Right-Wing Authoritarianism, Political Affiliation, Religiosity, and Their Relation to Psychological Androgyny

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The authoritarian personality is characterized by a traditional attitude towards gender roles that reflects its conservative ideology [T. W. Adorno, E. Frenkel-Brunswik, D. J. Levinson, and R. N. Sanford (1950) The Authoritarian Personality, New York: Norton]. The present study investigated the relationship between S. L. Bem's [(1974) sex roles "The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny," Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, Vol. 42, pp. 155–162], on the one hand, and right-wing authoritarianism [RWA; B. Altemeyer (1988) Enemies of Freedom: Understanding Right-Wing Authoritarianism, San Francisco], political affiliation, and religiosity level, on the other. Subjects were 365 Jewish undergraduate students (227 women and 138 men) at a number of universities; 81 were second generation Israelis, 90 were children of Ashkenazic parents, 75 were children of Sephardic parents, and 113 were children of parents from mixed background. They completed Altemeyer's RWA scale and a shortened version of Bem's Sex Role Inventory. Political affiliation and religiosity level (variables strongly linked to the authoritarian personality theory) were also measured. Among women, the RWA mean score of the cross-sex typed subjects was significantly lower than that of the sex-typed and the undifferentiated subjects, and most of the cross-sex typed women supported the political left and defined themselves as secular, while among men, no statistically significant RWA, political affiliation, and religiosity differences were found between Bem's four personality types. These results highlight gender differences in the relationships between authoritarian personality and gender-role identification. While it seems that cross-sex-typed women tend to rebel against the status quo, the question of why similar patterns do not appear among men still remains open to speculation.

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**Authoritarian Personality Theory**

The term "authoritarian personality" represents a syndrome of conservative attitudes, religious, national, and attitudinal intolerance, rigid emotional and cognitive functioning and personality traits which are thought to stem from deep personal conflicts and are reflected in compulsiveness, inordinate recourse to defense mechanisms, and distorted satisfaction of repressed drives (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). The theory claims that individuals who tend to be influenced by Fascist propaganda often developed early childhood hatred for authoritarian figures (parents), which could not be repressed under any circumstances. According to the theorists, the reaction formation response to the forbidden hatred is a tendency to admire and conform to power and authority. The aggression originally experienced towards the parents is displaced onto weaker figures; ethnic minorities, or groups, such as homosexuals, who deviate from social norms, are prime examples.

Adorno et al. (1950) who were interested particularly in anti-Semitism, began by asking whether the prejudices of anti-Semites are directed only against Jews, or against other minorities as well. After finding high correlations between anti-Semitism and prejudices against other minorities, they developed the Ethnocentricity Scale as a measure of prejudice against ethnic minorities. Personal interviews with the subjects revealed that other traits distinguish between high and low scorers on the Ethnocentricity scale. Among the most important is a tendency among the high scorers to glorify power, to admire authoritative figures and submit to their demands, on the one hand, and a contempt for weakness, sentimentalism or compassion, on the other. Such attitudes were defined as an "authoritarian approach" by the California group and items which reflected such attitudes were assembled as an F-Scale (Fascism Scale), the purpose of which is to investigate the complex of attitudes characterized the authoritarian personality.

Over the years there has been a consensus that prejudices against minorities—ethnic and otherwise—constitute a generalized attitude more typical (according to some of the theorists) to supporters of the right than of the left (e.g., Bierly, 1985; Kogan, 1961; MacDonald & Games, 1974; MacDonald, Huggins, Young, & Swanson, 1972; MacDonald, Huggins, Young, & Swanson, 1972; Murphy & Likert, 1983; Smith, 1971; Weinberger & Millham, 1979). Even Ray, among the most radical critics of the theory (see below), has had to admit that although negative attitudes toward minorities are not related to patriotism, there is a positive correlation between negative attitudes toward various ethnic groups (Ray & Lovejoy, 1986). Indeed, the dispute that began immediately with the appearance of *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al., 1950) focused on the question of