

## Self and other

### Outline

- Self
  - Everyone notices you
  - You are terrific
  - What you do makes sense
- Self and other
  - the fundamental attribution error
- Other
- Groups

## Why do we like others?

- Proximity
  - “mere exposure effect”
- Similarity
- Attractiveness

## Attractiveness Bias

- physically attractive people are rated higher on intelligence, competence, sociability, morality
- studies
  - teachers rate attractive children as smarter, and higher achieving
  - adults attribute cause of unattractive child's misbehavior to personality, attractive child's to situation
  - judges give longer prison sentences to unattractive people

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## How do we form impressions?

### 1. The power of first impressions

- Kelley's study
  - students had a guest speaker
  - before the speaker came, half got a written bio saying speaker was "very warm", half got bio saying speaker was "rather cold"
  - "very warm" group rated guest more positively than "rather cold" group

## How do we form impressions?

### 2. First impressions are fast: Thin slices

- teaching
- personality ratings
- Gaydar

What effects do our perceptions of other people actually have on other people?

## Self-fulfilling Prophecies

- When our beliefs and expectations create reality
- Beliefs & expectations influence our behavior & others'
- Pygmalion effect
  - person A believes that person B has a particular characteristic
  - person B may begin to behave in accordance with that characteristic

"You see, really and truly  
... the difference  
between a lady and a  
flower girl is not how  
she behaves but how  
she's treated. I shall  
always be a flower girl  
to Professor Higgins  
because he always  
treats me as a flower  
girl, and always will ..."  
-- Eliza Doolittle

## Studies of the Self-fulfilling Prophecy

### Rosenthal & Jacobson

- went to a school and did IQ tests with kids
- told teachers that the test was a "spurters" test
- randomly selected several kids and told the teacher they were spurters
- did another IQ test at end of year
- spurters showed significant improvements in their IQ scores b/c of their teacher's expectations of them

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  - the Pygmalion effect
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## How do we think about human groups?

- Us vs. them
- Stereotypes

## Categories

- Humans and other animals accumulate information about categories of objects
- This information allows us to respond adaptively to novel instances, and is essential for survival

## We also categorize people

- Men vs. women
- Child vs. adolescents vs. adults ..
- Whites vs. blacks vs. asians ...
- Lawyers vs. doctors ...
- Jews vs. Catholics ...
- Straight vs. gay ...
- Americans vs. Europeans ...
- Californians vs. New Yorkers ...
- Yale students vs. Harvard students ...

## This is not necessarily a bad thing

Stereotypes are often positive  
Stereotypes tend to be accurate

But ...

## But there are problems

1. Not always accurate
  - confirmation bias with stereotypes

## But there are problems

1. Not always accurate
  - confirmation bias with stereotypes
  - misleading data from media

## But there are problems

2. Moral problems
  - people should be judged as individuals, not as group members
  - debates over profiling

## But there are problems

2. Moral problems
  - negative stereotypes have all sorts of bad effects
  - e.g., stereotype threat

## MATH TEST

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

You have 90 minutes to answer the following questions. Good luck!

## MATH TEST

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

RACE: \_\_\_\_\_

You have 90 minutes to answer the following questions. Good luck!

## MATH TEST

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SEX: \_\_\_\_\_

You have 90 minutes to answer the following questions. Good luck!

## Studying stereotypes

- 3 levels of stereotypes in today's research
  - public
    - what we say to others about a group
  - private
    - what we consciously think about a group, but don't say to others
  - implicit
    - unconscious mental associations guiding our judgments and actions without our conscious awareness

### Implicit Stereotypes

- Use of priming: subject might not know stereotype is being activated, can't work to suppress it
  - flash pictures of Black vs. White faces subliminally
  - give incomplete words like "hos\_\_\_\_\_,"

### Implicit Stereotypes

- Use of priming: subject might not know stereotype is being activated, can't work to suppress it
  - flash pictures of Black vs. White faces subliminally
  - give incomplete words like "hos\_\_\_\_\_," subjects seeing Black make "hostile," seeing White make "hospital"

Who cares?

(what difference can a fraction of a second make?)

Also ... implicit attitudes  
play a role in difficult  
"judgment calls"

## Implicit Stereotypes

- Devine's automaticity theory
  - Everyone holds stereotypes
  - these stereotypes are automatically activated whenever we come into contact with individuals
  - we have to actively push them back down if we don't wish to act in a prejudiced way.
  - Overcoming prejudice is possible, but takes work

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  - First impressions & thin slices
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- Groups
  - Stereotypes

## Sleep (and dreams)

### Electroencephalogram (EEG)

- Electrodes placed on the scalp provide a gross record of the electrical activity of the brain
- EEG recordings are a rough index of psychological states

### EEG Waves of Wakefulness

- Awake, but non-attentive - large, regular alpha waves
- Awake and attentive - low amplitude, fast, irregular beta waves

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## Stages of Sleep

- Sleep stage 1 - brief transition stage when first falling asleep
- Stages 2 through 4 (slow-wave sleep) - successively deeper stages of sleep
- Characterized by an increasing percentage of slow, irregular, high-amplitude delta waves

## Stages of Sleep

- Upon reaching stage 4 and after about 80 to 100 minutes of total sleep time, sleep lightens, returns through stages 3 and 2
- REM sleep emerges, characterized by EEG patterns that resemble beta waves of alert wakefulness
  - muscles most relaxed
  - rapid eye movements occur
  - dreams occur
- Four or five sleep cycles occur in a typical night's sleep - less time is spent in slow-wave, more is spent in REM

## Summary: 2 types of sleep

Slow-wave/quiet sleep

- eyes drift separately and slowly
- immobile and hard to wake up

REM sleep

- active cortex
- EEGs similar to waking
- paralyzed, except for eyes
- erections in men
- Dreams

## What is sleep for?

- Restoration theory - body wears out during the day and sleep is necessary to put it back in shape
  - growth-producing hormone
  - restoration of brain and other organs
- Preservation and protection theory - sleep emerged in evolution to preserve energy and protect during the time of day when there is little value and considerable danger

## Sleep Disorders

- Somnambulism - sleepwalking
- Nightmares - frightening dreams that wake a sleeper from REM
- Night terrors - sudden arousal from sleep and intense fear accompanied by physiological reactions (e.g., rapid heart rate, perspiration) that occur during slow-wave sleep
- Narcolepsy - overpowering urge to fall asleep that may occur while talking or standing up
- Sleep apnea - failure to breathe when asleep

## Sleep Disorders

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- Sleep apnea - failure to breathe when asleep
- Some interesting side-effects of ambien

## Dreams

To sleep: perchance to dream:  
ay, there's the rub;  
For in that sleep of death what  
dreams may come  
when we have shuffled off this  
mortal coil,  
must give us pause

## Two philosophical questions about dreams

- Am I dreaming right now?
- Can I be immoral in a dream?

## Two philosophical questions about dreams

- Am I dreaming right now? NO
- Can I be immoral in a dream?  
NOT USUALLY

## True dreams versus Sleep thought

- true dream - vivid, detailed dreams consisting of sensory and motor sensations experienced during REM
- sleep thought - lacks sensory and motor sensations, is more similar to daytime thinking, and occurs during slow-wave sleep

## Facts about dreams

- Everyone dreams
- 3-4 times a night
- Fragile memories

## What do people dream about?

- Hill's 50,000 dream reports; dreambank.net, etc.
  - Most dreams are bad  
(more misfortune, more negative emotions)
  - Physical aggression  
(more in tribal societies)  
(more in men)  
(more in Americans)

## What do people dream about?

- What do people WANT to dream about?  
Women: Romance and adventure  
Men: Sex with strangers
- How many dreams are actually sexual?  
About 10%
- What is the most common dream?  
Being naked? Flying? Falling?

## Dreams and REM Sleep

- What are true dreams for?
- Freudian theories?
- Side effect of memory consolidation

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## Laughter

### What makes us laugh?

A first guess:

"We laugh when there is incongruity between what we expect and what actually happens, unless the outcome is frightening"

BUT:

- doesn't explain why incongruity causes laughter
- most incongruity doesn't cause laughter
- a lot of laughter isn't caused by incongruity

### Typical prelaugh comments (=90%)

- I'll see you guys later
- Look, it's Andre!
- Are you sure?
- I know!
- How are you?
- I try to lead a normal life
- Does anyone have a rubber band?
- It wasn't you?
- We can handle this

### "Humorous" prelaugh comments (=10%)

- Poor boy looks just like his father
- You smell like you've had a good workout
- Did you find that in your nose?  
[reference to dormitory food]
- He has a job holding back skin in the operating room

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## Some facts about laughter

### 1. It is social and communicative

- Involuntary noise-making
- Contagious
  - (laugh tracks, children)

## Some facts about laughter

### 2. It is shared with other primates

- laughing-like sounds in monkeys when they attack a common enemy
- laughing-like sounds in chimpanzees when they tickle each other

Q: What is tickling?

A: Touching parts of the body in a mock attack

## Laughter as a signal of mock aggression and collective aggression?

### Mock aggression

(tickling, teasing, insults, kidding around)

### Collective aggression

(mob assault, executions)

-- social bonding (Plato), often against a common enemy

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Tragedy is when I cut my finger.

Tragedy is when I cut my finger. Comedy is when you fall into an open sewer and die.

### Ingredients of humor

- A target, a person or institution, who experiences some harm. It can be an enemy, but also a friend, or even yourself
- The harm should not be so serious that it elicits strong negative emotions such as fear, grief, or pity
- The harm is often of a social nature, sometimes involving sex or scatology--banana peel, pie in face, pants falling down, etc.
- Some level of surprise

### Why can't we tickle ourselves?

(but some can!)

1. No surprise; no mock-aggression
2. General deadening of self-stimulation

### Reading Response

- Generate an interesting and testable hypothesis about either (a) dreams or (b) laughter

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