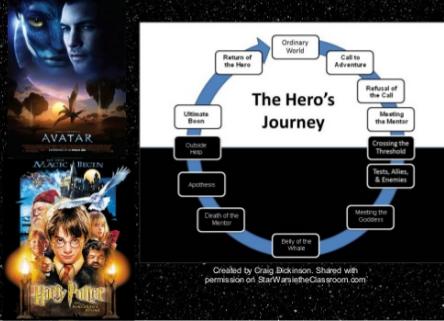


Personality and Social

Randall C. O'Reilly

STAR WARS STAGES OF THE HERO'S JOURNEY



Adolescence / YA is all about finding your new identity, breaking with the comforts of family: plot of every movie!

Find Your Social Identity

High school is a crucible / microcosm of our social brains at their most unhinged..

Social forces are strong

Dominant dimension: "popularity" = social dominance in animal social groups

Also competence, warmth



Dominant Dimensions

	Low	Competence (many dimensions: intellectual, physical, social)	High
Warmth	Pity Seen as low status & not competing with us Stoners / Skaters etc Examples: elderly, disabled, mums and housewives	Admiration Popular / Preps Seen as high status & not competing with us Geeks Examples: friends, allies, 'us'	
Warmth	Contempt Seen as low status & competing with us Losers / Outsiders Examples: the poor, state-supported, and certain racial groups	Envy Seen as high status & competing with us Jocks Mean Girls Examples: rich, activists, intellectuals, and certain racial groups	

Animal Social Structure

Clear dominance hierarchy:
"Top Dog", "Alpha Male", etc.

Are people any different?

Chimpanzee Politics
by Franz de Waal



Social => Smart Humans

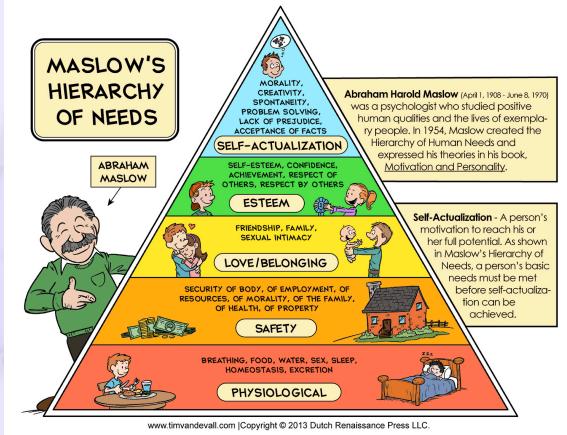
Robin Dunbar: Social brain hypothesis (complex!)

Michael Tomasello: Cooperation + Sharing

Geoffrey Miller: Showing off -> sexual selection



Ape Needs Stay at Bottom



Individual vs. Social pressure



Social forces are so strong, we rebel against them, & fail to recognize their pervasive impact...

We want to be superheroes that save the world, not be *dependent* up it!



Subjective: Self is in Control!



Subjective experience dominated by sense that *you* are in control of your own self, not external social forces...

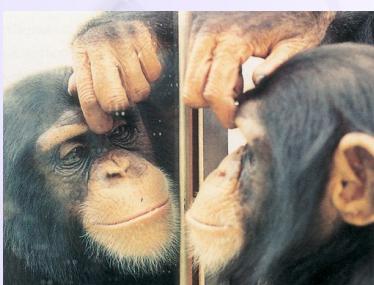
Self efficacy, self esteem: we're all about the self!

Self is a Predictive Model

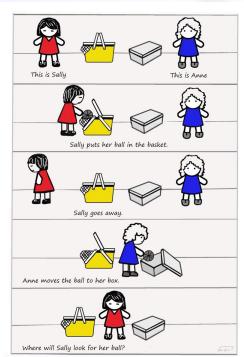


Constantly predicting multimodal sensory inputs:
 * Physical self is central causal explanation for all those coincidences.
 * Mental self explains behavior: we care a *lot* about explaining ourselves, and experience cognitive dissonance when it doesn't add up!

Self Awareness, Theory of Mind



Recognize self in a mirror?



Understand other experience != self experience

Self Phenomena

The best **self-defense** is a good offense:

- **Self-serving bias:** overestimate contributions (I *really* do 75% of housework!), relative status (I'm definitely above average!), attribution errors (success = all me, failure = someone/thing else)
- **Positive illusions:** it's *good* to be delusional! uncritically positive views of self, illusions of control, unrealistic optimism: all CCC=Control!

Self – Other Attributions

Attribution theory: why do people do what they do? Is it *them (disposition)* or the *situation*?

Fundamental Attribution Error: attribute other's behavior to *them*, ignoring *situation*.

- Situation often invisible
- But not so reliable cross-culturally, or in real adults..
- And situation acts via dispositions in first place!

Actor-Observer Bias

When I cut someone off, I'm just late – when they do it, they're just *rotten jerks* (always!)

- Mainly happens for negative behaviors that we want to explain away via situation (but don't have that motivation for others).

Control and Dissonance

(Must stay in control, maintain self model)

Cognitive Dissonance: when behavior is at odds with beliefs / values / attitudes:

- Change: 1. attitudes to match behavior, 2. behavior to match attitudes, or 3. perception of mismatch!
 - Cannot just let it go.. Must stay in control, always..
- Often 1 or 3 – hard to change behavior, easier to "rationalize"
- e.g., I am on diet; eat cookie anyway; reduce dissonance by *minimizing* ("only 1!") or *justifying* ("I worked hard today"), etc.

You struggle with Self Control



Self Control Summary

Self control: suppressing desires to be a better you, who is less dissonant with beliefs, values

Self regulation: All the processes of monitoring and controlling to achieve goals..

- Marshmallow study (Mischel): behavior as a kid predicts many later life outcomes!
- Depends on *PFC executive function*: so does a lot of other stuff (3rd variable: PFC is good, not self ctrl?)
- **Intertemporal choice:** live for the moment, or save for the future!?

Social Comparison: Contrast!

All about establishing "dominance" hierarchy

Downward: make you feel better

Upward: inspiration



Shadenfreude

Someone else's downfall is your upfall..



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Impression Management

We constantly engage in active management of social impressions:

- Produce positive / desired impressions
- Reduce negative / un-desired impressions



Spotlight Effect



You think the whole world's watching you / but they're all just watching themselves!

- I think this is a huge effect – and hugely important for your own personal well-being
- Don't worry about what others think of you – they're too busy worrying about themselves!
 - Golden rule! Relax, be happy, etc.
 - OTOH, if you're *weird*, people *will* talk about you and generally not want to socialize with you.

Interpersonal Situation: Personality in Social Interactions

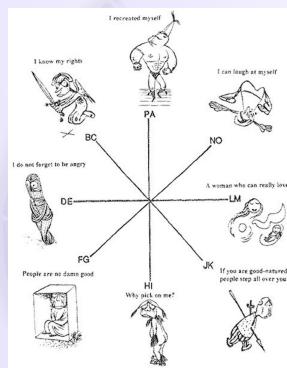


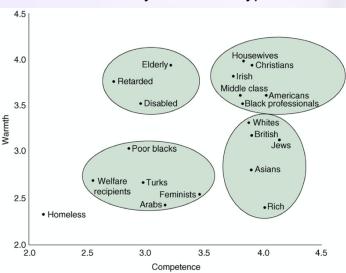
FIGURE 10. Samples. Note: Individual drawings from *The Lonely Ones*, by W. Steig, (1942, New York: Dell, Starn & Pearce) and from *The Rejected Lovers* (p. 25), by W. Steig, (1951, New York: Dover Publications. Reprinted with permission of author).

Two dimensions:

Dominance / agency

Warmth / communion

Susan Fiske analysis of stereotypes:



Explanatory Style / Locus of Control

External locus of control: blaming others

- * Loss of self-efficacy / control: learned helplessness

Internal locus of control: blaming self

Personality

Personality traits:

- Organized
- Integrated
- Relatively Enduring

i.e., not just some random stuff you do..

Person-Situation Controversy

Does personality exist at all, or are we just a product of our situations??

Walter Mischel (1960's): Situation is dominant

Seymour Epstein (1970's): Need to integrate over multiple situations to see personality traits!

Trait-situation behavior model: both factors together determine behavior (the answer is *always* both!)

What if our behavior was so consistent that you could see personality in every action? Where is free will!?

The Big Five OCEAN

- Openness
 - imaginative, curious, intellectual, creative.. Vs:
 - conventional and practical, enjoy routine, "down to earth"
- Conscientiousness
 - careful, thorough, well-organized, responsible Vs:
 - careless, inefficient, disorganized, irresponsible
- Extraversion*
 - Sociable, energetic, assertive, other-oriented Vs:
 - Passive, reserved, quiet, self-oriented
- Agreeableness
 - Warm, kind, empathetic, compassionate, trusting Vs:
 - Hostile suspicious, unkind, lacking in trust..
- Neuroticism*
 - Easily upset, anxious, emotional, self-pitying, worriers.. Vs:
 - Even-tempered, comfortable with selves, calm, stable.

The Big Ten Facets (in Harry Potter)

- Openness
 - **Truth:** intellectual (Ravenclaw)
 - **Beauty:** aesthetics (Luna Lovegood)
- Conscientiousness
 - **Industriousness:** Hufflepuff
 - **Orderliness:** Ravenclaw
- Extraversion*
 - **Enthusiasm:** Gryffindor
 - **Assertiveness:** Slytherin
- Agreeableness
 - **Compassion:** Hufflepuff
 - **Politeness:** Slytherin
- Neuroticism*
 - **Volatility:** active, angry, impulsive (Voldemort)
 - **Withdrawal:** depressive / anxious

Eysenck Two Factors

Neuroticism and Extraversion – are these somehow more basic?

Approach vs. Avoid & Motivation

Personality = emotion/motivation parameters

Approach orientation (BAS: activation):

- Ideas: Openness
- People: Extraversion

Avoid orientation (BIS: inhibition):

- Generally: Neuroticism
- People: Introversion, Ideas: -Openness

Anger = Agreeableness

Organization drive = Conscientiousness

Big Five Issues

- Seem clearly distinct in general desirability: there is a "good" side and a "bad" side to each
 - Why has evolution preserved all these "bad" personalities? What is actually "good" about them?
- Strong social orientation: mostly about how we interact with others

Genetics and Change

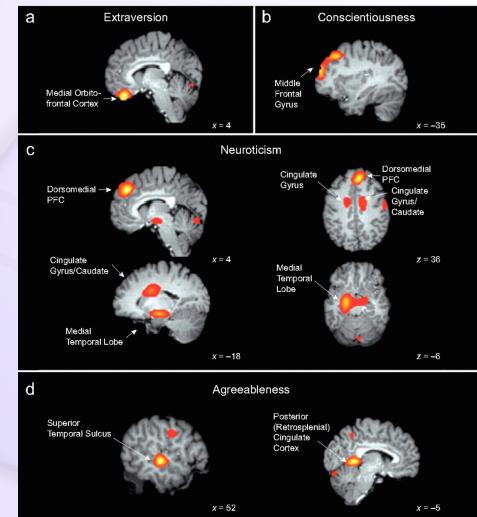
- As usual, about 50% contribution of genetics to personality factors (parents know this!)
- Traits get more stable over time
- Biggest change is in young adulthood (you!)
 - Rank-order stability:** how do their factors rank over time? Measures patterns within individuals. More stable
 - Mean-level stability:** does overall population level of trait change over time? Less stable.

Gender Differences

- Women higher in neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness

Measurement Techniques

- NEO-PI:** high face validity, only useful for normal diagnosis
- MMPI:** Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory: *objective (scored by computer)*
 - Low in face validity, but useful for abnormal diagnosis
- TAT, Rorschach:** highly subjective, not used..
 - Low validity, low reliability



Meyers-Briggs?

	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism
E-I	-0.74	0.03	-0.03	0.08	0.16
S-N	0.10	0.72	0.04	-0.15	-0.06
T-F	0.19	0.02	0.44	-0.15	0.06
J-P	0.15	0.30	-0.06	-0.49	0.11

The closer the number is to 1.0 or -1.0, the higher the degree of correlation.

Social Groups

Going beyond the individual / self <-> social into the world of emergent social dynamics in groups.

In-Group, Out-Group

We (presumably) evolved in small “tribes” that had to compete with others for limited resources.

Tribes that *helped* (love) members and *killed* (hate) non-members were more successful..

This happens with Chimps:
And *all the time* in humans

Can we be one big tribe??



Selfish Genes and Inclusive Fitness

Genes are selfish: they can live forever – we are just temporary hosts! (*The great chain of being*: genes passed down over millions of years!)

You share tons of genes with relatives – even distant ones (we are all distant cousins)..

We are motivated to help each other: **Altruism = inclusive fitness** of the group!

Stanford Prison Experiment etc



Innocent college kids become evil prison guards!

But some coaching from Zimbardo and others running expt.

Robbers Cave (Sherif et al, 1961) (*Lord-of-the-flies* behavior from kids) also had some issues.

Not easy to capture true evil in experimental context, but no doubt about its prevalence in real world!

Milgram Experiment



People “shocked” a confederate to point of unconsciousness!
Unclear what they really believed.
Illustrates “following orders” of authority figure (experimenter)

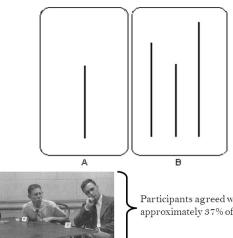
Conformity: Social Pressure

Solomon Asch:

Brains wired for social approval

But 95% did deviate at least once

Example of Stimuli Used in Asch's Study



Groupthink: collective failure to consider what could go wrong.. Bay of Pigs, Iraq War..

Bystander Effect: Kitty Genovese

Legend: nobody helped despite screams (*diffusion of responsibility*: someone else will call the cops..)

Truth: several people called police. Police were very slow to respond.

Initial reporting “told a story” in biased manner.

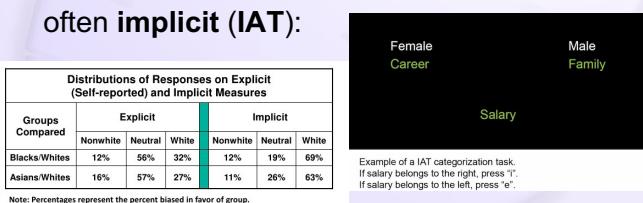
(Killer just died in prison)



Stereotyping, Prejudice

Stereotyping: typical features of given group – erroneously assumed to apply to all members of group. CCCC = Compression / Categorize

Prejudice: pre-judging according to stereotypes often implicit (IAT):



Sociocultural Psychology

- Opposite of evolutionary: culture is a major shaping force of behavior, values, etc
- Major dimensions:
 - Individualism vs. collectivism: USA vs. Asia
 - Power distance (acceptance of power diffs): Scandinavia low, Asian, Arab, Latin Am. high
 - Masculinity / Femininity: Japan male, Sweden fem.
 - Uncertainty avoidance: Japan high, USA low
- Social role: how do you fit in (e.g., patriarchy)

CCC = The 3 C's

CCC = Compression, Contrast, Control

- Compression:** filtering, simplifying, capturing the essence while removing the noise (perception, memory, learning, stereotypes, delusions..)
- Contrast:** everything is relative (happiness, color, size, income, social standing..)
- Control:** we are each little despots ruling our own fiefdoms, and don't you ever diss me! (control is central to most mental disorders)

Self Enhancement CCC = Control!

- Conclusion: everyone is focused on self enhancement – cultural universal – but form it takes depends on cultural norms..
 - Westerners: self-enhance on individualistic elements
 - East Asian cultures: self-enhance on collectivistic element
- Self enhancement – make people feel good about themselves, enhance self esteem

Help with cross-cultural interactions!

