

THE EFFECT OF FIVE LEVELS OF PRESTIGE  
UPON EXPRESSED ATTITUDES

by

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## INTRODUCTION

This experiment was designed to investigate the effects of prestige ratings of different authors on attitudes of humans towards statements attributed to these authors. Additionally, the study was planned to allow determination of the relative effect of different degrees of positive as well as negative prestige.

In brief, then, this study attempted to answer three questions: (a) Is it possible, by manipulating the prestige level of the attributed author, to alter attitudes towards a statement? (b) What are the relative strengths (as measured by expressed attitudes) of positive prestige influence and negative prestige influence? (c) What is the nature of the relationship between prestige of attributed author and expressed attitudes?

A considerable number of previous investigations have studied the effects of prestige upon expressed agreement to statements, speeches, news articles, and other communications. Most investigators have found that the source or author of communications does influence attitudes expressed towards them. This prestige effect has been observed on communications concerning religion (5); speech expressions, moral traits, and musical cadences (18); economic statements (16); dogmatic statements (19); and various social matters (e.g., 1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 17). Prestigious sources also have been found to influence judgments of photographs (4).

The present experiment was similar to preceding investigations in its general purpose, the measurement of prestige influences upon attitudes, but varied from most of them procedurally and thus in some of the conclusions it allowed to be drawn from the results. Unlike any of the studies cited this experiment used five levels of prestige as an independent variable--highly positive, positive, neutral, negative, and highly negative. By using five prestige levels, the investigation explored the effects of more points along a continuum of prestige than were examined in earlier studies. An additional difference between this experiment and most of the studies cited is that the five levels of prestige used here were determined empirically prior to the measurement of the to-be-influenced attitudes. A final difference is that the test-retest procedure common in earlier studies was not used in this one. The test-retest procedure in prestige studies involves measuring subjects' attitudes towards statements and then, at a later time, assessing their attitudes again to the same statements attributed to some prestige figure. This procedure was avoided here to eliminate the possibility of contamination of a subject's attitude toward a statement with his memory of his earlier response to the statement.

#### METHOD

##### Measurement of Prestige Ratings

Five persons, one at each of five different levels of prestige, were selected as follows:

A rating scale, distributed to each of 460 students, asked subjects to rate 11 men in two ways; first, by using a seven-point "like-dislike" scale and second, by ranking them (from 1 through 11). (A copy of the "Famous Names Attitude Survey" is included in the Appendix.) The 11 names included on the rating scale were William Jennings Bryan, Winston Churchill, Adolph Hitler, Thomas Jefferson, Nikita Khrushchev, Robert E. Lee, Abraham Lincoln, John D. Rockefeller, Sr., Josef Stalin, George Washington, and Woodrow Wilson. The more famous of these men were selected, on an intuitive basis, because it was felt that Americans' attitudes towards them are relatively homogeneous and stabilized. The names which are less well known than the others and which probably have been less influenced by "mythology," i.e., Wilson, Rockefeller, and Bryan, were chosen with the intention of obtaining at least one individual with a neutral prestige rating for the students as a whole.

The rating scales were administered during regular class periods to 371 general psychology students (in four classes) and to 89 introductory economics students (in one class). Two forms of the scale were used to determine whether a sequential effect in terms of the ordered position of the names might appear in the ratings. None did. Of the 460 scales completed, all but two were usable. One subject stated he had no opinion towards the men and filled all blanks with zeros. The other unusable scale contained questionable ratings and was signed by "Josef Stalin."

Table 1. Over-all ratings assigned to the 11 famous men on the "like-dislike" and the rank order scales.

Name	"Like-Dislike" scale			Rank Order scale		
	Modal rating	Median rating	Mean rating	Modal rating	Median rating	Mean rating
Abraham Lincoln	+ 3	+ 3	+ 2.65	1	1	1.74
George Washington	+ 3	+ 3	+ 2.39	2	2	2.52
Thomas Jefferson	+ 2	+ 2	+ 1.90	3	4	3.97
Winston Churchill	+ 2	+ 2	+ 1.88	3	4	4.00
Robert E. Lee	+ 1	+ 1	+ 1.37	6	6	5.48
Woodrow Wilson	+ 1	+ 1	+ 1.13	6	6	5.62
John D. Rockefeller, Sr.	0	+ 1	+ .83	8	7	6.36
William Jennings Bryan	0	0	+ .67	8	7	6.78
Nikita Khrushchev	- 3	- 2	- 1.84	9	9	9.62
Josef Stalin	- 3	- 3	- 2.13	10	10	9.94
Adolph Hitler	- 3	- 3	- 2.17	11	10	9.97

Table 1 lists the 11 men and the over-all ratings they were assigned. It can be seen that the ratings on the like-dislike and on the rank order scales agree closely. The first nine men listed were ranked in the same order by both rating methods. However, the positions of Stalin and Hitler were transposed on the two scales. The difference between their ratings was very small, though, being less than .01 of a unit on the like-dislike scale.

On the basis of the ratings in Table 1, five men were selected to represent different levels of prestige on the questionnaires used in the second part of the investigation. The like-dislike scale, rather than the rank order scale, was used as the primary means of selecting the five men. Ratings of a man on the rank order scale were made in relation to, and were limited by, ratings given the other 10 men. Such ratings were not, therefore, as suitable for selecting absolute prestige-level figures as were the like-dislike scale ratings, which could evaluate each man independently.

Lincoln obviously was the most well-liked one of the 11 men and was chosen as the highly positive prestige person. Hitler was selected as the highly negative prestige figure although Stalin would have served very nearly as well. As can be seen, the degree of Hitler's negativeness (-2.17) is not as great as Lincoln's positiveness (+2.65).

Jefferson and Khrushchev qualify well as moderately positive and moderately negative prestige figures, respectively. The

prestige of each is considerable, still it is appreciably less than that of the high prestige persons. Also, their absolute ratings are almost equal (1.90 to 1.84). Churchill might have been as suitable as Jefferson, but the latter was chosen as being less susceptible to temporary fluctuations in prestige. Also, in the rank order ratings Jefferson and Khrushchev occupy the most nearly opposite positions.

As a neutral figure, Bryan comes closest of the 11 men. Although his mean rating is somewhat positive (+ .67), his median and modal ratings are both 0.

A high degree of homogeneity of attitudes towards the 11 men was found in comparing over-all ratings by the five different groups (classes) of respondents. Table 2 lists the product-moment correlation coefficients between each pair of group's average ratings on the seven-point like-dislike scale.

Table 2. Inter-group agreement of ratings on like-dislike scale. (Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients)

Group	N	Group				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	156	.---				
2	18	.997	.---			
3	14	.991	.997	.---		
4	181	.998	.997	.993	.---	
5	89	.997	.992	.987	.996	.---

Groups 1 through 4 were four different classes of general psychology students, each with a different instructor. Group 5 was a class of introductory economics students.

Although any one individual's ratings on the like-dislike scale could not be assumed to constitute an equal-interval scale, group ratings probably averaged out such interval inequalities as did exist. For that reason, the product-moment correlation coefficient which assumes equal intervals seemed justified.

The extent of inter-group agreement in rank ordering the 11 men was also high. This is indicated by the rank-order correlation coefficients in Table 3.

Table 3. Inter-group agreement of rankings of the 11 men, (Spearman rank-order correlation coefficients)

Group	N	Group				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	154*	.---				
2	18	.982	.---			
3	14	.955	.973	.---		
4	181	.973	.973	.973	.---	
5	89	.964	.964	.991	.982	.---

\*The N of Group 1 is two less in this table than in Table 2 because two subjects who responded appropriately on the like-dislike scale failed to rank the 11 men.

#### Questionnaire Items

Sixty questionnaire items were selected from a pool of 140 statements on various social matters (e.g., economics, national policy, religion, education, politics, parent-child relationships, and qualities of people). The pool of statements was gathered from books of quotations and from attitude questionnaires used earlier by Crockett and Stewart (6). An effort was made to select

only those items of the 140 which could be attributed to any of the five prestige persons--Hitler, Lincoln, Khrushchev, Jefferson, or Bryan--by students as actual statements of the attributed author. Three Psychology Department faculty members and two graduate students judged each statement according to which of the five prestige figures would be accepted as the true author by general psychology students.

The inter-judge reliability was not computed because it was obvious that agreement for the 140 items on the whole was very low. However, since only 60 items were needed for the questionnaire, those on which there was highest agreement were selected as acceptable.

#### Subjects

Subjects were either volunteers or "captive audiences" from general psychology classes at Kansas State College. They were administered the questionnaires in unequal sized groups over a period of 10 days. A total of 287 students completed the questionnaire. One subject failed to follow directions and his results were discarded.

#### Experimental Design

Seven forms of the questionnaire were used. Fifty-eight subjects completed Form A which was a control form using the 60 statements with no attributed authorship. The other six forms were experimental ones. On these forms all but 10 statements

were claimed to have been taken from writings or speeches of one of the five prestige figures. The remaining 10 statements, constituting another control measure (the "control set"), were attributed to nobody, i.e., it was stated that the author of them was unknown.

The 60 items for the questionnaire were arranged into six "sets" of 10 statements each. (See the Appendix for a list of these statements.) An effort was made by the writer to keep the statements within a set consistent with each other as to opinions expressed. On a given experimental form of the questionnaire, Hitler would be the "author" of one set, Lincoln of another, etc. The sixth set would constitute the last 10 items of the questionnaire and would be "said" by none of the men. On the next experimental form of the test, the sets of statements would be revolved among the authors. The result of this procedure is shown in Table 4. Every statement was, on one form or another, once attributed to each of the five authors and once included in the control set. The order of the statements on the questionnaire was essentially random.

The design of the experiment, i.e., the arrangement of the statement sets among the authors, was that of a six-by-six Latin square. This meant that five degrees of freedom were available for questionnaire forms, five for statement sets, five for authors or prestige figures, and 1,352 for the residual error term.

Table 4. Attributed author of each set of statements on each form\*.

Questionnaire Form	Statement sets					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
B (N = 38)**	B	H	J	K	L	O
C (N = 38)	H	J	K	L	O	B
D (N = 38)	J	K	L	O	B	H
E (N = 38)	K	L	O	B	H	J
F (N = 38)	L	O	B	H	J	K
G (N = 38)	O	B	H	J	K	L

\*O indicates no author was used. B, H, J, K, and L indicate the attributed author was Bryan, Hitler, Jefferson, Khrushchev, or Lincoln.

\*\*N equals the number of subjects who completed usable copies of each form of the questionnaire.

#### Instructions

Written instructions were included on a page attached to the front of each questionnaire. A copy of the instructions attached to Form A is included in the Appendix. The instructions for experimental Forms B through G were identical to each other and differed from those of Form A in only two ways: (1) In Example 1, "JONES:" was typed directly before the statement, making it read "JONES: A college education provides...." In Example 2, "GLADSTONE:" was typed directly before the statement beginning "How little politics...." (2) Between the first and second paragraphs, the following paragraph was inserted:

These statements have been selected from writings and speeches of William Jennings Bryan, Adolph Hitler, Thomas Jefferson, Nikita Khrushchev, and Abraham Lincoln. The author of each statement is identified in capital letters immediately preceding the statement.

Approximately the same oral instructions were used for each administration of the questionnaire. The instructions were not read word-for-word, but they were delivered from the same outline for each group by the same examiner. These instructions were as follows:

Thank you for agreeing to help us in some research the Psychology Department is doing on attitudes. We are asking each of you to fill out an attitudes questionnaire for us today; but before we pass them out to you, I want to mention a few points.

First, because this questionnaire does cover attitudes there are no "correct" or "incorrect" answers for it. Your responses to the questionnaire will have no effect whatever on your course grade in general psychology or any other class. We want only your sincere, individual expressions of attitude.

When the questionnaires are passed out to you, read the directions closely before you go on. After you have read them, if you have no questions, turn the page and complete the questionnaire at your own speed. When you have finished, bring your questionnaire to me and leave quietly.

Are there any questions? (Pause) If not, we will now pass out the questionnaire forms.

The different forms of the questionnaire were interspersed in the stacks handed out to students. The questionnaires were passed down each row to the students sitting in alternate seats in that row. They were passed along quickly by the students on the ends of the rows, and there is no reason to believe that any of the subjects noticed that different forms of the questionnaire were being used.

#### Scaling Technique

Subjects responded to each statement by marking their first and second choices of the four alternatives--strongly agree, agree,

disagree, and strongly disagree. Six of the possible 12 permutations of first and second choices were assigned scale values as indicated in Table 5. The other six possible arrangements of first and second choices, i.e., those in which one of the points of the four-point scale lay between the first and second choices, were called non-scalable. Non-scalable (NS) responses were treated as though they had not been made at all. For example, if two of the 38 subjects rating a statement made NS responses, the statement was evaluated on the basis of the 36 scalable replies.

From Table 5 it can be seen that scale values 1 through 6 in order represent increasing amounts of disagreement. Values of 1 and 2 indicate agreement; 3 and 4 indicate nearly neutral positions; and 5 and 6 represent disagreement.

Table 5. Scale values assigned to scalable responses.

Scale Value	Alternatives on the four-point attitude scale			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	1*	2		
2	2	1		
3		1	2	
4		2	1	
5			1	2
6			2	1

\*1 indicates first choice; 2 indicates second choice

The main advantage of this type of scaling technique is that it yields a six-point measure but requires the subject to discriminate and respond on only a four-point scale. In other words, the scale

values derived have the flexibility and sensitivity of a six-point measure. Since subjects' responses are made on a four-point scale, though, they probably are more easily and accurately selected than they would be on a scale with a larger number of less discriminable intervals.

#### RESULTS

Table 6 gives the tabulation of the scale value categories of the responses. (It will be noticed that only 124 (.7%) of the 17,160 responses were non-scalable.) Tables 7 and 8 present the same data in percentages, analyzed two different ways. Table 7 gives the percentage of the total responses to each author (and the control set and control form) which fell into each of the scale value categories (1, 2, 3, etc.) Table 8 indicates the percentages of the total in each scale value which were made to statements by each different author (and to statements in the control set and on the control form.) For example, by looking at Table 6, one sees that a total of 4,517 responses had a scale value of 1. Of these, 748 were made to Lincoln statements and only 563 to Hitler statements. From Table 7 one sees that of the total responses made, 26.3 per cent of them were scale value 1. Of the total responses to Lincoln statements, 32.8 per cent were in scale value 1; only 24.7 per cent of the Hitler statement responses were of that value. From Table 8, one finds that 16.6 per cent of the total number of scale value 1 responses were made to Lincoln statements although only 13.3 per cent of the total number of responses were made to Lincoln

Table 6. Total number of responses made, listed by author and scale value.

Scale Value	Author							Total
	L	J	B	K	H	O <sub>1</sub> *	O <sub>2</sub> *	
1	748	680	618	523	563	525	860	4517
2	508	495	437	436	393	465	612	3346
3	437	446	479	425	402	481	680	3350
4	250	262	284	266	272	300	398	2032
5	181	234	274	313	338	288	507	2135
6	139	141	175	298	288	210	405	1656
NS	17	22	13	19	24	11	18	124
Total	2280	2280	2280	2280	2280	2280	3480	17160

\*O<sub>1</sub> and O<sub>2</sub> indicate no author was used. O<sub>1</sub> statements constituted the control set and O<sub>2</sub> statements appeared on the control form.

Table 7. Total number of responses made, listed by percentages falling in each scale value for each author.

Scale Value	Author							Total
	L	J	B	K	H	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	
1	32.8%	29.8%	27.1%	22.9%	24.7%	23.0%	24.7%	26.3%
2	22.3	21.7	19.2	19.1	17.3	20.4	17.6	19.5
3	19.2	19.6	21.0	18.7	17.6	21.1	19.6	19.5
4	11.0	11.5	12.4	11.7	11.9	13.2	11.4	11.8
5	7.9	10.2	12.0	13.7	14.8	12.6	14.6	12.5
6	6.1	6.2	7.7	13.1	12.6	9.2	11.6	9.7
NS	.7	1.0	.6	.8	1.1	.5	.5	.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 8. Total number of responses made, listed by percentages of each scale value category made to each author.

Scale Value	Author							Total
	L	J	B	K	H	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	
1	16.6%	15.0%	13.7%	11.6%	12.5%	11.6%	19.0%	100%
2	15.2	14.8	13.1	13.0	11.7	13.9	18.3	100
3	13.1	13.3	14.3	12.7	11.9	14.4	20.3	100
4	12.3	12.9	14.0	13.1	13.4	14.7	19.6	100
5	8.5	11.0	12.8	14.7	15.8	13.5	23.7	100
6	8.4	8.5	10.6	18.0	17.4	12.7	24.4	100
NS	13.7	17.8	10.5	15.3	19.3	8.9	14.5	100
Total	13.3	13.3	13.3	13.3	13.3	13.3	20.2	100

statements. Khrushchev statements also received 13.3 per cent of the total responses but received only 11.6 per cent of scale value 1 responses. In examining Table 8, one should bear in mind that the figures in the O<sub>2</sub> (control form) column are relatively large because a larger number of subjects completed the control form, i.e. 20.2 per cent of all responses were made to control form statements while only 13.3 per cent of the total number were made to statements by each of the authors.

It can be seen from the above three tables that, in general, a larger proportion of the favorable responses were made to statements by positive figures, Jefferson and Lincoln. Also, a disproportionate share of the unfavorable responses were made to statements attributed to Hitler and Khrushchev. These facts are reflected in Fig. 1 which shows that the means of responses to positive prestige figures' statements were more favorable than those to statements by negative prestige figures, by neutral figures, or by nobody. The shape of the curve in Fig. 1 indicates the prestige effects operated in the expected direction although the curve does not show whether the effects were significant.

The mean and median response values for statements attributed to Hitler were 3.13 and 3; to Khrushchev, 3.13 and 3; to control set, 3.00 and 3; to Bryan, 2.86 and 3; to Jefferson, 2.69 and 2; and to Lincoln, 2.57 and 2.

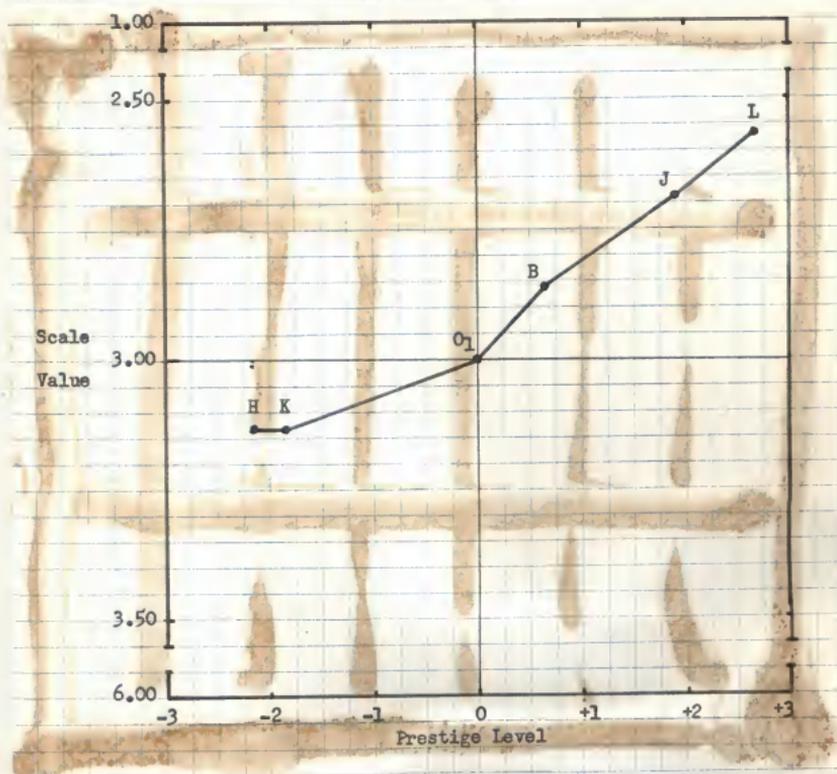


Fig. 1. Mean scale value of statements attributed to authors with five different levels of prestige. The horizontal line at Scale Value 3 indicates the mean value of responses to statements uninfluenced by prestige (i.e., to control set statements).

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of variance for the Latin square design described earlier is summarized in Table 9.

Table 9. Summary of analysis of variance.

Source of variation	df	Mean square	F-ratio
Between Authors	5	12.59	36.42**
Between Statement sets	5	19.17	55.42**
Between Forms	5	.67	1.94
Error	1352	.3457	
Total	1367		

\*\*p < .01

The magnitude of the F-ratio obtained for authors means that the experimental attachment of prestige figures to the statements used in this study had a highly significant effect upon the attitudes expressed to the statements. In other words who said what made a real difference in terms of student attitude toward the "what". The F-ratio between statement sets indicates that there were differences in agreement to the different sets of statements. This was to be expected. No attempt had been made to match the sets. However, the experimental design controlled for this inequality of statement sets and allowed isolation of the prestige effects of each author. Although the design did not assume equality of statement sets, it did assume that different groups of subjects were similar. This assumption was not challenged by the non-significant F-ratio between forms, which actually tested the combination of inter-group and inter-form differences.

Table 10. Differences between mean ratings as a function of different authors.

	Mean Rating	Difference
Lincoln statements	2.57	--
Jefferson statements	2.67	.12
Bryan statements	2.86	.17
Control set statements	3.00	.14
Khrushchev statements	3.13	.13
Hitler statements	3.13	--

Although the analysis of variance summarized in Table 9 indicates significant over-all differences between differential attributed authorship (including no author, i.e., control set statements), no quantitative statement of differences between the respective pairs of authors can be made from this analysis. To test the differences between the mean ratings of the statements attributed to the different authors, the procedure outlined by Tukey (20) was followed. This procedure involves calculation of a standard error based on the replication (error) mean square shown in Table 9. It can be shown that a difference of .22 between mean ratings is necessary for significance at the 5 per cent level of confidence using the appropriate  $t$  value for the one-tailed test of significance.

Table 10 summarizes the mean ratings for the different authors and for the control set statements. From this table it can be seen that no pairs of successive means show significant differences. In other words, the adjacent classifications of "prestige," ranging from highly favorable to highly unfavorable,

show no "real" differences from each other. However, the over-all trend from favorableness to unfavorableness is markedly significant.

Also of considerable interest in Table 10 are the interpretations which can be made by comparing the control set mean rating with the ratings associated with each author. Of these five comparisons, those involving the two best-liked authors exceed the significant gap (.22) while those involving the other three authors are not significant. It appears, then, that inducing a positive change in attitude is more readily accomplished with the type of experimental materials used here than is a negative change. This same conclusion is supported by the appearance of the curve in Fig. 1 and by a comparison of the ratios of prestige rating to effect on statement agreement. Lincoln's prestige rating was 2.65 above zero; his influence on statement agreement was .43 more than the control set, for a ratio of 6.17 to 1. The same ratio for Hitler was 16.69 to 1. Nearly three times more negative prestige was needed to get an equal absolute effect on statement agreement. Jefferson's prestige-to-influence ratio was very similar to Lincoln's--6.13 to 1. Bryan's was the smallest--4.79 to 1--and Khrushchev's was 14.15 to 1.

The control set rather than the control form was used in the above analyses as the zero level. This was done because the control set responses were made by the same 228 subjects upon whom prestige influence was exerted. The control form data came from

58 other students. The mean ratings of the two control measures do not differ significantly ( $t = 1.02$  with 284 df).

There was a close correlation between the average ratings of the statements attributed to the authors and the ratings assigned to the authors themselves by other subjects on the Famous Names Attitude Survey. (Table 1.) The extent of this relationship can be seen in Table 11.

Table 11. Comparison of ratings of statements attributed to the prestige figures and of ratings of the men themselves.

Author	Mean author rating on Like-Dislike scale	Mean author rating on Rank Order scale	Mean rating of statements attributed to author
Abraham Lincoln	+ 2.65	1.74	2.57
Thomas Jefferson	+ 1.90	3.97	2.69
William Jennings Bryan	+ .67	6.78	2.86
Nikita Khrushchev	- 1.84	9.62	3.13
Adolph Hitler	- 2.17	9.97	3.13

The product moment correlation coefficient between the author ratings on the like-dislike scale and the statement ratings is  $-.963$ . The correlation between the author ratings on the rank order scale and the statement ratings is just as striking  $-.961$ . Both of these correlations are in the expected direction and are significant beyond the .01 level of probability.

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence upon attitudes towards statements when these statements were attributed to authors with five different levels of prestige.

A "Famous Names Attitude Survey" was administered to 458 college students (in five separate groups) to determine empirically the desired five levels of prestige. Students rated 11 famous men in two ways--by assigning them values on a seven-point like-dislike scale and by ranking them in order of preference. Inter-group agreement on the ratings was high; all correlation coefficients (both product-moment and rank-order) were above .95. The five men selected to represent five levels of prestige were Abraham Lincoln (highly positive), Thomas Jefferson (positive), William Jennings Bryan (neutral), Nikita Khrushchev (negative), and Adolph Hitler (highly negative). Prestige was measured in terms of the like-dislike scale ratings.

Seven questionnaire forms, each with the same 60 statements, were developed to assess the effects of the five prestige figures upon expressed attitudes. On the control form, no authorship of the statements was claimed. On the six experimental forms, however, six sets of ten questions each were arranged so that each set was attributed once to each of the five prestige figures and included once in the control set. (The control set consisted of 10 statements for which it was stated on each questionnaire form that the author was unknown.) Students expressed agreement

or disagreement to each statement by indicating their first and second choices on a four-point scale. A system of scaling was used whereby responses were assigned scale values from 1 to 6 in decreasing order of amount of agreement. A total of 286 students completed the attitude questionnaires.

The mean agreement with statements attributed to the prestige figures was in the expected direction, i.e., agreement to statements attributed to positive figures was greater than to statements attributed to negative figures. It correlated  $-.963$  with the author ratings on the like-dislike scale and  $.961$  with the author ratings on the rank order scale. (The first correlation coefficient was negative because favorable ratings on the like-dislike scale were reflected by relatively large numbers whereas on the statement rating scale favorable ratings were expressed by relatively small numbers.)

An analysis of variance showed statistically significant differences between the same statements attributed to the different prestige figures.

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APPENDIX

## RATING SCALE

## FAMOUS NAMES ATTITUDE SURVEY

Part I

We are interested in learning your attitudes toward several men. In the blank before each name, please mark:

- + 3 if you like the man greatly
- + 2 if you like the man quite a lot
- + 1 if you like the man a little
- 0 if you feel neutral toward the man
- 1 if you dislike the man a little
- 2 if you dislike the man quite a lot
- 3 if you dislike the man greatly

\_\_\_\_\_ Woodrow Wilson

\_\_\_\_\_ Abraham Lincoln

\_\_\_\_\_ Adolph Hitler

\_\_\_\_\_ William Jennings Bryan

\_\_\_\_\_ Thomas Jefferson

\_\_\_\_\_ Nikita Khrushchev

\_\_\_\_\_ Josef Stalin

\_\_\_\_\_ Winston Churchill

\_\_\_\_\_ George Washington

\_\_\_\_\_ Robert E. Lee

\_\_\_\_\_ John D. Rockefeller, Sr.

Part II

Now, please look over the list of names again and rank them with the numbers "1" through "11" according to how favorable your attitude is toward them. After the man for whom you have the most favorable attitude write the number "1". After the man for whom you have the next most favorable attitude write the number "2". Continue this ranking procedure (using the numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, etc.) until you have placed the number "11" after the man for whom you have the least favorable attitude.

## ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

We are interested in learning your attitudes toward the statements which appear on the following pages.

For each of the statements there are four possible attitudes: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. We want to know the two alternatives which most nearly reflect your attitude. Therefore, instead of indicating only one alternative, proceed as follows:

Place the number 1 beside the alternative which best expresses your attitude.

Place the number 2 beside the alternative which next best expresses your attitude.

Example 1

A student who is fairly happy with his college experiences, but who is not extraordinarily pleased with them, might respond to the following statement as is indicated by the numbers in the blanks.

A college education provides a student with knowledge that will be invaluable in later life and with enjoyable experiences he could have in no other setting.

  2   Strongly agree        1   Agree           Disagree           Strongly disagree

Example 2

A student who thinks political activities are of some value, but not very much, might respond to the following statement as is indicated by the numbers in the blanks.

How little politics affect the moral life of a nation. One single good book influences the people a vast deal more.

     Strongly agree        2   Agree        1   Disagree           Strongly disagree

Please mark your answers carefully and work individually. If at any time you are in doubt about the procedure, please ask the examiner for instructions.

Turn the page now and begin.

## STATEMENTS USED IN THE ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

Set 1

1. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of your principles.
2. Parents too often expect their children to obey them; they should expect disobedience and be pleased with obedience.
3. Freedom is far more important than all the goods and gadgets of life.
4. Every country will eventually get the government it deserves.
5. Too often the sentences judges give in courts are determined by their own prejudices.
6. No man or woman feels, at all times, a great love and respect for his parents.
7. The way for a young man to rise is to improve himself in every way he can.
8. The fact that nations with overseas empires meet defeat after defeat is due to the growing movement for emancipation among the peoples in the colonies.
9. When a person has a problem or a worry, it is better for him not to think about it, but to busy himself with more cheerful things.
10. There is no such thing as the right to unlimited profits.

Set 2

1. Physical well-being is sometimes more important than political freedom.

2. The law cannot be disregarded merely because mistakes creep into it, any more than medicine can be condemned because some people sicken and die.
3. Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of inert facts.
4. Parents depend far too much on the past in their ideas.
5. Suspicion and jealousy seldom help men to deal with their problems.
6. A good education is no great comfort to a man out of work.
7. True individual freedom cannot exist without economic security.
8. I favor a graduated type of income tax, so that those better able to pay will contribute more to the government than the poor.
9. The right of individual freedom should come second in importance to the interests of the majority of the people.
10. Every man often finds it difficult to say the right thing at the right time.

### Set 3

1. There would be much less crime if economic systems were fair.
2. Most people become interested in an issue to the extent that it will affect their income or their standard of living.
3. It is of importance in a nation to guard one part of society against the injustice of the other part.
4. In disagreements about political policies the will of the majority is often wrong.

5. Economic stability is the first need for any political system.
6. It is the duty of every individual to obey the established government.
7. The solution of most of the world's problems is most likely to come as a result of education.
8. No weakness or difficulty can hold us back if we have enough will power.
9. Men should be encouraged to examine and question every aspect of life, including the existence of a God.
10. The greatest of faults is to be conscious of none.

Set 4

1. Theology is an attempt to explain a subject by men who do not understand it.
2. Perhaps the truest dignity of man is his capacity to improve himself.
3. Our chief need in life is for someone to make us do what we can do.
4. Laws and institutions must change with the progress of human mind.
5. In times of crisis in a country, it is often necessary to deprive citizens of some of their rights of criticism of the government.
6. Men sometimes must make promises they cannot fulfill.
7. The use of force is justified by a firm conviction in the necessity of victory for your cause.

8. Whoever wishes to be a great man must be prepared not to conform to the will of the majority.
9. Literature and the arts should not deal so much with the seamy side of life; their themes should be entertaining and uplifting.
10. The most basic right of a citizen of a democracy is the right to be wrong.

Set 5

1. All epoch-making revolutionary events have been produced by the spoken, not by the written, word.
2. Abuses will develop in any economic system.
3. Some leisure is necessary but it is good hard work that makes life interesting and worthwhile.
4. Countries that have not reached a high level of political development are not able to govern themselves, but must be governed by others until they catch up with more advanced countries.
5. When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign: most of the people are in a confederacy against him.
6. It is more important that a nation remain united than that every person in it receive equal treatment.
7. Human nature being what it is, there will always be wars and conflicts.

8. Jurors seldom understand a case well enough to give a man a fair trial.
9. Women are wiser than men because they know less and understand more.
10. A source of poverty is injustice in the distribution of wealth.

#### Set 6

1. We must retain the right to experiment with the form of our government.
2. Success is the judge of right and wrong in the world.
3. It is sometimes necessary for one man to impose his will upon another by force.
4. People vote their resentment, not their appreciation. The average man does not vote for anything, but against something.
5. All of the vigorous nations of the earth have sought and are seeking to conquer.
6. If judges are to make their decisions just, they should behold neither plaintiff, defendant, nor lawyer, but only the cause itself.
7. The success of science and logic indicates that they will someday be able to understand and explain everything important in life.
8. The strength of a nation is in the intelligent and well-ordered homes of the people.
9. What a healthy country needs most--more than laws or political programs--are a few courageous, tireless, devoted leaders in whom the people can put their faith.

10. Young men get ahead more on the friends they have than on their ability.

THE EFFECT OF FIVE LEVELS OF PRESTIGE  
UPON EXPRESSED ATTITUDES

by

LADD LAVERNE DURYEA

B. A., University of Nebraska, 1952

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence upon attitudes towards statements when these statements were attributed to authors with five different levels of prestige.

A "Famous Names Attitude Survey" was administered to 458 college students (in five separate groups) to determine empirically the desired five levels of prestige. Students rated 11 men in two ways--by assigning them values on a seven-point like-dislike scale and by ranking them in order of preference. Inter-group agreement on the ratings was high; all correlation coefficients (both product-moment and rank-order) were above .95. The five men selected to represent five levels of prestige were Abraham Lincoln (highly positive), Thomas Jefferson (positive), William Jennings Bryan (neutral), Nikita Khrushchev (negative), and Adolph Hitler (highly negative). Prestige was measured in terms of the like-dislike scale ratings.

Seven questionnaire forms, each with the same 60 statements, were developed to assess the effects of the five prestige figures upon expressed attitudes. On the control form, no authorship of the statements was claimed. On the six experimental forms, however, six sets of 10 questions each were arranged so that each set was attributed once to each of the five prestige figures and included once in the control set. (The control set consisted of 10 statements for which it was stated on each questionnaire form that the author was unknown.) Students expressed agreement or disagreement to each statement by indicating their first and second choices on

a four-point scale. A system of scaling was used whereby responses were assigned scale values from 1 to 6 in decreasing order of amount of agreement. A total of 286 students completed the attitude questionnaires.

The mean agreement with statements attributed to the prestige figures was in the expected direction, i.e., agreement to statements attributed to negative figures. It correlated  $-.963$  with the author ratings on the like-dislike scale and  $.961$  with the author ratings on the rank order scale. (The first correlation coefficient was negative because favorable ratings on the like-dislike scale were reflected by relatively large numbers whereas on the statement rating scale favorable ratings were expressed by relatively small numbers.)

An analysis of variance showed statistically significant differences between the same statements attributed to the different prestige figures.