

FACTORS INFLUENCING ATTRIBUTIONS TO PREJUDICE: HARM, INTENT, AND  
INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN THE PROPENSITY TO MAKE ATTRIBUTIONS TO  
PREJUDICE

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## **Abstract**

In recent American culture, expressions of racial prejudice have become increasingly subtle and ambiguous. Given such ambiguity, whether or not prejudice is perceived by observers may be related to individual differences in the tendency to make attributions to prejudice. The present set of studies test the hypothesis that the beliefs and expectations related to a propensity to make attributions to prejudice are moderated by different information about harm and intent that have been shown in previous research to influence observers' attributions of prejudice. Study 1 manipulated information about the harm caused by a White actor to a Black target (no harm, ambiguous harm, clear harm). Study 2 manipulated information about a White actor's intent to racially discriminate against a Black target (no intent, ambiguous intent, clear intent). Across both studies, evidence supported the conclusion that attributions of prejudice are related to observers' beliefs and expectations about racial prejudice when they are given ambiguous information about harm and intent. Understanding when differences in observers' propensity to make attributions to prejudice might influence their attributions will contribute to our understanding of when expressions of prejudice are perceived, and more generally about how and when beliefs influence how individuals interpret their social world.

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## Chapter 1 - Introduction

Prejudice and discrimination based on perceived racial group membership are unfortunate social realities. According to contemporary theories of prejudice (e.g., Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Dowden & Robinson, 1993), the development of social norms that condemn overt expressions of prejudice toward certain racial groups (e.g., Blacks; Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002) may have led to a reduction in blatant expressions of racism. Although these developments certainly could be considered progress toward eliminating racism, prejudice (defined as a negative evaluation of a social group; Crandall & Eshleman, 2003) remains at a more implicit, often unconscious level (e.g., Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). As such, expressions of racial prejudice are often more subtle, ambiguous, or justified in ways that decrease the likelihood that individuals will be perceived as racist, which may thus in turn function to protect individuals' beliefs that they are without prejudice (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Dovidio, 2001; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Katz & Hass, 1988; McConahay, 1986; Pearson, Dovidio, & Gaertner, 2009). For example, racial discrimination (a behavioral manifestation of prejudice) tends to increase when there are alternative, race-neutral explanations for a behavior (e.g., Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Saucier & Miller, 2003; Saucier, Miller, & Doucet, 2005). Such ambiguity may make it difficult for individuals to recognize and identify instances of racial prejudice.

Furthermore, individuals' attempts at impression management (e.g., avoiding being perceived as racist) may add to the ambiguity surrounding others' judgments of an actor's behavior. According to Major and Sawyer (2009), a judgment that prejudice has been expressed involves two essential components: 1) "a judgment that treatment was based on social identity or group membership" and 2) "a judgment that the treatment was unjust or underserved" (p. 90). Uncertainty regarding either of these judgments may lead individuals to alternative interpretations that do not involve labeling the actor, or the actor's behavior, as prejudiced. Because of the normative pressures that condemn acts of racial prejudice toward some groups of racial minorities (e.g., Blacks; Crandall et al., 2002), actors are likely to attempt to manage others' impressions regarding either one of these factors (e.g., by offering alternative justifications; cf., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003) in order to avoid being perceived as prejudiced.



Just as individuals may attempt to cover their racial biases, representations of prejudice in American culture (e.g., media) may work to conceal more subtle expressions of prejudice. There appears to be a general consensus that racism is limited to blatant expressions (e.g., hate crimes, the espoused beliefs of White supremacist groups), and this conceptualization of prejudice allows people to believe that they are relatively unprejudiced (O'Brien et al., 2010). This conclusion is consistent with research by Sommers and Norton (2006) that suggests that blatant, "old-fashioned" forms of racism are the prototype (Inman & Baron, 1996; Marti, Bobier, & Baron, 2000) for lay conceptualizations of what constitutes racism. Lay theories about racism may act as a cognitive tool for understanding racism as well as serving a motivational function in distancing oneself from being perceived as racist. These theories suggest that although individuals may agree in their perceptions of prejudice when it is more blatantly expressed, disagreements may occur in judgments about more subtle expressions of racial prejudice.

In short, contemporary expressions of prejudice are constructed in ways that are difficult for others to perceive. Given the ambiguity that surrounds contemporary expressions of prejudice, observers' judgments about whether prejudice has been expressed are influenced by a variety of factors related to the situation and characteristics of the individual perceiver. Accordingly, theories of attribution, motivated cognition, and racial prejudice, suggest that individuals will differ in terms of the likelihood that they will perceive prejudice in situations where prejudice is ambiguously expressed. Ambiguity leaves room for variation in how individuals interpret events. The major premise of the current thesis is that whether observers make attributions to prejudice depends on the situational cues as well as observers' beliefs and expectations regarding racial prejudice and discrimination. The present research examines how individual differences in the tendency to make attributions to prejudice (Miller, Culbertson, Hockett, & Saucier, 2013; Miller, Hockett, O'Dea, Till, & Saucier, 2014; Miller, Hockett, & Saucier, manuscript in preparation) contribute to variation in judgments of prejudice across a range of situational ambiguity.

Recently, Miller and colleagues (Miller et al., 2013), developed the Propensity to Make Attributions to Prejudice Scale (PMAPS). The authors designed the PMAPS to measure individual differences in beliefs and expectations regarding racial prejudice that will predict variation in observers' attributions to prejudice, especially in situations of ambiguity and uncertainty. In previous studies, the PMAPS was shown to exhibit good psychometric properties

(e.g., internal consistency, convergent validity). The present research was designed to further examine the predictive validity of the PMAPS, as well as test whether the tendency to make attributions to prejudice is moderated by the effects of different situational cues that prior theory and research suggest influence attributions to prejudice (e.g., Swim, Scott, Sechrist, Campbell, & Stangor, 2003).

To better understand when observers might make attributions to prejudice, it is necessary to review and understand the various psychological factors that might influence the tendency to make attributions to prejudice. The majority of research addressing the question of when people make attributions to prejudice has focused on the attributions made by typical targets of prejudice and discrimination (e.g., racial minorities, women), and with a few exceptions, little research examines when attributions are made by third party observers. In the following sections, I draw insights from theory and research on targets' attributions to prejudice and discuss how this knowledge may apply to our understanding of observers' tendencies to make attributions of prejudice.

### **Factors Influencing Judgments of Prejudice**

Understanding the factors that affect judgments of prejudice is of theoretical and practical interest. Prejudice is an attitude that is sometimes explicit, but often implicit (i.e., individuals are unaware of their prejudices; e.g., Banaji & Dasgupta, 1998; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995), and although blatant expressions of prejudice are typically socially unacceptable, subtle forms of prejudice are more pervasive, perhaps precisely because they are harder for others to detect as being prejudiced (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003). Because of the ambiguity that surrounds subtle expressions of prejudice and the subjective nature of attributional processes, judgments of prejudice are susceptible to human error (e.g., perceiving prejudice where none exists, or not perceiving prejudice when it does exist). Such errors can have negative societal and interpersonal consequences. For example, allowing prejudice to go unnoticed and unchallenged may promote a climate of intolerance and racial hostility. Yet mistakenly perceiving prejudice unfairly condemns others and their actions. To understand how these mistakes are made, it is important to understand the psychological factors that influence judgments of prejudice.

Judgments about expressions of prejudice have been shown in previous research to be influenced by a variety of person characteristics and environmental factors that may function to

bias individuals toward perceiving prejudice, or not perceiving prejudice. The majority of this research has focused on individual differences in the tendency to make attributions to prejudice and discrimination from the targets' perspective (for reviews, see Barrett & Swim, 1998; Kaiser & Major, 2006; Major, Quinton, & McCoy, 2002; Major & Sawyer, 2009), and only a small amount of research has been done to examine how third-party observers perceive prejudice (e.g., Inman & Baron, 1996; Marti, Bobier, & Baron, 2000; Swim et al., 2003). Although observers are typically less personally affected by potentially prejudiced behavior than are targets, observers and targets are both making judgments under uncertainty about the underlying causes for others' behaviors. Thus, by examining what we already know about targets' attributions to prejudice we can more fully understand the processes involved and gain insight into how observers form these judgments. The following review of the literature serves to describe the domain of social psychology in which the present research makes its contribution, and to pose unanswered questions and offer hypotheses about bystanders' attributions to prejudice that will define my program of research.

To understand how observers make judgments about whether prejudice has been expressed, it is necessary to understand why individuals might label someone or some action as prejudiced. Attributions to prejudice may function to provide causal explanations for observed behaviors (Major & Sawyer, 2009; Malle, 2004). Beyond satisfying a basic need for understanding another's behaviors, a multitude of social goals, discussed in the sections that follow, may be satisfied by making attributions to prejudice. In part, individuals may make attributions to prejudice (or to other causes) in order to protect their self-esteem, to manage others' impressions, or to be accepted by others. As such, whether prejudice is used as an explanation for others' behaviors can at times be understood as a special case of motivated cognition (e.g., Baumeister, 1996; Fiske, 2004; Kunda, 1990; Kunda & Spencer, 2003) that is driven by concerns about the self.

### ***Motivated Cognition***

Attributing one's negative outcomes (e.g., social rejection, being passed over for a promotion) to the prejudice of others may be self-protective (Allport, 1954). In cases where the achievement of some desired goal (e.g., obtaining employment or a promotion) depends on the judgment of another individual (e.g., an employer), making an external attribution for the failure

to reach that goal may reduce self-blame. Research on targets' attributions to prejudice supports this idea that in certain situations, attributions to prejudice can protect self-esteem. Several studies have found that when individuals who identify with a group that is chronically targeted by prejudice and discrimination (e.g., women, Blacks) attribute a negative evaluation to the prejudice of the evaluator, their self-evaluations are more positive than individuals who do not attribute their outcomes to prejudice (e.g., Major, Kaiser, & McCoy, 2003; Major, Kaiser, O'Brien, & McCoy, 2007; Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003; Wang, Stroebe, & Dovidio, 2012). This self-protective motivation is arguably not a factor in observers' attributions, however observers may take on the perspective of the target and empathize with his or her negative outcomes. Thus, individual differences in empathetic concern and perspective taking may be related to whether or not observers make attributions to prejudice. Indeed, the PMAPS has been found to be related to these individual differences (Miller et al., 2013).

Although protecting self-esteem by making attributions to prejudice may increase the tendency to perceive prejudice, other self-protective concerns may lead to a tendency to discount prejudice as an explanation. For example, claiming discrimination can have negative social costs for the accuser (e.g., stigmatized individuals who make attributions to discrimination are often disparaged). Therefore, stigmatized individuals may be motivated to avoid the social costs of publically claiming that discrimination has occurred, and thus may minimize the extent to which they perceive prejudice (Kaiser, 2006; Kaiser, Dyrenforth, & Hagiwara, 2006; Kaiser & Miller, 2001). Applying similar logic, it is also possible, although the confirming research is absent, that higher status, non-stigmatized bystanders may believe that they would risk disapproval from other ingroup members if they were to make it known that they believed that an actor behaved with prejudice. Thus, the motivation to be accepted by others and avoid social retributions may lead both targets and observers to discount prejudice as an explanation.

However, the need for social acceptance and belongingness (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995) may heighten or minimize attributions to prejudice depending on the group membership of the perceiver and the social group from which one seeks social approval. As already alluded to, because attributions to prejudice are morally condemning toward the actor and the actor's social group, and as such may be perceived as antagonistic, stigmatized individuals' desires to be accepted by members of a higher status group may function to minimize perceptions that they have been the target of prejudicial treatment (Carvallo & Pelham, 2006). A similar motivation

for acceptance from one's own stigmatized group may increase the tendency to perceive prejudice toward members of stigmatized groups (e.g., Craig & Richeson, 2012; Operario & Fiske, 2001) in that sharing the experience of stigma may be a form of social affiliation with others who may identify with a stigmatized group. Likewise, if non-stigmatized individuals desire to be accepted by a stigmatized group, they as bystanders may intervene and express their condemnation of prejudice as a way to demonstrate a prosocial orientation (e.g., empathy) toward the group. Such motivations may lead observers to have a stronger tendency to make attributions to prejudice.

Consistent with this idea that voicing one's attributions to prejudice may be a form of impression management, existing research has examined the types of expressions of prejudice that are more likely to be identified as prejudiced by observers. For example, when individuals who belong to groups that are prototypical perpetrators of prejudice (e.g., White males; Inman & Baron, 1996) condemn others' blatant expressions of racism (e.g., racial slurs), such individuals may believe that they are distancing themselves (e.g., O'Brien et al., 2010) from being perceived as racist (e.g., Monin & Miller, 2001). Thus, blatant forms of prejudice are more likely to be perceived and their existence agreed upon. However, it is also reasonable to assume that when prejudice is more subtly expressed, perhaps in ways that perceivers can imagine themselves behaving, individuals may deny that such behaviors are expressions of prejudice in order to avoid conceptualizing more subtle expressions of bias as prejudice, and thus possibly avoid having others perceive their own similar actions as prejudiced.

Impression management concerns may also function to increase the tendency to label other social groups, or individuals belonging to these groups, as prejudiced. For example, people may use attributions to prejudice as a form of moral condemnation that serves to convey the impression that oneself or one's social group is morally superior to other individuals or social groups (e.g., liberals who claim that conservatives are more likely to be racist). This self-serving expression of moral condemnation may be a way of attempting to persuade others that they should side with one's own social group (e.g., DeScioli & Kurzban, 2013), although this hypothesis has yet to be studied directly in relation to prejudice. Furthermore, observers who are more concerned about suppressing their own prejudiced thoughts and behaviors because it is important to their self-concept (e.g., Plant & Devine, 1998), may be more likely to make attributions of prejudice to others in order to condemn such behavior. Prior research has found

that the PMAPS is related to such internal motivations to suppress prejudice, such that individuals who may be more likely to make attributions to prejudice also have higher internal motivations to respond without prejudice (Miller et al., 2013).

In summary, different situations that activate different self-concerns (e.g., social acceptance) may motivate attributions to prejudice, or alternatively, attributions to non-prejudiced causes, depending on the salient concerns of the perceiver. Because of the subjective and motivational nature of these social judgments, it is also necessary to understand how attributions to prejudice are affected by the combination of situational factors and enduring differences between individuals (e.g., identity, social attitudes). The following discussion focuses on how person x situation interactions (Allport, 1937, 1954; Lewin, 1935) further influences perceptions of prejudice.

### ***Individual Differences in Attributions to Prejudice***

The overarching question addressed in the present research is whether individual differences in beliefs and expectations regarding racial prejudice affect the probability that they will attribute prejudice as the cause of ambiguously discriminatory behaviors (e.g., Kaiser & Major, 2006; Piel, 1999). Research related to this question suggests that individual differences tend to have a stronger effect on individuals' appraisals in situations of higher ambiguity, or when discriminatory behaviors are more subtle (e.g., Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003; Operario & Fiske, 2001), which is often the case when prejudice is expressed. The following discussion first introduces and briefly summarizes the research and theory on how individual differences affect targets' perceptions of prejudice and then extends this research by constructing several theoretical propositions about the individual differences that might be relevant for understanding factors that influence bystanders', and in particular, members of socially dominant groups (e.g., Whites), attributions to prejudice.

#### ***Target characteristics***

Psychologists have mostly limited their study of individual differences in attributions to prejudice to the target's perspective. Researchers have focused on how individual differences in constructs such as social identity, foundational belief systems (i.e., worldviews), and expectations to be treated stereotypically, work to suppress or facilitate the perception that one

has been the target of prejudice or discrimination (for reviews see Barrett & Swim, 1998; Kaiser, 2006; Kaiser & Major, 2006, Major et al., 2002; Major & Sawyer, 2009).

### ***Social identity***

According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), individuals may vary in terms of how much personal meaning they derive from their social group memberships, and to what degree their group-level identities shape their cognitive interpretations of the social world. One interesting prediction of this theory is that the increased importance of individuals' social group to their self-concept increases the likelihood that social interactions with outgroup members will be interpreted through the lens of their group identities. Major, Quinton, and Schmader (2003) extended this theory to predict that more strongly identifying with a stigmatized group will increase perceptions that one has been the target of group-based discrimination. In other words, stronger group identification was hypothesized to increase the tendency for stigmatized individuals to attribute others' ambiguously prejudiced behaviors to group-level causes (e.g., being a member of a stigmatized social group), rather than an individual-level causes (e.g., their own idiosyncratic behaviors). Consistent with this theory, Major et al. (2003) found that, after receiving negative feedback, women who more strongly identified with their gender group (i.e., for whom being a woman was a more important element of their social identity) were more likely to make attributions to discrimination when prejudice cues were ambiguous. Similar studies have found that racial minorities who more highly identify with their racial group are more likely to interpret subtle, or ambiguous, prejudice cues (e.g., avoiding eye contact) as expressions of prejudice (e.g., Operario & Fiske, 2001), as well as more likely to believe that they have been the target of prejudice and discrimination in the past (e.g., Eccleston & Major, 2006; Sellers & Shelton, 2003).

### ***Worldviews***

Individuals' foundational beliefs (i.e., the ways in which people interpret and understand their social world) also appear to influence judgments of prejudice. Particular attention has been given to individuals' meritocratic worldviews (e.g. Jost et al., 2004; Lerner, 1980), defined as the belief that people are individually responsible for their own successes or failures. In other words, according the meritocratic worldview, achievement (e.g., academics, career success, socioeconomic mobility) is based primarily on individual merit. When confronted with evidence

of racial inequality, individuals who more strongly endorse a meritocratic worldview tend to attribute negative characteristics to lower status racial groups to explain those inequalities (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003).

In addition to justifying prejudice toward lower status groups this meritocratic worldview may also influence whether or not stigmatized individuals believe that they have been targets of discrimination and prejudice. Believing that one has been treated unfairly may threaten one's beliefs that the world is just and fair. To avoid the discomfort associated with this dissonance, individuals may minimize the extent to which they perceive discrimination and prejudice. Indeed, multiple studies have found that more strongly endorsing a meritocratic worldview may lead lower-status (or chronic) targets of discrimination to fail to perceive instances of discrimination because it threatens their belief in meritocracy (Kaiser, 2006; Kaiser et al., 2006; Kaiser & Major, 2006; Major et al., 2002). Additionally, perceiving discrimination toward their ingroup may have negative effects on self-esteem for individuals who more strongly endorse a meritocratic worldview (Major et al., 2007). However, a meritocratic worldview may lead Whites to perceive reverse discrimination in reaction to affirmative action policies, while simultaneously contributing to a denial of racial discrimination committed by Whites (Kaiser, 2006). The evidence so far appears to support the proposition that, for targets of prejudice, a meritocratic world view is associated with a tendency to discount prejudice as an explanation for racial inequality. It seems reasonable to assume that this worldview would similarly predict attributions to prejudice made by bystanders, although this remains to be empirically confirmed.

### ***Stigma consciousness***

Related to social identity, but perhaps a more proximal factor influencing targets' judgments of prejudice may be their expectations to be mistreated because of their membership in a stigmatized social group, a concept Pinel (1999) termed stigma consciousness. Much of the work on stigma consciousness in relation to attributions to prejudice has focused on women as a stigmatized, lower power social group (e.g., Brown & Pinel, 2003; Pinel, 2002; Pinel, Warner, & Chua, 2005; Pinel & Paulin, 2005; Wang et al., 2012). Women's expectations to be treated stereotypically have been shown to predict quicker reaction times in perceiving facial expressions of male contempt (Inzlicht, Kaiser, & Major, 2008) and attentional vigilance toward subliminal cues (sexist words presented at preconscious speed) related to sexism (Kaiser, Vick, & Major, 2006). These findings demonstrate that for women, the expectation to be treated



prejudicially is related to heightened sensitivity to indicators of prejudice. Consistent with the evidence that a higher expectation to be treated stereotypically is related to a tendency to favor prejudice as an explanation for ambiguously discriminatory behaviors, I propose (and further discuss below) that differences in bystanders' expectations that others behave prejudicially toward stigmatized individuals will similarly predict observers' tendency to make attributions to prejudice.

In summary, it appears that differences in targets' meritocratic worldviews, expectations to be treated stereotypically, and social identities are important factors influencing attributions to prejudice. Yet, compared to the literature on targets' attributions to prejudice, little research has been done to examine how individual differences may affect third party observers' (i.e., bystanders') attributions to prejudice.

### ***Observer characteristics***

Consistent with attribution theory (e.g., Kelly & Michela, 1980) and research on stigma consciousness, which make the assertion that prior beliefs influence the attributions people make, possible sources of individual variation in the tendency to make attributions to prejudice may be observers' expectations for, and vigilance toward, expressions of prejudice. From the theoretical perspective of Signal Detection Theory, these prior beliefs and expectations are hypothesized to affect individuals' thresholds for detecting prejudice given the presence or absences of various cues for prejudice (e.g., the actors' intent to racially discriminate, perceived harm done to the target) that may or may not be present in a given situation (e.g., Barrett & Swim, 1998). For example, observers who expect to see prejudice and are more vigilant in attending to potential signals of prejudice may have a lower threshold for detecting prejudice and thus be more likely to interpret others' behaviors as expressions of prejudice. Alternatively, observers who think that prejudice is uncommon and who rarely think about it or look for it may have a higher threshold for detecting prejudice and thus be less likely to see prejudice when it is expressed. In short, I propose that individuals' prior beliefs about prejudice (e.g., about the prevalence of prejudice) and behavioral tendencies (e.g., vigilance toward indicators of prejudice) toward detecting prejudice, will predict individuals' attributions to prejudice in situations where prejudice may prototypically be expressed (e.g., an interracial interaction between a White and Black individual; Inman & Baron, 1996).

## **The Propensity to Make Attributions to Prejudice Scale**

To test the hypothesis that individuals' prior beliefs and expectations related to expressions of prejudice will predict attributions to prejudice in situations where prejudice may be expressed, Miller and colleagues (2013), designed a measure of individual differences in observers' tendencies to make attributions to prejudice: the Propensity to Make Attributions to Prejudice Scale (PMAPS). In contrast to existing measures of targets' expectations to be treated stereotypically, the PMAPS items are worded to measure third-party observers' attitudes. This allows researchers to measure the attitudes of members of social groups who are prototypically the perpetrators of racial discrimination (e.g., Whites), and thus may be used to further our understanding of how and when prejudice is perceived by dominant group members. The PMAPS expands upon existing measures of expectations for prejudicial treatment (e.g., Pinel, 1999) to include additional, theoretically related constructs. Specifically, the PMAPS was designed to measure four related dimensions of a tendency to make attributions to prejudice (described in more detail below) conceptualized as: 1) *expectation*, or perceptions of the pervasiveness of racial prejudice (i.e., beliefs about the base-rates for prejudice); 2) *vigilance* in spotting instances of prejudice; 3) *trivialization* of targets' claims and concerns about being treated prejudicially; and 4) *self-efficacy*, or self-confidence in recognizing instances of prejudice (see Appendix A for scale items). In combination, these constructs were hypothesized to underlie individuals' tendencies to make attributions to prejudice.

### ***Expectation***

The first dimension that I propose is relevant to observers' tendencies to make attributions to prejudice is their expectations for prejudice. Bystanders may have different expectations for others' behaviors related to their beliefs about the prevalence of racial prejudice. Expectations for prejudice may be especially important when prejudice cues are subtle, or alternative race-neutral explanations are available. Such ambiguity may invite top-down processing effects described by theories of confirmation bias (Nickerson, 1998), and biased assimilation (Lord, Ross, & Lepper, 1979). These top-down processes are known to affect how individuals attend to, interpret, and weigh available information in forming their attributions. Individuals who believe that racial prejudice is more widespread (i.e., higher base-rates, Barrett & Swim, 1998) may be more likely to perceive prejudice in situations where prejudice has the

potential to be expressed by others (e.g., witnessing an interracial interaction). Conversely, individuals who think that prejudice is uncommon, or rare, may fail to consider prejudice as a possible explanation. In each case, there is a tendency to perceive prejudice (or not) that is consistent with prior beliefs. Therefore, expectations about prejudice should be an important factor in predicting individuals' propensity to make attributions to prejudice.

### ***Vigilance***

In addition to higher expectations for prejudice, the second dimension of the PMAPS is vigilance. Individuals who are more vigilant for environmental cues that may indicate racial prejudice may be more likely to see prejudice in their social world (e.g., Inzlicht et al., 2008). For chronic targets of prejudice, vigilance for cues that they have been subjected to prejudice or discrimination may be adaptive (Major & Sawyer, 2009) in that attributing one's negative outcomes to the prejudice of others can protect self-esteem. Although the motivation for vigilance may be less obvious for observers, higher levels of vigilance are likely to result in a greater sensitivity (and over-sensitivity) to signs of prejudice (Barrett & Swim, 1998). Therefore, variation in bystanders' vigilance for cues of prejudice may predict variation in their attributions to prejudice.

### ***Trivialization***

Individuals who are more likely to expect prejudice and are more vigilant in seeking out indicators for prejudice may also be less likely to trivialize targets' concerns about being discriminated against or treated stereotypically because of their racial group membership. This third dimension, trivialization, is defined as the belief that racial minorities too often unfairly claim that they are the targets of prejudice and discrimination (e.g., modern racism; McConahay, 1986). While this construct is antithetical to higher expectations for prejudice, a tendency toward trivialization may operate through similar processes of confirmation bias (Nickerson, 1998). Members of the racial majority (e.g., Whites) may be motivated to trivialize the impact of prejudice as a way of justifying negative or ambivalent attitudes toward racial minorities (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Katz & Hass, 1988; McConahay, 1986), or to legitimize their higher social standing (e.g., Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994) by denying that racial discrimination occurs. Trivialization should therefore be related to a lower tendency to make attributions to prejudice.

### ***Self-Efficacy***

After accounting for individuals' tendencies to expect prejudice, be vigilant in looking out for it, and not trivialize targets' concerns about suffering discrimination, it is also important to consider whether people will feel confident in reporting their attributions to prejudice. Thus, the fourth dimension of the PMAPS is individuals' self-efficacy in their ability to recognize instances of racial prejudice and discrimination. If individuals are not confident in their judgments, they are unlikely to report them. Thus, in combination with expectations, vigilance, and trivialization, self-efficacy should be related to a higher tendency to make attributions to prejudice.

### ***Empirical Assessment of the PMAPS***

Initial assessment of the psychometric properties of the scale (Miller et al., 2013) has revealed that the PMAPS demonstrates acceptable reliability and meaningful relationships with other theoretically relevant psychological constructs. Importantly, the higher order construct of the tendency to make attributions to prejudice as measured by the PMAPS has been found to be related to other, theoretically related individual differences. As previously discussed, an important characteristic of contemporary forms of prejudice is the denial that prejudice exists in today's society (e.g., Dovidio, 2001; McConahay, 1986). Therefore, individuals who are more likely to hold prejudices toward stigmatized groups (e.g., racial minorities) should be less likely to make attributions to prejudice. This hypothesis was supported in research by Miller and colleagues (2013) who found that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice was related in predictable ways to several individual differences that are theoretically considered to justify (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003), or cause (Duckitt & Sibley, 2007; McFarland, 2010), racial prejudice.

For example, a lower tendency to make attributions to prejudice as measured by the PMAPS was found to be related to higher levels of modern racism (McConahay, 1986), or beliefs that racial prejudice and discrimination are no longer a problem (Miller et al. 2013). Additionally a lower tendency to make attributions to prejudice was found to predict higher levels of social dominance orientation (Pratto et al., 1994), and right-wing authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1988). These two worldviews appear to justify prejudice toward lower status and threatening groups, such as racial minorities (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Duckitt & Sibley,

2007; McFarland, 2010). Thus, a lower tendency to make attributions to prejudice by observers appears to be related to system justifying beliefs and a denial of racial prejudice, and these findings are consistent with findings that whether or not targets of prejudice make attributions to prejudice and discrimination is related to their system justifying ideologies (Kaiser, 2006; Kaiser et al., 2006; Kaiser & Major, 2006; Major et al., 2002, 2007).

Additionally, Miller and colleagues (2013) found that the tendency to make attributions predicts individual differences in the tendency to suppress expressions of prejudice (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003). For example, the PMAPS was found to positively correlate with measures of empathy and perspective taking (e.g., Davis, 1980; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Hoffman, 1990; Stephan & Finlay, 1999), suggesting that a higher tendency to make attributions to prejudice may be related to a higher level of empathy for the targets of racial prejudice and discrimination. Also, a higher tendency to make attributions to prejudice predicted stronger support for humanitarian and egalitarian beliefs (e.g., Katz & Hass, 1988; Monteith & Walters, 1998), and internal motivations to suppress prejudice (e.g., Plant & Devine, 1998, 2009). This is compelling evidence that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice is positively related to a network of beliefs that, in general, prejudice is wrong and should be eradicated.

In addition to finding that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice is related to individual differences in beliefs that justify or suppress expressions of prejudice, Miller and colleagues (2014) also found that this tendency predicts attributions to prejudice in specific scenarios. Consistent with attribution theory and research on targets' attributions to prejudice, Miller and colleagues (2014) found that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice predicted attributions to prejudice when individuals were presented with brief scenarios describing antisocial behavior by Whites directed at racial minorities (e.g., Blacks, Hispanics, Arabs). The three scenario sets differed in terms of the ambiguity in which prejudice was expressed. The low ambiguity, non-prejudice scenarios all contained a race-neutral explanation for the actors' behaviors (e.g., *A White driver flips off a Black driver for driving dangerously in traffic*). In other words, the scenarios in the non-prejudice condition described the actor's behavior as being motivated by situational factors that had nothing to do with the target's race. In the ambiguous prejudice condition, no explanations were given for the actor's behavior (e.g., *A White sales associate keeps a close eye on a Black customer*). In the blatant prejudice condition, the scenarios described a more obvious expression of prejudice (e.g., *A White individual shouts "Go*

*back to Mexico” at a group of Hispanics at a civil rights protest*). As predicted, the correlation between the PMAPS and judgments of prejudice was highest in the ambiguous condition ( $r = .73, p < .001$ ), while only weakly correlated in the blatant condition ( $r = .25, p = .20$ ). Interestingly, the PMAPS also predicted judgments of prejudice in the non-prejudice condition ( $r = .60, p < .001$ ), suggesting that a stronger tendency to make attributions to prejudice may be related to a tendency to discount alternative explanations for antisocial behavior perpetrated by Whites toward racial minorities. This pattern of effects suggests that there is less individual variability in attributions to prejudice when prejudice is expressed more blatantly. However, when there is a lack of information about the reasons for an actor’s behavior, or even when non-prejudiced reasons are available, individual differences in the tendency to perceive prejudice may play a larger role in whether attributions to prejudice are made.

In summary, the evidence collected so far supports the reliability and validity of the PMAPS, and demonstrates how the tendency to make attributions to prejudice are related to individual differences in beliefs that justify or suppress expressions of prejudice. In the current research, I further tested the validity of the measure, but more importantly, I more systematically assessed whether the tendency to make attributions to prejudice is moderated by the effects of situational information that influences attributions to prejudice so that we can better understand factors that affect whether or not prejudice is perceived in our social world.

## **The Present Research**

For the present set of studies, I manipulated characteristics of the situation and assessed whether the tendency to make attributions to prejudice interacts with informational cues that are known to affect judgments of prejudice (e.g., information about an actor’s intent and information about the harm caused to the target; Swim et al., 2003). In other words, contextual information that generally supports or contradicts attributions to prejudice may override the effects of a general tendency to make attributions to prejudice. For example, when information about an actor’s intent suggests that the actor intended to racially discriminate, the tendency to make attributions to prejudice may have less of an affect on observers’ attributions to prejudice because the cues signaling that prejudice has been expressed will have surpassed many observers’ thresholds for making an attribution to prejudice . Similarly, when information suggests that no harm came to the target, individuals are less likely to attribute prejudice to the

actor (Swim et al., 2003), and this effect may attenuate the effects of a tendency to make attributions to prejudice because the available information signals that prejudice has not been expressed and therefore many observers' thresholds for making an attribution to prejudice will not be reached. However, when expressions of prejudice are more ambiguous (e.g., when information about harm and intent are unavailable), a tendency to make attributions to prejudice should have more of an effect on attributions to prejudice in these situations because differences in individuals' thresholds for making attributions to prejudice (as measured by the PMAPS) will be more predictive of whether or not individuals make attributions to prejudice in ambiguous situations. To test this hypothesis, I conducted two studies in which I manipulated information about the harm done to the target (Study 1) and information about an actor's intent to racially discriminate (Study 2) and assessed whether the PMAPS interacted with different levels of information about harm and intent in predicting attributions to prejudice.

### ***The Role of Intent and Harm in Judgments of Prejudice***

Intent is understood by psychologists as a conscious mental state that precedes deliberate action, or leads to a decision among alternative choices (Malle, 1999, 2004). Social psychologists who study processes involved in stereotyping and prejudice understand that intent is not always necessary to motivate expressions of prejudice. For example, when group membership is salient, as it is in the case of visual features (e.g., skin color) that are used to categorize individuals into racial groups, culturally constructed stereotypes are automatically activated (e.g., Devine, 1989; Kunda & Spencer, 2003). Thus, in some situations that prevent controlled, intentional suppression of stereotype application or that may cause individuals to interpret their behavior as unbiased, people are more likely to behave consistent with their true levels of prejudice (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Devine, 1989; Dovidio et al., 1997). In these situations, individuals may not even be aware of the real reasons for their discriminatory behavior, and thus cannot be understood to intentionally discriminate. However, when intent to express prejudice is present, there may be little doubt about an actor's prejudice (Swim et al., 2003).

Information about intent may be important because, for the lay observer, accusations of prejudice have social costs for the accuser (e.g., Kaiser & Miller, 2001). Similarly, labeling someone as a racist is morally condemning and will likely entail social costs for the accused,

which in some situations risks retaliatory actions. Thus, because individuals may perceive labeling someone as prejudiced (e.g., racist) as a risky behavior, people may be more reluctant, or require a greater degree of supporting evidence before making attributions to prejudice compared to attributions to race-unrelated causes. Information about an actor's intent may allow individuals to justify their judgments, convince others that they have made a correct judgment, and appeal to the normative rules guiding expressions of prejudice in order to minimize the social costs that they may incur for making such judgments. Swim and colleagues (2003) found evidence across multiple studies that information about an actor's intent to express prejudice affects observers' attributions to prejudice, such that attributions to prejudice were most likely when information more clearly suggested that the actor intended to express prejudice.

However, the intention behind an actor's behavior is difficult to judge because observers do not have access to the actors' internal mental states (Malle, 1999, 2004). Even when actors provide an account of the reasons for their behavior, they may not be believed, especially when they appear to be managing others' perceptions by offering race-irrelevant justifications for behaviors that could be interpreted as evidence of prejudice. Alternatively, if actors were to unambiguously reveal their intent to discriminate, observers should be much more certain in their judgments of the actors' prejudice. Given the uncertainty that likely surrounds judgments of intent, individual differences in the tendency to perceive prejudice may interact with information about intent in influencing observers' attributions to prejudice. Specifically, when the actor's intent is more ambiguous (e.g., when there is no information about an actor's intent to express prejudice), the tendency to make attributions to prejudice should have a stronger effect on observers' interpretations of the actor and his or her behavior compared to when information about an actor's intent is less ambiguous (e.g., the available information more clearly suggests that the actor did or did not intend to express prejudice). The present research was designed to assess whether the tendency to make attributions to prejudice is moderated by the effects of information about intent on attributions to prejudice.

In the absence of information about intent, the amount of harm experienced by targets of prejudice appears to influence whether individuals make attributions to prejudice and discrimination. Swim and colleagues (2003) found that when intent was ambiguous, information that indicated higher levels of harm done to the target resulted in higher levels of perceived prejudice. I propose that the effects of information about harm also moderate individuals' prior



tendencies to make attributions to prejudice, such that individuals who have a higher tendency to make attributions to prejudice will more likely see prejudice in situations where information about harm is unavailable or ambiguous, compared to situations where information about harm is provided.

### ***Summary of Hypotheses***

One goal of the present research was to further assess the predictive validity of the PMAPS. If the PMAPS is indeed measuring individual differences in the propensity to judge others as prejudiced, then this measure should predict attributions to prejudice. Therefore, my first hypothesis is that the PMAPS will predict attributions to prejudice. Specifically, the present studies assessed whether individual differences in the tendency to make attributions to prejudice, as measured by the PMAPS, predict attributions to prejudice in situations where prejudice might be expressed (e.g., an interaction between a White and Black individual). The second goal of the present research was to assess whether information about harm and intent moderates a tendency to make attributions to prejudice. My second hypothesis is that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice will be a stronger predictor of attributions to prejudice in situations where information about harm and intent are most ambiguous. The present research tested these hypotheses in the studies described below where the interactions between the PMAPS and manipulated information about harm (Study 1) and intent (Study 2) were assessed for their effects on individuals' attributions to prejudice in situations where prejudice may potentially be expressed (e.g., an interracial interaction).

## Chapter 2 - Study 1

In Study 1, information about harm was experimentally manipulated in order to assess whether the effects of the PMAPS on attributions to prejudice are moderated by information that conveys varying levels of harm done to a target in a situation where racial prejudice may potentially be expressed. Specifically, participants were presented with scenario in which a White landlord declined the rental application of a Black student. Three different story endings given to three different groups of participants were used to manipulate information about the level of harm (e.g., no harm, ambiguous harm, and clear harm conditions). Based on the findings by Swim et al. (2003) suggesting that individuals' judgments of prejudice are influenced by the level of harm done to the target, I predicted a main effect for level of harm, such that attributions to prejudice would be more likely when observers are given information that suggests that the target was harmed by the actor's behavior (i.e., in the clear harm condition). Additionally, I predicted a main effect for the PMAPS, such that it would be positively related to the perceived likelihood that the actor in the story was prejudiced regardless of information about harm. Finally, and more central to the hypothesis that information about harm moderates the relationship between the tendency to make attributions to prejudice and attributions of prejudice within the situation, I predicted an interaction between the level of harm and the PMAPS, such that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice would be a stronger predictor of attributions to prejudice when information about harm was ambiguous (i.e., not provided in the ambiguous harm condition) than when information about harm was provided (i.e., in the no harm and clear harm conditions).

In addition to assessing how the tendency to make attributions to prejudice is moderated by the effects of information about harm on attributions of prejudice, I also addressed an exploratory question in Study 1. Swim and colleagues (2003) found that observers were more likely to label a behavior as prejudiced than to make a judgment about the actor's dispositional prejudice. By asking individuals to make judgments about both the actor and the actor's behavior, I assessed whether the PMAPS moderated the tendency for observers to judge actors as less prejudiced than their behaviors.

## **Method**

### ***Design***

Study 1 was a 3 (level of harm: no harm, ambiguous harm, clear harm) X continuous (participant PMAPS level) design. Attributions to prejudice and perceptions of harm and intent served as the dependent variables. Prior to collecting data, I conducted a power analysis (conducted using G\*Power; Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) which indicated that 263 participants would be adequate to power ( $1-\beta = 0.80$ ,  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) analyses to detect interactions of moderate effect sizes (interaction  $\Delta R^2 = 0.05$ ).

### ***Participants***

Participants were college students (90.8% were in their first or second year) who were enrolled in an introductory psychology course. Participants received credit toward a course research participation requirement, however once the participant elected to sign up for the study, completion of the study was not required for credit to be granted. In total, 230 participants began the study. However, only participants who completed all measures and whose data could be matched from both parts of the study (see procedures below) were included in the final sample. This resulted in a final sample size of 207 participants. Only participants who self-identified as White/Caucasian were able to sign up for the study (this criterion was enforced by the department's participant management software that made the study available to participants who self-identified as White/Caucasian in a prescreening survey). The final sample consisted of 78 male participants and 129 female participants age 18 to 51 years old ( $M = 19.29$ ,  $SD = 3.36$ ).

### ***Procedure***

Study 1 consisted of a two part web-based survey. In part one, participants completed the PMAPS at the beginning of the semester as part of a large sample prescreening of several different psychometric instruments. After completing part one, participants were eligible to participate in part two of the study at a time of their choosing during the remainder of the semester. On average, responses to part two were 33.23 days ( $SD = 18.14$ ) after participating in part one. After being presented with information pertaining to informed consent, participants provided demographic information (age, gender, ethnicity, and class year). On the following page, participants were presented with one of three randomly assigned vignettes (see Appendix

B) corresponding to the three different experimental conditions manipulating level of harm (no harm, ambiguous harm, clear harm). The written vignettes were accompanied by a photographic image (see Appendix C) with labels identifying the names of the two characters in the vignette. All three vignettes described a White landlord (the actor) who, after showing an apartment to a Black student (the target), informed the student that he had decided to rent the apartment to another applicant. Three alternate story endings were used to manipulate information about the level of harm done to the target (no harm, ambiguous harm, clear harm). In the no harm story ending, the target was described as not suffering any negative consequences as a result of the actor's behavior (*Jason was not disappointed because he had already found an apartment he liked better*). No information about harm was provided in the ambiguous harm condition. For the clear harm condition, the story ending described the target as being negatively affected by the behavior of the actor (*Jason was very disappointed because he had to eventually settle for an apartment that he didn't like nearly as much*). On separate pages following the vignette page, participants were asked to respond to several items regarding their judgments about the scenario they had just read. Following the materials for the current study, participants completed measures for several unrelated studies.

### ***Materials and measures***

#### ***Propensity to make attributions to prejudice.***

Participants completed the PMAPS (Miller et al., 2013) in part one of the study. The 15-item PMAPS consisted of four subscales. The expectation subscale contained four items that measured individuals' perceptions of the prevalence of racial prejudice (e.g., *Racist behavior is more widespread than people think it is*). The four-item trivialization subscale measured attitudes that the concerns racial minorities have about racial prejudice are unjustified (e.g., *Racial minorities are too worried about being discriminated against*). The four-item vigilance subscale measured the cognitive effort that individuals invest in thinking about prejudice and looking out for cues indicating prejudice (e.g., *I am on the lookout for instances of prejudice or discrimination*). The three-item efficacy subscale measured individuals' confidence in recognizing expressions of prejudice (e.g., *I find that prejudice and discrimination are pretty easy to spot*). See Appendix A for a complete list of the PMAPS items and subscales. All items were measured on a nine-point scale with anchors at 1 = *disagree very strongly* and 9 = *agree*

*very strongly*. Subscale scores were created for each participant by taking the average score of the items within each subscale. Each of the subscales were found to demonstrate adequate reliability (expectation  $\alpha = .73$ , trivialization  $\alpha = .84$ , vigilance  $\alpha = .78$ , efficacy  $\alpha = .68$ ). An overall PMAPS score was created by averaging all 15 items in the scale after inflecting the items in the vigilance subscale ( $\alpha = .80$ ) so that higher scores indicated higher levels of the propensity to make attributions to prejudice.

### ***Judgments of prejudice and discrimination.***

Participants first responded to an open-ended question asking them to provide their own reasons for why they thought that the landlord did not rent the apartment to the student. Specifically, participants were asked “*Why do you think that Mike did not rent the apartment to Jason?*” and were provided an empty text-box to type in their answers. These responses were independently coded by two judges for the presence (coded 1) or absence (coded 0) of any mention that the race of the target could have been the reason why the landlord did not rent the apartment to the target. The judges were instructed to only code the presence of an attribution to prejudice if race was explicitly mentioned in the participant’s response. As an example, *Because Jason was black*, was coded 1 (attributing the actor’s behavior to prejudice) because it was clear that the participant thought that the actor racially discriminated against the target based on his race. Conversely, *Maybe Jason did not check out on a credit report*, was coded 0 (no attribution to prejudice) because the target’s credit rating, not his race, was the only reason provided by the participant for the actor’s behavior (even though the participant might have responded in this way because the target’s race activated negative stereotypes about Blacks). Initial interrater agreement was exceptionally high ( $kappa = .93$ ), suggesting that the coding scheme was consistently implemented by the judges, and full agreement was later reached through discussion on the seven cases where the two judges originally disagreed on their coding. The resulting variable is referred to as *spontaneous attributions to prejudice* in the results that follow.

On the following page of the survey, participants were asked to provide their judgments about the behavior, the actor, and the consequences for the target in the scenario using items modified from Swim et al. (2003; Study 3). All items were presented in random order among filler items that referred to the scenario but were not intended to be included in the analyses (see Appendix C for a complete list of items). Multi-item measures were averaged together after

reverse scoring antithetical items to create composite variables where higher scores represented higher levels of the construct. Three items ( $\alpha = .91$ ) were used to measure participants' attributions of the harm done to the target (e.g., *Using your best judgment, how much harm did Mike cause Jason?*) on a nine-point scale with anchors at 1 = *None* and 9 = *Very High*. Three items ( $\alpha = .89$ ) were used to measure participants' attributions of the extent to which the actor intended to discriminate against the target (e.g., *Using your best judgment, how much did Mike intend to racially discriminate against Jason?*) on a nine-point scale with anchors at 1 = *No Intent* and 9 = *Very High Intent*. Four items ( $\alpha = .92$ ) were used to measure attributions that the behavior of the actor was racially prejudiced (e.g., *Mike's behavior was racist*) on a nine-point response scale with anchors at 1 = *Disagree Very Strongly* and 9 = *Agree Very Strongly*. Four items ( $\alpha = .91$ ) were used to measure attributions that the actor was racially prejudiced (e.g., *Mike is prejudiced toward Blacks*) on a nine-point response scale with anchors at 1 = *Disagree Very Strongly* and 9 = *Agree Very Strongly*.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Data screening and manipulation checks***

Prior to conducting the analyses, the procedures described in Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) were followed to check the data for violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and outliers. Distributions of the variables approximated normal distributions (assessed using histograms and descriptive statistics). No univariate outliers were found when examining the  $z$ -transformed variables for values in excess of 3.29 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Additionally, inspection of the scatterplots and  $R^2$  change values for a quadratic fit improvement revealed that the relationships between the PMAPS and attributions of prejudice to the behavior and to the actor were roughly homoscedastic and best fitted to a linear equation in each of the three experimental conditions. Descriptive statistics and a bivariate correlation matrix by experimental condition for the PMAPS and each of the dependent measures are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics as Different Levels of Harm**

Condition	Variable	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>r</i> <sub>Intent</sub>	<i>r</i> <sub>Behavior</sub>	<i>r</i> <sub>Actor</sub>	<i>r</i> <sub>PMAPS</sub>
All Conditions Combined	Harm	4.22	2.02	.55**	.55**	.53**	-.03
	Intent	3.53	2.03	-	.79**	.79**	-.02
	Prejudiced Behavior	4.47	2.14		-	.91**	.08
	Prejudiced Actor	4.58	1.89			-	.03
	PMAPS	5.35	0.89				-
No Harm	Harm	2.89 <sup>a</sup>	1.93	.75**	.61**	.62**	-.12
	Intent	3.28 <sup>a</sup>	2.26	-	.79**	.84**	-.15
	Prejudiced Behavior	4.08 <sup>a</sup>	2.14		-	.92**	-.16
	Prejudiced Actor	4.25 <sup>a</sup>	1.86			-	-.09
	PMAPS	5.39 <sup>a</sup>	0.98				-
Ambiguous Harm	Harm	4.53 <sup>b</sup>	1.75	.46**	.51**	.47**	.06
	Intent	3.57 <sup>a</sup>	1.87	-	.82**	.73**	.12
	Prejudiced Behavior	4.45 <sup>a</sup>	1.92		-	.88**	.28*
	Prejudiced Actor	4.61 <sup>a</sup>	1.73			-	.14
	PMAPS	5.40 <sup>a</sup>	0.85				-
Clear Harm	Harm	5.08 <sup>b</sup>	1.77	.50**	.53**	.52**	.05
	Intent	3.71 <sup>a</sup>	1.96	-	.80**	.79**	.02
	Prejudiced Behavior	4.84 <sup>a</sup>	2.32		-	.93**	.16
	Prejudiced Actor	4.84 <sup>a</sup>	2.05			-	.06
	PMAPS	5.27 <sup>a</sup>	0.86				-

*Note.* For each variable, mean values that do not share a common superscript were significantly different between conditions at  $p < .05$ . For the bivariate correlations, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .



Across all conditions, attributions of harm to the target and attributions of the actor's intent to racially discriminate were moderately correlated (Table 1). Consistent with Swim and colleagues' (2003) findings, attributions of the actor's intent to racially discriminate were more strongly related to attributions of prejudice to the behavior and attributions of prejudice to the actor than were attributions of harm to the target (Table 1), suggesting that perceptions of intent are more important in making attributions to prejudice than are perceptions of the harm caused by the action. Also consistent with Swim and colleagues' (2003) findings, the relationship between attributions of prejudice to the behavior and to the actor were highly related (Table 1). Contrary to Swim colleagues' (2003) findings, the average attributions of prejudice to the actor was higher than the average attributions of prejudice to the behavior, but this difference was not statistically significant ( $t(206) = 1.70, p = .10$ ), nor was the difference moderated by level of harm manipulated in the experimental conditions (condition X target of attribution actor/behavior  $F(2, 204) = 0.79, p = .45$ ). Thus, there was no evidence that attributions of prejudice differed between attributions to the behavior and attributions to the actor.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that there were no significant differences in the average of the PMAPS scores between experimental conditions,  $F(2, 204) = 0.49, p = .61$ , indicating that random assignment was effective in controlling for PMAPS levels between conditions. Attributions of harm to the target were significantly affected by the experimental manipulation,  $F(2, 204) = 26.33, p < .001$ . Post-hoc analyses revealed that attributions of harm to the target were greater in the ambiguous and clear harm condition compared to the no harm condition ( $ps < .001$ ), but were not significantly different between the ambiguous and clear harm condition ( $p = .21$ , see Table 1). This finding suggests that the different story endings were partially successful in manipulating perceptions of harm. Perceptions of the actor's intent, attributions to prejudiced behavior, and attributions to a prejudiced actor were not significantly different between conditions ( $F_s < 2.15, ps > .12$ , see Table 1), suggesting that the harm manipulation was not effective in influencing participants' attributions to prejudice.

### ***Moderation Effects of Information about Harm***

Three dummy coded variables were created to code for the experimental conditions, such that one variable was created for each condition where a value of 1 was entered for the condition,

and 0s were entered for the other two conditions (e.g., for the variable representing the no harm condition, 1 was entered for all cases in the no harm condition and 0s were entered for all cases in the ambiguous and clear harm conditions). To test for differences in the relationship between the PMAPS and attributions to prejudice between the three conditions, the Process add-on for SPSS (Hayes, 2013) was used to simultaneously enter two of the dummy coded experimental conditions along with the PMAPS. The Process software handled the computation and entry of the condition X PMAPS two-way interaction terms as well as provided tests of the change in  $R^2$  due to the interactions and the simple slopes analyses. To fully test all of the condition X PMAPS two-way interactions for each aspect of the three conditions in the design, it was necessary to conduct two separate simultaneous regressions. This procedure was repeated for each of the criterion measures: spontaneous attributions to prejudice, attributions of prejudice to the behavior, attributions of prejudice to the actor, and the difference between attributions of prejudice to the behavior and actor (calculated by subtracting attributions of prejudice to the actor from attributions of prejudice to the behavior). The interaction terms in these models tested for the difference in the regression coefficient of the PMAPS between the experimental conditions manipulating levels of harm.

Spontaneous attributions to prejudice (i.e., the presence of attributions to prejudice in participants' written responses) were analyzed using a logistic regression version of the model described above to assess whether the PMAPS was related to the likelihood that individuals spontaneously made attributions to prejudice at different levels of information about harm. None of the predictor variables nor any of the interaction terms were significant predictors in the model ( $ps > .19$ ,  $N = 207$ , model log likelihood = 6.13, Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .03$ ). The PMAPS did not predict spontaneous attributions to prejudice in any of the three experimental conditions ( $ps > .33$ ), nor did spontaneous attributions to prejudice significantly differ by condition ( $\chi^2(2) = 4.23$ ,  $p = .12$ ), although there was a non-significant pattern of responses, such that there was a higher proportion of spontaneous attributions to prejudice in the clear harm condition and a lower proportion of spontaneous attributions to prejudice in the no harm and ambiguous harm conditions (see Table 2).

**Table 2. Distribution of Spontaneous Attributions to Prejudice by Condition**

Condition	No Attribution to Prejudice	Attribution to Prejudice	Total
No Harm	40 (63.5)	23 (36.5)	63
Ambiguous Harm	44 (62.0)	27 (38.0)	71
Clear Harm	35 (47.9)	38 (52.1)	73
Total	119 (57.5)	88 (42.5)	207

*Note.* The percentages of responses appear in parentheses next to the frequency count.

Spontaneous attributions to prejudice did not differ by condition ( $\chi^2(2) = 4.23, p = .12$ ).

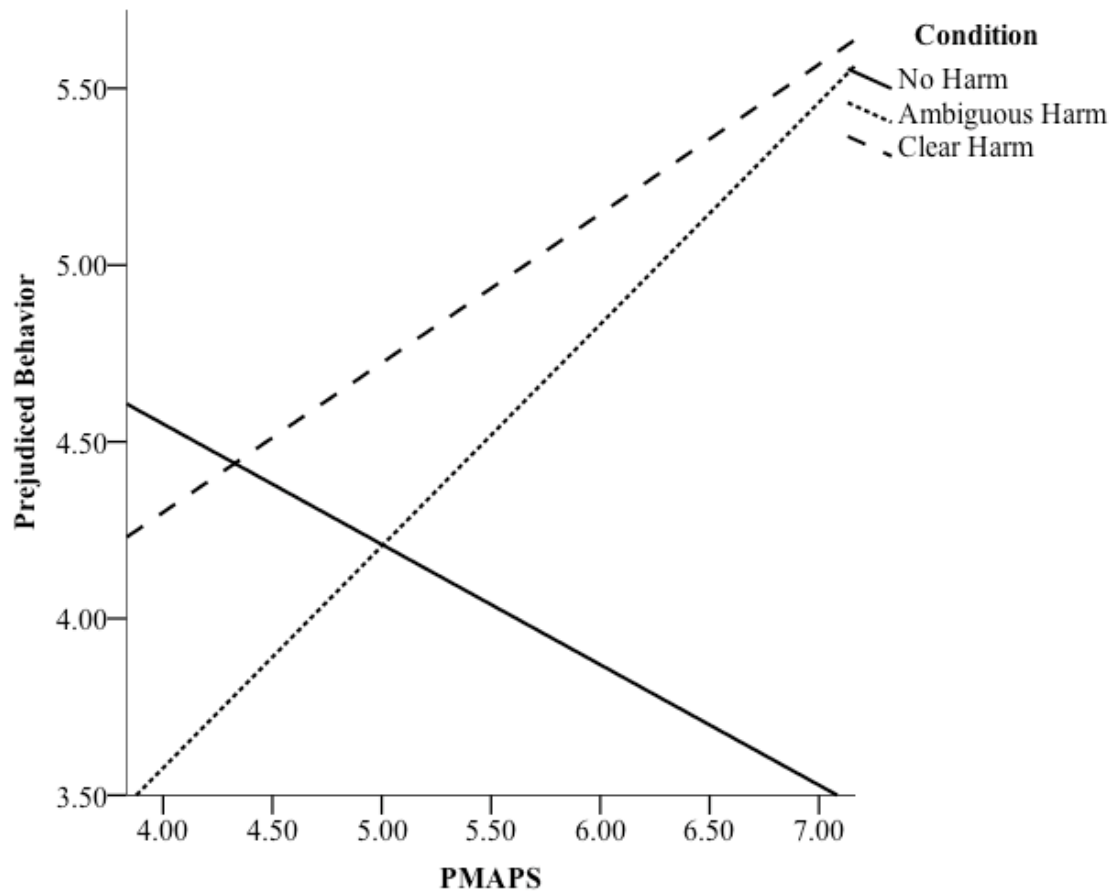
Evidence of the moderating effect of information about harm on the PMAPS was found in the analysis predicting attributions of prejudice to the behavior. The effect of the PMAPS was stronger in the ambiguous harm condition than in the no harm condition (interaction  $\Delta R^2 = .03, F(1, 201) = 5.79, p = .02$ ), but the effect in the ambiguous harm condition was not significantly different from the effect in the clear harm condition (interaction  $\Delta R^2 < .01, F(1, 201) = 0.25, p = .62$ ). Additionally, the effect of the PMAPS in the clear harm condition was marginally different from the effect in the no harm condition (interaction  $\Delta R^2 = .02, F(1, 201) = 3.31, p = .06$ ). Table 3 displays the regression coefficients by experimental condition of the simple slopes analysis (described above) showing the relationship between the PMAPS and attributions of prejudice to the behavior, actor, and behavior – actor difference. Participants’ PMAPS scores significantly predicted attributions of prejudice to the behavior only in the ambiguous harm condition (see Table 3), such that higher levels of the PMAPS were related to higher levels of attributions of prejudice to the behavior. Figure 1 displays a plot of the simple slopes from this analysis. These data provide partial support for the hypothesis that beliefs and expectations regarding racial prejudice influence attributions to prejudice when information about the harm of an action caused to a Black target by a White actor is more ambiguous.

**Table 3. Simple Slopes Analysis of the Relationship between the PMAPS and Attributions to Prejudice at Different Levels of Harm**

Criterion	Condition	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	Lower CI	Upper CI
Prejudiced Behavior	No Harm	-0.34 <sup>a</sup>	0.27	.21	-0.89	0.20
	Ambiguous Harm	0.63 <sup>b</sup>	0.30	.04	0.04	1.21
	Clear Harm	0.42 <sup>ab</sup>	0.29	.14	-0.15	0.99
Model $R^2 = .06$ , $F(5, 201) = 2.52$ , $p = .03$						
Prejudiced Actor	No Harm	-0.17 <sup>a</sup>	0.24	.49	-0.65	0.31
	Ambiguous Harm	0.29 <sup>a</sup>	0.27	.28	-0.24	0.81
	Clear Harm	0.13 <sup>a</sup>	0.26	.62	-0.38	0.64
Model $R^2 = .03$ , $F(5, 201) = 1.04$ , $p = .40$						
Behavior - Actor Difference	No Harm	-0.17 <sup>a</sup>	0.11	.12	-0.39	0.05
	Ambiguous Harm	0.34 <sup>b</sup>	0.12	< .01	0.10	0.58
	Clear Harm	0.29 <sup>b</sup>	0.12	.01	0.06	0.52
Model $R^2 = .08$ , $F(5, 201) = 3.61$ , $p < .01$						

*Note.* Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. Within each criterion measure, coefficients that do not share a common superscript are significantly different at  $p < .05$ . Lower CI and Upper CI are the lower and upper limits respectively of a 95% confidence interval for the effect.

**Figure 1. Simple Slopes for Attributions to Prejudice Behavior by Condition**

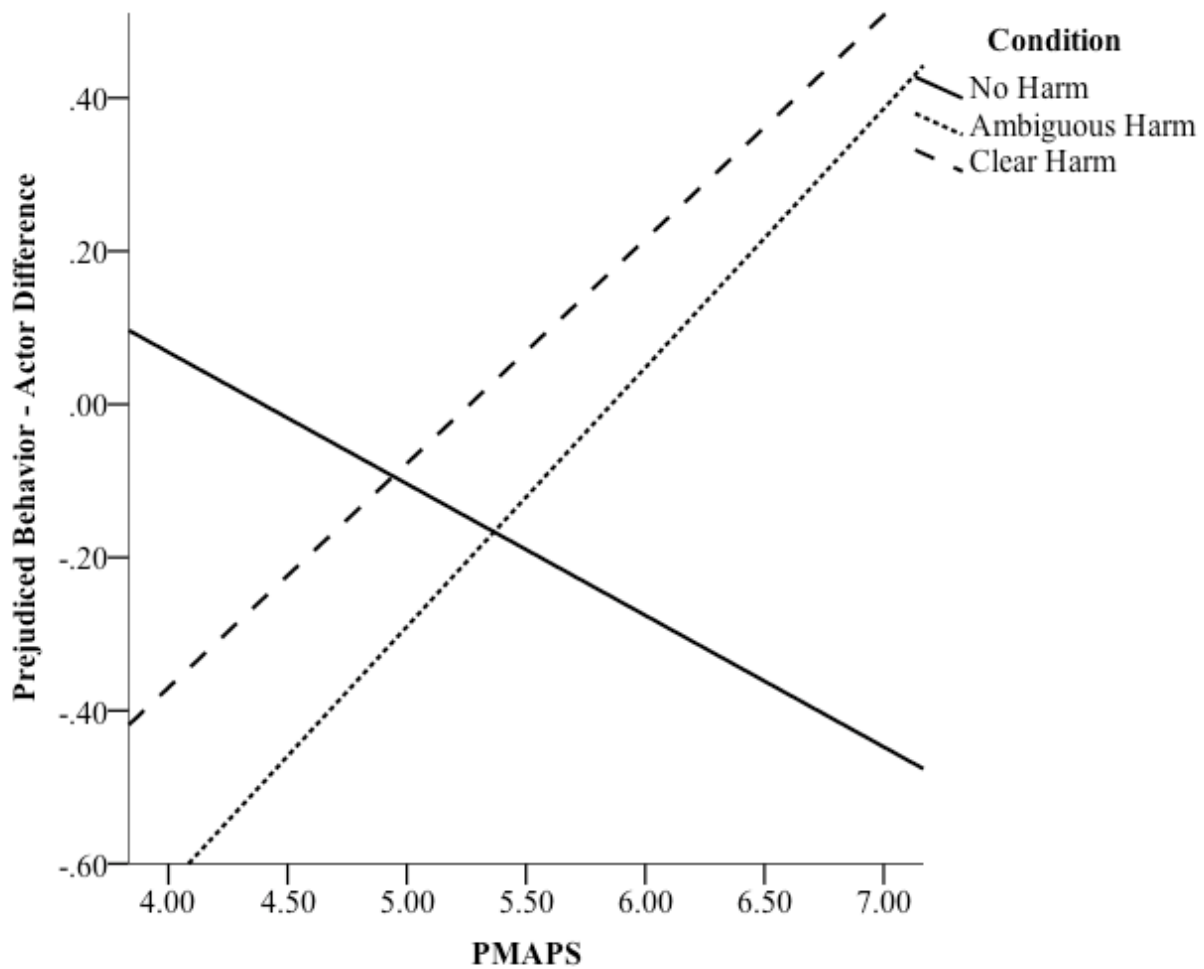


In predicting attributions of prejudice to the actor, the PMAPS was not a significant predictor in any of the three conditions, nor were the effects different between conditions (interaction  $\Delta R^2$ s < .01). Thus, from this analysis, no evidence was found to support the hypothesis that the PMAPS would be more strongly related to attributions of prejudice to the actor in the ambiguous condition. However, the regression coefficients for the PMAPS in predicting attributions of prejudice to the actor trended in a similar pattern to that of the effects of the PMAPS on attributions of prejudice to the behavior, such that the largest effect was observed in the ambiguous harm condition and although the relationship was non-significant, it was in the predicted positive direction.

In an exploratory analysis predicting whether the PMAPS would be related to a tendency to make stronger attributions of prejudice to the behavior or the actor, the PMAPS was found to be positively related to stronger attributions of prejudice to the behavior than to the actor in a

both the ambiguous and clear harm conditions, but not in the no harm condition (see Table 3). Additionally, although the effects of the PMAPS in the ambiguous and clear harm conditions were not significantly different from each other (interaction  $\Delta R^2 < .01$ ,  $F(1, 201) = 0.08$ ,  $p = .78$ ), the PMAPS effects in both the ambiguous and clear harm conditions were significantly different from the effect in the no harm condition (interaction  $\Delta R^2 = .04$ ,  $F(1, 201) = 9.63$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $\Delta R^2 = .04$ ,  $F(1, 201) = 8.23$ ,  $p < .01$  respectively). Figure 2 displays a plot of the simple slopes from this analysis. The slope in the no harm condition was non-significantly negative, but in the ambiguous and clear harm conditions the slopes were significantly positive, suggesting that when information about harm was ambiguous or clear, increasingly higher levels of the PMAPS were associated with stronger attributions of harm to the behavior than to the actor. This finding suggests that beliefs and expectations regarding racial prejudice moderate whether individuals see the actor or the behavior as more prejudiced.

**Figure 2. Simple Slopes Predicting the Difference Between Attributions to Prejudiced Behavior and Attributions to a Prejudiced Actor**



In summary, the PMAPS significantly predicted attributions of prejudice to the behavior when there was no information about the harm done by a White actor to a Black target (i.e., in the ambiguous harm condition) and this effect was significantly different than the effect in the no harm condition. Thus, partial support was found for the hypothesis that individual differences in the tendency to make attributions to prejudice are stronger when information about harm is most ambiguous. More generally, the finding that a tendency to make attributions to prejudice was predictive of attributions to prejudice in a specific scenario where information about the harm done to the target was unavailable is important because in real life, observers often do not have information about the degree of harm suffered by the targets of racial discrimination. Thus, the current study suggests that a propensity to make attributions to prejudice may play a role in the

likelihood that observers will see prejudice in interracial interactions where the consequences of those interactions are ambiguous.



## Chapter 3 - Study 2

As a further test of the hypothesis that different informational cues will moderate the effects of the tendency to make attributions to prejudice in predicting situational attributions to prejudice, I conducted a second experiment that manipulated information about an actor's intent to racially discriminate (e.g., no intent, ambiguous intent, clear intent conditions). As previously discussed, information about an actor's intent to discriminate appears to more strongly influence judgments of prejudice compared to information about harm (e.g., Swim et al., 2003). Thus, Study 2 served as an additional test of the boundary conditions for the effects of the tendency to make attributions as measured by the PMAPS because information about intent should be more difficult for individuals to discount in making judgments about expressions of prejudice.

In Study 2, I predicted a main effect for level of intent, such that higher levels of prejudice would be perceived when it is clearer that the actor intentionally discriminated based on negative attitudes toward a racial minority (i.e., in the clear intent condition). Additionally, I predicted a main effect for the PMAPS, such that it would be positively related to the perceived likelihood that the actor in the story was prejudiced independent of information about intent. Most relevant to my hypothesis that individual differences in the tendency to make attributions to prejudice will be most predictive of attributions to prejudice in ambiguous situations, I predicted an interaction between intent and the PMAPS, such that the PMAPS would be a stronger predictor of attributions to prejudice when no information about intent was provided (i.e., in the ambiguous intent condition) compared to when information about intent was provided (i.e., in the no intent and clear intent conditions).

As in Study 1, I also attempted to replicate findings by Swim et al. (2003) who found that when intent to discriminate was ambiguous, observers were generally less likely to attribute prejudice to the actor than to judge the actor's behavior as prejudiced, but when intent to discriminate was clear, there was little difference between judgments of the actor and the actor's behavior. The authors interpreted this to mean that when intent is uncertain, observers may need more evidence (e.g., more demonstrations of similar behavior) before they are willing to attribute more stable qualities to an individual, especially for normatively undesirable characteristics such as prejudice. To extend this finding, I explored whether the PMAPS moderates this effect. Study

I found no evidence that observers were more likely to make attributions of prejudice to the behavior than to the actor across different levels of harm, but did find evidence that the effects of information about harm interact with the PMAPS in predicting this difference. Study 2 examined whether this effect could be replicated under conditions where different information about intent is provided (or not provided).

## **Method**

### ***Design***

Study 2 was a 3 (level of intent: no intent, ambiguous intent, clear intent) X continuous (participant PMAPS level) design. Attributions to prejudice and perceptions of harm and intent served as the dependent variables. Prior to collecting data, I conducted a power analysis (conducted using G\*Power; Faul et al., 2007) which indicated that 263 participants would be adequate to power ( $1-\beta = 0.80$ ,  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) analyses to detect interactions of moderate effect sizes (interaction  $\Delta R^2 = 0.05$ ).

### ***Participants***

Participants were college students (83.4% were in their first or second year) who were enrolled in an introductory psychology course. Participants received credit toward a course research participation requirement, however once the participant elected to sign up for the study, completion of the study was not required for credit to be granted. In total, 308 participants began the study. However, only participants who completed all measures and whose data could be matched from both parts of the study were included in the final sample. This resulted in a final sample size of 259 participants. Only participants who self-identified as White/Caucasian were able to sign up for the study (this criterion was enforced by the department's participant management software that made the study available to participants who self-identified as White/Caucasian in a prescreening survey). The final sample consisted of 81 male participants and 178 female participants age 18 to 47 years old ( $M = 19.36$ ,  $SD = 2.60$ ).

### ***Procedure***

The procedures used for Study 2 were exactly the same as those described in Study 1 with the exception that Study 2 used different vignettes. In Study 2, the vignettes provided no

information about harm to the target. Rather, the information provided about the intent of the actor to racially discriminate against the target was manipulated within the vignettes. On average, responses to part two (where the vignettes were presented and the dependent measures were measured) were 30.69 days ( $SD = 16.80$ ) after participating in part one where the PMAPS (15 items,  $\alpha = .83$ ) was measured. The base vignette and photo describing a White landlord informing a Black student that he would not be able to rent to him were the same as those used in Study 1. Three alternate story endings were used to manipulate information about the actor's intent to racially discriminate (see Appendix C). In the no intent condition, the story ending provided a description of the actor's reason for not renting the apartment to the target that did not involve racial discrimination (*A few days later, Mike phoned Jason to say that he was renting the apartment out to another individual who was higher on the waiting list*). No information was given about the actor's reason for not renting the apartment to the target in the ambiguous intent condition. In the clear intent condition, the actor was described as intending to discriminate based on his attitudes toward Blacks (*A few days later, Mike phoned Jason to say that he was renting the apartment out to another individual. Mike suspected that Jason, being a young Black male, may keep company with people he didn't want hanging around the building*).

As per the procedures described in Study 1, coding of the participant's written responses to the open-ended question about the actor's reason for not renting the apartment to the target was conducted by two judges for spontaneous attributions to prejudice. Interrater agreement was high ( $kappa = .88$ ) and agreement was later reached through discussion on the sixteen cases where the two judges originally disagreed on their coding. The continuous dependent measures were the same as Study 1 (harm 3 items,  $\alpha = .86$ ; intent 3 items,  $\alpha = .90$ ; prejudiced behavior 4 items,  $\alpha = .91$ ; prejudiced actor 4 items,  $\alpha = .91$ )

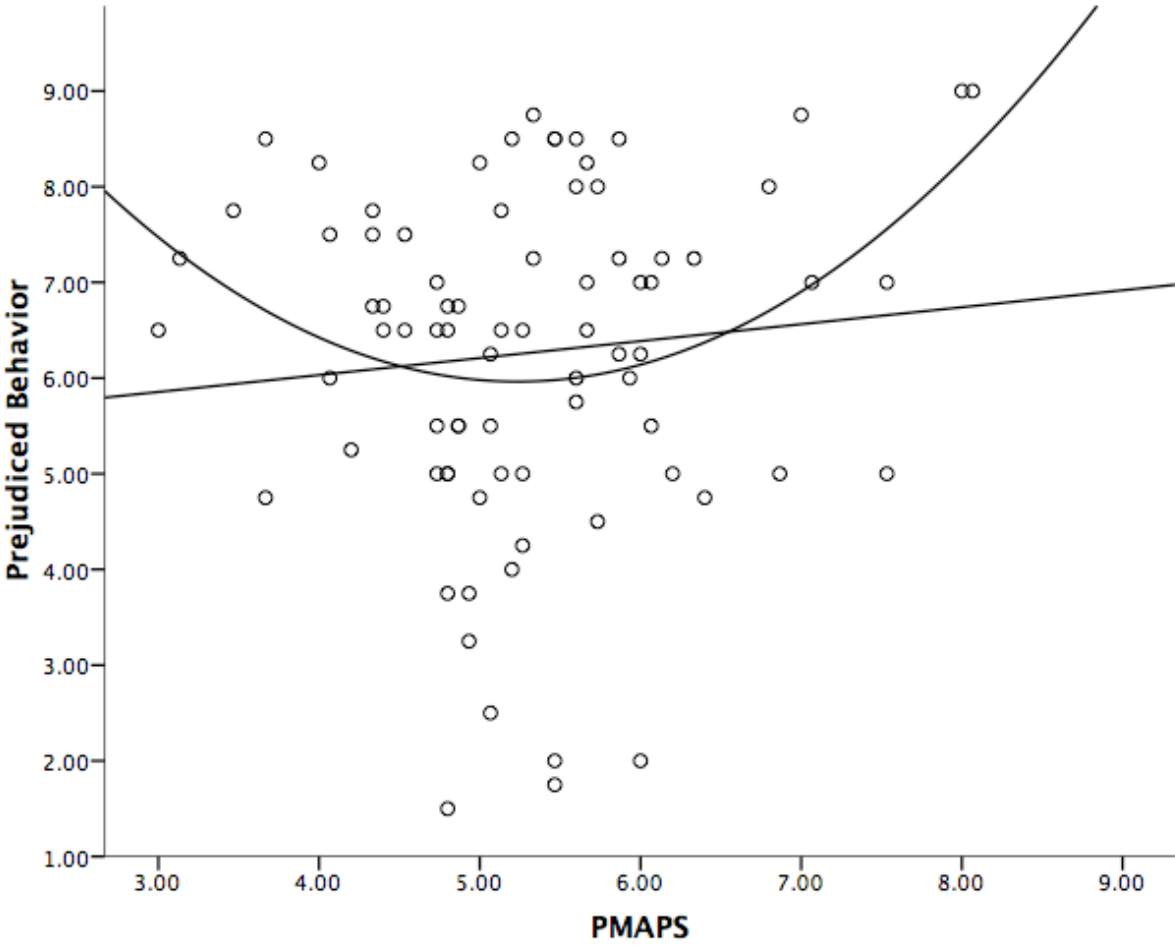
## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Data screening and manipulation checks***

Prior to conducting the analyses, the procedures described in Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) were followed to check the data for violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and outliers. Distributions of the variables approximated normal distributions (assessed using histograms and descriptive statistics). No univariate outliers were found when examining the  $z$ -transformed variables for values in excess of 3.29 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Additionally,

scatterplots and  $R^2$  change values for a quadratic fit improvement suggested that the relationships between the PMAPS and attributions to prejudiced behavior and actor were roughly homoscedastic and best fitted to a linear equation in the no intent and ambiguous intent conditions. However, there was significant curvilinearity in the clear intent condition in predicting attributions of prejudice to the behavior and to the actor that were best fitted to quadratic, u-shaped curves ( $\Delta R^2 = .07$ ,  $F(1, 77) = 5.85$ ,  $p = .02$ , and ( $\Delta R^2 = .07$ ,  $F(1, 77) = 5.53$ ,  $p = .02$  respectively; see Figures 3 and 4). Linear analyses (e.g., bivariate correlations, simple slopes coefficients) for this condition were interpreted with caution because they underestimate the true degree of the relationship between the PMAPS and attributions of prejudice in the clear intent condition. Descriptive statistics and a bivariate correlation matrix by experimental condition for the PMAPS and each of the dependent measures are provided in Table 4.

**Figure 3. Contrasting the Linear and Curvilinear Fits in the Clear Intent Condition for the Relationship Between the PMAPS and Attributions of Prejudice to the Behavior**





**Table 4. Descriptive Statistics at Different Levels of Intent**

Condition	Variable	Mean	SD	$r_{\text{Intent}}$	$r_{\text{Behavior}}$	$r_{\text{Actor}}$	$r_{\text{PMAPS}}$
All Conditions Combined	Harm	4.68	1.77	.64**	.63**	.60**	.23**
	Intent	3.85	1.92	-	.80**	.80**	.22**
	Prejudiced Behavior	4.88	2.14		-	.93**	.19**
	Prejudiced Actor	4.91	1.98			-	.20**
	PMAPS	5.29	0.97				-
No Intent	Harm	4.14 <sup>a</sup>	1.74	.72**	.68**	.67**	.19
	Intent	3.26 <sup>a</sup>	1.82	-	.85**	.86**	.12
	Prejudiced Behavior	3.93 <sup>a</sup>	2.07		-	.94**	.22*
	Prejudiced Actor	3.99 <sup>a</sup>	1.80			-	.20
	PMAPS	5.15 <sup>a</sup>	1.01				-
Ambiguous Intent	Harm	4.54 <sup>a</sup>	1.87	.61**	.63**	.54**	.22*
	Intent	3.72 <sup>a</sup>	1.91	-	.86**	.81**	.30**
	Prejudiced Behavior	4.54 <sup>a</sup>	1.91		-	.88**	.25*
	Prejudiced Actor	4.66 <sup>b</sup>	1.83			-	.28**
	PMAPS	5.39 <sup>a</sup>	0.91				-
Clear Intent	Harm	5.40 <sup>b</sup>	1.41	.49**	.37**	.43**	.29**
	Intent	4.59 <sup>b</sup>	1.82	-	.63**	.65**	.21
	Prejudiced Behavior	6.26 <sup>b</sup>	1.78		-	.91**	.10
	Prejudiced Actor	6.16 <sup>c</sup>	1.70			-	.10
	PMAPS	5.30 <sup>a</sup>	1.00				-

*Note.* For each variable, mean values that do not share a common superscript were significantly different between conditions at  $p < .05$ . For the bivariate correlations, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .



The bivariate relationships in Study 2 followed a similar pattern to that observed in Study 1. Attributions of harm to the target and attributions of the actor's intent to racially discriminate were moderately correlated (Table 4). Further replicating findings from Study 1, attributions of the actor's intent to racially discriminate were more strongly related to attributions of prejudice to the behavior and to the actor than were attributions of harm to the target (Table 4), suggesting that perceptions of the intent of the actor to racially discriminate are more related to attributions to prejudice than are perceptions of harm done to the target. In Study 2, as in Study 1, attributions of prejudice to the behavior and to the actor were highly related (Table 4) and attributions of prejudice to the behavior did not differ from attributions of prejudice to the actor ( $t(258) = 0.67, p = .50$ ).

A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that there were no significant differences in the average of the PMAPS scores between experimental conditions,  $F(2, 256) = 1.35, p = .26$  (see Table 4), indicating that random assignment was effective in controlling for PMAPS levels between conditions. The experimental manipulation of information about intent significantly affected attributions of harm to the target ( $F(2, 256) = 11.64, p < .001$ ), attributions of the actor's intent to discriminate ( $F(2, 256) = 10.81, p < .001$ ), attributions of prejudice to the behavior ( $F(2, 256) = 32.07, p < .001$ ), and attributions of prejudice to the actor ( $F(2, 256) = 31.33, p < .001$ ). The pattern of effects revealed in the simple effects analyses (see Table 4) was that the no intent condition did not significantly differ from the ambiguous intent condition for levels of harm, intent, and attributions of prejudice to the behavior ( $ps > .10$ ), although the trend was for higher ratings of these measures in the ambiguous compared to the no intent condition. However, attributions of prejudice to the actor were higher in the ambiguous intent condition than in the no intent condition ( $p = .04$ ). More consistently, for all of the dependent measures, higher ratings were observed in the clear intent condition compared to the ambiguous and no intent conditions ( $ps < .01$ ; see Table 4). Thus the experimental manipulation of information about the actor's intent to racially discriminate appeared to be successful in affecting participants' perceptions of the harm to the target, attributions of prejudice to the behavior, and most notably, attributions of prejudice to the actor, such that stronger attributions were made when information suggested that the actor intended to racially discriminate.

### *Moderation Effects of Information about Intent*

Analysis procedures for Study 2 were the same as those described in Study 1. To test for the moderating effect of information about intent on the tendency to make attributions to prejudice between the three conditions, the Process add-on for SPSS (Hayes, 2013) was used to simultaneously enter two of the dummy coded experimental conditions and the PMAPS. The Process software handled the computation and entry of the condition X PMAPS two-way interaction, as well as computation of the simple slopes analyses. All of the criterion measures of attributions to prejudice (spontaneous attributions to prejudice, attributions of prejudice to the behavior, attributions of prejudice to the actor, and the difference between attributions of prejudice to the behavior and actor) were analyzed using this procedure. The interaction terms in these models tested for the difference in the regression coefficient of the PMAPS between the experimental conditions manipulating levels of intent.

Information about the actor's intent to racially discriminate appeared to affect spontaneous attributions of prejudice (see Table 5). The frequency of spontaneous attributions of prejudice were lowest in the no intent condition, higher in the ambiguous intent condition, and highest in the clear intent condition ( $\chi^2(2) = 32.38, p < .001$ ), indicating that information about intent influences attributions to prejudice. When the available information suggested that the actor had a reason for his actions that did not involve the race of the target, observers were less likely to make attributions to prejudice than when a reason was not provided or suggested that the actor intended to racially discriminate. Furthermore, from the logistic regression model (model log likelihood = 43.28, Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .21$ ), there was marginal evidence that the effect of the tendency to make attributions to prejudice was moderated by information about the actor's intent to racially discriminate, such that there was a marginally significant interaction testing the difference in the effect of the PMAPS between the no intent and clear intent conditions ( $z = -1.79, p = .07$ ). The differences in the effect of the PMAPS between the no intent and ambiguous intent conditions and between the ambiguous intent and clear intent conditions were non-significant ( $ps > .21$ ). The PMAPS predicted the likelihood that individuals spontaneously made attributions to prejudice in the no intent condition and marginally in the ambiguous intent condition, such that higher levels of the PMAPS were related to a higher probability of making an attribution to prejudice, but not in the clear intent condition (see Table 6 and Figure 5). These findings suggest that a stronger propensity to make attributions to prejudice may lead observers

to be more likely to make attributions to prejudice even when alternative, race-neutral reasons for an actor's behavior are provided and also when no information about the actors' reasons are available.

**Table 5. Distribution of Spontaneous Attributions to Prejudice by Condition**

Condition	No Attribution to Prejudice	Attribution to Prejudice	Total
No Intent	58 (71.6)	23 (28.4)	81
Ambiguous Intent	55 (56.1)	43 (43.9)	98
Clear Intent	22 (27.5)	58 (72.5)	80
Total	135 (52.1)	124 (47.9)	259

*Note.* The percentages of responses appear in parentheses next to the frequency count ( $\chi^2(2) = 32.38, p < .001$ ).

In testing whether information about intent moderated the effects of the PMAPS on participants' attributions of prejudice to the behavior and to the actor, none of the two-way condition X PMAPS interactions were significant ( $\Delta R^2 < .01, ps > .17$ ). However, the PMAPS significantly predicted attributions of prejudice to the behavior in the no intent and ambiguous intent conditions (see Table 6 and Figure 6), such that higher levels of the PMAPS were related to higher levels of attributions of prejudice to the behavior. Similarly, the PMAPS was positively related to attributions of prejudice to the actor in the ambiguous intent condition and marginally in the no intent condition (see Table 6 and Figure 7). These results are consistent with the results from the analyses of spontaneous attributions to prejudice, suggesting that stronger attributions to prejudice can be predicted by individual differences in the propensity to make attributions to prejudice when information about the reasons for the behavior are unavailable, or when alternative, race-neutral reasons are provided.

**Table 6. Simple Slopes Analysis of the Relationship between the PMAPS and Attributions to Prejudice at Different Levels of Intent**

Criterion	Condition	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	Lower CI	Upper CI
Spontaneous Attributions	No Intent	0.66 <sup>a</sup>	0.27	.02	0.12	1.19
	Ambiguous Intent	0.42 <sup>a</sup>	0.24	.08	-0.04	0.88
	Clear Intent	-0.01 <sup>a</sup>	0.25	.97	-0.51	0.48
Model log likelihood = 43.28, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .21$						
Prejudiced Behavior	No Intent	0.46 <sup>a</sup>	0.21	.03	0.05	0.87
	Ambiguous Intent	0.52 <sup>a</sup>	0.21	.01	0.11	0.94
	Clear Intent	0.18 <sup>a</sup>	0.21	.41	-0.24	0.60
Model $R^2 = .24$ $F(5, 253) = 15.59, p < .001$						
Prejudiced Actor	No Intent	0.36 <sup>a</sup>	0.19	.07	-0.03	0.74
	Ambiguous Intent	0.56 <sup>a</sup>	0.20	.005	0.17	0.94
	Clear Intent	0.18 <sup>a</sup>	0.20	.37	-0.21	0.56
Model $R^2 = .23$ $F(5, 253) = 15.47, p < .001$						
Behavior - Actor Difference	No Intent	0.10 <sup>a</sup>	0.09	.26	-0.08	0.28
	Ambiguous Intent	-0.03 <sup>a</sup>	0.09	.70	-0.21	0.14
	Clear Intent	0.0006 <sup>a</sup>	0.09	.995	-0.18	0.18
Model $R^2 = .02$ $F(5, 253) = 0.99, p = .42$						

*Note.* Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. Within each criterion measure, coefficients that do not share a common superscript are significantly different at  $p < .05$ . Lower CI and Upper CI are the lower and upper limits respectively of a 95% confidence interval for the effect.

Figure 5. Simple Slopes Predicting Spontaneous Attributions of Prejudice

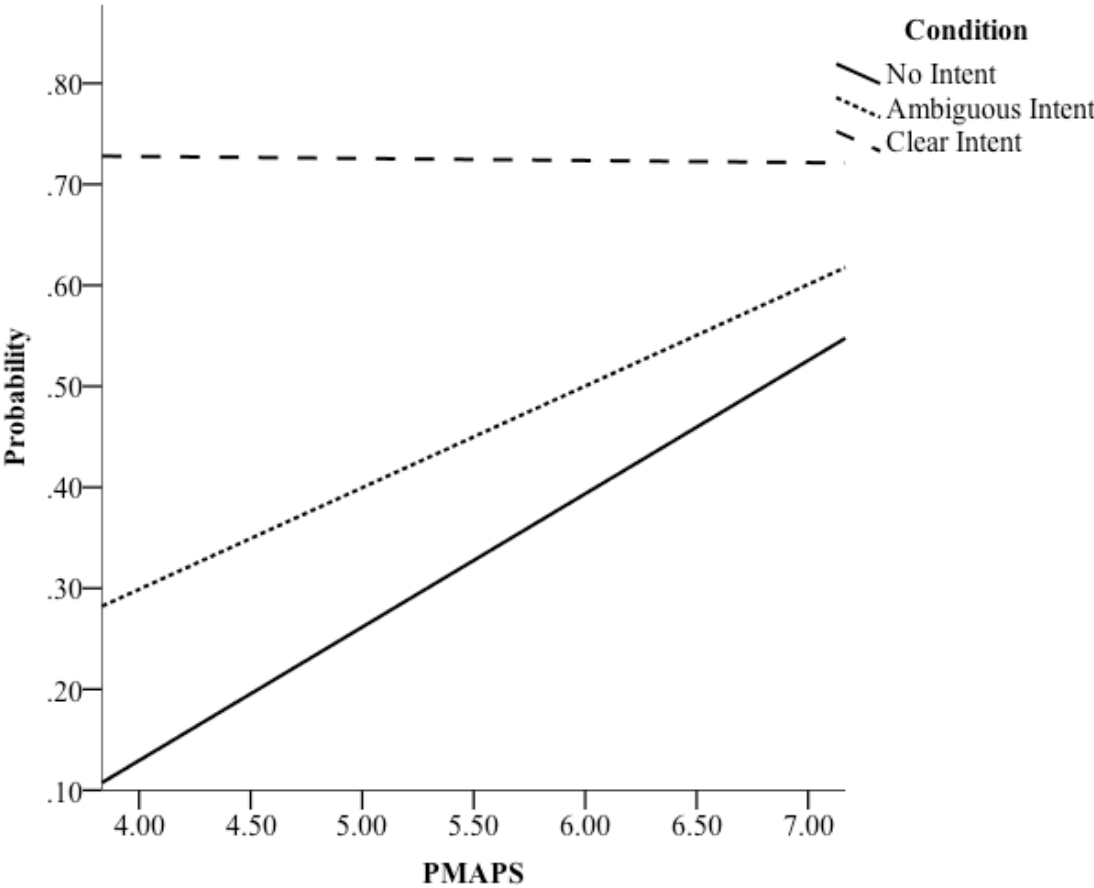


Figure 6. Simple Slopes Predicting Attributions of Prejudice to the Behavior

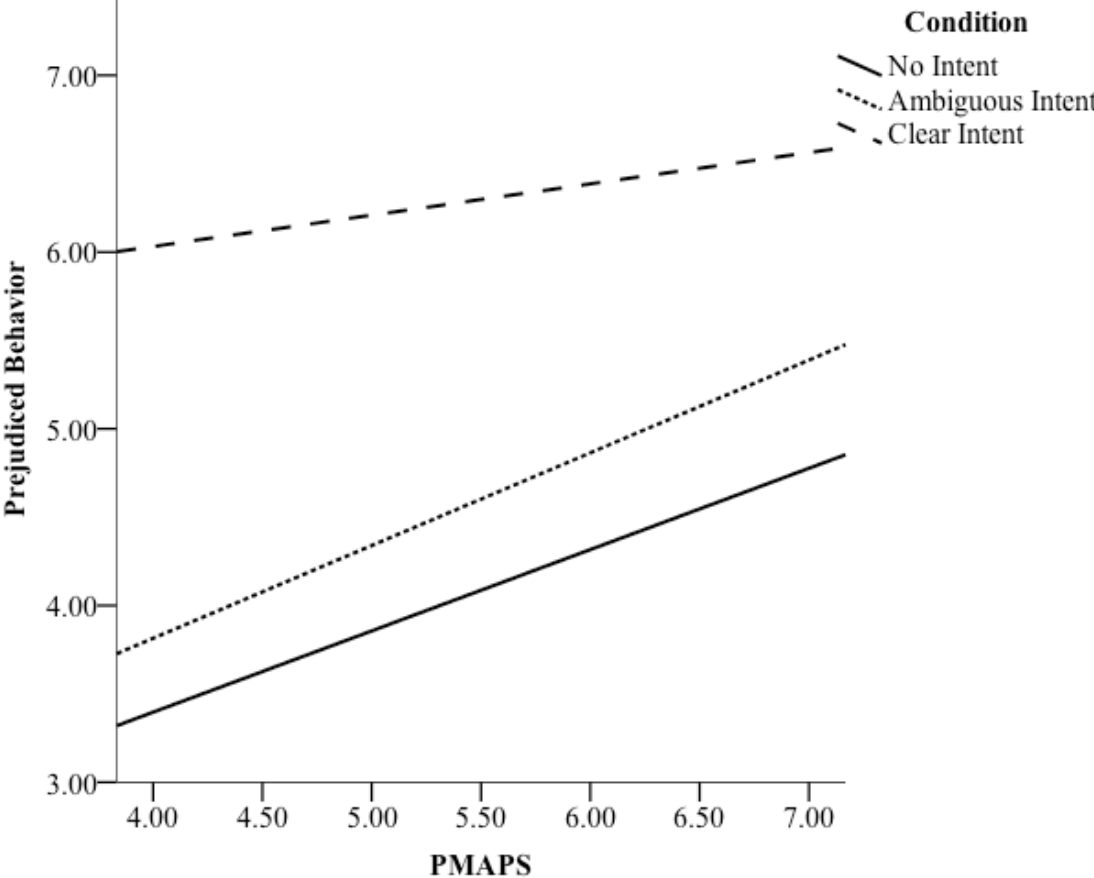
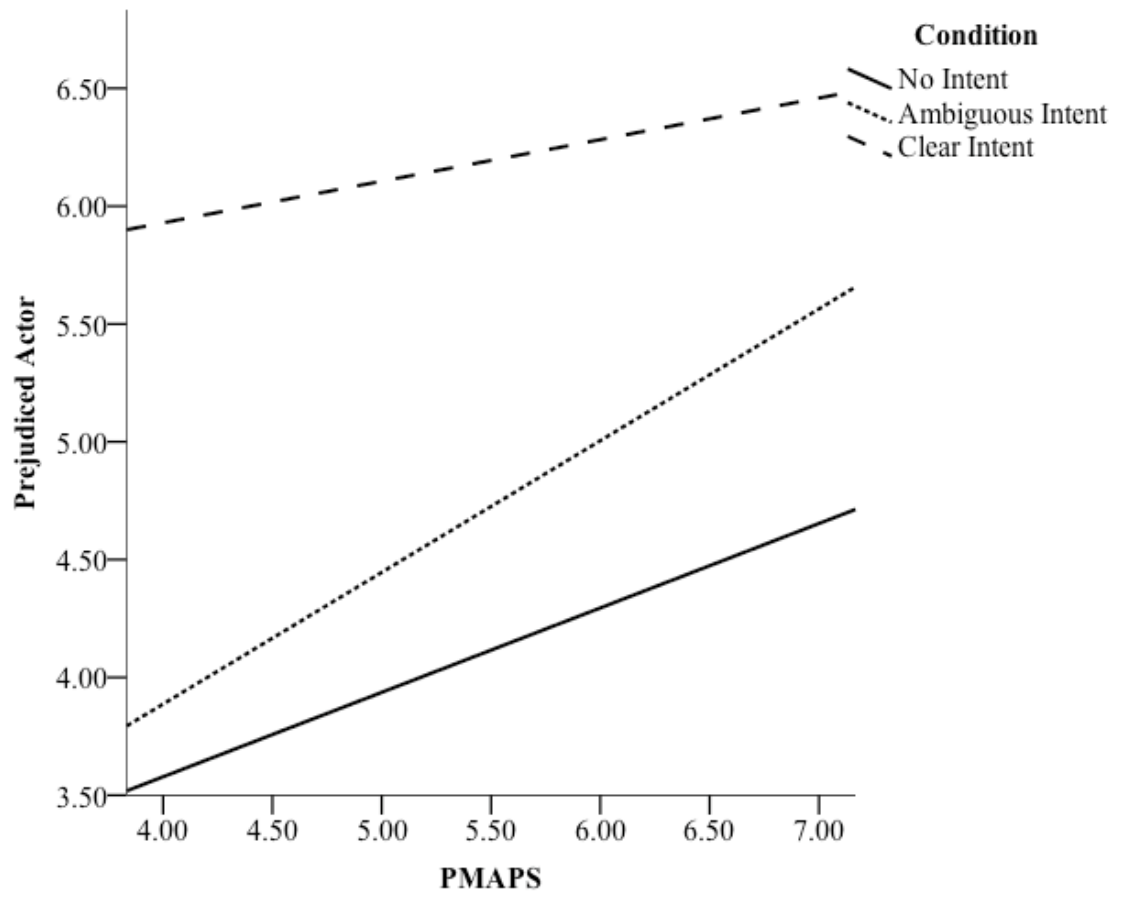


Figure 7. Simple Slopes Predicting Attributions of Prejudice to the Actor



The exploratory model predicting the difference between attributions of prejudice to the behavior and to the actor accounted for only 2% of the variance and none of the PMAPS effects or interactions were significant (see Table 6). Thus, Study 2 failed to replicate the finding from Study 1 that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice moderates whether observers more strongly attribute prejudice to the behavior or to the actor.

In summary, Study 2 provided support for the hypothesis that individual differences in the tendency to make attributions to prejudice predict attributions to prejudice in situations where interracial interaction occurs between a White actor and a Black target. Partial support was also found for the hypothesis that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice is most influential when information about the intent to racially discriminate is most ambiguous. Although the interactions testing the differences between no intent, ambiguous intent, and clear intent conditions were not significant, the pattern of effects did trend in the predicted direction, such that at least descriptively, the strongest relationships between the PMAPS and attributions of prejudice to the behavior and actor were observed in the ambiguous intent condition.

Furthermore, the PMAPS predicted attributions to prejudice when the reason for the actor's behavior was unavailable and when an alternative reason was provided, but not when the actor's reason more clearly suggested an intent to racially discriminate. This finding is important because information about an actor's intent to racially discriminate is often unavailable to the observer, and when it is, this information is likely to imply that the actor did not intend to racially discriminate. Individuals are motivated to avoid appearing racist (Plant & Devine, 1998) and are more likely to express prejudice when race-neutral alternative explanations are available, or situational ambiguity can mask expressions of prejudice (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Dovidio, 2001; Pearson, et al., 2009). Thus, the current findings that a tendency to make attributions to prejudice predicted attributions to prejudice when information about intent implied that an actor did not intend to racially discriminate and when information about intent was not available are important because these conditions are representative of situations that observers are more likely to experience in their social world. In conclusion, the results of Study 2 support the more general hypothesis that attributions to prejudice can be predicted by the individual differences in beliefs and expectations regarding racial prejudice that are measured by the PMAPS.



## Chapter 4 - Chapter 4 - General Discussion

The purpose of the current studies was to assess whether beliefs and expectations regarding a tendency to make attributions to prejudice would predict attributions to prejudice in situations where racial discrimination prototypically might occur (e.g., a White individual causing an unfavorable outcome for a Black individual; Inman & Baron, 1996). Additionally, the current studies tested whether the tendency to make attributions to prejudice would interact with situational information about the harm caused to the target and information about the actor's intent to racially discriminate. I hypothesized that higher levels of the propensity to make attributions to prejudice as measured by the PMAPS would be related to a higher likelihood of making attributions to prejudice when individuals observe an interracial interaction that may potentially involve racial discrimination (e.g., housing discrimination by a White landlord against a Black applicant). Additionally, I hypothesized that, because people tend to interpret ambiguous social information in ways that are consistent with their beliefs and expectations (e.g., Nickerson, 1998; Lord et al., 1979; Saucier & Miller 2003), this relationship would be strongest when information about harm and intent were most ambiguous.

In two studies, participants were presented with a scenario where a White landlord declined to rent an apartment to a Black student. Participants were asked to provide reasons for the actor's behavior and ratings of the level of prejudice in the actor's behavior, as well as the level of prejudice they attributed to the actor himself. To control for priming effects of reporting their beliefs and expectations regarding racial prejudice more generally, participants completed the PMAPS in a seemingly unrelated study about one month (on average) prior to being presented with the scenarios in Studies 1 and 2.

Studies 1 and 2 provided evidence in support of the hypothesis that a tendency to make attributions to prejudice would predict attributions to prejudice in scenarios where a White actor might discriminate against a Black target. In Study 1, information about the harm done to the target was manipulated in three conditions (no harm, ambiguous harm, and clear harm conditions). Participants' attributions of prejudice to the behavior were predicted by the PMAPS in the ambiguous harm condition (i.e., where no information about harm was provided), but not in the no harm condition (i.e., where information suggested that no harm came to the target) or clear harm condition (i.e., when information clearly suggested that the target was harmed). This

finding was replicated in Study 2 where information about the actor's intent to racially discriminate was manipulated in three conditions (no intent, ambiguous intent, and clear intent conditions) The PMAPS significantly predicted attributions to prejudice in the ambiguous intent condition (i.e., where no information about the actor's intent to racial discrimination was provided) and in the no intent condition (i.e., where the information suggested a race-neutral reason for his behavior), such that participants at increasingly higher levels of the PMAPS were more likely to make spontaneous attributions to prejudice and rate the behavior and actor as more prejudiced. The PMAPS did not significantly predict attributions to prejudice in the clear intent conditions (i.e., where information suggested clear intent to racially discriminate).

Partial support was also found for the hypothesis that a tendency to make attributions to prejudice would be strongest when information about harm and intent were most ambiguous. At least descriptively, in the ambiguous conditions where information about harm (Study 1) and intent (Study 2) were not provided, the strongest relationships between the PMAPS and participants' attributions of prejudice to the behavior (Studies 1 and 2) and actor (Study 2) were observed. However, the interactions testing the difference in the relationship between the PMAPS and attributions did not consistently reach conventional levels of statistical significance. In Study 1, evidence for moderation was found in two of the four tests for moderation, but no significant evidence was found for moderation in Study 2. Specifically, in Study 1, attributions of prejudice to the behavior were predicted by the PMAPS in the ambiguous harm condition (i.e., where no information about harm was given) and this effect was significantly stronger than the effect in the no harm condition (i.e., where information suggested no harm came to the target), but not significantly stronger than the effect in the clear harm condition (i.e., where information suggested the target was harmed). In Study 2, the PMAPS predicted spontaneous attributions to prejudice and ratings of the level of prejudice demonstrated by the behavior and the level of prejudice attributed to the actor in the ambiguous intent condition (i.e., where no information about intent was given) and in the no intent condition (i.e., where information suggested that the actor had a race-neutral reason for his behavior), but these effects were not significantly different from the effect in the clear intent condition (i.e., where the information clearly suggested that the actor intended to racially discriminate).

There are several possible explanations for this lack of consistent evidence for the moderating effects of information about harm and intent on the tendency to make attributions to

prejudice. In Study 1, in the clear harm condition, the tendency to make attributions to prejudice was found to have a non-significant, but positive relationship with attributions of prejudice to the behavior (see Table 3 and Figure 1). In other words, the effect of the PMAPS on attributions to prejudice in the clear harm condition trended in a similar direction to the significant effect observed in the ambiguous harm condition, thus making it difficult to find a significant difference between them.

Furthermore, in Study 2, the significant positive relationship between the PMAPS and all three measures of attributions of prejudice in the ambiguous intent condition, and in the no intent condition (see Table 6), is consistent with previous findings that the PMAPS predicts attributions to prejudice when race-neutral reasons for potentially prejudiced behaviors are available, as well as when cues for prejudice are ambiguous (Miller et al., 2014). Together, such evidence may imply that observers who have a relatively higher tendency to make attributions to prejudice may be more likely to discount disconfirming information that is counter to attributions of prejudice. In the current studies, as well as being consistent with the previous study by Miller and colleagues (2014), the similarity of the effect of the PMAPS in predicting attributions to prejudice in the no intent and ambiguous intent conditions made it difficult to find a significant difference between them.

Furthermore, although the information provided in the clear intent condition suggested that the actor's reason for his behavior was due to his racial prejudice, participants were not directly told that the actor was racist. And while providing information that implied that the actor was prejudiced in the clear intent condition resulted in stronger attributions of prejudice compared to the ambiguous and no intent conditions, attributions to prejudice did not ceiling out in the clear intent condition (see Table 4). Avoiding ceiling effects was an intentional part of the design in Study 2, but this did leave room for the PMAPS to have an effect on attributions to prejudice in the clear intent condition. Although the relationship between the PMAPS and attributions to prejudice in the clear intent condition was non-significant, the effect was in the same direction as the effect in the ambiguous intent condition resulting in a non-significant test of the difference between the effects. This finding is consistent with a prior study by Miller, Hockett, and Saucier (manuscript in preparation) who, in a non-student sample, found that the PMAPS predicted attributions to prejudice when cues for prejudice were ambiguous as well as when cues for prejudice were more clear. These findings suggest that even when there is clear

evidence for prejudice, a relatively lower tendency to make attributions to prejudice may lead observers to deny that prejudice has occurred.

## Implications

Despite not finding consistent evidence of the moderating effects of information about harm and intent on the tendency to make attributions to prejudice, these data do provide more consistent evidence that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice can predict attributions to prejudice in situations where the potential for racial discrimination is present (e.g., an interracial interaction between White and Black individuals; Inman & Baron, 1996; Marti et al., 2000) and information about the actor's intentions and the harmful consequences to the target are unavailable. This finding is important because observers often do not have information about harm and intent (Swim et al. 2003), and may therefore interpret the situation in a way that is consistent with their beliefs and expectations, as is proposed by theories and research on the biased assimilation of information (e.g., Nickerson, 1998; Lord et al., 1979; Saucier & Miller, 2003). Even when information about an actor's intent is available, this information is likely to come from an actor who is motivated to avoid being seen as racist and thus may be conveyed to imply that the actor is not prejudiced (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Dovidio, 2001; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Katz & Hass, 1988; McConahay, 1986; Pearson et al., 2009). Observers who have a stronger tendency to make attributions to prejudice may discount such race-neutral alternative explanations of actors' intentions, and although the current studies do not examine the cognitive mechanisms by which such discounting may occur, the current findings are certainly consistent with this proposition. Future research should more systematically examine whether individuals who have a stronger tendency to make attributions to prejudice more strongly discount information that suggests non-prejudiced alternative reasons for an actor's potentially prejudiced behaviors.

Another important contribution of the current studies is that they examine the tendency to make attributions from the point of view of an *observer*. With a few notable exceptions (e.g., Inman & Baron, 1996; Marti et al., 2000; Sommers & Norton, 2006; Swim et al., 2003), the majority of research is concerned with factors that may influence attributions to prejudice from the perspective of the *targets* of prejudice (for reviews, see Barrett & Swim, 1998; Kaiser & Major, 2006; Major et al., 2002; Major & Sawyer, 2009). However, gaining a better

understanding of attributions to prejudice from the perspective of third party observers is also important. Often, observers are called upon to make judgments and decisions that affect both the actor and target when racial discrimination is claimed or disputed (e.g., the juries in criminal cases, individuals who monitor and enforce workplace anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies). Therefore, an understanding of the factors that influence observers' attributions to prejudice may also have important practical implications that can be applied to real world settings.

The current studies also further validate the PMAPS as a measure of observers' tendencies to make attributions to prejudice. Having the capability to measure differences in peoples' expectations that others' behavior towards stigmatized individuals reflects their underlying prejudice has many possible research applications. An understanding of the individual differences in making attributions to prejudice will help psychologists interested in studying the processes involved in identifying discrimination. For example, some individuals may be more likely to make certain types of errors (e.g., false positives and false negatives, in other words, seeing prejudice when it is not expressed and failing to see prejudice when it is expressed). Additionally, the PMAPS might help identify people who are more likely to engage in collective social action. For example, individuals who believe that stereotyping and discrimination are uncommon occurrences may lack the social consciousness and collective identity (e.g., Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Vlope, 2004) needed to motivate engagement in activities to bring about social change. Furthermore, a tendency to see others as prejudiced may be accompanied by social costs, such as negative evaluations and social exclusion. The PMAPS could be a useful instrument for exploring how individuals manage the social consequences of making attributions to prejudice (e.g., Kaiser & Miller, 2001, 2003). Also related to social motivations, the PMAPS could help researchers study identity threat to majority group members who reject prejudice. Other ingroup members who openly express their prejudices through disparaging comments, stereotyping and discrimination may threaten the identities of Whites who are more likely to see prejudice in the world around them. Such individuals may respond by distancing themselves from their ingroup (e.g., Spears, Doosje, & Ellermers, 1997), or by confronting ingroup members who explicitly express prejudice (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003). In summary, it is through a psychometrically-sound measure such as the PMAPS that a better understanding of the consequences for third party observers can be achieved.

## Limitations

The current studies are not without limitations. The results from an undergraduate sample in a Midwest region may not generalize to the broader population. Additionally, the hypothetical scenarios and the written vignette format used in the current studies may not generalize to real world events. However, it is not uncommon for individuals to encounter expressions of prejudice in the media (e.g., news stories, online comments) and thus the written format used in these studies is not necessarily invalid. Still, future research should examine how the PMAPS predicts judgments of prejudice in a more behavioral, interactive setting. Such an environment would also allow researchers to assess the influence of additional factors, such as the effect of corroborating, or contradictory judgments expressed by the actor, the target, and other bystanders.

Additionally, consistent with Swim and colleagues' (2003) methods, ambiguity in the current studies was operationalized as a lack of information. As such, the level of ambiguity was relative to the no (harm/intent) and clear (harm/intent) conditions. However, there are different ways in which informational ambiguity can arise as, for example, from the presence of conflicting information. Future research should manipulate prejudice confirming and prejudice disconfirming information in the same scenario (i.e., both pieces of information are sometimes present) to test whether the tendency to make attributions to prejudice is related to the differential weighting of information that is consistent or inconsistent with prior beliefs and expectations.

An additional limitation related to the nature of the experimental stimuli may account for the lack of an effect of information about harm on attributions of prejudice in Study 1. In the vignette for the clear harm condition, the target was described as only suffering the psychological harm of being disappointed because he had to settle for a less-preferred apartment. Participants may not have perceived this as a high amount of harm. Future research should examine how more extreme levels of harm suffered by the targets of prejudice affect attributions to prejudice.

A further limitation is related to the self-report method of measuring participants' PMAPS responses as well as the dependent measures. Prior research suggests that the PMAPS is not related to a tendency to provide socially acceptable answers (Miller et al., 2013); however, this tendency was not measured in the current studies. Furthermore, the PMAPS is a measure with emerging, but not yet fully established, evidence of validity (although the current studies do

support its predictive validity). In relation to the dependent measures, asking participants to rate how prejudiced they thought the behavior was may have introduced a demand characteristic, and although measurement of attributions to prejudice was equivalent across the experimental conditions, participants may have guessed the purpose of the studies. This limitation was partially addressed by having participants respond to an open-ended question (see Inman & Baron, 1996 for similar methods) about the reason for the actor's behavior in the vignette prior to them being presented with the rating scales on the following page. In Study 2, the PMAPS predicted participants' attributions to prejudice in participants' open-ended responses, suggesting that there was no evidence of a demand characteristic. However, measuring attributions to prejudice by evaluating participants' written responses also has its limitations. Some participants may have suspected that prejudice was expressed, but did not clearly reveal this in their responses. Therefore, what may have been actually measured in this case was the participants' threshold for clearly reporting an attribution to prejudice.

The measurement of the PMAPS in the current studies was also designed to minimize demand characteristics. The measurement of PMAPS being separated on average about one month prior to participation in the experiments was a strength of the design because this feature limited priming participants' thoughts of racial discrimination. However, this feature could also be considered a limitation because it introduced measurement error. Prior research (Miller, Hockett, & Saucier, manuscript in preparation) found that the test-retest reliability of the PMAPS to be acceptable ( $r = .68$ ), but perhaps not as high as might be expected by a reliable measure of a truly trait-like construct. Beliefs, expectations, and cognitive tendencies may be relatively more stable over longer periods of time compared to more state-like constructs, but they are not as stable as traits. Thus, by introducing a time delay between the measurement of the PMAPS and the dependent measures into the design of the current studies, measurement error was potentially introduced due to the possibility that participants' tendencies to make attributions to prejudice may have changed over that time period of time. Such measurement error may have attenuated the strength of the observed PMAPS effects. Furthermore, the observed scale reliabilities for the PMAPS in the current studies were acceptable, but also an additional source of measurement error. Despite these limitations, the PMAPS was generally found to be a significant predictor of attributions to prejudice in the current studies.

One final limitation should be noted regarding the inconsistency in the evidence supporting the hypothesis that the tendency to make attributions to prejudice will be stronger when information about harm and intent is most ambiguous. Although the required sample sizes for both studies were estimated using a priori power analyses in which the effect sizes were based on prior PMAPS studies, the observed effect sizes for the condition X PMAPS interactions in the current studies were relatively weak (possibly due to the additional source of measurement error described above related to the measurement of the PMAPS several weeks before presenting participants with the stimuli and dependent measures). Furthermore, because of the loss of analyzable cases due to participants' incomplete responses and the failure to match all participants' data from part one (where PMAPS was measured) and part two (where the manipulation occurred and the dependent measures were gathered), the sample sizes in both studies were less than the target sample sizes estimated from the a priori power analyses. Post-hoc power analyses using the observed average effect size ( $R^2$  increase) for the key dependent measures (attributions of prejudice to the actor and to the behavior) revealed that even if the target sample sizes were achieved, the studies would have been underpowered to find significant evidence of moderation (Study 1 power = .51, Study 2 power = .16).

### **Future Directions**

Despite these limitations and the need for additional research, having the capability to measure differences in peoples' tendencies to perceive prejudice has many important research applications that can contribute to our understanding of the psychology of prejudice. For example, individual differences in the tendency to perceive prejudice may be related to differences in individuals' prototypes for the expression of prejudice (e.g. Inman & Baron, 1996; Marti et al., 2000), or the tendency to perceive non-prototypical forms of prejudice (e.g., prejudice towards women who have been raped; Hockett, Saucier, & Badke, 2012; prejudice toward individuals with intellectual disabilities; McManus, Feyes, & Saucier, 2011). Similarly, the tendency to make attributions to prejudice may affect how individuals perceive, or misperceive the intent to use humor to disparage social outgroups, or the intent to use humor to subvert a culture of prejudice and discrimination (e.g., Saucier, Strain, & Till, manuscript in preparation; Strain, dissertation in preparation). Future research should also examine whether



individual differences in judgments of prejudice in prototypical and non-prototypical expressions are a function of automatic or controlled cognitive processes (e.g., Devine, 1989).

It may also be useful to examine how individual differences in attributions to prejudice operate at the cognitive level from the theoretical perspective of Signal Detection Theory (SDT). As already suggested in the introduction, the PMAPS may be measuring individual differences in the threshold for making an attribution to prejudice (i.e., detecting prejudice), such that individuals higher in the tendency to make attributions to prejudice have a lower threshold for detecting prejudice. Future research could use SDT paradigms to systematically manipulate different levels of information that positively indicate prejudice (i.e., the signal) in addition to, or in combination with, different levels of information that negatively indicate prejudice or attenuate the signal in other ways (i.e., informational noise).

Additionally, the PMAPS may be related to differences in perceptions of the social consequences of publically acknowledging instances of racial prejudice and discrimination. For example, individuals who are more or less likely to perceive prejudice in the world around them may differ in terms of whether they fear that the personal costs of communicating their judgments to others (e.g., Kaiser & Miller, 2001, 2003) is outweighed by the societal costs of being silent (e.g., allowing prejudice to go unchallenged). Similarly, individuals may also perceive different costs (e.g., to themselves, the targets, and the accused) of making different types of errors (e.g., false positives vs. false negatives) in judgments of prejudice. These different perceptions of risk may further help explain individual variation in perceiving and reporting expressions of prejudice. Furthermore, support for social programs that seek to help the targets of prejudice (e.g., affirmative action, civil rights legislation), or programs that are aimed at improving intergroup relations (e.g., diversity initiatives) may be related to a combination of the tendency to perceive prejudice and beliefs about the negative societal consequences of prejudice.

In addition to predicting when attributions to prejudice might occur, the current research may be extended to examine factors that increase or decrease the tendency to make attributions to prejudice. For example, the PMAPS could be used as a dependent measure for interventions that attempt to raise social consciousness regarding racial prejudice and discrimination. Conversely, research on how different experiences, motivations, and political orientations work to attenuate the tendency to make attributions to prejudice may increase our understanding of the different psychological processes that lead to (arguably false) beliefs that, at least in the United

States, we are living in a post-racial society where prejudice and discrimination are no longer a problem.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the PMAPS will contribute to our theoretical understanding about how different individual differences and social contexts operate through motivational and cognitive mechanisms to facilitate or hinder the recognition of subtle expressions of prejudice. The broader impacts of this work will be to advance our understanding of how prejudice and discrimination are perceived by third parties. An understanding of attributions to prejudice made by observers, especially by members of dominant groups, has important societal implications in that bystanders' judgments are often implicated when dealing with instances of prejudice and discrimination. In a contemporary society in which prejudice emerges often under the cover of ambiguity, understanding the processes that underlie perceptions of prejudice is essential in understanding contemporary intergroup relations.

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## **Appendix A - The Propensity to Make Attributions to Prejudice Scale**

### *Expectation*

1. People discriminate against people who are not like them.
2. Racist behavior is more widespread than people think it is.
3. Other people treat minorities based on stereotypes.
4. You'll see lots of racism if you look for it.

### *Trivialization*

5. Racial minorities are too worried about being discriminated against.
6. Racial minorities are too sensitive about stereotypes.
7. Minorities today are overly worried about being victims of racism.
8. People are overly concerned about racial issues.

### *Vigilance*

9. I think about why racial minorities are treated stereotypically.
10. I think about whether people act in a prejudiced or discriminatory manner.
11. I consider whether people's actions are prejudiced or discriminatory.
12. I am on the lookout for instances of prejudice or discrimination.

### *Efficacy*

13. I am quick to recognize prejudice.
14. My friends think I'm good at spotting racism.
15. I find that prejudice and discrimination are pretty easy to spot.

## Appendix B - Vignettes



The image above was used to convey the race of the actor and the target and identify the names and roles of the characters for the vignettes used in Studies 1 and 2.

### **Base Vignette**

Jason was looking for an apartment prior to the start of the fall semester at college. He submitted a rental application to Mike, the landlord. Mike showed Jason the apartment and said that he would get back to him regarding whether he could rent it out to Jason. A few days later, Mike phoned Jason to say that he was renting the apartment out to another individual.

### **Study 1 Harm Manipulation**

#### *No Harm Ending*

Jason was not disappointed because he had already found an apartment he liked better.

#### *Ambiguous Harm Ending*

(No additional information was given.)

### ***Clear Harm Ending***

Jason was very disappointed because he had to eventually settle for an apartment that he didn't like nearly as much.

## **Study 2 Intent Manipulation**

### ***No Intent Ending***

A few days later, Mike phoned Jason to say that he was renting the apartment out to another individual who was higher on the waiting list.

### ***Ambiguous Intent Ending***

(No additional information was given.)

### ***Clear Intent Ending***

A few days later, Mike phoned Jason to say that he was renting the apartment out to another individual. Mike suspected that Jason, being a young Black male, may keep company with people he didn't want hanging around the building.

## **Appendix C - Dependent Measures**

The following items were used as dependent measures in both Studies 1 and 2.

### **Open-Ended Question**

Why do you think that Mike did not rent the apartment to Jason? Please write your thoughts in the space provided.

### **Attributions of Harm**

1. Using your best judgment, how much harm did Mike cause Jason?
2. Using your best judgment, how much emotional distress did Mike cause Jason?
3. Using your best judgment, how much psychological distress did Mike cause Jason?

### **Attributions of Intent**

1. Using your best judgment, how much did Mike intend to harm Jason?
2. Using your best judgment, how much did Mike intend to racially discriminate against Jason?
3. Using your best judgment, how much did Mike intend to express prejudice toward Jason?

### **Attributions of Prejudiced Behavior**

1. Mike's behavior was racist.
2. Mike demonstrated bias toward Blacks.
3. Mike racially discriminated against Jason.
4. Mike's behavior was fair. (*reversed*)

### **Attributions of Prejudiced Actor**

1. Mike is racist toward Blacks.

2. Mike is prejudiced toward Blacks.
3. Mike holds negative stereotypes about Blacks.
4. Mike has positive feelings about Blacks. (*reversed*)

### **Filler Items**

1. Mike didn't think enough about the consequences of what he was doing.
2. Mike's behavior was typical.
3. Most people would do the same thing as Mike in this situation.
4. Mike's behavior was insensitive.
5. Mike's behavior was foolish.
6. Mike's behavior was unkind.
7. Mike's behavior was surprising.
8. I would do the same thing as Mike in this situation.
9. I feel sorry for Jason.
10. I would not want to be associated with Mike.
11. If I could, I would help Jason.
12. I would not hold Mike's behavior against him.
13. Mike meant no harm by what he did.
14. Jason probably thought that Mike was prejudiced.
15. Jason probably thought that Mike was racist.
16. Jason probably thought that Mike racially discriminated against him.
17. Jason probably thought that Mike's behavior was racist.
18. Jason probably thought that Mike's behavior was prejudiced.
19. If I was Jason, I would be very upset at Mike.