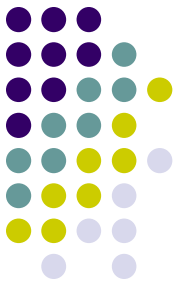
Social Identity Theory
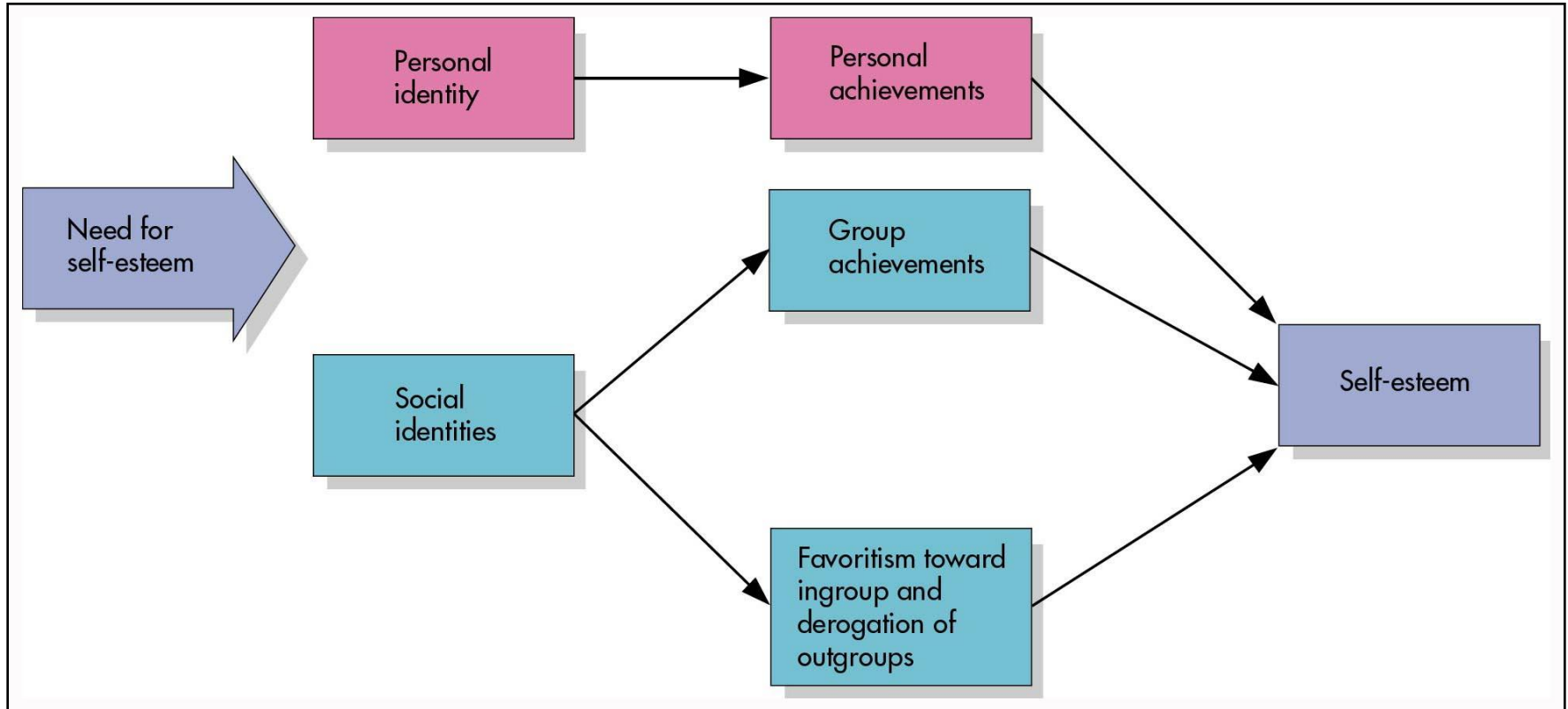
Basic Predictions of Social Identity Theory

- Threats to one's self-esteem heighten the need for in-group favoritism.

- Expressions of in-group favoritism enhance one's self-esteem.
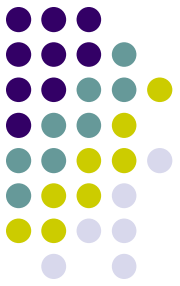
Sexism

Prejudice and Discrimination Based on a Person's Gender

Gender Stereotypes

- How would you describe the the typical man and woman?
  - Males: More adventurous, aggressive, independent, and task oriented?
  - Females: More sensitive, gentle, dependent, emotional, and people oriented?
- Gender images appear to be universal and salient to even very young children.
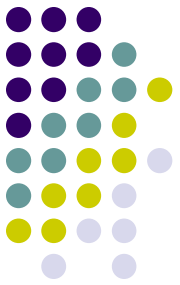
Ambivalent Sexism

- Consists of two elements:
  - Hostile sexism, characterized by negative feelings about women's abilities, values and ability to challenge men's power.
  - Benevolent sexism, characterized by affectionate, chivalrous, but potentially patronizing feelings of women needing and deserving protection.
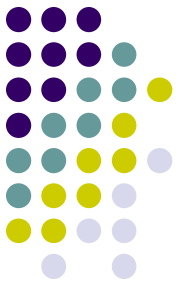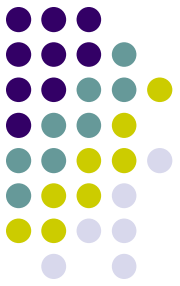
Racism

Prejudice and Discrimination Based on a Person's Racial Background

How Racial Stereotypes Distort Social Perceptions

Adapted from Allport & Postman, 1947.

Where Racism Exists

- At the individual level
  - Any one can be racist toward anyone else.
- At the institutional and cultural levels
  - Some people are privileged while others are discriminated against.

Changes in Overt Racism

Percentage of White Participants Selecting a Trait to Describe Black Americans			
Trait	1933	1967	1993
Superstitious	84%	13%	1%
Lazy	75	26	5
Happy-go-lucky	38	27	2
Ignorant	3 8	11	5
Musical	26	47	12
Very religious	24	8	17
Stupid	22	4	0

Percentage of White Participants Who Report Being Willing to Admit Blacks into Various Relationships with Them			
	1949	1968	1992
Willing to Admit Blacks to:			
Employment in my occupation	78%	98%	99%
My club as personal friends	51	97	96
My street as neighbors	41	95	95
Close kinship by marriage	0	66	74

| Percentage of Adult Participants Who Agree with the Statement "It's All Right for Blacks and Whites to Date Each Other."	
1987	1997
48%	69%

Dovidio et al, 1996; Peterson, 1997.
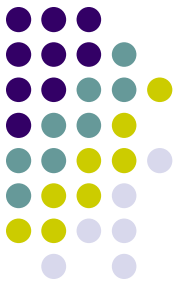
Modern Racism

- A subtle form of prejudice that surfaces in direct ways whenever it is safe, socially acceptable, or easy to rationalize.

- Based on idea that many people are racially ambivalent.

  - Can lead to subtle, often unconscious forms of prejudice and discrimination.
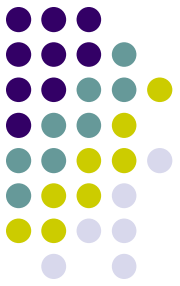
Interracial Perceptions and Interactions
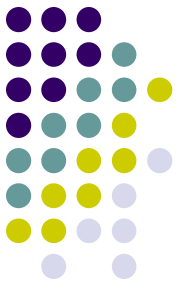
- Particularly challenging and fraught with tension because:
  - Less contact
  - Stronger negative emotions
  - Anxiety about appearing racist
- Emotional reactions can be influenced by racial labels and implicit racism.
  - Differential responses found in the amygdala.

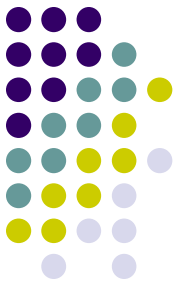# How Stereotypes Survive: Illusory Correlations

- The tendency for people to overestimate the link between variables that are only slightly or not at all correlated.

- Tend to overestimate the association between variables when:
  - The variables are distinctive.
  - The variables are already expected to go together.

How Stereotypes Survive: Attributions

- Attributional biases can perpetuate stereotypes.
  - Fundamental attribution error revisited.
- If expectations are violated, more likely to consider situational factors.

How Stereotypes Survive: Confirmation Biases

- Stereotypes are often maintained and strengthened through confirmation biases.

- Stereotypes can cause a perceiver to act in such a way that the stereotyped group member really does behave in a stereotype-confirming way.

  - The stereotype creates a "self-fulfilling prophecy."

# How we perceive our world breeds stereotypes
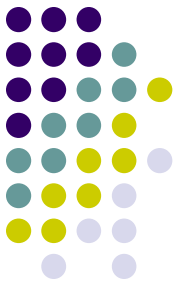
- Distinctive people
  - People who capture our attention are seen as more responsible for what happens
- Vivid cases
  - We think of vivid examples and apply to the group
- Distinctive events
  - Attentitiveness to unusual occurrences can create illusory correlations
  - If gay man murders someone – emphasize the fact that he is gay

Just-world phenomenon
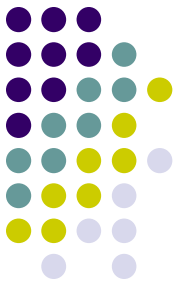
- Tendency of people to believe the world is just and that people get what they deserve

- Observing another person being victimized makes victim seem worse

- Same beginning to a story either ending in proposal or rape – readers blame woman for rape

- Explains why some may feel that people deserve to be where they are in society – also explains why some people who are better off believe that they deserve to be
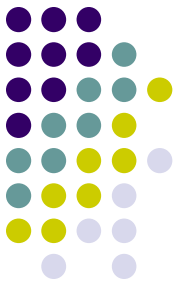
Reactions to Low Status

- How do people cope with ingroups of low status or with weak ingroup members?

- To preserve the integrity of the ingroup, may treat less able people more harshly.

- May de-emphasize the importance of domains in which the ingroup is relatively low in status.
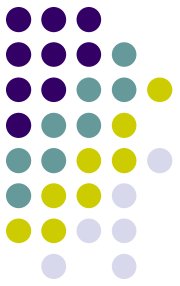
A Threat in the Air

Effects on Stigmatized Targets

Stereotype Threat and Academic Achievement
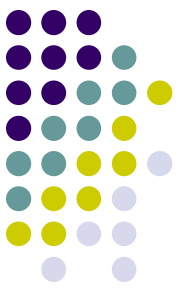
- Stereotype threat is the fear that one will be reduced to a stereotype in the eyes of others.

- How can stereotype threat hamper academic achievement?

  - The reactions to the threat can directly interfere with performance.

  - The threat can cause individuals to dismiss the domain as no longer relevant to their self-esteem and identity.

Stereotype Threat and Academic Achievement

- Women do worse on math test when they are told beforehand that there is a gender difference on test

- If African-American students are required to put report their race on a test, their scores are impaired

- Saying test is 'test of intelligence' as opposed to 'problem-solving task'
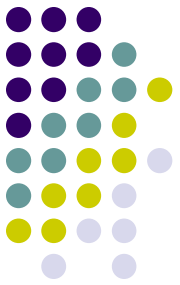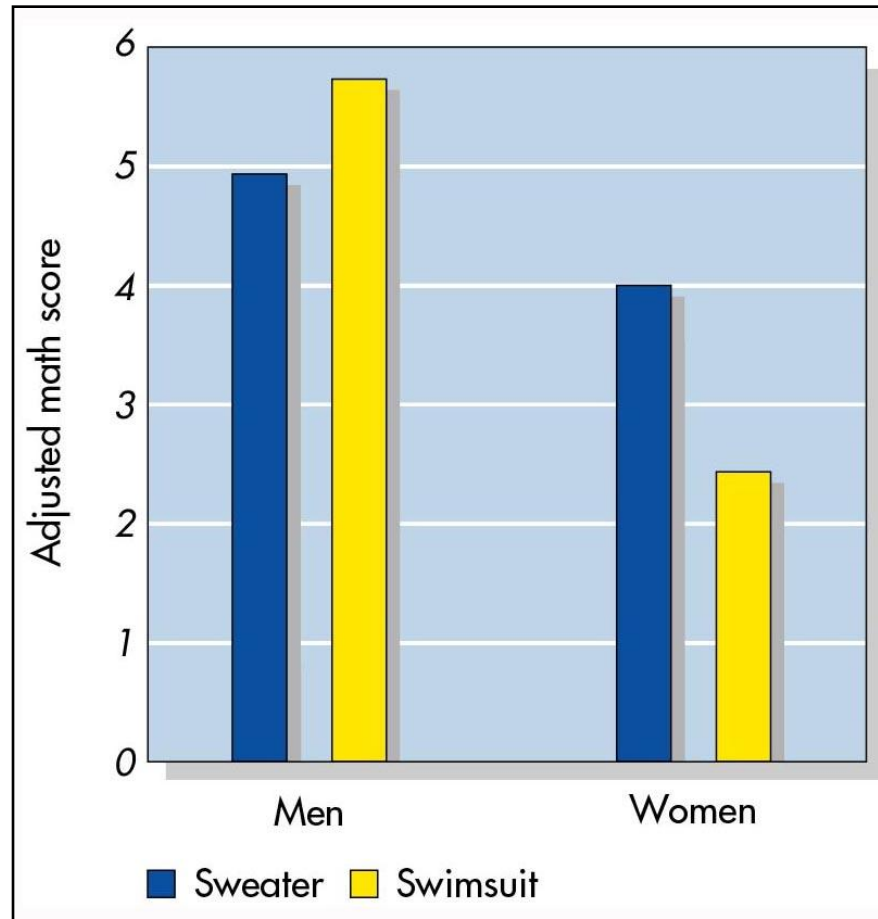
Stereotype Threat and Academic Performance
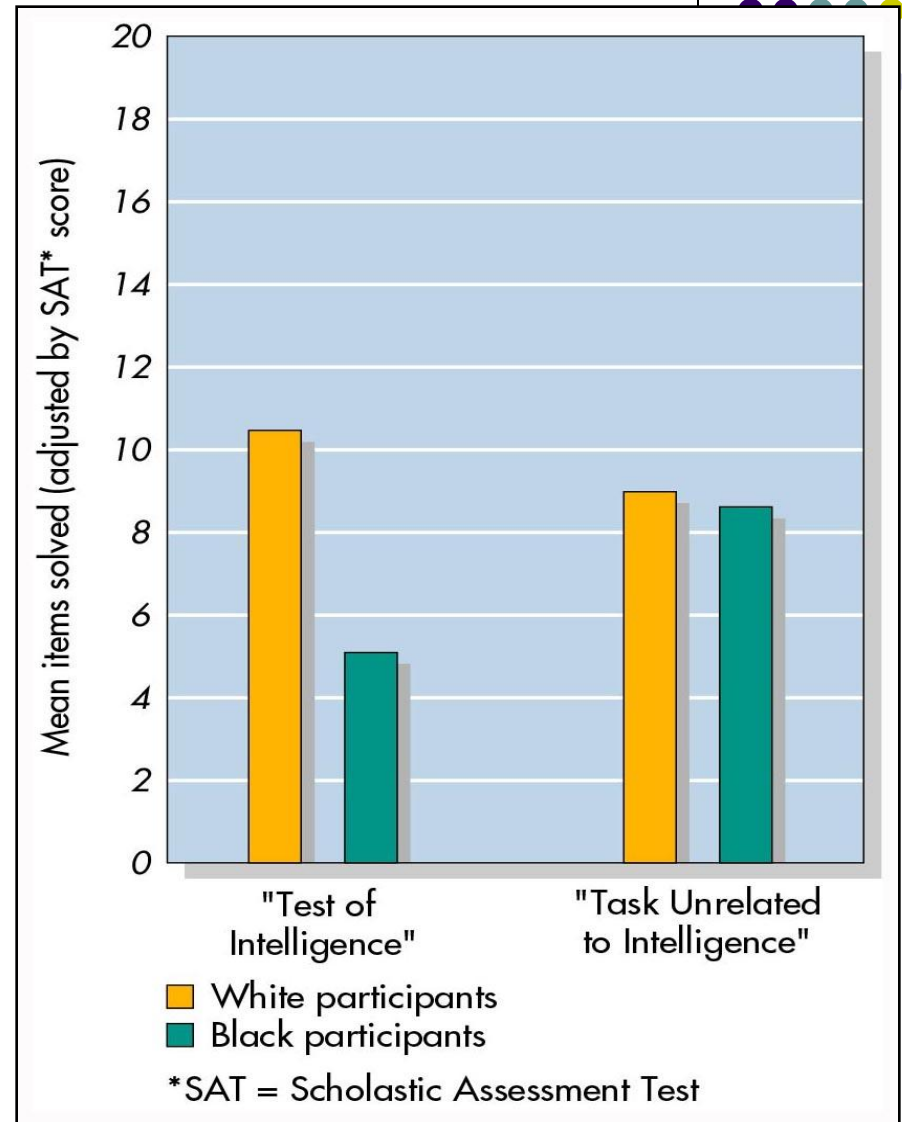
From Claude Steele (1995) Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 69, 797-811.
Copyright (c) 1995 by the American Psychological Association. Adapted with permission.

- What if you had men and women wear a swimsuit or a sweater (asked to evaluate some consumer products) in front of a mirror while taking a tough math test?

The Swimsuit Becomes You

From B.L. Fredrickson, T.A. Roberts, S.M. Noll, D.A. Quinn and J.M. Twenge (1998) "That Swimsuit Becomes You: Sex differences in Self-Objectification, Restrained Eating, and Math Performance," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75, 269-284. Copyright (c) 1998 by the American Psychological Association. Reprinted with permission.
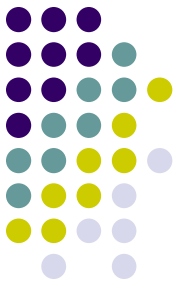
Diversity of Stereotype Threats

- Can affect any group for which strong, well-known negative stereotypes are relevant in particular settings.

- Whether feel threatened or emboldened by a stereotype depends on which social identity has been activated.

- One does not need to believe in a negative stereotype for it to have an effect.