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# SYMPATHETIC IDENTIFICATION WITH THE UNDERDOG\*

BY HOWARD SCHUMAN AND JOHN HARDING

Many years ago Charlie Chaplin built a great career by portraying in the movies a grossly "underprivileged" man who met adversity with dignity, nonchalance, and subtle humor. He appealed to the common streak of sympathy and friendly amusement that appears to be a fundamental part of human nature. Here is a study of attitudes toward the underdog that seeks to test and analyze this aspect of human response in a modern and sophisticated context.

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PEOPLE differ greatly in the extent to which they identify with the social underdog—specifically, with the ethnic minority facing discrimination. The difference often appears in the way situations are defined. At one extreme are those who readily assume that any minority experiences pain or resentment at instances of discriminatory treatment. At the other extreme are people who interpret such situations in a way that eliminates the need for sympathy with the underdog. In between, of course, are many who have never given the matter much thought.

This paper reports an attempt to measure systematically the dimension of "sympathetic identification with the underdog." We will report data on its social correlates, and explore its relation to measures of prejudice. The study has more general implications also, for the tendency to put oneself in the place of the underdog is a psychological feature common to all humanitarian movements.<sup>1</sup>

## METHOD

The questionnaire consists of eleven simple stories. In each a minority member is exposed to an act of discrimination or prejudice. The respondent is asked after each story to indicate, by choosing one of four

\* This research was supported by a grant from the Field Foundation to the Laboratory of Social Relations, Harvard University. We owe a particular debt to the encouragement and advice of Gordon W. Allport. An earlier draft of this paper benefited from comments by Thomas F. Pettigrew.

<sup>1</sup> The humanitarian, writes Crane Brinton, "presumably feels love or friendship toward the object of his concern; yet his strongest emotion is a kind of imaginative flinching before the spectacle of inflicted pain." From "Humanitarianism," in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, New York, Macmillan, 1932, Vol. 7, pp. 544-549. See also Alfred Cobban, *In Search of Humanity*, New York, Brasiller, 1960, pp. 11-19.

alternatives, what the minority member's "likely reaction" to the situation would be. Two of the items are reproduced below:<sup>2</sup>

1. A colored man born in New England goes South for the first time and sees in a Mississippi bus station two waiting rooms, one for colored and one for whites. How do you think he would be likely to react to this?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (a) He probably thinks it is a good thing at present, since it prevents trouble from arising.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (b) He may notice it at first, but after a while he probably gets used to it and it doesn't make much difference to him.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (c) He very likely feels hurt by it, and perhaps angry.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (d) It is hard to know exactly how he would react to such a situation, though with more information one might be able to tell.
- . . . . .
6. Two Chinese girls get jobs in a large American business office. The white girls in the office are polite, but do not want to become too friendly with them. What is the reaction of the Chinese girls likely to be?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (a) They might prefer it this way, since they have each other as friends and would rather not mix too much with white people.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (b) Probably it makes little difference if the job is good in all other ways.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (c) The Chinese are so different in some of their customs that it would be difficult for a person who is not Chinese to figure out exactly what they would think.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (d) They would almost certainly feel sad or angry or both.

Each basic situation, it will be noted, is presented in a neutral fashion, leaving the respondent free to define social meaning as he sees it.<sup>3</sup> The alternatives, on the other hand, carry more emotional coloring, since each is designed to attract persons with a particular orientation to intergroup relations.

The content of the alternatives repeats approximately the same four themes over all eleven items. One response always assumes that members of minority groups in the United States are likely to be hurt or angered by instances of prejudice. This is the response scored as indicating "sympathetic identification with the underdog." The other three alternatives to each story are designed to evoke attitudes which, *whatever else they may indicate*, are not characterized by immediate sympathetic identification.

One nonidentifying type of response assumes that members of sub-

<sup>2</sup> The use of multiple-choice questions to minimize response set unfortunately makes the questionnaire too long to reproduce in full. A copy can be obtained by writing to: Howard Schuman, Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

<sup>3</sup> This accounts for the bland, almost meaningless term "reaction" in framing questions. For a similar reason, "colored person" is used throughout instead of "Negro," since the former is more widely heard in the general population from people of varying social classes and degrees of prejudice. Five of the stories in the questionnaire concern Negroes, three Jews, and one each Chinese, Japanese, and Puerto Ricans.

ordinate groups are usually indifferent to instances of prejudice. Another nonidentifying alternative reinterprets the incident as really a good thing from the minority member's point of view—it prevents trouble, for example, or fits his own ethnocentrism. The final alternative offered is not so much a reply to the question as a rejection of it: not enough information is said to be available on which to judge the matter, and so the respondent takes an agnostic stance toward the feelings of the hypothetical minority member.

One characteristic, however, is shared by all four types of response: each has *some* claim to truth. While all may not be equally likely in a given situation, each describes a reaction that is possible and that actually exists to some extent. The element of truth in all responses is intended to make a subject's choice dependent less on the accuracy of his knowledge of minority-group reactions—though this undoubtedly does enter into the weighing of responses—than on the emotional quality that characterizes his perception of the feelings of others in discriminatory situations. Given the fact that many minority-group members do suffer from encounters with prejudice, we hypothesize that an individual with a good deal of sympathy for the feelings of the underdog will perceive hurt or anger as the “most likely reaction” in the situations described—especially since a respondent can always assume that even minority members who openly deny being hurt may feel such hurt at some covert level. On the other hand, those respondents whose sympathy with the underdog is low *relative* to their other values and attitudes should find one of the nonidentifying alternatives more appealing.

Are these themes underlying the questionnaire also apparent to respondents, leading them to shape their answers accordingly? The problem is a crucial one, but the reader should not be too quick to assume that such bias occurs to any significant extent. The subject is never required to say anything bad about other ethnic groups or anything explicitly supportive of prejudice or discrimination. He may, indeed, desire to choose the “best answer”—this is what the directions call for—but our earliest pre-test experience indicated that people generally regard the response *they* prefer as the best answer. Nor does repetition of response types, even where noted by subjects, seem to lead to the inference that one type is always correct regardless of story content.

Nevertheless, to disrupt any set to follow a single theme mechanically, we added two control stories. They appear in the questionnaire as items 3 and 7, though actually they are not scored. Item 3, for example, begins as follows:

3. A Chinese couple opens a Chinese restaurant in a large American city. The restaurant is quite successful, but often customers mispronounce the

names of Chinese foods when ordering meals. How would Chinese owners be most likely to react to this?

The alternatives offered fit the four types already discussed. But the actual content of the story hardly justifies choice of the "sympathetic response" under any assumption. Those respondents who may have thought on the basis of the first two items that such a response is always called for should stop short on reading the third story. If their answering reflects a consideration of rational as well as emotional elements in a situation, they should proceed with less certainty about the purpose of the questionnaire. If, on the other hand, a significant proportion of subjects simply follow a sympathetic pattern blindly on this item, one can make a judgment for any sample as to who they are and what significance their response has for the validity of the measure.

The complete questionnaire thus consists of thirteen stories, of which only eleven are scored. Each of these eleven items is scored 1 or 3: 1 if the sympathetic identifying response is selected, 3 if *any* other alternative is chosen.<sup>4</sup> (A score of 2 is reserved for omitted or multiply checked items.) The total score is obtained by summing item scores, which makes the possible range for the complete questionnaire 11 to 33. Note that a high score indicates *lack* of sympathetic identification.

#### DIFFICULTY AND RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Contrary to fears that the questionnaire might prove too obvious in purpose, it turns out to be "difficult" for the general population. The median total score in our main standardization sample of 229 Boston adults is 25.<sup>5</sup> This indicates that the average respondent selects a non-sympathetic alternative to seven of the eleven scored stories. Moreover, 20 per cent of the subjects chose nonsympathetic responses to at least

<sup>4</sup>It might seem logical to score what we have labeled "agnostic responses" as intermediate between identifying and clearly nonidentifying alternatives. On theoretical grounds, however, the person who consistently chooses the agnostic response *fails* to express sympathetic identification, even though he may present a qualitative picture that is different from those who select more clearly anti-sympathetic responses. Whatever the theoretical argument, however, practically it does not make much difference. For the Boston sample described in the next section, a rescoreing of the questionnaires to give 2 points rather than 3 to each agnostic response yields a set of scores that correlates .93 with those obtained by the regular scoring method.

<sup>5</sup>This sample was drawn to provide a reasonably heterogeneous and representative base for standardization. Groups of five to fifteen people were located in a wide variety of settings (bars, hospital outpatient waiting rooms, churches, etc.) and were paid a small amount to fill out this and several other questionnaires on the spot. Quotas for sex, age, education, and religion were used to obtain a sample roughly typical of metropolitan Boston, though precise representation was neither needed nor attempted. The sample, besides its urban character, is distinctive relative to the country as a whole in including a high proportion (59 per cent) of Catholics. Members of the minorities mentioned in the questionnaire were specifically excluded from the sample.

ten of the eleven items, while only 7 per cent chose sympathetic responses to that many items. The remainder of the sample is distributed in a roughly normal fashion over intermediate scores, though, as the above figures suggest, the distribution tends to pile up toward the nonsympathetic end.

The corrected split-half reliability (internal consistency) of the questionnaire in the general Boston sample is .76. Thus a consistent response dimension is clearly being measured, though of course no statistic can assure us that the dimension is precisely the one conceptualized. From a practical standpoint, the questionnaire can be characterized as reliable enough in its present form for use in group comparisons, though the reliability is below the level required for precise predictions about individuals.<sup>6</sup>

The performance of the Boston sample on the two unscored control items provides evidence that the questionnaire is not answered in a mechanical fashion. Although on the eleven scored items the sympathetic alternative was always selected by at least one-third of the Boston subjects, on the two control items less than 2 per cent chose the sympathetic response. Moreover, this 2 per cent comes no more from the high sympathizers than from the low sympathizers: the former are not so set in one direction as to give sympathy even when uncalled for. We take this as evidence that each item in the questionnaire lends itself to independent consideration regardless of its formal similarity to other items.

#### VALIDATION BY KNOWN GROUPS

A preliminary test of validity was provided by administering the questionnaire to three groups we had reason to believe differed in extent of sympathetic identification with ethnic minorities. This approach to validation is by no means conclusive, but the failure of a measure to meet it would certainly raise serious questions.

College samples were used, holding sex, age, and education approximately constant:

1. *Southern*: A state college in the Deep South with a largely traditional orientation toward nonwhite minorities ( $N = 52$ ). The sample comes from two summer-school classes.

<sup>6</sup> The lowest corrected reliability (internal consistency) obtained thus far is .62, based on a sample ( $N = 112$ ) from a single college where respondents are of the same sex, age, religion, freshman status, and social-class background, and where the spread in scores is very slight.

An estimate of retest reliability over time is also available. The questionnaire was administered to an introductory sociology class in a girls' college, and then readministered to the same class one month later. Thirty students took the questionnaire on both occasions. The correlation ( $\rho$ ) between their two sets of scores is .80, which is quite satisfactory considering the brevity of the questionnaire, the homogeneity of the sample, and the lapse of a month's time.

2. *Northern*: The male sample ( $N = 71$ ) consists of the introductory sociology class in a Catholic college for men. The female sample ( $N = 112$ ) consists of half the freshman class in a Catholic girls' college.
3. *Harvard race relations*: This sample consists of all the white, non-Jewish students beginning an elective course in race relations at Harvard University ( $N = 47$ ).

None of the above samples was chosen randomly from its college population, but except in the case of the race relations course each is probably representative of its setting.

The predictions here were straightforward. Students at the Southern college should show the least sympathetic identification, since a primary defense of segregation in the South has been to deny that most Negroes wish things otherwise.<sup>7</sup> Students in the Harvard race relations course should show the most identification, on the assumption that both by college setting and by self-selection into such a course these are individuals concerned with the minority viewpoint. The northern Catholic schools were expected to fall somewhere between these two "boundary samples."

Table 1 shows, for each sex separately, the sample distributions around a theoretical score mid-point of 22. (This is the score that would be obtained if half the items were answered in a "sympathetic" manner and half in an "unsympathetic" manner.) It is clear that the questionnaire leads to results in line with expectations.

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE OF SYMPATHIZERS IN COLLEGE GROUPS*		
<i>College Group</i>	<i>Sympathizers among Males</i>	<i>Sympathizers among females</i>
Southern	21 (33)	32 (19)
Northern	53 (71)	48 (112)
Harvard race relations	72 (39)	88 (8)

\* Each percentage represents the proportion of the accompanying base  $N$  with scores below the theoretical score mid-point of 22.

For males, comparison by colleges yields  $\chi^2(2 \text{ d.f.}) = 18.65$ ,  $p < .01$ .

For females,  $\chi^2$  is not computed because of low cell expectancies, but trend is similar.

Indeed, differences among the schools are clear-cut enough to suggest that "sympathetic identification" is quite responsive to a climate

<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, if the questionnaire merely measures gross exposure to minority-group feelings, then these Southern students should produce "identifying" scores, since open Negro rebellion against segregation is more salient today in the South than in the North.

of opinion or value. At the same time, there is no lack of overlap between even the "extreme" samples: one-fourth of the Southern sample show sympathetic identification on the majority of the test items, while one-fourth of the Harvard students choose nonidentifying responses on the majority of items. The considerable variance within, as well as between, these college groups suggests that individual as well as group factors are heavily involved in determining responses.

#### RELATION TO SEX, AGE, AND EDUCATION

Both the Southern and the Harvard samples reveal a slight tendency for women to be sympathizers more often than men. But no consistent sex difference appears for the Catholic colleges, nor for the sample of Boston adults once it is controlled for age and education. It seems clear that in general men and women do not differ appreciably in their scores on this questionnaire.

Since the word "sympathy" carries a more feminine than masculine connotation, this lack of difference is puzzling. The type of sympathy involved, however, is quite specific. It is directly connected with concern for the underdog, which may be as much a masculine as a feminine trait. Moreover, the actual questionnaire items often involve explicit anger on the part of the minority member, which might be expected to draw male more readily than female identification.

There are small but significant relations between identification and both young age and greater education. Scores correlate  $-.32$  with schooling and  $.25$  with age in the Boston sample.<sup>8</sup> Table 2 allows an analysis of these two correlates separately. When education is controlled, the original relation of identification scores to age loses much of its consistency and is strong only among the least educated. But when age is controlled, the relation to education continues to be clear at each level, though it becomes especially strong among the oldest respondents. Interaction of age and education is sharp at the extreme of low education and old age: 95 per cent of these subjects are on the nonidentifying side of the theoretical score mid-point.

These results fit the fact that intense concern over segregation is found mainly among college students, and that humanitarian movements ordinarily gain their greatest support from the college-educated. There may also be a class-cultural factor associated with education: it is a particularly middle-class parental concern that children *learn* to consider, and be considerate of, the feelings of others. Among lower-

<sup>8</sup> It was also possible to obtain College Board Verbal Aptitude Scores for the subjects in the Northern Catholic girls' college. The correlation of these aptitude scores with identification scores is only  $-.13$ , which, with an N of 112, does not reach significance at the .05 level.



TABLE 2  
 PERCENTAGE OF SYMPATHIZERS IN EACH BOSTON AGE-EDUCATION  
 CATEGORY\*

Age	Education			(N)
	11 Grades or Less	High School Graduate	Some College or More	
Young (16-29)	29 (7)	45 (49)†	50 (22)	(78)
Middle-aged (30-49)	41 (27)	29 (35)	55 (20)	(82)
Old (Over 50)	5 (39)	35 (17)	60 (10)	(66)
(N)	(73)	(101)	(52)	(226)

\* Each percentage represents the proportion of the accompanying base N with scores below the theoretical score mid-point of 22.

† Sixteen respondents actually in the last year of high school are included here. The "11 Grades or Less" category thus includes only people of post-high school age who did not complete high school.

class children, socialization may more often lead to character traits which, when projected, carry little sympathy.<sup>9</sup>

#### IDENTIFICATION AND PREJUDICE

Our initial interest in sympathetic identification was closely tied to a study of prejudice. We were certain that the two dimensions were related, but uncertain of the strength of their relation. Are there really two separate dimensions after all, or are prejudice and lack of sympathetic identification simply different ways of characterizing the same phenomenon?

There is evidence from two studies on this question. Both the Boston sample and the Catholic girls' college sample also filled out three questionnaires dealing directly with prejudice, one concerned with the cognitive area of beliefs, one with situations involving public discrimination, and one with social distance in personal relationships. The intercorrelations among these three measures of prejudice range from .63 to .74 in the Boston sample and from .57 to .63 in the college sample.<sup>10</sup> Thus the three are highly related, as attitude scales go. We may use their degree of interrelationship as a touchstone to evaluate the relation of each to the identification questionnaire.

<sup>9</sup> One hard-boiled pretest subject, who regularly chose the responses imputing indifference to the minority member, commented, "That's how I'd feel, I wouldn't give a damn about what anybody'd say." Robert W. White has pointed out that in some environments it would be more accurate to speak of the brutalization of children rather than of their socialization.

<sup>10</sup> All three measures are highly reliable in both samples. Their corrected internal-consistency correlations range from .87 to .93.

The correlations of the identification questionnaire with the three prejudice measures range from .29 to .43 in the Boston sample, the mean being .36; and from .14 to .44 in the college sample, with a mean of .30. Even if we correct for attenuation and assume perfect reliability all around, the average of the correlations between the sympathy measure and each of the other three measures rises only to .50 in the Boston sample and to .41 in the college sample—still considerably lower than the average uncorrected intercorrelations of the three prejudice measures.<sup>11</sup>

These results suggest that sympathetic identification cannot be thought of as simply equivalent to what is usually measured under the term “prejudice.” The two types of measure are clearly related, but not so much so as to consider one a close substitute for the other. Identification with the underdog appears to be a distinctive dimension, worth studying, if at all, in its own right.

There is one interesting qualification to this conclusion. Identification seems to be more highly and consistently related to one of the prejudice measures (called “Social Problems”) than to the other two. The correlation in this case is .43 in the Boston sample and .44 in the college sample—high enough to suggest a fairly strong relationship within the limits of reliability.

A distinctive characteristic of “Social Problems” is that it describes discriminatory incidents so as to emphasize the strong pressures supporting *unequal* treatment in realistic situations. The majority member in a story is often presented as mediating between a minority member and the wishes of other majority members. In one story, a man’s neighbors are against his selling his house to a Jew; in another, the harmony of a factory may be threatened by promotion of a Negro to be foreman over whites. The respondent must continually choose between a course that injures a minority member and a course that may offend one or more majority members. To oppose discrimination in such circumstances may require more than a sense of abstract justice: the nondiscriminator may need the capacity to identify at least as strongly with the minority member in such situations as with fellow majority members. What we are suggesting is that it may well take a high degree of sympathetic identification with the underdog for an individual to resist conformity to discriminatory pressures in concrete situations. In this sense, the high correlation can be interpreted as pointing to a genuine causal relation.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> This discrepancy cannot be explained on the basis of response sets or other characteristics of questionnaire form. Each of the prejudice questionnaires is distinctive in its format, and they are about as different from one another in this respect as they are from the identification questionnaire.

<sup>12</sup> Space does not allow an analysis here of the relation between the identification

## SYMPATHETIC IDENTIFICATION IN INTERVIEWS

Several months after the questionnaires had been administered to the Boston sample, fifteen of the respondents were interviewed individually.<sup>13</sup> The schedule was entirely open-ended and ranged informally over a variety of issues both ethnic and nonethnic.

The following questions were included specifically to tap sympathetic identification:

Have you heard about those colored bus riders who go down South and try to enter white waiting rooms and eat at white lunch counters? What do you think of the whole thing? What do you think leads colored people to do that?

Relevant material often appeared in response to other questions also.

Two judges later listened to the tape-recorded interviews. Judge A was more familiar than Judge B with the concept of sympathetic identification, and more aware of the relatively low correlation between it and measures of prejudice. The correlation ( $\rho$ ) between Judge A's ranking of the subjects for sympathetic identification and their questionnaire ranking is .69. For Judge B it is .31. The questionnaire thus predicts quite well the spontaneous verbalizations of the subjects as evaluated by Judge A; but for Judge B the correlation is too small to be of real value from the standpoint of prediction.

What accounts for the difference in the success of the two judges? The reason is not hard to find. Of the 15 respondents, 5 were (deliberately) cases where identification and prejudice scores were "inconsistent" from the standpoint of the original questionnaire intercorrelations. And 4 of these 5 were sharply "mis-ranked" by Judge B, entirely accounting for his lowered correlation. In each case, Judge B apparently assimilated identification to the more general prejudice dimension, and allowed the latter to dominate his ranking of the interview material.

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questionnaire and various *indirect* correlates of prejudice. It suffices to note that such relationships have been generally lower than anticipated. A special ten-item F scale correlates only .24 with identification in the Boston sample; the correlation is .36 in one Northern college sample and  $-.07$  in another. At least one factor here seems to be the compatibility of certain F items with propensity toward sympathetic identification (e.g. "An insult to our honor should always be punished"). The two subjects described in the following section are a good example of this low correlation: although differing radically in identification, they have almost identical F scale scores.

<sup>13</sup> Although the questionnaires were administered anonymously, a phone number was obtained where possible from every third subject in the Boston sample. The oldest and least educated subjects were then excluded from this pool, since we were not primarily interested in gross social factors in the personal interviewing phase. Finally, interview subjects were chosen from the pool, not at random but in an attempt to represent various score combinations, for example, individuals with both a high degree of prejudice and a high degree of sympathetic identification. Neither the interviewers nor the judges mentioned below knew the questionnaire scores of these final interview subjects.

It is suggestive in distinguishing between prejudice and sympathetic identification to look briefly at two extreme examples of these four contradictory cases. Subject 199 is particularly striking. He is a fifty-five-year-old, unemployed man, partially crippled by arthritis. He believes very strongly in residential segregation and has a generally negative attitude toward Negroes, who, he claims, are "disagreeable" and "live like cattle." Such attitudes, expanded at length, led both judges to agree in classifying the subject as high in prejudice.

But the interview also adds several features to what might otherwise seem a familiar picture of working-class authoritarianism and intolerance. For one thing, the subject lives in a poor area of Boston where the majority of residents are Negroes, many recently arrived from the South. As a single, elderly, white man, he has been (or at least sees himself as having been) intimidated by Negro youths, to whom he may indeed seem a ready target for hostility to the white world. Throughout the interview there runs a subtle theme: "Just as much as whites dislike them, so they dislike whites." In itself, this shows a consciousness of Negro resentment quite unusual among white subjects.

Toward the end of the interview, the interviewer picked up the theme and asked why Negroes harbor so much dislike for whites. The subject replied, "Maybe 'cause they've been pushed around themselves. Getting it dirty for years . . . came over as slaves, not able to get higher than a certain level in the South. Whites don't let them get any education, get any job. . . ." This single remark and another less striking one, together with the fact that the subject's prejudice, though extreme, was largely focused on Negroes and apparently closely tied to a realistic living situation, led Judge A to classify the subject as midway in identification, as against Judge B who had ranked him at the non-identifying end of the interview sample. Actually, the subject is in the more identifying 20 per cent of the Boston sample in terms of his questionnaire score. Space does not allow for detailed interpretation, but the interview suggests that the subject's handicap, his low subjective status, and his contact with Negroes have all acted to increase *both* his hostility toward, and his identification with, the underdog.

A quite different picture is presented by subject 312, the middle-aged wife of a clothing cutter and one of the less prejudiced in the Boston sample in terms of both her questionnaire and interview responses. She is, in particular, quite rational in her thinking about ethnic groups and opposed to all forms of discrimination. Her views on segregation are strongly influenced by religious values: "I don't think it's right—I mean Christ wouldn't have wanted it that way." She reports her main satisfaction in life to be "doing things for others, helping people."

Despite strong opposition to prejudice, this subject tended to evade questions on the motivation of the colored bus riders. She focused instead on Southern whites and their difficulty in accepting a sudden change in custom: "I think it's probably hard for us here to understand how the white people there feel about it." Thus she reacted to the problem by showing sympathetic identification with the "top dog" rather than the underdog. Finally, when pressed about Negro feelings, she concluded, "Of course, the ones that are brought up to it, they're used to it, they'd feel funny going in where they shouldn't be. But I think people from here would be hurt going into those places, to think there is that barrier." Strains of both sympathy and lack of sympathy appear in the last quotation. But in the context of attitudes favorable to inter-ethnic relations, the easy dismissal of the feelings of Southern Negroes ("they're used to it") suggests a lack of real personal involvement in the role of the underdog. This is exactly what her identification questionnaire indicates, for she chose a nonsympathetic response to 10 of the 11 items. The subject appears to be a person whose relative lack of prejudice is due to strong values, receptive intelligence, and personal experience—but not to identification with minority groups in any emotional sense. Her case appears to be typical of the low identification/low prejudice pattern.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Evidence has been presented for the existence of a dimension termed "sympathetic identification with the underdog." It can be measured simply and fairly reliably, is related in a meaningful way to several standard social variables, and shows at once a substantial and yet surprisingly low relation to more traditional dimensions of prejudice.

A number of problems remain for further research. On the psychological side, we have deliberately avoided using the term "empathy," since our questionnaire does not deal directly with a subject's ability to interpret *individual* feelings accurately. The question must remain open: Is sympathetic identification essentially a form of empathy, or is it a propensity based only on how the respondent *himself* would feel as an underdog? On the social side, how is sympathetic identification with the ethnic underdog related to social movements concerned with altering intergroup patterns? Our impression is that white members of such movements show considerable variation in underlying traits like "authoritarianism," but that all show a very high degree of identification with the underdog. Finally, although our focus has been on identification with the *ethnic* underdog, it is likely that this is only a variant of identification with the social underdog more generally, which in turn may constitute a central motivating force in humanitarian movements.