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Social Identity Theory

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Henri Tajfel's greatest contribution to psychology was Social Identity Theory (1979).

Groups which people belonged to (e.g. social class, family, football team etc.) were an important source of pride and self-esteem. Groups give us a sense of social identity: a sense of belonging to the social world.

McLeod, S. A. (2019, Oct 24). Social identity theory. Simply Psychology. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/social-identity-theory.html>

3

Tajfel proposed that stereotyping (i.e. putting people into groups and categories) is based on a normal cognitive process: the tendency to group things together. In doing so we tend to exaggerate:

1. the differences between groups
2. the similarities of things in the same group.

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Tajfel proposed that stereotyping (i.e. putting people into groups and categories) is based on a normal cognitive process: the tendency to group things together. In doing so we tend to exaggerate:

1. The differences between groups (**TA racist BWA enlightened, T have no culture BW have rich history, T are immoral BWA law abiding people, TA thieves BWA honest hard working people**)
2. the similarities of things in the same group. (**Not one of them is socially aware, They are all depraved brutes, you know they are lying when their lips are moving, you can't trust any of them, they will cheat you the first chance they get**)

5

This is known as in-group (**us**) and out-group (**them**). The central hypothesis of social identity theory is that group members of an in-group will seek to find negative aspects of an out-group, thus enhancing their self-image.

Prejudiced views between cultures may result in racism; in its extreme forms, racism may result in genocide, such as occurred in Germany with the Jews, in Rwanda between the Hutus and Tutsis and, more recently, in the former Yugoslavia between the Bosnians and Serbs.

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Tajfel and Turner (1979) proposed that there are three mental processes involved in evaluating others as "us" or "them"

Categorization - If we can assign people to a category then that tells us things about those people. Similarly, we find out things about ourselves by knowing what categories we belong to. We define appropriate behavior by reference to the norms of groups we belong to.

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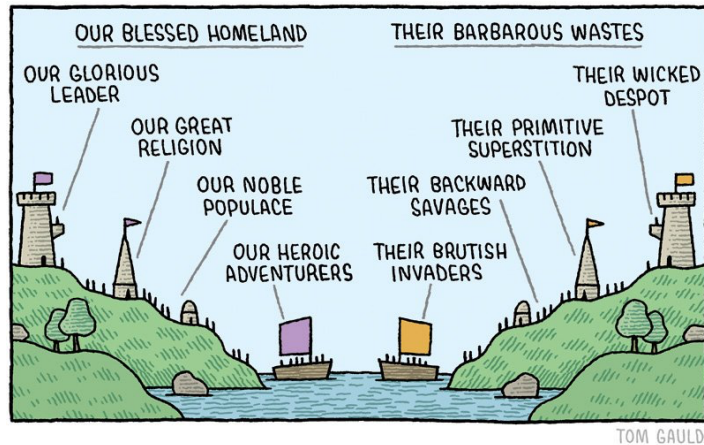
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Social Identification - In this second stage, we adopt the identity of the group we have categorized ourselves as belonging to. There will be an emotional significance to your identification with a group, and your self-esteem will become bound up with group membership

Social Comparison - Once we have categorized ourselves as part of a group and have identified with that group we then tend to compare that group with other groups. If our self-esteem is to be maintained our group needs to compare favorably with other groups.

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9

Who is my neighbor?

10

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" 27 He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied.

- Luke 10:25-37

11

"Do this and you will live." 29 But **he wanted to justify himself**, so he asked Jesus, "And **who is my neighbor?**" 30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

- Luke 10:25-37

12

32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper.

- Luke 10:25-37

13

36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" 37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

- Luke 10:25-37

14

9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

- Luke 2:9-10

15

9 To some who were **confident of their own righteousness** and **looked down on everyone else**, Jesus told this parable: 10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, **I thank you that I am not like other people**—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.

- Luke 18:9-14

16

13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'
14 "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

- Luke 18:9-14

17

16 "To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: 17 "'We played the pipe for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.'
18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' 19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is proved right by her deeds."

- Matthew 11:16-19

18

So what are we doing?

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16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 18 Dear children, let us not **love** with words or speech but **with actions** and in truth.

1 John 3:16-18

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