


Social Cognition

- ▶ This section covers:
 - The importance of roles and norms
 - How we form judgments about others




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Social Psychology

- ▶ How do interactions with others affect a person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors?
 - Humans have evolved to be social beings



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Social Roles

- ▶ What position does someone occupy in society?
 - What behaviors are expected from him or her?



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Stanford-prison experiment

people conform to social roles assigned to them

Ethics: The study has received many ethical criticisms, including lack of fully informed consent by participants and the level of humiliation and distress experienced by those who acted as prisoners.

The consent could not be fully informed as Zimbardo himself did not know what would happen in the experiment (it was unpredictable). Also, participants playing the role of prisoners were not protected from psychological and physical harm. For example, one prisoner had to be released after 36 hours because of uncontrollable bursts of screaming, crying and anger.

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Attributions

- ▶ Why did somebody behave in a particular way? What caused the behavior?

Internal (dispositional) External (situational)

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- **Attributions - Judgments about the causes of a person's behavior**
 - > Internal attributions - judgments about the cause of a person's behavior to their personal qualities or characteristics
 - Thoughts, personality, needs, abilities
 - > Situational attributions - judgments assigning the cause of a person's behavior to the environment
 - Factors that lie outside of a person.

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Fundamental Attribution Error

- ▶ A tendency to attribute others' behavior to internal factors
- ▶ Why is this woman yelling at her companion?



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The **fundamental attribution error** is the most common type of attribution error people make.

- overestimate the importance of dispositional factors when observing the behavior of others
 - > For instance, if somebody cuts you off in traffic or goes speeding by you, it's common to think "that person is reckless" (or worse).
 - > Another example is when people attribute the actions of a movie character to the actor or actress's personality.

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Other Attribution Errors

- ▶ We make different attributions for ourselves and others.

Actor-observer bias Self-serving bias

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- The **actor-observer bias** is our tendency to attribute others' actions to internal factors, while attributing our own actions to external factors.
 - > Imagine you're driving on the freeway and suddenly notice that your exit is right up ahead, but you're in the left lane. You might mash down on the accelerator to get ahead of traffic and sharply cut over to the exit. If you're like most people, you (the *ACTOR*) will rationalize your behavior by attributing it to external factors:
 - I couldn't get into the line of cars, so I had to speed up.
 - I was thinking about an argument I had earlier, otherwise I would have gotten over earlier.
 - There should be more signs to indicate which exits are coming up.
 - > The other drivers on the road (the *OBSERVERS*) are likely to attribute your behavior to internal factors:
 - That person is a jerk!

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- **Self-serving bias**-judge our failures due to situational factors but our successes as dispositional factors.
 - > protects our self-esteem and view ourselves in a positive manner.
 - > A classic example of this can be seen in students' reactions to their performance on an exam.
 - Often, success on an exam will be attributed to internal factors:
 - « I studied hard.
 - « I'm intelligent.
 - « I'm good at using a particular test-taking strategy.
 - Failure, on the other hand, is often attributed to external factors:
 - « The questions were unfair (or tricky, difficult to understand, etc.).
 - « The test didn't cover the material I was told to study.
 - « My roommate kept bugging me and I couldn't study.
 - « All of my professors scheduled exams this week and I didn't have enough time to prepare.

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Schemas - What we already think about ourselves and other

1. what we pay attention to and what we ignore Schema Theory Example.wmv
2. what we remember about a person
 - ex. Waitress - remember beer and owned a T.V
 - Librarian - remembered glasses and classical music
3. judgment about the behavior of others Coca Cola's Viral Ad _No Labels This Ramadan_ Features Loy Machedo.wmv

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First Impressions

Based on our schemas

Forming impressions

Ex. Admir's first day at school

*negative information attracts more attention and weight

Lasting impressions

Impressions slow to change

*she is not herself today

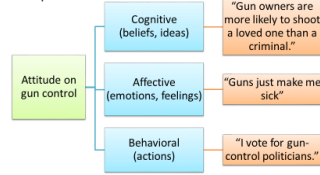
Self-fulfilling prophecy - schemas cause us to subtly lead people to behave

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Attitudes

► May include cognitive, affective, and behavioral components



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Attitude - predisposition to respond in a particular way toward a specific thing

1. belief or opinion
2. feelings about something
3. Tendency to act

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What affects our attitude?

Culture

Marriage

Women's roles

Human touch

Parents

Peers

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Effects of Attitudes

Stereotyping

► A simplified set of traits that are associated with group membership



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Stereotypes

- > Often, they contain a mixture of *positive* and *negative* qualities.
 - They're still an oversimplification that defines a person by superficial characteristics.

ted talk

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Prejudice

▶ A preconceived opinion or attitude about an issue, person, or group

Victim	Less stereotypical	More stereotypical
White victim	24.4	57.5
Black victim	45	66.6

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- Prejudice - obesity
- Prejudice - homophobia

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Discrimination

▶ The biased treatment of people based on their membership in a particular group or category

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- > Sometimes, the actions are taken to exclude a certain group of people.
 - Refusing to rent an apartment to members of a certain ethnic or racial group.
 - Choosing to only interview males for job opening.

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- > Sometimes, the actions target a specific group of people.
 - Under the NYPD stop-and-frisk program, officers stopped many more African-Americans (56% of stops) and Latinos (29%) than Caucasians (11%)

Racism and the death penalty


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Scapegoat - displace frustration onto other people not responsible for the problem
Ex. Hitler blamed Jews for the war

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Reducing Prejudice

- ▶ Increase contact in cooperative activities



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5 Minute History Lesson, Episode 3_ Robbers Cave.wmv

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Reducing prejudice Labels are for cans, not for people.wmv

Contact hypothesis

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Social Influence on Attitudes
Attitude formation

1. Compliance
2. Identification
3. Internalization

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Compliance

- ▶ Agreeing to do something simply because we have been asked



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1. Compliance - accepting the wishes of others in order to avoid discomfort or rejection
Ex. You tell me your not prejudice just so I don't start to argue with you

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2. Identification - occurs when a person wants to define himself or herself in terms of a person or group, and adopts that person's attitudes/behaviors
Ex. You are not prejudice because you know I am not and you want to be like me

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3. Internalization - acceptance of an attitude
Ex. You are not prejudice because you believe all should people are equal
**most powerful and longest lasting

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Inducing compliance
1. Foot-in-the-door technique - ask for small request first and later ask for the larger request
Ex. Political candidate - survey and later ask to put sign in yard
Ex. Free gift if you apply for card

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2. Door-in-the-face technique - request for something likely to be denied and than asks for the original "smaller" request.
ex. Want kids more ask for full custody - settle on joint custody (what you really wanted)

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3. Low-ball approach - get someone to agree to request and then raise the stakes
Ex. Get them to agree to buy car...come back and tell them it is more money because of a computing error

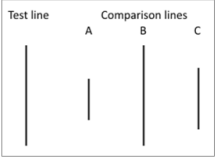
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Conformity - people change their beliefs/behaviors to match other members of a group
 Ashe experiment
 Reasons
 Unanimity
 Size of the majority
 More people - more conformity
 Gender - equal (however, women have been perceived as conforming more)

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Conformity

▶ Behaving in ways that increase the likelihood of gaining a group's approval and avoiding rejection



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Asch Conformity Experiment.mp4


Prudential_ Everybody's Doing It.wmv

Recreated Asche

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Social Facilitation

▶ Occurs when the presence of other people changes individual performance



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Social facilitation-when the presence of other people changes individual performance

- Well-practiced skills, like riding a bicycle, improve with an audience
- The complexity of a task - can have either pos. or neg. effect
- Difficult tasks - lack confidence in their abilities, performance can suffer when others are present.

> In one study looking at students playing pool, researchers found that confident players increased their accuracy from 71% to 80% when shooting in front of a crowd.
 - Unsure players, however, shot worse when being watched (25%) than they did alone (36%).

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Social Loafing

▶ Reduced motivation and effort by individuals who work in a group as opposed to work alone




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Groupthink

▶ A type of flawed decision making in which a group does not question its decisions critically



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Groupthink -If group members suppress dissenting opinions in the interests of group cohesion

- This type of flawed decision making might account for a number of unfortunate group decisions throughout history including the Challenger explosion and the pre-emptive strike on Iraq based on the conviction at the time that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction
 - > If people are afraid to speak out or “rock the boat,” the flaws in a plan may never come to light.
 - In some cases, the leaders of a group are unwilling to tolerate dissent.
 - In other cases, there may be implicit pressure to present alternative views.


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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=korGK0yGIDo>

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Deindividuation

▶ Immersion of the individual within a group, making the individual relatively anonymous



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Changing attitudes

1. Cognitive dissonance - the uncomfortable feeling that arises when a person experiences contradictory or conflicting thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes
 - Ex. Young girl pregnant
 - Ex. Homophobic having homosexual child

Reduce cognitive dissonance

1. change one or both of the conflicting attitudes
2. avoid situations that produce uncomfortable situations

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2. Persuasion - direct attempt to influence attitudes through communication

Communication process

1. source
2. message
3. channel
4. audience

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Source

1. is the subject trustworthy
2. do they know what they are talking about

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Exceptions to the source

1. identification phenomenon - famous people selling products
2. physical appearance *Octomom*
3. boomerang effect - attempt backfires
ex. hippies oppose war: more adults for the war effort

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Message

1. emotion <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gspEIV1yvc>
2. humor <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FhaYv11yrUM>
3. facts <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g889jpa6b0>

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Channel

1. where, when and how message is presented
 - a. personal contact is best
 - b. TV is better than print

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/hops-menu-design-gets-customers-200842018.html>

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audience

1. who are you trying to persuade

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLbndJKMfCk&feature=related>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZn_IJoN6PI

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Brainwashing

1. strip away identity - intense social pressure and physical stress
 - a. prisons, boot camp http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgtPpU2M_Pk
2. Milieu control
communication with outside world is limited
only ideology is what is being taught
3. Mystical manipulation
group has a higher purpose than outsiders
Coincidences are portrayed as symbolic events
Attention is given to the problems of out-group

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- 4. Confession
 - Individuals are encouraged confess sins
 - Discussion of inner fears and anxieties to expose vulnerability - produces trust
 - Causes exhaustion making them more open to suggestion.
- 5. Self-sanctification through purity
 - Individuals are encouraged to constantly push towards an ultimate and unattainable perfection.
- 6. Aura of sacred science
 - The beliefs and regulations of the group are framed as perfect, absolute and non-negotiable.
 - Rules and processes are followed without question


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- 7. Loaded language
 - New words and language are created to explain the new and profound meanings that have been discovered.
- 8. Doctrine over person
 - The importance of the group is stress, not individualism
 - Past experiences, beliefs and values are invalid if they conflict with group rules
- 9. Dispensed existence
 - Insiders are to be saved and outsiders are doomed
 - People who leave the group are singled out as particularly evil, weak, lost
 - People thus have a constant fear of being cast out

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Obedience

- ▶ Complying with instructions given by an authority figure



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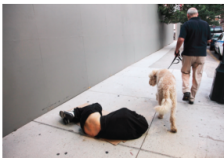
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- Obedience - demand from an authority figure
Stanley Milgrim
- Factors that affect obedience
- 1. Prestige
 - 2. Presence of others who disobey
 - 3. personality characteristics
 - a. authoritarianism - believe in authority
 - b. locus of control - who is in control
 - i. internal - your fault
 - ii. external - their fault

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Altruism

- ▶ Engaging in helping behaviors without the expectation of any personal gain



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- Altruism and helping behavior
- Arousal: cost-reward theory - sees a person in need and help because it causes unpleasant arousal
- Before helping we evaluate the cost
- 1. clarity of need <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOcnxybY7qA>
 - 2. presence of others - inhibit
 - a. bystander effect - Kitty Genovese
 - wheelchair
 - What would you do: kidnap
 - What would you do: hazing
 - What would you do: black
 - What would you do: blind
 - 3. personality of helper

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Bystander Apathy

▶ People's willingness to lend help decreases when others are around.

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    graph TD
      A[There is a situation] --> B[You notice it]
      B --> C[It's an emergency]
      B --> D[It's NOT an emergency]
      C --> E[You take responsibility]
      D --> F[It's NOT your responsibility]
      E --> G[HELP PROVIDED]
      F --> H[NO HELP PROVIDED]
      D --> I[NO HELP PROVIDED]
      F --> J[NO HELP PROVIDED]
  
```

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Environmental factors

- big city - less likely to help

Empathy-altruism theory - if they feel empathy toward victim

Ex. Fundraising for person with cancer

ex. Poverty kids vs. males

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8N4uv4yRyIE&feature=related>

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Aggression

▶ An action done with the intent to harm others

▶ Several contributing factors:

- Biology
- Frustration
- Learning



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Aggression

- genetic/biological mechanisms
 - limbic system/amygdale
 - hormones - testosterone
 - drugs/alcohol
- Learning and Cultural
- Environmental influences on aggression

Ex. Noise, pollution

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