

# Social Psychology I:

## Influencing Other People and How They Influence Us

### Social Perception and Cognition

04/29/2014

#### I. Stereotypes and Prejudice

##### a. Stereotype

- i. Belief about a particular group of people

##### b. Prejudice

- i. Negative attitude toward a group of people
  1. Often results in discrimination (unfair treatment)

##### c. No one admits their prejudices anymore!

- i. But almost all of us have them
- ii. We don't ask people directly about prejudices because they lie
- iii. We study them in sneaky ways

##### d. Implicit Association Test

- i. Reaction time test
- ii. Measures reactions to combinations of category pairings
- iii. We react faster to pairings that conform to our prejudices, even subconsciously
  1. Even when we deny being prejudices
- iv. What's the point?
  1. That kind, well-meaning people have prejudices
    - a. Even if we aren't aware of them

##### e. Overcoming Prejudice

- i. Cooperation instead of competition
- ii. Requires in-depth, repeated contact with the group you are prejudiced against
  1. As roommates
  2. Members of the same sports team
  3. Working toward a common goal (Robbers Cave study)

#### II. Interpersonal Influence

- a. Social facilitations
  - i. Mere presence of others can increase our performance (e.g., if in a group, if being watched)
    - 1. On difficult task our performance suffers
- b. Social Comparison
  - i. We evaluate our beliefs and behaviors by comparing them to others
    - 1. If unsure of how to act, we act like others do
  - ii. Mass Hysteria and Urban Legends
    - 1. Believed because repeated so many times and play on our negative emotions
      - a. Pool urine detectors, HIV needles at movie theaters, Pop Rocks and soda (snotes.com)
- c. Giving in to Others: Conformity
  - i. Conformity: changing your beliefs or behavior in order to follow group norms
    - 1. Asch's study
  - ii. We are more likely to conform when
    - 1. All other group members are unanimous
    - 2. There are several people in the group
- d. Giving in to Others: Compliance
  - i. Compliance: changing your behavior because someone asks you to
- e. Giving in to Others: Obedience
  - i. Obedience: Changing your behavior because someone told you do
  - ii. "I was just following orders"
    - 1. Nuremberg trials, Abu Ghraib
    - 2. Milgram's shock study
      - a. 65% of people will shock someone to a lethal level when told to do so by an authority figure
      - b. Most likely to obey when an authority figure is very close by, and when we feel less responsibility
    - 3. It's all about the situation!

# Social Psychology Part 2: Interpersonal Influence

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- I. Social Influence: Diffusion of Responsibility
  - a. Definition: Social phenomena occurring in groups where responsibility is not explicitly assigned
    - i. People are less likely to engage in "helping" behavior in the presence of others (Bystander apathy)
      1. 1964 Kitty Genovese case and others
        - a. Many people heard her yet no one called the police until half an hour later
      2. Lab fire experiment (70% vs. 13%)
        - a. Alone: 70% got help
        - b. Not alone: 13% got help
    - ii. Pluralistic ignorance (seeing others not act)
    - iii. "enlightenment effect"
- II. Deindividuation
  - a. Deindividuation is a state of lower self-awareness or personal identity as being part of a group
    - i. Zimbardo's Stanford Prisoner Study (1971)
      1. The power of the role that you are assigned
    - ii. 2004 Abu Ghraib Prison Abuse
      1. Untrained guards let go of their individualism/moralism and took on the role they believed was expected of them
- III. Persuasion: Two routes to attitude change
  - a. Central Route
    - i. For important decisions
    - ii. Requires careful use of evidence, logic, and evaluation
  - b. Peripheral Route
    - i. For minor decisions lacking any importance
    - ii. Requires little other than appearance, number or arguments, etc.
  - c. 4 Persuasion Techniques
    - i. Foot in the Door
      1. Ask somebody for a relatively small request (\$1 to feed cats for a week)