

Week 1 lecture notes - PSYC 3435

Jan 16-20, 2017

Ways of knowing

Exercise:

- Write down two things that you know
- How do you know these things?

"Ways of knowing" versus "Types of knowledge"

Ways/Types	Objective	Subjective
Analysis	<i>Observation</i>	<i>Deduction</i>
Acceptance	<i>Authority</i>	<i>Intuition</i>

Definitions:

- *Intuition*: relying on *common sense* as a means of knowing about the world
- *Deduction*: using logical reasoning and current knowledge as a means of knowing about the world
- *Authority*: relying on a knowledgeable person/group as a means of knowing about the world
- *Observation*: relying on what one observes as a means of knowing about the world

Why do research?

- foundational to field of psychology – it is how we know what we know
- basic human desire – we like to know *how things work*

- pragmatism – helping professions need to *understand human behavior* in order to design treatments/therapies

How do we do research?

- research = systematic observation
- four *canons (laws)* of the scientific method
 1. empiricism - knowledge comes from experience/observation
 2. determinism - phenomena have identifiable *causes*
 3. parsimony - given two possible explanations for a behavior, the simplest is the "correct" one
 - important because simple explanations are easier to *falsify*
 4. testability - explanations for behavior can be tested (and falsified)

Types of research:

- basic research
 - goal = developing consistent, mechanistic explanations for human behavior
- applied research
 - goal = applying results *beyond the lab*