

Unit 11 Social Psychology Notes

I. Social Thinking 643

A. *Attributing behavior to persons or to situations* 644

1. *Attribution theory* Fritz Heider

The cause of behavior is either *situational* (surrounding environment) or *dispositional* (inside/part of you)

2. *Fundamental attribution error* (FAE) Basing your attribution on only one of the two causes

Underestimating the *situation* and overestimating the *personal factors*

Example: "He's poor because he's lazy."

(maybe the situation of a bad economy keeps him jobless)

FAE thinking is more likely to happen when we don't know the person.

3. Attribution sources: Harold Kelley, consensus, consistency, distinctiveness

The Effects of Attribution

Judgments about people have consequences socially, economically, politically at the individual level, the larger group and even nationally.

B. *Attitudes and Actions* 646

1. *Attitude*: beliefs and feelings predisposing us to people and objects

Persuasion: Central or peripheral route

Central: direct appeal to logic and thought

Peripheral: appeal is to superficial cues or gimmicks

2. Do our attitudes guide our actions?

- a. outside influences on what we say and do our minimal
- b. only if it's specifically relevant to the behavior
- c. only when we're keenly aware of the attitude

Actions Affect Attitudes

3. *Foot in the door phenomenon*

Agreeing to a larger request because you've already agreed to a smaller one
(Robert Cialdini, 1993)

Role Playing Affects Attitudes

Demonstrated by the Philip G. Zimbardo prison experiment (1972); college students internalized the roles of prisoners and guards to such an extent that a two week study had to be shut down after only six days.

(*Illustrates the "power of the situation"*)

Close up: Abu Ghraib Prison: some of the same behaviors in the Zimbardo study occurred in the American run prison in Iraq in 2003-4. Military guards abuse prisoners due to the powerful influence of the situation and other outside factors (lack of training, poor leadership). Page 649

Cognitive dissonance: relief from tension

This is the theory of Leon Festinger.

We act to reduce difference between our attitudes and actions; when a difference occurs we either change our behavior or our thinking.

II. Social Influence 650

Conformity and Obedience 650

What do experiments on conformity and compliance reveal about the power of social influence?

Chameleon effect: unconsciously mimicking others (Tanya Chartrand and John Bargh, 1999)

Mood linkage: sharing up and down moods

Copycat violence: media coverage leads to more aggression

Copycat suicide: Marilyn Monroe's (1962) lead to an uptick in suicides.

A. *Group Pressure and Conformity*

1. *conformity: going along with group behavior*
2. *Solomon Asch studies. see fig. 14. 2, page 652*

Under certain conditions we will conform even though we know something is incorrect. Asch set up a study where most people on certain line pairings gave the obviously incorrect answer; they purposely gave these false answers to pressure the only real subject in the experiment to conform to their group judgment. Many did.

Conditions that strengthen conformity 652

More than three, they are unanimous, one is made to feel incompetent, one admires those trying to influence you

Reasons for conforming 653

3. *normative social influence* Conforming to gain approval
4. *informational social influence* Changing behavior by accepting other's opinions about reality

B. *Obedience 654*

1. *Stanley Milgram, a student of Asch, studied complying with authority*
He set up an experiment where "teachers" thought they were using punishment (escalating shocks) to improve the learning of word pairs in their "subject". Actually the teachers were being pressured to obey the directions to harm another individual.
2. *Findings*
 - a. the teachers were more obedient than predicted (about two-thirds complied)
 - b. legitimate authority can be blindly followed ex. Jewish massacres
 - c. obedience was highest when teacher was close to experimenter and far from the learner
 - d. even ordinary people can be destructive
 - e. less likely to obey when others seen disobeying
 - f. controversy: Milgram deceived his subjects and subjected them to stress

Lessons from the Conformity and Obedience Studies 656

Social situations pressure us to conform. Ordinary people can do horrible things due to the power of the situation.

D. *Group influence 657*

Individual behavior in the presence of others

How is our behavior affected by the presence of others or by being part of a group?

1. *Social facilitation*
 - a. the presence of others improves your performance on well-learned tasks
 - b. it hinders your performance on un-mastered skills

Dominant response: Robert Zajonc says when others are present we become aroused; *social impairment* leads to worse behavior with others present; the harder the task the more likely you are to be impaired

2. *Social loafing*

Giving less effort when working with others (Bibb Latane, 1981); we feel less responsible or accountable.

3. *Deindividuation*

Losing your awareness and restraints when in a group situation that makes you anonymous. ex. Klan behavior

Effects of Group Interaction 659

4. *Group polarization*

When groups with members of the same views become more extreme; text author Myers and George Bishop found this when they had students discuss prejudice—they became even more prejudiced. See fig. 14.5, page 659

5. *Groupthink*

Irving Janus researched this topic (1982). He found that when no one in the decision-making group wants to disturb harmony, people will just go along on a bad decision. The result is usually disaster. Some American political decisions to illustrate the concept:

- a. NASA Challenger explosion
- b. JFK Adm. and the Bay of Pigs crisis
- c. Vietnam war decisions
- d. Failure to anticipate Pearl Harbor

Cultural Influence 661

How do cultural norms affect our behavior?

Culture: your behavior, attitudes, and traditions that are passed down

Variations Across Cultures 662

1. *Norms* Rules for acceptable behavior
2. *personal space*

The area within which you're not comfortable when persons invade
North Americans prefer more personal space than do Latin Americans

Expressiveness and pace of life also see differences.

Variation over time

The pace of culture has increased and also increased such behaviors as divorce, delinquency and depression.

The Power of Individuals 663

Social control and personal control interact

Minority influence

You are more likely to sway a group by consistently holding to your position

In 1930, James Cameron's lynching was stopped by one woman telling the mob not to string him up because he wasn't involved.

III. Social Relations 664

A. Prejudice

What is prejudice?

Unjustifiable negative attitude towards a group; the powerful use it to justify social inequalities

1. *Stereotype* Overgeneralized belief about a group
2. *Discriminate* actions carried out on the basis of prejudice

How Prejudiced Are People?

Blacks are more likely to be pulled over

The kind of name you have affects applications for housing
Lesbians and gays are discriminated against around the world
A gender bias on pay exists in America

Close-Up: Automatic Prejudice 666

Implicit Association Test

Anthony Greenwald (1998) showed that people harbor negative associations even though they may deny prejudicial attitudes.

Social Roots of Prejudice 667

Social Inequalities

Gordon Allport (1954), *The Nature of Prejudice*. *The blame the victim dynamic*.

Us and Them: Ingroup and Outgroup

ingroup bias 'we're better than they are' favoring one's own group; you see this a lot in sports.

outgroup 'them'

Emotional Roots of Prejudice 668

Scapegoating theory of prejudice: frustration causes people to blame others for problems justifying discrimination

Cognitive Roots of Prejudice 669

What are the cognitive roots of prejudice?

Categorization: we put people into categories.

Own race bias begins as a toddler.

Vivid cases: feed stereotyping. Some extreme case is called to our attention and then everyone we can put in that group is assigned those attributes.

Just world phenomenon you get what you deserve and you deserve what you get.

Hindsight bias works here, too: blaming the victim--- "she should have known better"

B. Aggression 670

Any physical or verbal behavior intended to hurt another

The biology of aggression

1. neural influences

amygdala/limbic system

Genetic influence found through animal and twin studies

2. biochemical influences

a. *testosterone* increases aggression

b. *alcohol* increases aggression

Psychological and Social-Cultural Factors in Aggression

What psychological factors may trigger aggressive behavior?

Frustration-aggression principle frustration creates anger and people respond with the fight or flight response.

Social and Cultural Influences

Ostracism, where people are excluded from groups (Jean Twenge, 2001) is a factor. Ex.: Seung-Hui Cho' Virginia Tech attack (2007)

Observing Models of Aggression

Pornography that portrays sexual aggression affects levels of violence.

Acquiring social scripts: ways to act provided by our culture

Television violence and aggression

Exaggerates the frequency of violence in the world

Do video games teach, or release violence? 676

a. those who play them do view the world as more hostile

b. Craig Anderson (2000) found that people playing them tend to be the most physically aggressive.

Catharsis hypothesis is incorrect; they don't blow off steam; more likely to have aggressive thoughts and behaviors

Other researchers have found that video games increase aggressive thoughts and behavior during and after the play (the discussion of long term effect is missing).

Aggression must be understood using the biopsychosocial model: frustration, role models, genes, chemicals, the workings of the brain, rejection, the media, parenting, and the environment are all involved.

E. The Psychology of Attraction 678

Proximity someone near to you more likely to be friend (most powerful predictor)

Mere exposure effect repeated exposure increases liking

Close Up: Online Matchmaking. *Speed dating* research finds that 4 minutes is enough time to form a good impression of someone. 679

Physical attractiveness

The power of attractiveness: Elaine Hatfield's Minnesota students study (1966) found that the one thing that affected the rating of a blind date was attractiveness.

Similarity

a. birds of a feather flock together

b. *reward theory of attraction* we like those whose behavior is rewarding to us

Romantic Love 683

Passionate love aroused, intense, present at the beginning; temporary

Elaine Hatfield's theory (1988): love has two elements: physical arousal and cognitive appraisal. (her theory is similar to the two factor theory of emotion by Schacter and Singer, see Unit 8B)

Companionate love; enduring.

Deep commitment a. *Equity theory* You receive in proportion to what you give

c. *Self-disclosure* revealing intimate details about self

Theories of Love

John Lee's Six types: agape, eros, mania, storge, ludus, pragma

Robert Sternberg's Triarchic theory: intimacy, passion, commitment

F. Altruism

When are we most---and least---likely to help?

Unselfish regard for other's welfare

1. Kitty Genovese murder (1964); no one responded to her cries for help when she was attacked and killed in a New York City building.

a. *John Darley and Bibb Latane studied bystander intervention as a result of this attack (1968)*

See fig. 14.16, page 686

They found a *diffusion of responsibility*, as more people are around any one person feels less responsible to help someone in need

When people are in a group they may feel *deindividuation*, no longer an individual with responsibilities

Another factor is *social loafing* where we exert less effort because of the group.

b. *bystander effect* less likely to give aid when others present

The Norms for Helping

a. *Social exchange theory*: aim is to maximize benefits and minimize costs

b. *Reciprocity norm*: you help those who help you

c. *Social responsibility norm* we should help those who need our help

d. According to *Gallup surveys*, *religious people report being more likely to help poor*

G. Conflict and Peacemaking 688

Conflict: a perceived incompatibility of goals, actions or ideas.

Social traps everyone pursuing their own gain, leading to destruction, the Tragedy of the Commons.

Garrett Hardin says the commons is any resource which is shared by a group of people; however, selfish households accumulate wealth from the commons by acquiring more than their fair share of the resources and paying less than their fair share of the total costs; ultimately as population grows and greed runs rampant, the commons collapses and ends in "the tragedy of the commons."

Enemy perceptions

Mirror image perceptions: they see us as we see them.

Self-fulfilling prophecies

Your belief leads you to act in ways that causes others to confirm your beliefs

Ex. teachers views of students

Contact 689

How can we transform feelings of prejudice, aggression, and conflict into attitudes that promote peace?

People have to come together, but this is usually inadequate.

1. Cooperation

a. Muzafer Sherif's Robber Cave Study

Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif conducted this study in 1954 with groups of boys at a camp in Oklahoma (now Robber's Cave State Park).

The experiment plan called for the selection of well-adjusted 24 boys of about 12 years of age from similar backgrounds.

Two groups were created and they developed separate identities (separate camps, chores and activities).

Next, hostility was created using manipulated contests between the Rattlers and Eagles.

When they become aware of the presence of the other group they developed possibly in-group bias and became defensive about which of the camp facilities their group enjoyed, that the other group might be "abusing."

Both groups asked the camp staff to arrange some sort of competition against the other.

The two competing groups were brought together for the first time in the mess hall. There was name-calling, harassment, and singing of derogatory songs.

Before supper that evening, some Eagles expressed a desire not to eat with the Rattlers.

The groups showed disrespect for each other's flags and they also raided each other's cabins.

b. Superordinate goals

To resolve the conflict, the boys were required to work together to solve a manufactured camp water crisis.

All of the drinking water in the camp came from a reservoir on the mountain north of the camp. The boys were told the water supply had failed and the Camp staff blamed this on "vandals."

The Eagles and the Rattlers as separate groups discovered a practically full tank which was found to have a sack stuffed into it. Almost all the boys gathered around the faucet to try to clear it.

Suggestions from members of both groups concerning effective ways to do it were thrown in from all sides simultaneously with actual efforts at the work itself. The work on the faucet lasted over 45 minutes.

When the water finally came through, the boys from both groups expressed happiness.

Experiment summary: co-operation on shared goals is of vital importance in resolving conflict peacefully. The study showed that merely stopping fighting or bringing hostile groups together is not enough. Co-operation must be promoted at various levels in the social system, building a sense of positive interdependence.

Communication 691

Mediators need to search for win-win solutions.

Conciliation 692

1. GRIT *Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension-Reduction*

Charles Osgood (1962) developed this to reduce conflict through *conciliation*

You have to initiate small, conciliatory acts and see if the other side responds.

Tensions reduced; mutual interests supported.

JFK used a similar approach to achieve a limited nuclear test ban treaty with the Soviet Union in 1963.

Key terms: 694 or see study guide

AP Quiz: 694-695