

Science of Psychology

PSY W1001 Section 2
MW 8:40-9:55 Fall 2012



Monday, November 19
Social Psychology

Announcements

- Written Assignment
 - Late Assignments Due by 5pm on Friday
 - Late assignments only earn half credit
 - No assignments accepted after 5pm on Nov. 23 for any reason
- Exams will be returned on Wednesday
 - No more grade changes for Exam #1
- Final Exam
 - Wednesday, Dec. 19th from 9a to 12p.
 - Be on time
 - No one admitted after the first student completes the exam and leaves the classroom.
- No make-up lecture from hurricane
 - Be prepared for faster pace in remaining lectures.

Social Psychology

- What is one of the most “human” things we do?
 - Interact with other humans

Social Cognition

- What is the influence of human-human interactions on behavior?
 - What do we think of others?
 - What do others think of us?
 - How does this affect behavior?
- We make *attributions* about others' actions – and about our own

Attribution

- Causal attributions
 - What makes you act that way?
 - What makes someone else act that way?
- 2 types of attributions
 - Situational attributions
 - It was so hot outside that he lost his temper
 - Dispositional attributions
 - He's a naturally irate person
- Attributional styles also vary by *culture*
 - Individualistic – more likely to use dispositional
 - Collectivistic – more likely to use situational

Fundamental Attribution Error

- Do you assume situational or dispositional attributions?
 - Quizmaster vs. contentant
- Actor-observer bias
 - I lost my temper because it's hot outside
 - My behavior is based on situation
 - You lost your temper because you're short-tempered
 - Your behavior is based on disposition
 - Why?
 - More prevalent in individualistic cultures
 - Less so in collectivistic cultures

Person Perception

- Who do you want for your physician?



Person Perception and Cognitive Schemas

- Cognitive schemas
 - Shortcuts
 - Use to explain behavior
- If someone comes at you with a syringe, is it appropriate?
 - Yes, if you are in a medical setting and that person is a physician (correct schema)
 - No if you are on the street and the person is dressed in jeans and sneakers

Stereotypes

- One type of schematic thinking
 - In-group versus out-group
 - Us vs. them
 - Out-group homogeneity effect
 - All artists are alike, but we scientists are SUCH a diverse group – especially the learning theorists!!
 - Confirmation biases
 - See, all those artists dress weirdly!
 - » If not, s/he must not be much of an artist
- Origins
 - Explicitly and Implicitly communicated
 - Used more often when not familiar with group

Effects of stereotypes:

- Self-fulfilling prophecies
 - You are what you believe
 - You act in accordance with the belief of others
- Stereotype threat
 - You act in accordance with beliefs about group
 - Lowered expectations of self based on expectations for group?
 - Claude Steele (your former Provost)

Combating prejudice

- “Robbers cave” experiment (Sherif, 1966):
 - 12 y.o. boys
 - Matched in demographics
 - Divided into 2 groups
 - Behavior observed
 - Competition increases prejudice
 - Cooperation decreases prejudice
 - Status must be held equal for all members
 - Contact must be sustained for a long time

Attitudes

- Attitude
 - belief, feeling, predisposition to act in a certain way
- Cover a wide range of topics about which we may feel quite strongly
 - nuclear power, abortion, bilingual education, etc.

Attitudes and Advertising

- What makes you choose to buy one product over another?
 - Hint: attitude or belief about product
- [Wanna buy a car?](#)

Attitude Change

- Central route to persuasion
 - we attend to the message, the message-bearer, and make decisions accordingly
- Peripheral route to persuasion
 - context in which information is given is capable of determining our attitude
 - Why is Brad Pitt a good advocate?



Cognitive Dissonance

- We try to justify our own behavior;
 - if we *cannot* justify it, we experience dissonance (discomfort) between beliefs and actions
- Easier to change attitude if behavior has already occurred
 - Then, no dissonance!!
- Effort alters perception of reward
 - I worked so hard for it, it must be valuable
 - Which is more satisfying – the easy A or the one you had to work for?

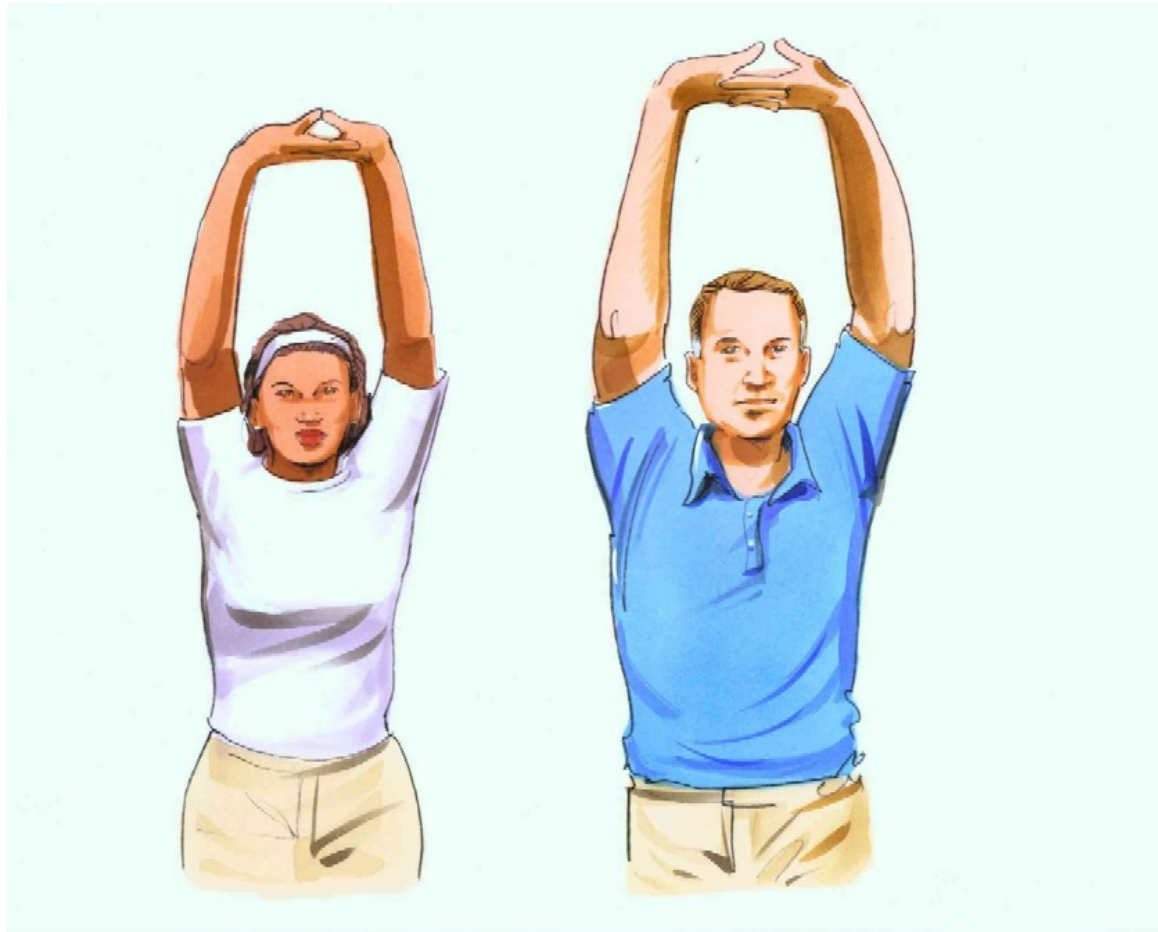
Bem - Self-Perception Theory

- Attitude change
 - Not based on distress from lack of match between attitude and behavior
- Re-interpretation of our own behavior
 - What do we feel?
 - Behavior serves as a guide to understand attitudes
- Example: foot-in-the-door technique
 - A small behavior suggests an attitude that may lead to more committed behavior

Which is right?

- Both
 - May be situation-specific
- Cognitive dissonance
 - When attitudes were defined, and behavior doesn't match
 - Behavior is in contrast to attitude, but seen as the determinant to underlying attitude.
- Self-Perception
 - When attitudes are not strongly formed
 - Behavior used as a guide to understand underlying attitudes not previously monitored

Mini Break



Study Questions

- Define the term “social cognition”. How does the study of attribution apply to social cognition? Be specific about causal attributions.
- What are the 2 types of attributions? IS There a cultural difference in attributions?
- Explain the fundamental attribution error and give an example (different than lecture or in your text).
- How do we perceive others? What are some of the “shortcuts” we use in person perception? Give an example (different than text/lecture).
- Explain the out-group homogeneity effect. Give an example (different than text/lecture).
- How do confirmation biases effect person perception?
- What are stereotypes?
- How are stereotypes learned?
- What are some of the effects of stereotypes?
- Describe the Robber’s Cave experiment and explain what this suggests about stereotypes.
- What is an attitude? Why are advertisers interested in changing your attitude about their product?
- What is the difference between listening to President Obama describe foreign policy and listening to Bono (of U2 fame) describing foreign policy? (in reference to attitude change)
- According to Festinger what happens when our behavior doesn’t match our attitude? Describe the classic experiment (discussed in lecture) that was the foundation for this theory.
- How would Bem describe attitude change? How does it differ from Festinger? Which is right and why?