

Chapter 16 Notes

- Social psychology- examines the influence of social processes on the way people think, feel, and behave

Social Cognition

- The process by which people make sense of others, themselves, social interactions, and relationships
- Networks of association- interconnected nodes where memories are stored
- Schemas- organized patterns of thought that direct attention, memory, and interpretation
- Concepts- mental representations of categories
- **Perceiving Other People**
 - First Impressions
 - Initial perceptions of another person that can be powerful in shaping future beliefs about the person
 - Create a frame of reference within which everything else that is learned about a person is interpreted
 - Halo effect- tendency to attribute additional positive characteristics to someone who has one salient quality, such as physical attractiveness
 - People who perceive themselves to be physically attractive are more extraverted and social
 - Schemas and Social Cognition
 - Patterns of thought hypothesized to organize human experience
 - We form schemas about people, situations, and roles and relationships
 - People most likely to remember schema relevant information; ex: people remember that a librarian had glasses and a bun (b/c that fits the schema) and that she likes to go out (b/c that goes against schema), but not that her hair is brown (irrelevant to schema)
- **Stereotypes and Prejudice**
 - Stereotypes- characteristics attributed to people based on membership of specific groups
 - Prejudice- judging people based on negative stereotypes
 - Discrimination- behaviors that follow from prejudice
 - Authoritarian personality- personality type that is prone to hate people who are different or downtrodden (ex: Jews, blacks, homosexuals, etc.)
 - Ingroups- people perceived as belonging to a valued group
 - Outgroups- people perceived as not belonging to a valued group
 - People tend to perceive members of outgroup as all the same and favor ingroup members
 - Social identity theory- people derive part of their identity from groups to which they belong

- People who base their identities on ingroup will maintain positive feelings for their group and negative feelings for outgroup
- Situational events can also enhance degree to which people identify with group (ex: patriotism during 9/11)
- **Attribution**
 - Inferences about the causes of one's own and others' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors
 - People are like intuitive scientists; use theories, frame hypotheses, collect data, and draw conclusions to examine impact of various experimental manipulations
 - External attributions- behavior is attributed to situation
 - Internal attributions- behavior is attributed to person
 - People rely on 3 types of information to make attributions:
 - Consensus- way most people respond
 - Consistency- extent to which person always responds in same way to same stimulus
 - Distinctiveness- individual's likelihood of responding in this way to many different stimuli
 - Most actions have multiple causes; people adjust for strength of situational demands through two processes:
 - Discounting- when people downplay role of one variable because they know others may be contributing to behavior
 - Augmentation- increasing an internal attribution for behavior that has occurred despite situational demands
 - Attributional style- person's habitual manner of assigning causes to behaviors or events
- **Biases in Social Information Processing**
 - Correspondence Bias
 - Tendency to assume that other people's behavior corresponds to their internal states rather than external situations
 - Mostly used when explaining others' behavior; when explaining our own behavior, we look for external causes
 - Self-Serving Bias
 - People tend to see themselves in a more positive light than others see them
 - People rate themselves higher than average on most dimensions
 - More likely to recall positive than negative information about themselves
 - Faulty Cognition
 - Heuristics lead to biases in social thinking
 - Motivational biases