# **Social Psychology Chapter 4**

## **Social Cognition**

(structure of what my world is around me.)

Social judgments examine how people:

* make judgments
* make decisions
* interpret past events
* make predictions for future
* understand current events.

The social judgments that are made, will ultimately influence behaviors. Cognition == the way "I" see.

We are often very set in our judgments and they can shape our entire worlds

We often miss what we are not looking for pseudoscience??

Social judgments are often inaccurate- they are prone to many types of errors and biases

Life is so colored with different possibilities that our brains often pick and choose — our brain sees what it is looking for

Ex) when you look for a specific color you’ll find it

## **Ladder of Inference**

The ladder of inference creates bad judgment:

Created by Chris Argyris's

* **actions**

- Why do I believe this to be the right action?

- What are some alternative options?

* **beliefs**

- What beliefs do I hold about this?

- What conclusions are they based on?

* **conclusions**

- Why did I conclude this?

- What are my assumptions there?

* **assumptions**

- Am I looking at the data objectively?

- What other meanings could they have?

* **Selected data** (focus on one point)

- what did I ignore or not pay attention to?

- Are there any sources of data I did not consider?

* **observable data/available data**

- (observable reality)

Recursive loop —choices beliefs to selected data

(actions you're taking are based upon assumptions)

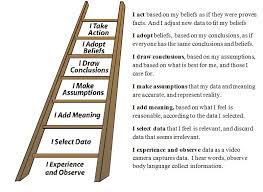
To prevent this questions thoughts through the latter

Latter is breaking down the automatic processing—this is happening all the time

Taking actions with limited data can often cause a paradox (soccer player example)

—-Confirmation bias

Actions can lead to confirmation of the selective data



## **Minimal information — inferring personality from physical appearance**

Snap judgments

Sometimes we have very little information but make judgments anyway

When people make personality judgments based on physical appearance

Can be done with ethnicity, age, clothes, and gender ex…

Can I relate to the miger?? Thing

Photograph interpretation: Confidence— looking at the camera straight on insecurity—-looking to the side/ wearing hats/glasses anything to cover your face

Make direct eye contact and people will avoid confrontation

Discussion questions:

1. I have made judgments about people that turned out to be accurate, there is probably about a 50/50 split between positive and negative judgment

* Though someone would be rude or mean based on clothes
* Though someone would be polite/shy based on body posture
* Often make judgments about emotions based on expression and body language
* Judgments about political views based on location and appearance

I find that most of the judgments I make the second I glance at someone's face, cannot be conferred accurately or not since I usually take actions to get away or avoid confrontation if people seem unsafe or I make negative quick judgments. Despite not being able to name it or consider the concepts of automatic processing when I reflect on past instances of judgments I do find out often my brain has made snap decisions about people. Even when walking around campus I find myself making judgments about people's intelligence, likability, and personalities based on their clothes and posture. I usually find those judgments to be more accurate than not, but that may be because those features are typically things that individuals chose purposefully to express themselves. On the other hand, I find that the snap judgments about people that end up being wrong most often are the ones about things people can’t control as easily; such as their physical appearance, profession, or mood on a given day. When I am making quick judgments I rarely consider the possible externalities brought upon a person. When I see someone driving in a wrecked car I often think to myself “They must be a bad/reckless driver” and put the blame and judgment onto them. But when I consider the situation logically I recognize that it could have been someone else's fault or It might not even be their car.

I would be interested to engage with people with different viewpoints but I find it difficult at times because people tend to be defensive when you want to question or even talk about difficult subjects. I often find it hard to meet people with fundamental differences in opinion or belief since in this area most people share the same political beliefs and opinions about issues. Most of my friends and close family share many of my fundamental beliefs since I usually want to spend time around people who understand my viewpoints and have many of the same moral alignments. When I do find other people to talk to about controversial issues it can feel a little uncomfortable talking to people about my personal beliefs when I don't know them very well or when they are refusing to consider other's opinions. Many people seem to be very set in their ways and are unwilling to reflect or admit that they are allowed to be wrong or change their opinions. However, I do believe that talking to strangers online or through public forms and social media can be a beneficial way to experience other people. Others are much more likely, to be honest when they are anonymous. I know that this anonymity can travel in a negative direction but I also think it can allow people to be more open to conversations.

What are the 7 words you are not allowed to say

## **Inferring Personality from Belif Glances at Faces**

Perceiving trust and dominance

* What is it the people think they see in brief glances at another person’s face?

## **Misleading firsthand information**

This is information based on personal experience or observation

Personal experience may be unrepresentative.

For instance, making judgments about what a country is like from having visited only a few people and places.

### **Illusory correlation:**

There are certain things you say about people are true for almost anyone or could be true about almost anything

-a test where they handed out a mass murder horoscope to a classroom of people and they all thought it applied to them

### **Pluralistic Ignorance**

Misperception of - group norm

Results from observing people who are action behaving differently from private beliefs out of concern for social consequences

* Getting what people want to show you

### **Self-fulfilling prophecies**

The tendency for people to act in ways that bring about the very thing they expect to happen

If a prophecy is to be self-fulfilling, there must be some mechanism that translates a given expectation into an action that tends to confirm the prophecy.

— wear very nice clothes. The first 2 weeks of class will be super early and you will do well. Always introduce yourself to your professor—what do I need to do to do well?

When people have an expectation about you they will fit you into that expectation

## **Misleading secondhand information**

Secondhand information- this is information that comes from other sources, gossip, news, books, magazines or the internet

### **Ideological distortions**

-people may be biased when transmitting information because they wish to foster specific ideas in others.

—pick and choose what you want to hear—listen to the one good when there are twice as many bad

Our social cognition is biased/limited and often inaccurate

### **The service of entertainment:**

Distortions are caused in entertainment services, with an overemphasis on bad news.

We are attracted to negative things

One of the most pervasive causes of distortion is secondhand accounts of the desire to entertain.

They are skewing news to make it entertaining — incite fear

Crime rates over the last 20 years have actually been going down —but all they talk about on the news are the crime rates

People may believe they are more at risk of victimization than they really are.

How information is presented— if we want people to buy expensive/unnecessary stuff we make them afraid. Buying stuff and giving us dopamine —- at the end of the day we want safety.

## **Order effects**

primary