

Adorno T W, Frenkel-Brunswik E, Levinson D J & Sanford R N. *The authoritarian personality*. New York: Harper & Row, 1950. 990 p.  
[Columbia University, New York, NY and University of California, Berkeley, CA]

In this comprehensive five-year study, seven investigators used objective tests, interviews, and projective techniques in demonstrating that personality processes, especially unconscious ones, had a major role in the determination of anti-Semitism and a broad pattern of related beliefs and attitudes—a pattern that came to be called authoritarianism. [*The Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)*® indicates that this book has been cited in over 1,800 publications since 1966.]

R. Nevitt Sanford  
65 Roble Road  
Berkeley, CA 94705

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"In January 1943, I was asked by the Provost of the University of California at Berkeley if I could use \$500, from an anonymous donor, for a study of anti-Semitism. I certainly could, not only because I wanted to join the scientific attack on Fascism but because I saw a chance to carry on the kind of psychoanalytically oriented research on personality in which I had been trained under Henry Murray at the Harvard Psychological Clinic. I immediately recruited one of my graduate students, Daniel Levinson, a highly talented kindred spirit.

"We began by constructing a scale for measuring anti-Semitism. This we administered, together with a personal-data questionnaire, to groups of students, and by early fall we were giving talks on anti-Semitism before community groups and had a paper ready for publication.<sup>1</sup> This led to more funds becoming available, making it possible for Else Frenkel-Brunswik to join us. Within a year, we had ready for publication a paper that embodied most of the kinds of

findings and interpretations that were to be embodied in our book.<sup>2</sup>

"By that time, our work had come to the attention of Max Horkheimer, an associate of the American Jewish Committee. He saw to it that we were adequately funded and enabled Theodore Adorno to join our group.

"Our book has been hailed as a 'classic'—and severely criticized both for its theory and for its methods. After 30 years, it was still available in hardcover, and two paperback editions had appeared. It has been translated into German, French, and Italian. A book about our book was published in 1954.<sup>3</sup> In 1982, an abridged edition appeared.<sup>4</sup> I think it was mainly because of this book that the International Society of Political Psychology established its Nevitt Sanford Award and made me its first recipient.

"The criticism that rolled over our work came both from people who approved of our approach but worried about our methods and from people desiring to discredit the whole thing. Our F scale became a special object of criticism. There were heroic but unsuccessful efforts to improve it or to produce less far-out substitutes for it. These studies were far outnumbered, however, by those in which this scale was used successfully to predict performance on other instruments and overt behavior in various situations.

"It is rare that as many as four senior scientists collaborate for five years or longer. We had our problems—not the least those deriving from pride of authorship—but were held together by the conviction that our important work had to be published at whatever cost and by our agreement that it be presented as a collective enterprise. Unfortunately for me, this last constraint required that authors' names be listed in alphabetical order. Thus, over the years, when friends and relatives have wanted to look up a work that they knew was my labor of love for seven years, they could not find it in the library. Such is life in academia."

1. Levinson D J & Sanford R N. A scale for the measurement of anti-Semitism. *J. Psychology* 17:339-70, 1944.
2. Frenkel-Brunswik E & Sanford R N. Some personality factors in anti-Semitism. *J. Psychology* 20:271-91, 1945.
3. Christie R & Jahoda M, eds. *Studies in the scope and method of "The authoritarian personality."* Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1954. 279 p.
4. Adorno T W, Frenkel-Brunswik E, Levinson D J & Sanford R N. *The authoritarian personality, abridged edition.* New York: Norton, 1982. 493 p.