

Announcement: 390s Needed

- Contact Adrienne Carter-Sowell
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- Three main research topics:
 - How we experience social pain (loss, bereavement, ostracism, breaking up, etc.)
 - How ostracism affects us?
 - Cults: who is vulnerable and why?
 - Attitudes toward homosexuals and others who are stigmatized

Reminder:

Recitations Begin Next Week

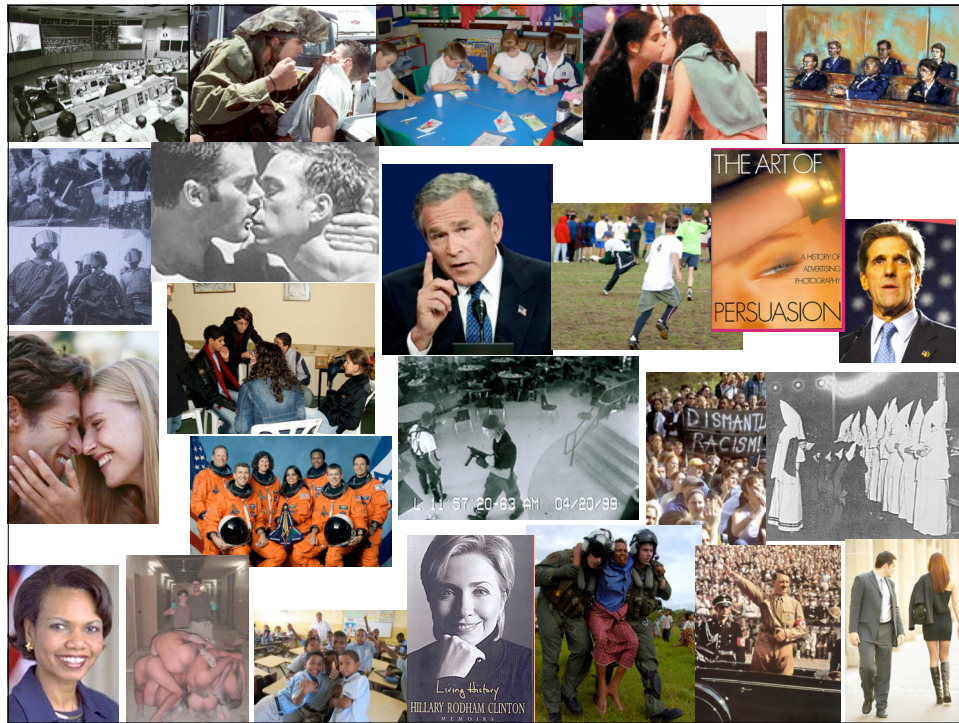
Lecture 2

***Introduction to Social
Psychology:
What is it and how do we do it?***

**Psy 240; Fall 2006
Purdue University
Dr. Kipling Williams**

What is Social Psychology?

- Effects of people on people.
 - Social thinking
 - Social influence
 - Social relations



Social Psychology and Theoretical Influences

- Freud
 - Self-serving biases, unconscious motivation, defense mechanisms
- Skinner
 - Behavior determined by reinforcement contingencies in the environment.
- Darwin
 - Behavioral reactions of humans may be related to what is adaptive and leads to success in the perpetuation of the species.
- Becker
 - Terror of knowing that we die can influence our thoughts and behaviors.

What Are Social Psychology's Big Lessons?

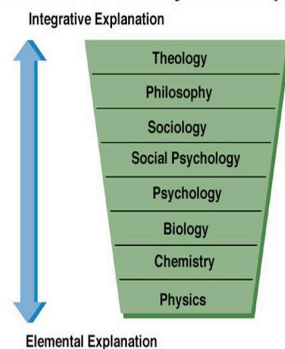
- The Power of the Situation
- We construct our social reality
- Our social intuitions are often powerful but sometimes perilous
- Social influences shape our behavior, *often outside our awareness.*
- Personal attitudes and dispositions also shape behavior
 - But attitudes and dispositions are subject to social influence
- Social behavior is also biological behavior
- Social psychology's principles are applicable to everyday life and other disciplines

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Social Psychology: Related Disciplines & Levels of Explanation

Partial Hierarchy of Disciplines



- Specific comparisons:
 - Sociology
 - Personality

Psychological Social Psychology **Sociological Social Psychology**

The central focus is on the individual.

Researchers attempt to understand social behavior by analyzing immediate stimuli, psychological states, and personality traits.

Prediction of behavior is the primary goal of research.

Experimentation is the primary research method, followed by surveys.

The central focus is on the group or society.

Researchers attempt to understand social behavior by analyzing societal variables, such as social status, social roles, and social norms.

Description of behavior is the primary goal of research.

Surveys and participant observation are the primary research methods.

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Social Psychology and Human Values



- Obvious ways in which values enter
 - Relationships are good
 - Prejudice is bad
- Not-so-obvious ways in which values enter
 - The subjective aspects of science
 - Example: Social Facilitation and Social Loafing
- Attempting to be value-free has benefits to science and applications.
 - Admitting when you are not at least puts research into proper perspective.

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Is Social Psychology Just “Common Sense”?

- It's easy to see how we might think social psychology's findings are common sense
 - Out of sight; out of mind/Absence makes the heart grow fonder/early bird catches the worm; look before you leap
 - Birds of a feather flock together/Opposites attract
- Hindsight bias
 - The tendency to exaggerate, after learning an outcome, one's ability to have foreseen it
 - the I-knew-it-all-along phenomenon
 - *Important for test preparation*

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How Do We Do Social Psychology?

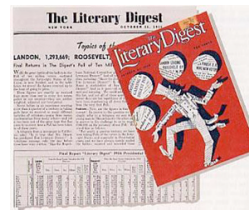
Two General Categories of Studies

1. Correlational

- Detecting Natural Associations
- Observational Studies
 - Naturalistic
 - Laboratory
- Participant observation
- Surveys
 - Questionnaires
 - Interviews
- Diary Studies

Concerns of Correlational designs

- Question wording
- Third variables
- Social Desirability



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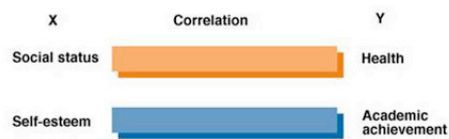
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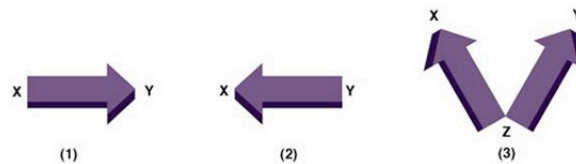
Understanding Correlations

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When 2 Variables Correlate



Possible Explanations



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How Do We Do Social Psychology?

Two General Categories of Studies

2. Experimental Designs

- To determine causation
 - Control
 - Random Assignment
- Concerns:
 - Placebo Effects
 - Demand Characteristics
- Solutions
 - Well thought out control and comparison conditions
 - Disguised cover stories

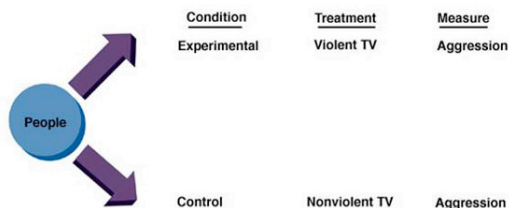
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Understanding Experiments

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Random Assignment \neq **Random Selection**



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Concepts to Know (hint: for the exam) in Social Psychological Research

- Theory
- Hypothesis
- Population
- Sample
- Representative sample
- Random sample
- Random Assignment
- Blind Procedures
- Independent variable
- Dependent variable
- Survey
- Placebo Effects
- Third variables
- Causation
- Reliability
- Validity

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Understanding Experiments

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Field v. Laboratory Experiments

Comparison of Field and Laboratory Experiments

	Field	Laboratory
Advantages of the Field Experiment		
External validity	High	Low
Experimental realism	High	Low
Minimizes participants' suspicion and maximizes natural and spontaneous behavior	Yes	No
Advantages of the Laboratory Experiment		
Random assignment	Generally no	Yes
Control over variables	Low	High
Convenience and accuracy in collecting data	Low	High

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