

# 11

## Behavioral Responses to Discrimination: A Focus on Action

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In this chapter, we focus on what many social psychologists studying prejudice consider to be its behavioral component—discrimination. Our emphasis is not on the behavior of the discriminator, however, but on the individuals for whom the consequences of discrimination are devastating. These are the victims of discrimination. In addition, we focus on overt behaviors (i.e., actions) that are taken in response to discrimination rather than covert behaviors (i.e., affect and cognition), because it is the actions taken by victims of discrimination that are most likely to bring about a change in the status of the disadvantaged groups of which they are members.

The first part of this chapter examines social psychological approaches that bear on the responses of victims of discrimination. It is argued that theories of intergroup relations hold considerable promise for the study of responses to discrimination (e.g., social identity theory). Although these theories are not formulated explicitly for the study of discrimination, they are formulated from the perspective of disadvantaged group members, they involve a consideration of overt behaviors that can lead to change, and they can be used to guide future research on the subject of discrimination. The behaviors discussed within these theories are contrasted with behaviors of victims of discrimination presented in seminal work on prejudice (e.g., Allport, 1954). Finally, examples of research that focus on the behavior of disadvantaged and discriminated individuals are described, along with a brief presentation of Tajfel's (1978) interpersonal–intergroup behavior continuum as a framework for understanding the interpretation of different situations of discrimination. The second part of this chapter focuses on research we conducted that explores the range of responses that can be taken in different situations of discrimination and the behavioral dimensions



underlying these responses. The results of these studies illustrate the limitations that exist within current theoretical models and suggest some directions for future research.

### SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RESPONDING TO DISCRIMINATION

Most discussions of prejudice usually elicit some reference to the notion of discrimination. Despite its clear prominence as a social problem and its common lay usage, however, it often appears in social psychological discourse in a somewhat sterilized form. For this reason, we begin by contrasting a definition exemplifying the view of social psychologists with a classic example of discrimination. Dovidio and Gaertner (1986) provide a typical definition of discrimination that is framed within the context of prejudice: "Whereas prejudice is an attitude, discrimination is a selectively unjustified negative behaviour toward members of the target group. . . . It is important to note that prejudice does not always lead to discrimination and that discrimination may have causes other than prejudice" (p. 3). Several questions come to mind that are both raised and neglected by this definition. For example, how may discrimination occur in the absence of prejudice? More central to this chapter are questions that are not addressed in the definition. What happens to the individual in the target group after the occurrence of this negative behavior? What might he or she do? In order to answer these questions, we offer an example of discrimination that is familiar to readers acquainted with the history of the Civil Rights Movement.

On Thursday, December 1, 1955, after a hard day's work as a seamstress in a department store in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks boarded a bus to take her home. Rosa Parks had corns and bunions and "she sat in the first seat behind the white section—that is to say the first Negro seat" (Lomax, 1963, p. 17). The bus filled rapidly, and some White people were left standing. The White bus driver ordered Mrs. Parks and three other Blacks to move back so the White people could have their seats. The Montgomery bus system was segregated with Whites at the front of the bus and Blacks at the back, and Whites were given priority over Blacks in terms of seating. Rosa Parks refused to comply with the bus driver's demands, and she was subsequently arrested and taken away by the police (Lomax, 1963). This event in itself represents a dramatic example of discrimination, but the story is not complete.

Although Rosa Parks was not the first person who refused to give up her seat to a White person, word of her arrest spread quickly in the Black community. It was decided that action should be taken, and as part of the strategy, a young Baptist minister, Martin Luther King, Jr., helped organize a bus boycott. The following Monday, 4 days after the arrest of Rosa Parks, 99% of Black commuters started walking or using car pools. This boycott, which continued for

over 12 months, is referred to as the Montgomery Walk to Freedom. It led to a Federal District Court ruling on June 4, 1956, against the segregated policy for bus seating in Montgomery, and this ruling was upheld by the United States Supreme Court 4 months later (Lomax, 1963).

The example of Rosa Parks can be used to understand the definition of discrimination taken from Dovidio and Gaertner (1986). An important element of that definition is that discrimination is not necessarily related to a prejudicial attitude. The arrest of Rosa Parks may have had little to do with the underlying attitude of the bus driver who asked her to move or even with the attitude of the police who arrested her. The discrimination that Rosa Parks experienced was institutional; it was built into and buttressed by an entire social system.

A definition of discrimination is correct, therefore, when it states that individual prejudice is not a necessary precondition for acts of discrimination. Why then is there an inherent tendency to view discrimination solely as the behavioral component of prejudice? One reason for this link is historical. Early research on prejudice, which proved to be very influential (e.g., Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), viewed discrimination as stemming from the individual. Another contributing reason is that if the source of discrimination lies within the prejudiced individual, it is easier to study and remedy the problem than when discrimination is rooted within an entire social system (see Fairchild & Gurin, 1978). Unfortunately, we must agree with Pettigrew (1986), who stated that "institutionalized discrimination is the core of the problem; prejudice both supports and is derived from these institutionally restrictive arrangements" (p. 172).

When we further contrast Dovidio and Gaertner's (1986) definition of discrimination with the situation of Rosa Parks, we note a limitation in its perspective. The emphasis is on the behavior of the discriminator who is the actor; although the definition does not inherently exclude the discriminated, the latter is put into the more passive role of target. This definitional limitation is not raised as a critique of the excellent work of Dovidio and Gaertner but rather as a means for highlighting the fact that researchers have generally not studied the behavioral reactions exhibited by victims of discrimination. The focus of most research on discrimination has been on the behavior of the discriminator as a function of his or her prejudice.

This unidirectional perspective has profound implications for the study of discrimination. Importantly, it fails to accentuate the need for understanding the phenomenology of being a victim of discrimination. Furthermore, if the goal is to eliminate acts of discrimination, this unidirectional focus (along with a belief in the prejudice-discrimination link) leads to strategies directed at changing the attitude of the discriminator by focusing on that individual. Such strategies, however, are largely ineffectual, and change must come by altering the institutional arrangements that provide a dominant position and special privileges to certain groups (Pettigrew, 1986). Historical examples suggest that most systemic



change derives from the actions that are taken by the victims of discrimination and not from the individuals who are in the advantaged position. The Civil Rights Movement in the United States received much of its impetus from the actions taken by individuals like Rosa Parks.<sup>1</sup> In a similar vein, the growing support for native rights and Indian self-government in Canada is the result of a sensitization to native issues that was brought about by actions such as those taken by a group of Mohawk warriors in Oka, Québec, in the summer of 1990. If one is to study discrimination with an eye on social change, one has much to learn by studying the responses of the victims of discrimination.

Three points can be drawn from this exercise in contrast between a social psychological definition of discrimination and Rosa Parks' experience of discrimination:

1. When one studies the phenomenon of discrimination, one must include the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of the victims of discriminatory actions. Unfortunately, little research addresses the phenomenology of the victims of discrimination (Dion & Earn, 1975; Harrison, 1974). One purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how certain social psychological theories of intergroup relations offer a theoretical framework for understanding and predicting the behavior of victims of discrimination.

2. If one of the goals of social psychological inquiry is the reduction of discrimination through social change, then constructive solutions may be found by studying the actions taken by victims of discrimination. These actions have the potential of bringing about change that has positive consequences for the individual, for the group, and for society. Unfortunately, the research that examines the effects of discrimination on its victims focuses mainly on its affective and cognitive consequences.<sup>2</sup>

3. Victim responses to discrimination are a function of the situations in which they occur. In the case of Rosa Parks, a strictly interpersonal interpretation of her situation does not explain how her behavior became the catalyst for opposition to a systemic form of discrimination. Rather, her situation demands an interpretation from a larger social perspective. In this chapter, the

<sup>1</sup>In an invited address to the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues in 1967, Martin Luther King, Jr. (1968) stated that, "It was the Negro who educated the nation by dramatizing the evils through nonviolent protest. The social scientist played little or no role in disclosing truth. The Negro action movement with raw courage did it virtually alone" (p. 180). On the other hand, Condor (1989), criticized the "assumption that *all* current efforts for social change come from subordinate social groups" (p. 32) and provided examples in which the activity of high-status groups is also implicated.

<sup>2</sup>All social psychologists agree that discrimination has very negative consequences for its victims. Although some affective and cognitive consequences may be characterized as positive (see Crocker & Major, 1989), these positive consequences are compensatory in nature and they should not have to exist.

problem of discrimination is viewed as an intergroup problem and not an interpersonal one. Later, we introduce the interpersonal-intergroup continuum, discussed by Tajfel (1978), in order to provide a key to understanding both the interpretations of situations of discrimination and the behavioral responses to those situations.

### Theories of Intergroup Relations and Responses to Discrimination

Given the assumption that most cases of discrimination are systemically rooted and thus best understood in terms of the imbalance of power between advantaged and disadvantaged social groups, theories of intergroup relations are appropriate for understanding discrimination and its related effects. From an intergroup-relations perspective, discrimination represents a situation where an individual is unjustly treated on the basis of membership in a disadvantaged group. This definition, which clearly puts the focus on the victim and not on the perpetrator, has been forwarded by others such as Jones (1986) who stated that "discrimination refers simply to differential treatment of individuals on the basis of their social category by people or the institutional policies they create and enforce" (p. 289).

Three social psychological theories of intergroup relations that are particularly relevant for understanding behavioral responses to discrimination are: (a) relative deprivation theory (Crosby, 1976; Davis, 1959; Gurr, 1970; Runciman 1966),<sup>3</sup> (b) social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and (c) the five-stage model of intergroup relations (Taylor & McKirnan, 1984). These theories are quite broad in their scope and are not examined in any detail in this chapter (for a review of these theories, see Taylor & Moghaddam, 1987). The question to be addressed at this juncture is, why are these theories useful for understanding the behavior of victims of discrimination? Although they are not explicitly conceived for understanding or predicting the behavior of victims of discrimination, they are formulated from the perspective of individuals who are in a disadvantaged position on the basis of their group membership, a perspective congruent with our conceptualization of discrimination. Moreover, these theories attempt to predict the behavior of those who feel relatively deprived compared to others (relative deprivation theory), of those who have a negative social identity when they compare themselves to members of another group (social identity theory), and of those

<sup>3</sup>Relative deprivation has a more complex history of development than the other two theories and has appeared in a number of forms. In the original model, the dependent variable of interest is the feeling of deprivation (an attitude), and the addition of behavior as a dependent variable is a relatively recent development (Martin & Murray, 1984). The more relevant component of the theory with regard to discrimination pertains to fraternal deprivation (Runciman, 1966). The link between fraternal deprivation and discrimination has been described in detail by Dion (1986).



who recognize that they are in a position of social disadvantage (five-stage model). Clearly, these interrelated feelings and experiences can be present within individuals who are victims of discrimination. Instead of using the term *discrimination*, however, researchers working with these theories used terms such as *injustice* (e.g., Crosby & Gonzalez-Intal, 1984), *disadvantage* (e.g., Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990), *inequality* (e.g., Martin, Brickman, & Murray, 1984), and *deprivation* (e.g., Smith & Gaskell, 1990). All of these terms reflect the experience of discrimination.

These theories are important because they make predictions concerning the behaviors that will be taken by members of a disadvantaged group. From an experimental perspective, the independent variables are found in the structural characteristics of the intergroup situation (e.g., open or closed intergroup boundaries) and the personal characteristics of disadvantaged group members (e.g., belief in individual social mobility). Of particular interest in this chapter are the dependent variables that are central in these theories, namely, the behaviors that can be taken by disadvantaged group members. Table 11.1 provides a summary of the more detailed typologies of behavioral responses that have been offered by researchers working within the frameworks offered by theories of intergroup relations. This list is meant to be representative rather than exhaustive. The typologies reveal the range and multidimensionality of responses that can be taken, at least theoretically, by individuals who experience social injustice.

An examination of the typologies in Table 11.1 reveals dimensions of behavior that are common to the different theories. These dimensions, which have been identified by some of the researchers listed in Table 11.1, are overlapping and should not be seen as independent from each other. An *active vs. passive* dimension, which has been previously highlighted by others (e.g., Dion, 1986), distinguishes behaviors in terms of whether or not they are directed at bringing about a change for the disadvantaged individual or group. Examples of passive behaviors are stress symptoms, attitudes toward the self/object/system, political apathy, and acceptance. Examples of active behaviors include self-improvement, object-directed behavior, militancy, and social competition. A *normative vs. nonnormative* distinction was explicitly identified by Wright et al. (1990) as well as Dion (1986) in terms of constructive versus destructive behaviors. Along this dimension, behaviors are differentiated in terms of whether or not they are conducted with the approval of the existing social system. Normative behaviors include self-improvement, constructive social change, political participation, and individual mobility. Nonnormative behaviors are exemplified by violence against society, drug abuse, militancy and violence, and terrorism. A third dimension of behavior, which has received considerable attention in many areas of psychology, is the *individual vs. collective* distinction. Although research within personality and cross-cultural psychology recognizes the individual-collective distinction as complex (e.g., Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990), a simple distinction between behaviors that are engaged in alone and behaviors that are engaged in

TABLE 11.1  
Typologies of Behaviors That May Result From Relative Deprivation, Social Injustice, or Social Disadvantage

<i>Relative Deprivation Theory</i>													
Crosby (1976)	Stress symptoms Self-improvement Violence against society Constructive change of society												
Mark and Folger (1984)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">Attitude toward the Self:</td> <td>self-deprecation, mental-health problems, enhancement of self-image</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Self-directed behavior:</td> <td>self-enhancement through education, self-diminishment with drug abuse</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Attitude toward the object:</td> <td>affective and cognitive upward or downward reappraisal of object that was not attained</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Object-directed behavior:</td> <td>increase or decrease in achievement behavior related to the object</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Attitude toward the system:</td> <td>affective and cognitive reappraisal of system that has denied the object</td> </tr> <tr> <td>System-directed behavior:</td> <td>aggressive behavior, riots, revolution, constructive social change</td> </tr> </table>	Attitude toward the Self:	self-deprecation, mental-health problems, enhancement of self-image	Self-directed behavior:	self-enhancement through education, self-diminishment with drug abuse	Attitude toward the object:	affective and cognitive upward or downward reappraisal of object that was not attained	Object-directed behavior:	increase or decrease in achievement behavior related to the object	Attitude toward the system:	affective and cognitive reappraisal of system that has denied the object	System-directed behavior:	aggressive behavior, riots, revolution, constructive social change
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System-directed behavior:	aggressive behavior, riots, revolution, constructive social change												
Dion (1986)	Direct political participation Militancy and violence Indirect political support Political apathy and resignation												
<i>Social Identity Theory</i>													
Hogg and Abrams (1988)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">Individual mobility:</td> <td>exit, passing, assimilation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social change:</td> <td>seek new dimensions of social comparison, redefine the value of existing dimensions of social comparison, use different outgroups for social comparison</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social competition:</td> <td>civil-rights activity, political lobbying, revolution, terrorism, war</td> </tr> </table>	Individual mobility:	exit, passing, assimilation	Social change:	seek new dimensions of social comparison, redefine the value of existing dimensions of social comparison, use different outgroups for social comparison	Social competition:	civil-rights activity, political lobbying, revolution, terrorism, war						
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<i>Five-Stage Model</i>													
Wright, Taylor, and Moghaddam (1990)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Acceptance</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">Individual - normative:</td> <td>individual upward mobility within system</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Individual - nonnormative:</td> <td>individual action outside system</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collective - normative:</td> <td>collective behavior that preserves status quo</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collective - nonnormative:</td> <td>collective behavior that threatens social order</td> </tr> </table>	Acceptance		Individual - normative:	individual upward mobility within system	Individual - nonnormative:	individual action outside system	Collective - normative:	collective behavior that preserves status quo	Collective - nonnormative:	collective behavior that threatens social order		
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with others can be applied to many of the behaviors that are discussed within intergroup theories (e.g., Wright et al., 1990). Examples of individual behaviors include stress symptoms, self-oriented attitudes or behavior, and, in many instances, assimilation. Collective behaviors are found in riots, revolution, civil rights activity, and some forms of political participation. A fourth distinction



underlying many of the behaviors in Table 11.1 is that of *self-directed vs. system-directed* behaviors (e.g., Mark & Folger, 1984). Self-directed behaviors include self-improvement and self-deprecation, whereas system-directed behaviors include violence against society and political participation and lobbying.

The behavior typologies of intergroup theories and their underlying dimensions have their shortcomings regarding their applicability to the experience of discrimination. Because they refer to broadly defined behaviors, it is sometimes difficult to determine how these behaviors can be applied to specific instances of discrimination occurring, for example, in situations involving employment or housing. Furthermore, it should be recalled that these typologies are not explicitly formulated for an understanding of the behavior of victims of discrimination. We now review some of the literature that directly addresses the consequent responses of victims of discrimination in order to determine if intergroup theories are sufficiently comprehensive in their behavioral typologies to be of use in the study of discrimination.

### Traditional Psychological Perspectives on Responding to Discrimination

Different perspectives are applied to understanding the range of responses to discrimination. Personality theory, for example, is used to explain the development of a "Black personality" and its relation to racism and discrimination. Early psychoanalytic work by Kardiner and Oversey (1951) provides a very bleak perspective by concluding that oppression leads Blacks to having self-hatred, low self-esteem, and hostility towards Whites. This view, fortunately, is countered by more recent developmental models of Black psychologists who see the potential for a strong personality that is related to a positive social identity (see Jones, 1991, for a brief review). Although the personality perspective on discrimination is important, it is primarily centered on the self-directed behaviors in the typologies that were presented earlier. A number of classic works within social psychology and sociology provide the most comprehensive views on the responses of victims of discrimination. Here, we briefly examine those of Allport (1954), Pettigrew (1964), and Simpson and Yinger (1985).

In his seminal treatise on prejudice, Allport (1954) devoted a chapter to "Traits Due to Victimization" in which he presented 15 responses to discrimination representing different types of ego defenses. In his analysis, Allport distinguished between responses more likely to be used by extropunitive victims, those who attribute their situation to outer causes, and responses more likely to be used by intropunitive victims, those who blame themselves. In his list of behaviors, intropunitive responses include withdrawal and passivity, clowning, aggression against ingroup, and symbolic status striving, whereas extropunitive types use the strengthening of ingroup ties, slyness and cunning, fighting back, and enhanced striving. Allport's intropunitive-extropunitive distinction can be recast in

terms of the self- versus system-directed distinction that is identified in the intergroup theory typologies. It should also be noted that most of the behaviors discussed by Allport could be identified along the active-passive, individual-collective, and normative-nonnormative dimensions of behavior.

Pettigrew (1964) presented a behavioral typology that is quite different from Allport's, in a chapter entitled "Reactions to Oppression." He described three general classes of response: (a) moving towards the oppressor (seeking acceptance through integration), (b) moving against the oppressor (fighting back), and (c) moving away from the oppressor (flight or avoidance). A comparison of the classification schemes of Allport and Pettigrew reveals a clear shift from an individual level of analysis (the intro/extropunitive dimension) to an intergroup level of analysis (responses of oppressed in relation to oppressor), yet the specific behaviors and exemplars that are used by both authors are quite similar.

In order to provide a more sociologically oriented perspective, we refer to the more recent edition of Simpson and Yinger (1985), who presented four general classes of behavior in their chapter on "Types of Response to Prejudice and Discrimination." These classes are: (a) avoidance (e.g., passing, separation, escape), (b) aggression or striking back (e.g., protest, hostile aggression, boycotts), (c) reformism (i.e., actions directed at social change within the existing system), and (d) acceptance. Once again, the classes of behaviors put forward by social psychologists interested in the experience of discrimination are found within the response typologies suggested by researchers working within relative deprivation theory, social identity theory, and the five-stage model.

Why are intergroup theories important to the understanding of responses to discrimination when many of these responses have already been discussed in early social psychological analyses of discrimination? These theories offer frameworks from which testable predictions can be made concerning the types of behaviors that will be taken by individuals in a disadvantaged position. More specifically, they deal with the prediction of behaviors that can be taken to bring about social change. A few examples of how these theories are applied to the prediction of behavior of disadvantaged individuals are offered in the following discussion.

### Empirical Investigations of Responses to Discrimination

Most of the research addressing the phenomenology of being a victim of discrimination focuses on behaviors that are self-directed and relatively passive in terms of the dimensions of behavior that were identified earlier. Much of this work demonstrates the cognitive and emotional coping strategies that are elicited when an individual must deal with the stigma of belonging to a disadvantaged group (see Crocker & Major, 1989, chapter 12, this volume). The comprehensive research program of Dion serves as a good example of this type of research



(Dion, 1975; Dion & Earn, 1975; Dion, Earn, & Yee, 1978). Dion and his colleagues used an experimental attribution paradigm, in which single members of a minority group (e.g., Jews, women) are led to believe they are competing in a task against either three members of a majority group (e.g., Christians, men) or three nondescript individuals. All minority group members experience failure in the task, and the assumption underlying the paradigm is that subjects who interact with outgroup members can attribute their failure to discrimination. In their study of Jewish subjects, Dion and Earn (1975) found support for this assumption, as well as some interesting effects with regard to the cognitive and emotional consequences of discrimination. Subjects who attributed their failure to discrimination rated themselves more strongly on the positive aspects of their ingroup stereotype compared to subjects who did not make this attribution. In addition, subjects who perceived discrimination reported feeling more aggression, sadness, anxiety, and egotism than subjects who did not perceive discrimination. These emotional responses have been interpreted as indicative of a stress reaction (Dion, 1986).

Experimental studies conducted within the framework of relative deprivation theory also focus on the affective or cognitive consequences of deprivation (Bernstein & Crosby, 1980; Folger & Martin, 1986; Folger, Rosenfield, Rheume, & Martin, 1983; Folger, Rosenfield, & Robinson, 1983; Guimond & Dubé-Simard, 1983; Mark, 1985). For example, Bernstein and Crosby (1980) looked at the effects of the hypothesized preconditions of relative deprivation (e.g., the perception of entitlement to a desired outcome) on a number of affective responses such as resentment, dissatisfaction, disappointment, anger, and unhappiness.

In fact, much of the research examines behavior that falls on the self-directed end of a self-directed versus system-directed dimension of behavior. More recently, however, some experimental studies framed within the context of relative deprivation theory (Crosby, 1976), social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and the five-stage model (Taylor & McKirnan, 1984), have focused on responses that characterize the active-passive, individual-collective, and normative-non-normative dimensions of behavior (Ellemers, van Knippenberg, & Wilke, 1990; Inglis, 1990; Martin et al., 1984; Lalonde & Silverman, 1992; Taylor, Moghadam, Gamble, & Zellerer, 1987; Wright et al., 1990).

Martin et al. (1984) examined the relationship between the severity of fraternal deprivation and the willingness to participate in legitimate or illegitimate forms of collective action. In their role-playing study, the magnitude of fraternal deprivation was manipulated by varying the degree of financial inequity between male and female managers in a fictitious company. Female subjects, who were asked to think of themselves as employees of the company, had stronger feelings of deprivation when faced with greater financial inequities. The severity of the deprivation, however, had no effect on their willingness to engage in collective forms of behavior. Martin et al. concluded that the feelings of injustice associated with fraternal deprivation play only a secondary role in evoking collective

action and that other variables such as the availability of mobilization resources are much more important in the prediction of collective behavior. In short, resource mobilization theory (McCarthy & Zald, 1979) posits that an individual's willingness to participate in collective action is influenced by the perception of opportunities for participation (i.e., resources). Mobilization resources were manipulated by Martin et al. by including factors such as the presence of an organized female management group. They found that subjects were more willing to engage in illegitimate forms of collective behavior when resources were present than when they were absent.

The study by Wright et al. (1990) serves as a good example of research addressing individual and collective behaviors within an intergroup theory framework. According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the five-stage model (Taylor & McKirnan, 1984), collective action is more likely to be associated with a completely closed, advantaged group (i.e., impermeable group boundaries), whereas individual action is linked to more open, advantaged groups. In order to test this prediction, Wright et al. (1990) used an experimental paradigm that was first developed by Taylor et al. (1987). In this paradigm, all subjects begin as members of an unsophisticated decision-making group and are told that promotion to a higher status, sophisticated decision-making group will be based on their performance on a decision-making task. All subjects are subsequently rejected by a group of members of the advantaged group. Wright et al. manipulated the degree of group openness so that subjects believed that the advantaged group was either open, partially open, or completely closed to all members of their group. In accordance with social identity theory and the five-stage model, impermeable group boundaries were associated with the willingness to engage in a nonnormative collective action (i.e., to write a message of protest that urged other members of the disadvantaged group to ignore the final decision of the advantaged group and to take action that would allow their entry). This particular finding also received support in a study by Lalonde and Silverman (1992), who additionally found that the salience of an individual's social identity facilitated the propensity to take collective action when group boundaries were closed.

The studies described previously are presented to demonstrate the usefulness of intergroup theories for predicting the behavior of disadvantaged individuals in situations of social injustice. The behaviors under investigation in these studies, however, are constrained by the experimental paradigms selected by the researchers and by the particular dimensions of behavior suggested by the theoretical models that are being tested (i.e., individual vs. collective, passive vs. active, normative vs. nonnormative, self-directed vs. system-directed).

In order to gain insight into the phenomenology of being a victim of discrimination, other types of methodologies have proved to be useful. Adams and Dressler (1988), for example, used an ethnographic approach (i.e., open-ended interviews) to identify the different areas of life in which members of a Black community experience discrimination (e.g., general service, city government,



school system, police service). Of particular relevance to this chapter is a study by Lykes (1983) that focuses on the responses that a sample of older Black women had made in situations of discrimination experienced over the course of their lives. Lykes analyzed the oral histories obtained in open-ended interviews of 52 women who had contributed to the improvement of the lives of Black people, particularly in the 1940s and 1950s. Their accounts were content analyzed with regard to the types of situations of discrimination they encountered (personal prejudice vs. institutional discrimination) and the types of coping strategies they used in these situations. These coping strategies were categorized as a function of their instrumentality, such that behaviors were rated as passive, indirect (nonconfrontational), or direct (action directed at the source of the problem). These women were also compared as a function of the predominant culture of their employment setting; some women worked in predominantly Black organizations and some in predominantly White organizations. Lykes' analysis reveals two findings of note. She found that strategies of coping were more direct when discrimination was of a personal nature than when discrimination was institutional. There was also an interaction between the employment setting of the women (Black vs. White) and the type of discrimination experienced (personal vs. institutional) on the types of responses that were taken. Lykes found that women who worked in Black settings were likely to take more direct approaches in cases of institutional discrimination compared to cases of personal prejudice, whereas women working in White organizations were more likely to take direct approaches in cases of personal prejudice than in cases of institutional discrimination.

Another strategy for studying discrimination is found in the work of Mikula (1986; Mikula & Schlamberger, 1985) who used retrospective and role-playing techniques to explore responses to perceived social injustice. In a first study, Mikula (1986) had university students provide a report of an unjust event they had experienced. Their responses were coded according to a number of criteria, including their reactions to the event. The active responses that were identified included a confrontation of the perpetrator, insulting or taking revenge on the perpetrator, avoiding future contact with the perpetrator, and seeking advice, support, or consolation. It should be noted that most of the unjust events that were elicited involved interpersonal situations with the opportunity of continued contact between perpetrator and victim. In a second study by Mikula (1986), high school students participated in school-related scenarios of injustice involving a student and teacher. He found that the most frequent types of action-related thoughts reported by students were (a) attempts at restoring justice, (b) punishment of the perpetrator, (c) passive resistance, (d) opposition, (e) seeking advice or information, and (f) the encouragement of others to take action.

When the behavioral responses identified by Mikula (1986) are contrasted with the dimensions underlying the behaviors discussed in intergroup theories, there is some communality. None of the behaviors found by Mikula, however, qualify as system-directed and very few qualify as collective. Furthermore, some

of the behaviors are not considered as potential responses within intergroup theories (e.g., seeking advice). The difference in behaviors raised by his participants and those raised by intergroup theories can be partially attributed to different types of situations of discrimination that Lykes (1983) recognized in her analysis, namely personal versus institutional settings of discrimination. These variations in context may be clarified by placing these situations at different positions on an interpersonal-intergroup continuum.

### Discrimination and the Interpersonal-Intergroup Continuum

Tajfel (1978) suggested a behavioral continuum bounded by poles describing interpersonal and intergroup forms of behavior. At the interpersonal end, interactions between people take place on the basis of their individual characteristics, whereas at the intergroup end, interactions are guided primarily by group membership. When interactions between people occur more towards the intergroup end of the continuum, the behavior of ingroup members towards outgroup members is more uniform, and outgroup members are perceived as an undifferentiated mass. When the boundaries between social groups are clear and impermeable, extreme forms of intergroup behavior are more likely to occur. When the boundaries between social groups are more fuzzy and permeable (i.e., individual mobility is seen as possible), interpersonal forms of behavior are more likely to occur (Tajfel, 1978).

Tajfel noted that discrimination is a behavior that falls closer to the intergroup end of his continuum. Some situations of discrimination, however, are closer to the intergroup pole than others. We believe that instances of discrimination that are experienced with a single individual are interpreted at the interpersonal end of Tajfel's behavior continuum, especially when indices of systemic discrimination are not available. With regard to the work of Mikula (1986), individuals recalling their own experiences of injustice were likely to recall events of an interpersonal nature that did not necessarily tie into some type of group membership. In the case of discrimination experienced by Rosa Parks and many of the women interviewed by Lykes (1983), however, behavior clearly occurred at the intergroup extreme of Tajfel's continuum. In our own research, we identify the types of behaviors elicited in situations of discrimination that are perceived as falling at different points on the interpersonal-intergroup continuum.

### EXPLORING THE ACTIONS OF VICTIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

In this section, we report some preliminary work that attempts to identify the range of responses that individuals perceive as being at their disposal in different situations of discrimination. This research has two general purposes:



1. We want to compare the responses of lay people to the behaviors that are identified as important in social psychological theories of intergroup relations. By identifying behavioral responses in relation to specific instances of discrimination, it is possible to determine if the behaviors identified in these theories are comprehensive enough in scope.

2. Another purpose is to compare the types of responses that are elicited by instances of discrimination interpreted as falling at different points on the interpersonal-intergroup behavior continuum. The study by Lykes (1983) indicated that Black women differentiated between personal and institutional instances of discrimination and adopted different response strategies as a function of this distinction. Feagin and Eckberg (1980) proposed a typology of situations of discrimination that includes at least four types (isolate, small group, direct institutional, and indirect institutional). It was expected that different situations of discrimination would evoke different types of responses.

Two studies are reported. In the first study, participants imagined themselves in a situation that would eventually lead to an act of discrimination directed at them on the basis of their membership in a particular group. This study identifies the behavioral responses that seem reasonable in different situations of discrimination. In the second study, a new group of participants sorted the behaviors that were generated in the first study. Its purpose was to identify the dimensionality of behaviors that are deemed important by lay people when interpreting behaviors within the context of discrimination. The only manipulated variable in these studies was the type of situation in which discrimination occurred.

### Study 1

Before describing the situations of discrimination, it is beneficial to describe some of the primary features of our methodology:

1. Participants were engaged in scenarios of discrimination by means of an interactive role-playing strategy using verbally guided imagery. They chose the category on the basis of which they had been victimized.
2. It was explicitly stated in the scenarios that discrimination had taken place, and it did not have to be inferred as in many experimental studies of social injustice.
3. The questioning of participants and the subsequent analysis of their responses were explicitly focused on the actions that they perceived as possible in their situation and not on affective and cognitive responses.
4. Scenarios were selected to represent situations of discrimination falling at different points on the interpersonal-intergroup continuum.

The first two scenarios involved discrimination in employment and housing situations.<sup>4</sup> For the third scenario, a situation of discrimination was created in which individuals were denied the right to vote in an imaginary "new world."<sup>5</sup> Although any situation of discrimination is fundamentally intergroup when it is based on membership in a social category, the job and apartment scenarios were more interpersonal than the new world scenario, because they described a situation involving a direct personal encounter with the perpetrator.<sup>6</sup>

### Method

*Respondents.* The interviews took place at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto. Interested visitors approached a booth that announced a psychology study was in progress. Seventy-four interviews were conducted with 43 women and 31 men with a mean age of 36 years. More than 80% of the participants were Canadian or American (48.6% and 35.1%, respectively), and 10.8% were from the United Kingdom. Participants were not asked to indicate their racial identification, but the majority of respondents did not belong to visible minority groups.

*Procedure.* Participants were recruited for a study of Strategies for Dealing With Social Dilemmas and were assigned to one of three interviewers (two male and one female). They were presented with one of the three scenarios that was read aloud and a guided imagery technique was used to elicit the thoughts and feelings that they would experience in the described situation. Each session was tape recorded. The three scenarios are briefly described as follows:

<sup>4</sup>These two situations of discrimination were selected on the basis of a search in our university library system. When discrimination was entered as the key word for a subject search, there were 300 general headings. When these headings were broken down into particular areas, the most popular were employment (99 of 300) and housing (63 of 300). None of these latter headings were related to psychological references, thus suggesting that these areas were in need of psychological study.

<sup>5</sup>Although one may conjure images of South Africa for this scenario, it was not so long ago that natives in Canada were in the same situation. In fact, they did not have the right to vote in federal elections until 1960. It is also worthy to note that like South African Blacks, natives living on reserves were restricted in their freedom of movement. According to the Indian act, natives on a reservation needed a special permit or they could be arrested. This restriction was in effect until the 1950s.

<sup>6</sup>Our method has the advantage of exercising control over the situation in which discrimination is experienced, while permitting respondents to choose the basis of the discriminatory action and the responses that they perceived as being appropriate. Such a role-playing method, however, has obvious limitations. Many respondents have no experience with the situations in which they are placed, and many may not have experienced discrimination in their lives. As a result, some of their responses are seen as reflecting strategies that are stereotypically associated with these situations, and respondents may not consider the full consequences of their actions. A central purpose of the study is to identify a range of perceived behavioral options, however, and subjects were not asked for the single response in which they would actually engage.



**The Job Application.** Respondents were situated in an interview for a specific job that they could realistically get and would like. They were asked to imagine the job and describe it, as well as the interviewer and the setting. Later, they were informed that although they had the necessary qualifications, a better candidate was selected. According to a reliable source (someone working at the same place), however, the job was not filled, and confidentially they were the victim of some type of discrimination in hiring. Participants were also informed that none of their references was contacted. They were asked to think about why they might have been discriminated against (i.e., membership in a particular social group or some defining characteristic).

**The Apartment.** This scenario was similar to the job situation, except that the primary interaction took place with a building owner for the purpose of renting a desirable apartment. In this story, the participants were told they were called and informed that the apartment had been given to someone else. A good source (someone living in the same building), however, informed them that the apartment was not rented and that, confidentially, they were the victim of some type of discrimination. They also found out that their bank and present landlord were not contacted as references.

**A Sad New World.** This scenario most clearly represented an intergroup situation, because participants imagined themselves living in a future society in which they are identified as members of a social group that is denied basic human rights (e.g., the right to vote) by a group in power. Participants were asked to imagine that this group is one with which they presently identify.

After selecting the reason for which they may have been discriminated against, participants in all three conditions were asked a number of questions dealing with what they might do in response to their situation. Prior to these questions, the following was read to individuals receiving the job (or apartment) scenarios:

You are now in a position where you can ignore the situation or you can take some type of action. Remember that it was important for you to get this job [apartment]. Try to imagine how you feel knowing that you probably didn't get the position [apartment] because you were discriminated against. Think about all the different things you might do knowing you have been unjustly refused a job [a place to live].

Participants receiving the sad new world scenario were read:

You are now in a position where you can ignore the situation or you can take some type of action. Are you going to do something about the discrimination that exists simply because you happen to belong to a particular group? Think about all the different things you might do knowing you are being unjustly treated.

Following these prompts, participants responded to the question that was of central importance in this study: What are all of the possible actions that you might take?

### Results and Discussion

**Perceived Reason for Discrimination.** Gender was the most frequently imagined reason for the described discrimination, reported by 23% of the respondents (all of these were women). The two other most typical responses were age (both young and old; 13.6%) and ethnicity/nationality or race (12.2%). None of the respondents used the most frequent category of discrimination reported to the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 1990–1991—handicap. The frequencies associated with the reported categories are shown in Table 11.2 as a function of scenario and gender of respondent.

**Possible Actions in Response to Discrimination.** In order to determine if the scenarios elicited behaviors that differ from behavior dimensions that are identified as central to intergroup theories, responses were coded as (a) passive (e.g., do nothing about the situation) or active (e.g., take legal action), (b) individual (e.g., gather evidence proving I was a victim) or collective (e.g., demonstrate with others), and (c) normative (e.g., be involved in rallies) versus nonnormative (e.g., plant bombs), which was operationalized as a function of the legality of the behavior in North America. Agreement between two coders was over 92% for each category. Responses were not coded to determine if they were self-directed or system-directed, because the question under investigation precludes self-directed behaviors. There were no significant relationships between gender, nationality, or educational level and the types of actions selected by respondents.

TABLE 11.2  
Suggested Basis of Discrimination for Females and Males

Category	Scenario			Totals
	Job	Apartment	Sad New World	
Gender	8F 0M	6F 0M	3F 0M	17F 0M
Age	2F 0M	2F 2M	3F 1M	7F 3M
Ethnicity/Race	3F 1M	0F 1M	1F 3M	4F 5M
Religion	0F 1M	—	2F 3M	2F 4M
Student	—	3F 1M	1F 0M	4F 1M
Politics	1F 1M	—	0F 2M	1F 3M
Parent	1F 0M	1F 1M	—	2F 1M
Educated	—	—	0F 3M	0F 3M
Appearance	2F 1M	—	—	2F 1M
Other	1F 0M	0F 2M	0F 4M	1F 4M
None	0F 3M	3F 3M	—	3F 6M



Approximately 75% of the respondents indicated that they would take some type of action, and no relationship was found between scenario type and the passive versus active distinction. This is not surprising, given that prompts were formulated to evoke active behaviors. There was a significant relationship, however, between the likelihood of an active or passive response and the typicality of the discrimination category,  $\chi^2(1, N = 72) = 13.51, p < .001$ . Respondents attributing the discrimination to gender, age, or ethnicity/race were more likely to engage in some type of action (33 out of 35) than those suggesting less typical reasons (e.g., level of education, appearance) for the discrimination (21 out of 37). One interpretation of this finding is that membership in a more typical social group is more central to one's self-concept, and people are more likely to take an active response when such a membership is threatened by discrimination.

There also was a significant relation between scenario type and endorsement of individual versus collective behaviors,  $\chi^2(2, N = 72) = 36.71, p < .001$ . This relationship is attributable to the collectively oriented responses of most people (75%) imagining themselves in the new world scenario. Only 3 of the 48 respondents in the job and apartment scenarios suggested taking action with others. These results probably reflect the impact of different contexts of discrimination. When respondents were victims of institutionalized discrimination (new world), collective actions came readily to mind. The discrimination here was clearly presented as the product of intergroup power differentials, and most people responded by formulating actions in group terms. In contrast, the job and apartment scenarios depicted discrimination in situations that were more interpersonal, and people were far less likely to spontaneously suggest collective forms of behavior.

The endorsement of normative versus nonnormative behavior was also significantly related to scenario type,  $\chi^2(2, N = 72) = 18.00, p < .001$ . All of the respondents who suggested norm-violating actions (11%) were in the sad new world scenario. This finding is congruent with some research indicating that nonnormative behavioral strategies may be used in extreme situations of discrimination in which there is little or no chance of otherwise escaping the disadvantaged position (Wright et al., 1990).

## Study 2

Although the behaviors identified in Study 1 can be coded according to the behavior dimensions implicated by intergroup theories, lay respondents may not conceptualize these behaviors along the same lines. Theories offer overarching dimensions of behavior, but when individuals are placed within the constraints of a particular situation of discrimination, more subtle behavioral distinctions may apply. In addition, there is evidence in the first study indicating that contextual variations across situations of discrimination are reflected by quite different

dimensions of behavior (i.e., nonnormative behaviors were found only for the new world scenarios). The purpose of this study, then, is to identify the categories and dimensions that lay people see as representative of behaviors in certain situations of discrimination.

In order to identify the specific behaviors that were accessed by the lay sample in Study 1, all of the discrete behaviors that could be identified from the transcripts of the taped interviews were extracted. This process was achieved in several stages.<sup>7</sup> The end result was the identification of 27 discrete behaviors for the job scenario, 30 for the apartment scenario, and 38 for the new world scenario. These behaviors provided the stimuli for the second study. Given the similarity of behaviors that were elicited in the job and apartment scenarios and a clearer pattern of results for the apartment scenario, the data for the job scenario are not presented here.

## Method

*Respondents.* Seventy-six undergraduate psychology students were recruited from classes and paid for their participation. There were 55 females and 21 males with a mean age of 21 years.

*Procedure.* Each participant received a written version of two of the three scenarios that were used in Study 1 on the basis of a fixed random order, thus providing 52 respondents per scenario. After reading a scenario, the respondent was given the following written instructions:

There are a number of things that a person in your situation may do. We will provide you with a number of actions or behaviors that other people in your situation have thought of. Each of these behaviors is presented separately on a card. Please read all of the cards a few times, so that you become familiar with them. Think about what each behavior involves, and the implications it has.

<sup>7</sup>First, the transcripts of 17 randomly selected interviews were examined separately by three raters to determine if they used similar extraction strategies for discrete behaviors. Second, the remaining interviews were divided randomly and evenly between two of the raters. The extraction of ambiguously presented behaviors was resolved by a discussion between the two raters who came to an agreement. Third, the extracted behaviors were retranscribed to follow a similar format. Redundant, ambiguous, or apparently nonsensical items were then eliminated. The result is the generation of a list of discrete behaviors expressed in sentence form for each scenario. These sentences were again rephrased in order to be presented suitably in the next phase of the study. A final examination of the items resulted in the elimination of those that were too general, those that could be collapsed into others, and those that were geared towards seeking the reason for the discrimination. A constant attempt was made to retain the integrity of the participants' responses by using their wording and erring in the direction of overinclusiveness.



The respondent was then given a shuffled set of cards associated with the scenario and a standard set of instructions for card sorting.<sup>8</sup>

**Results and Discussion**

Similarity matrices were constructed for each scenario on the basis of the frequency of appearance of pairs of behaviors in the card-sorting task. A multi-dimensional scaling procedure was used to analyze the matrices using an ALS-CAL procedure. A three-dimensional solution provided a satisfactory fit for the apartment data (RSQ = .89, Stress = .13), and a two-dimensional solution provided the best fit for the new world data (RSQ = .88, Stress = .19). The list of behaviors for the apartment and new world scenarios is in the appendix at the end of this chapter, along with the symbols used to identify each of them.

**Apartment Scenario.** In order to facilitate the presentation of the three-dimensional space of behaviors obtained for the apartment scenario, the results are collapsed into 2 two-dimensional views. Figure 11.1 shows how behaviors cluster along Dimensions 1 and 2 when collapsing Dimension 3, and Fig. 11.2 shows behaviors along Dimensions 1 and 3 when collapsing Dimension 2. In Fig. 11.1 and Fig. 11.2, the behaviors that are grouped within circles always clustered together regardless of the perspective that was taken when behaviors were examined in their complete three-dimensional space. These clusters of behaviors are given abbreviated names to facilitate their presentation and aid in the interpretation of dimensions. Examples of the behavior clusters include: (a) resignation (e.g., forget about the apartment and search for another one elsewhere), (b) collective organization (e.g., work to organize others who were similarly discriminated against), (c) government agents (e.g., contact my city councilor), (d) legal action (e.g., take the owner to court), (e) collect evidence (e.g., record all conversations with the owner, and (f) confront perpetrator (e.g., confront the owner and demand to know why I was refused the apartment).

In terms of the identification of the dimensions underlying the spatial organization of the behaviors, Dimension 1 is a *Private versus Public* dimension, because behaviors on the private end primarily focused on interpersonal interactions with the perpetrator, and behaviors on the public end focused on social agencies, government agents, and the media. Dimension 2 is a *Passive versus Active* dimension, where behaviors on the passive end were resignation, talking

<sup>8</sup>The instructions were as follows:

“Your task is to sort these behaviors into groups in terms of how similar they are to each other. Cards that you see as similar should be put into the same group. You form a group by putting cards into the same pile. You can form as many groups (piles) as you like, and you can have a different number of cards in each group. You can even have a card by itself, but try to create no more than 10 groups. A card can belong to only one group, but you may change your assignment of behaviors to groups until you are happy with your sorting.”

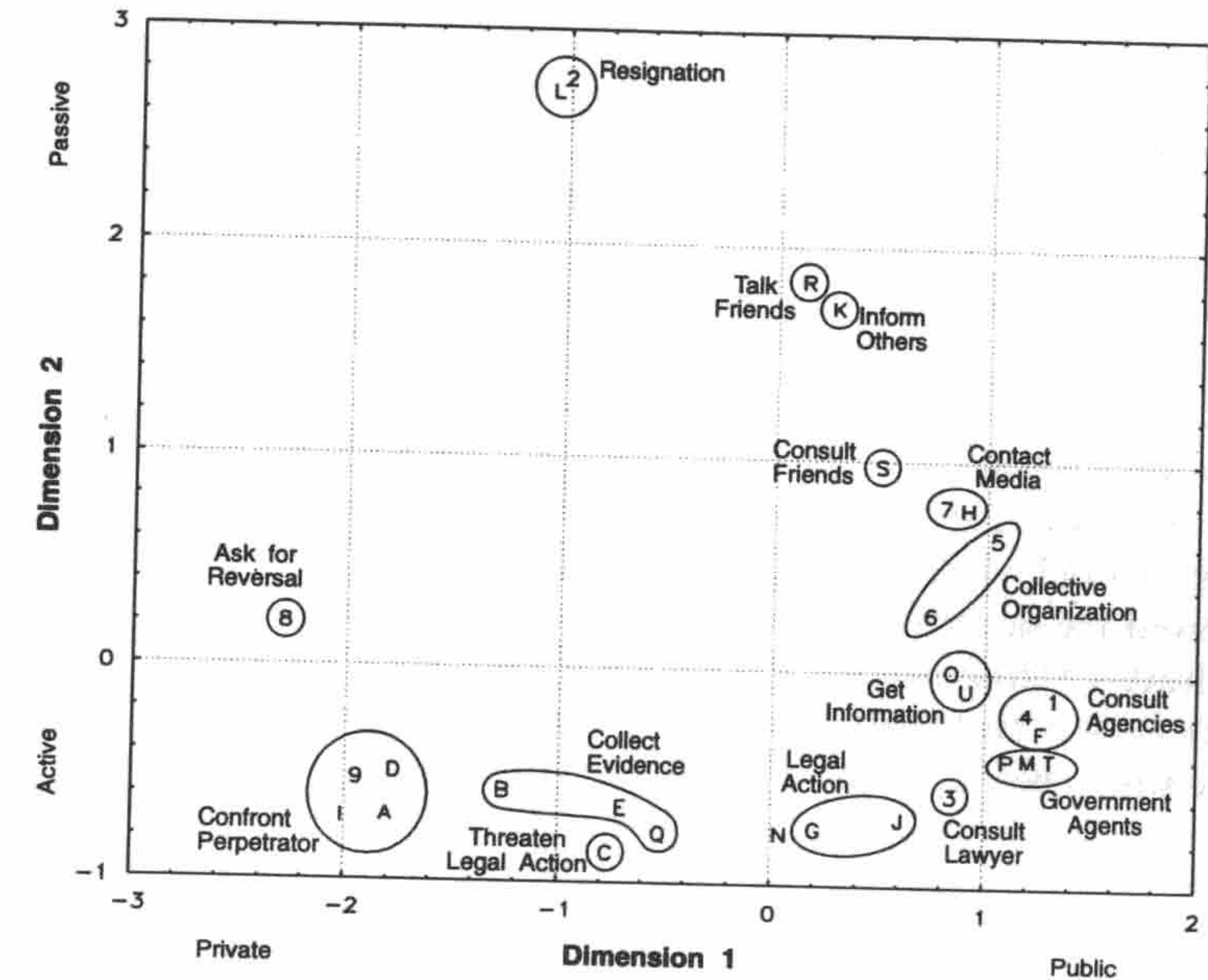


FIG. 11.1. Two-dimensional view of Dimensions 1 and 2 for the apartment scenario.

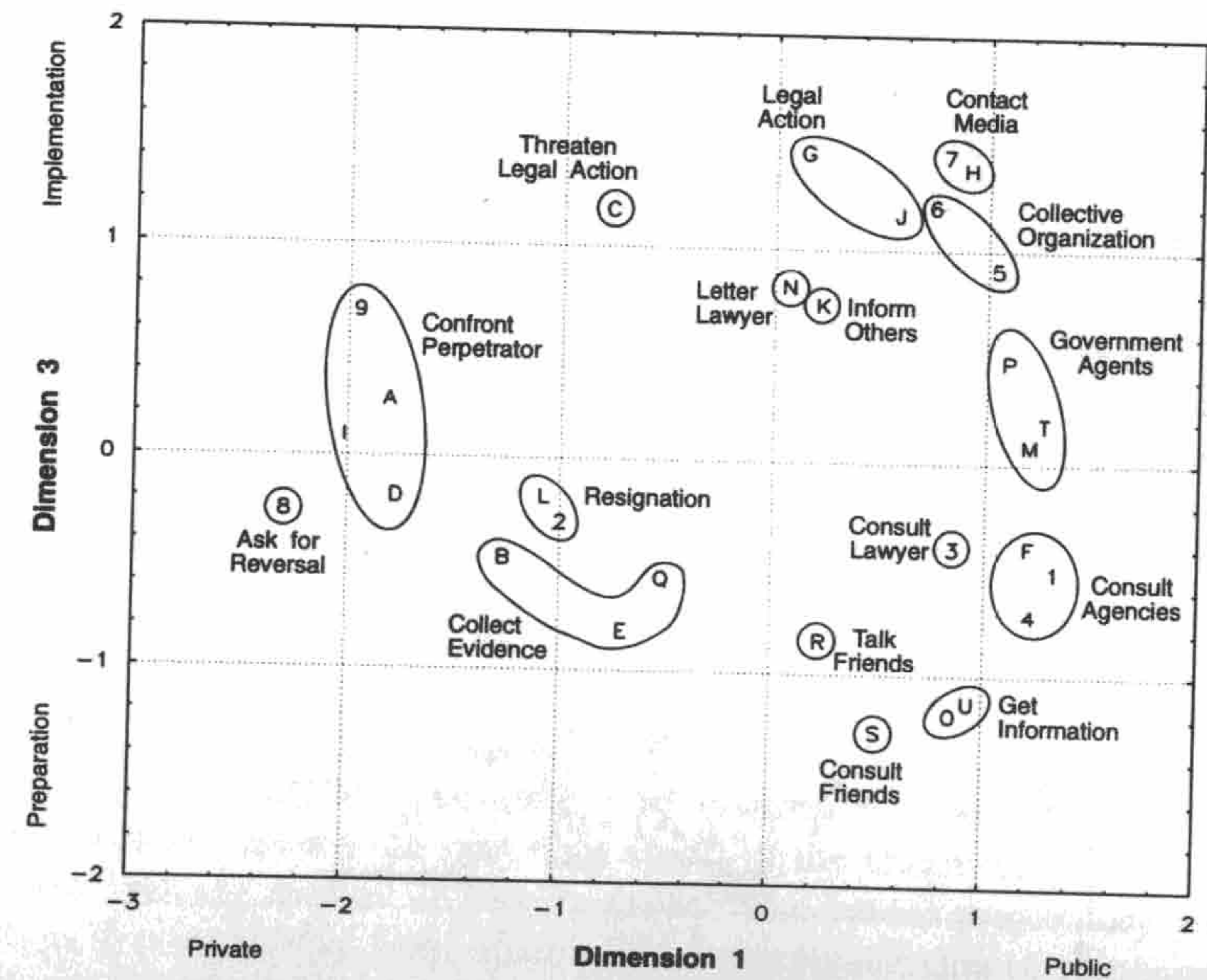


FIG. 11.2. Two-dimensional view of Dimensions 1 and 3 for the apartment scenario.



with or consulting friends and family, and informing others about the discrimination. More active behaviors included engaging in legal action, collecting evidence, and confronting the perpetrator. Dimension 3 reflects a *Preparation versus Implementation* dimension. Preparation behaviors included consulting family and friends or agencies, getting information, and collecting evidence. Implementation behaviors included taking legal action, contacting the media, and collective organization.

*New-World Scenario.* The two-dimensional solution for the new world behaviors is seen in Fig. 11.3. Behaviors in this scenario tended to group closely together and only a few distinct clusters were identified to facilitate the interpretation of the underlying dimensions. These clusters are: (a) resignation/exit (e.g., leave or dissociate myself from the group that is being discriminated against), (b) sabotage (e.g., plant or throw bombs), (c) social protest (e.g., demonstrate with others in public places), and (d) group consciousness raising (e.g., write letters to the press describing my experiences of discrimination). Other interesting behaviors included trying to convince those in power that the situation of discrimination is unfair, withdrawing labor as a form of protest, and looking for a leader who could unite people to oppose the discrimination.

The underlying dimensions of behavior for the new world scenario are quite clear and easier to label than in the case of the apartment scenario. Dimension 1 is labeled *Normative versus Nonnormative*. Behaviors on the normative end included group consciousness raising, as well as an active concern for the avoid-

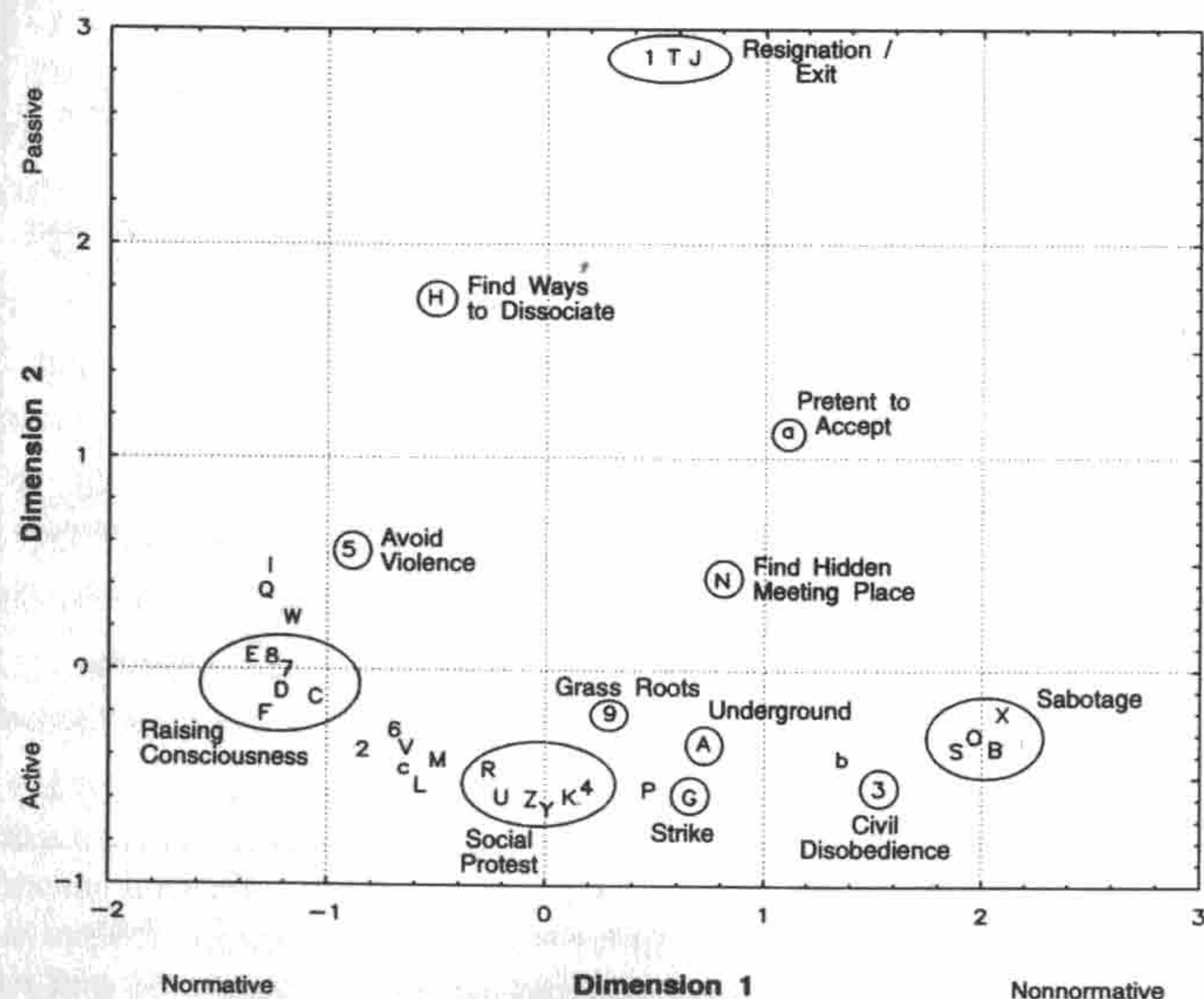


FIG. 11.3. Two-dimensional solution for the new-world scenario.

ance of violence. Behaviors on the nonnormative end included acts of sabotage and civil disobedience. Social protest behaviors fell between these two extremes. Dimension 2 reflects a *Passive versus Active* dimension, with resignation and exit behaviors at the passive end of the dimension, and social protest behaviors at the active end.

Earlier in this chapter, four dimensions of behavior were seen as underlying the behaviors that are available to individuals who are in a position of social disadvantage: (a) active versus passive, (b) normative versus nonnormative, (c) individual versus collective, and (d) self-directed versus system-directed. These dimensions are also applicable to the traditional social psychological analyses of the responses of victims of discrimination (e.g., Allport, 1954). It is of considerable interest, therefore, to compare the dimensions identified by social psychological theorists to those identified by lay people who were asked to classify the behaviors of their peers (note that self-directed behaviors are precluded in this study). We limit ourselves to four observations that can be drawn from this comparative exercise.

A first observation is that the individual-collective distinction in behavior did not surface in the apartment or new world scenarios. As seen in Study 1, the apartment scenario elicited behaviors that were almost exclusively individual, and the new-world scenario elicited behaviors that were largely collective in nature, thus making it difficult for this dimension to appear. A plausible explanation for this pattern in behaviors is that entire classes of response strategies (i.e., individual or collective) may be evoked as a function of where the discrimination situation falls on the interpersonal-intergroup continuum. It is also possible, however, that the individual-collective distinction is not as clear as social psychologists would like it to be. Kağitçibaşı (1987) questioned the validity of the individual-collective distinction within cross-cultural psychology and suggested that they are not incompatible orientations even within the same individual. With regard to social action, the individual response of Rosa Parks (saying no) led to the collective action of her group (bus boycott). Another example of individual behaviors having implications for the status of the group comes from a study by Abel (1981), who found that the pursuit of sex-discrimination grievances by individual women within universities is related to an improved overall status of women on a campus.

These latter examples highlight a second point of the present results. It is more appropriate in some cases to view responses to discrimination in terms of process rather than in terms of discrete acts. As reflected by the preparation versus implementation dimension for the apartment scenario, the exploration of potential responses was an important aspect of the aftermath of discrimination. The role-playing studies of Mikula (1986) also reveal preparatory behaviors, such as seeking advice from others. The conceptualization of responses to discrimination, therefore, should extend backwards from the final action(s). Of course, this must take place along with a consideration of the resources and



system structures available to the individual. Social psychological theories of intergroup relations, as well as resource mobilization theory (McCarthy & Zald, 1979), offer insight as to how these resources and structures impact the decisions that are made by individuals and/or their groups in selecting their actions.

A third observation taken from our second study is the potential importance of a private-public dimension in behavior. This is a distinction that merits attention in future theory and research. An important difference between private and public behaviors is in the cost involved in engaging in these types of behaviors. Although on the surface, confronting the perpetrator of the discrimination may seem costly, the victims have nothing to lose, because they have already been refused the apartment. There are significant psychological costs, however, associated with publicly acknowledging the experience of being discriminated against (see Abel, 1981). Both Martin et al. (1984) and Inglis (1990) indicated that this cost factor must be considered in research on social action in response to injustice, and the private-public distinction is one key in unraveling its complex relationship.

A final point to be drawn from the role-playing scenario studies is that they reveal the salience of a particular class of behaviors worth pursuing in future research on discrimination, namely litigation. More than one third of the behaviors that were examined in the apartment scenario referred to the use of a lawyer, the courts, or government agency. These behaviors, which are normative and system-directed, have the potential for bringing about tremendous social change (e.g., *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 1954). They represent what Simpson and Yinger (1985) called reformism—actions directed at social change using existing social structures. Yet these behaviors are not explicitly and adequately integrated within the social psychological theories of intergroup behavior that are examined in this chapter. Such a class of behaviors cannot be ignored in the development of theoretical models of intergroup relations and the study of responses to discrimination. Although the study of these responses may seem promising for bringing about social change, however, some legal scholars have questioned the utility of the courts for bringing about lasting social improvements for disadvantaged groups (Shattuck & Norgren, 1979).

The role-playing studies presented here have the advantage of helping to identify possible modes of action under a controlled set of circumstances where a discriminatory act was explicitly labeled, without limiting the participants to a specific set of responses. The studies, however, have their limitations and represent only one step in understanding the representation of actions that individuals have when faced with a situation of discrimination. We are now engaged in some new research where similar scenarios (job and apartment) are being presented to individuals who are at a high risk of experiencing discrimination (South Asians and Caribbean immigrants). In these scenarios, we manipulate variables such as the type of discrimination experienced (individual and institutional) and use the behaviors that are identified in the present studies as our dependent variables.

## DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH ON RESPONSES TO DISCRIMINATION

In this final section, we highlight some issues that were raised by the literature and our research, in order to make some suggestions for future inquiry. A first observation is that responses to discrimination, whether they be passive or active, should be recognized as part of a process. There are at least two stages within this process: (a) the acknowledgment that discrimination has indeed occurred, and (b) an analysis of the situation in order to determine which strategy of action, if any, to adopt.

The stage of acknowledgment is a particularly difficult one as suggested by the work of Taylor and colleagues on the personal/group discrimination discrepancy (Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam, and Lalonde, 1990; Taylor, Wright, & Porter, chapter 10, this volume). This involves the perception by individuals that their group is discriminated against to a far greater extent than they are themselves. Although the mechanisms underlying this discrepancy are unclear, it represents a potential cognitive obstacle to considering possibilities for action (particularly if personal experiences of discrimination are denied). One challenge for future research is to identify the conditions that bring about an acknowledgment of personal discrimination when it occurs. One key to this recognition is to have discriminated individuals process information at an intergroup level rather than an interpersonal level of analysis (Tajfel, 1978), meaning that disadvantaged group members need to interpret their experiences in terms of category membership rather than personal attributes (in relative deprivation terms, to shift from an egoistical to a fraternal level of analysis). It should be noted that the process of recognition can be facilitated by consciousness raising, which represents a key stage in Taylor and McKirnan's (1984) five-stage model of intergroup relations.

Once discrimination has been recognized by its victim, the theories of intergroup relations that are mentioned in this chapter are particularly beneficial in predicting what type of action will be taken. Much work remains to be done within these theories, however, in terms of an elaboration of the behavioral responses that they have identified. An example of such an elaboration is the recognition of preparatory responses (e.g., information and social support seeking) prior to a commitment to a line of action. In experimental studies, more attention needs to be paid to the dependent variables in order to move from the prediction of broad classes of behavior, such as system-directed behavior, to the prediction of specific behaviors within these broad classes, such as lodging a grievance with the Human Rights Commission. In addition, research paradigms should focus on common experiences of social injustice such as access to employment and housing.

In order to study the more common manifestations of discrimination, future research should use a plurality of methods and approaches. In the studies that were presented earlier, a number of methods of investigation proved to be useful:



(a) experimental studies (e.g., Dion & Earn, 1975; Wright et al., 1990), (b) the analysis of oral histories (Lykes, 1983), and (c) role playing (Mikula, 1986). Although our own studies have a number of methodological limitations, the results still reveal dimensions of behavior that are not explicitly acknowledged by relevant social psychological theories, and they provide more fine-grained behavioral repertoires to be used in future research.

In terms of alternative approaches, there is an emerging body of work in discourse analysis (e.g., Potter & Wetherell, 1987) that ascribes fundamental importance to language in social psychology. According to discourse analysis, social categories do not simply exist in an objective manner but are used flexibly in speech to perform different functions in different contexts; similarly, an experience such as discrimination exists as it is constructed in discourse. Discourse analytic methods move beyond content analysis (e.g., Lykes, 1983) in that the coding of the discourse is not the endpoint of the analysis but the substrate for the generation of hypotheses regarding the functions of discourse in a particular context. By "listening" to the victims of discrimination, a discourse analytic framework reveals the ways in which instances of discrimination are evaluated before any type of action can be taken. Essed (1991), for example, examined accounts of racism in the everyday lives of Black women in the United States and the Netherlands. Her analysis illuminated the often subtle reproduction of structural racism in everyday social practices and ascribed importance to the knowledge that Black women have gained through their experiences of discrimination. Victims of discrimination may be regarded as "experts" in this domain; clearly, an understanding of their knowledge is essential for predicting when an individual will decide to take (or not to take) action in response to the discrimination. Louw-Potgieter (1989) took this perspective in a study of personal accounts of racism by Black students at a South African university. It was found that most experiences were characterized by resignation due to beliefs that covert racism could not be directly confronted and that the racism was institutional in nature. An interesting aspect of these studies is the description of victims' explanations and evaluations of their experiences. The observations that are made within phenomenologically and discourse-oriented approaches can be usefully employed to elaborate theoretical models that focus on discrimination.

Central to the present chapter is the notion that discrimination is systemically rooted in unequal intergroup power relations. Recent theory and empirical work in intergroup relations reflects a growing concern with the issue of power (e.g., Bourhis, chapter 8, this volume; Condor & Brown, 1988; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1991). There is, however, another facet of the power dynamic that needs to be addressed, concerning the present state of social psychological research. The need for a "minority voice" is acutely felt in the field of prejudice and discrimination. We (the authors, as White, middle-class males), are relatively ill-equipped to conceptualize the very experiences of many of the disadvantaged groups we attempt to study (e.g., visible immigrants, Blacks, women). Thus, along with

our suggestion that the focus of research shift from the discriminator to the discriminated, we advocate minority input into research and policy in this area. Such advocacy is not new (Lewin, 1946) but is still needed. If the social psychology of prejudice and discrimination is to stand for social justice, social change, and social action, then the notion of affirmative action within our own institutions should not be a point of debate (see Blanchard & Crosby, 1989) but a point of priority.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## APPENDIX: BEHAVIOR ITEMS FOR THE APARTMENT AND NEW-WORLD SCENARIOS

### Apartment Scenario Behaviors

1. Go to the Human Rights Commission to find out what I can do about the discrimination.
2. Not do anything about it.
3. Consult with a lawyer for advice about what to do.
4. Consult with the various social agencies that deal with discrimination.
5. Work to organize others who were similarly discriminated against.
6. Get together with others in the same situation to contact a lawyer.
7. Get together with others in the same situation to contact a newspaper.
8. Try to coax the owner into reversing his or her decision.
9. Demand a written explanation from the owner concerning his or her decision.
- A. Demand proof from the owner that his or her decision was not an act of discrimination.
- B. Record all conversations with the owner.
- C. Threaten the owner with legal action.
- D. Set up an appointment with the owner to discuss his or her decision.
- E. Gather as much information as possible about the discriminator.
- F. Call a tenant association or agency for help.
- G. Take the owner to court.
- H. Inform the media about the situation.
- I. Confront the owner and demand to know why I was refused the apartment.
- J. Take legal action against the owner.
- K. Inform others by word of mouth about the discrimination.
- L. Forget about the apartment and search for another one elsewhere.
- M. Contact my city counselor.
- N. Ask a lawyer to write a letter to the owner asking about his or her decision.
- O. Find out whom I would have to contact about this type of situation.
- P. File a formal complaint against the owner with a political agency such as the Human Rights Commission.

- Q. Gather evidence proving that I was a victim of discrimination.
- R. Express to my friends and family my anger about the situation.
- S. Ask my friends and family for their ideas about possible actions I could take.
- T. Contact an ombudsman within a government agency.
- U. Look into the possible actions I could take in response to the discrimination.

### New-World Scenario Behaviors

1. Not do anything.
2. Try to convince those in power that this situation of discrimination is unfair.
3. Become involved in acts of civil disobedience.
4. Become an activist.
5. Avoid using violent actions.
6. Get organized with others who are in the same situation.
7. Seek out others who are in the same situation as myself.
8. Discuss with others in my situation the implications of this discrimination for our future.
9. Oppose those who are ruling by working with others at the grass-roots level.
- A. Secretly work with others in an underground operation opposing the ruling group.
- B. Work with others in acts of sabotage against the current government.
- C. Get ideas together with others who are victims of this discrimination.
- D. Try to make people aware of the discrimination that is occurring.
- E. Write letters to people describing my experiences of discrimination.
- F. Write letters to the press describing my experiences of discrimination.
- G. Withdraw labor (i.e., stop working) as a form of protest.
- H. Explore ways in which I or others can get out of the group that is being discriminated against.
- I. Quietly make people conscious of what is occurring.
- J. Move elsewhere to escape discrimination.
- K. Demonstrate with others in public places.
- L. Write letters of protest to members of government.
- M. Look for a leader who could unite people to oppose the discrimination.
- N. Find a hidden place to hold meetings to discuss the situation.
- O. Try to sabotage the ruling group's communication network.
- P. Exercise with others what I see to be my rights even if my actions are in violation of the existing rules or laws.
- Q. Tell others not to ignore the discrimination.
- R. Organize people into some type of protest group.



- S. Be involved in violent group uprisings.
- T. Leave or dissociate myself, if possible, from the group that is being discriminated against.
- U. Be involved in rallies with others in my situation.
- V. Sign or circulate petitions requesting social change.
- W. Find out what type of actions were already being taken in my community.
- X. Plant or throw bombs.
- Y. Try to take political action wherever possible.
- Z. Lobby against the governing group.
  - a. Secretly fight back while I pretend to accept the situation.
  - b. Engage in subversive actions in order to overthrow the ruling group.
  - c. Use the media to inform others about what is happening.