

# Prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination and the differences between them

[Sociology](#), [Social Issues](#)



## **Stereotypes**

Stereotypes are found almost everywhere in our society, research suggests that the human brain is predisposed to learn negative stereotypes and the brain responds strongly to information that negatively portrays groups, this adds weight to view that negative depictions of groups in the media leads to racial bias. Stereotypes are simplified, overgeneralized idea about a group of people; usually based on race, age, gender, ethnicity etc. They are sometimes presented as positive, usually when one is talking about their own group, for example, Woman and nurturing caregivers, men are the strong breadwinners. Another more innocuous example would be that people who wear glasses are more intelligent but on the other side of the coin, people who are good looking and more physically able tend to be considered unintelligent, this is considered Negative stereotyping. Usually, negative stereotypes are pointed towards groups that are different from another, such as when members of a dominant group suggesting that another is stupid or lazy. An example of negative stereotyping is that all Arabs and Muslims are terrorists and all Jewish people are greedy, these have a great impact on societies when portrayed in the media as we have seen in recent years. In both of these cases, positive and negative stereotyping does not take into account the individuals differences.

## **Prejudice**

Prejudice refers to the unjustified, usually negative beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes a person or a group may hold about another.

Prejudice is bias thinking and it has no basis on an individual's experience it

is a prejudgment of a person or group. In a 1970 documentary called “ Eye of the Storm” Jane Elliott, a 3rd-grade teacher, conducts an experiment labeled the ‘ Blue eye, Brown eye’ experiment. During the class she divides the pupils into eye color, stating at first that blue eyes were superior to brown eyes, and later switching to say brown eyes were in fact superior. This resulted in the children showing prejudice against those who were not part of the favored category. Racism is a strong form of prejudice, it is used to justify the belief that one racial group is superior or inferior to another. This is usually shown in the sense of a racial majority presenting themselves as superior to a minority group. Racial groups such as the Ku Klux Klan believe a specific group to be superior to others and encourage both hate crime and hate speech.

### **Discrimination**

Prejudice and discrimination overlap closely. Discrimination is the actions taken against a group of people, this can be based on age, health, race, religion etc. Racial and ethnic discrimination can come in the form of biased hiring systems, criminal justice system bias, as well as unfair housing practices and social discrimination. Open discrimination has long been a part of society, for example, the Jim Crow laws, hanging signs in shop fronts inviting “ Whites Only” and having designated black footpaths and bathrooms, This is often referred to as Social Dominance Orientation. Discrimination not only manifests itself as a singular individual entity it is also found institutionalized. Institutional discrimination occurs when a system develops and runs with an underlying discrimination embedded in

their society. This also includes groups that are promoted to a higher status for the sole reason of being part of a dominant group.