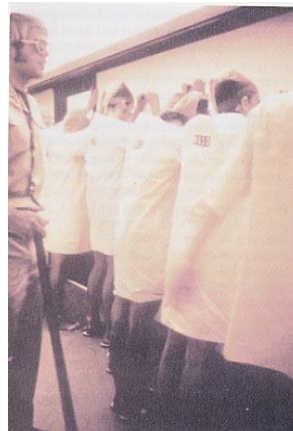


# ***Persuasion***

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

## **Does Behavior Determine Attitudes?**

- Role playing
  - Zimbardo's Prison Study (1971)
- Wells & Petty (1980):
  - Testing headphones
- The foot-in-the-door effect
- Evil acts and attitudes
  - Treatment of inmates
  - Ostracism confederates



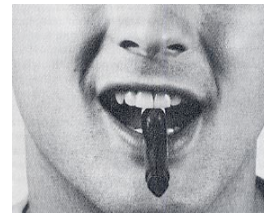
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## Why Do Actions Affect Attitudes?

- Self-presentation theory
  - Inconsistency looks bad to others.
  - We express attitudes that make us appear consistent with our behavior.
- Cognitive dissonance theory
  - Inconsistency feels bad to us.
  - We justify our actions by changing our attitudes to fit what we did/said.
- Self-perception theory
  - Our actions are self-revealing



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## Why Do Actions Affect Attitudes?

- Cognitive dissonance theory
  - Insufficient justification
    - \$1 vs. \$20
  - Effort justification
  - Post-decisional dissonance
  - Over-justification



Leon Festinger

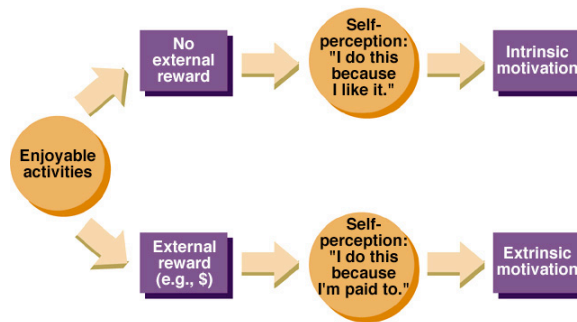
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# Attitudes & Motivation

David G. Myers, *Social Psychology*, 6ed. Copyright © 1999. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

## Intrinsic/Extrinsic Motivation



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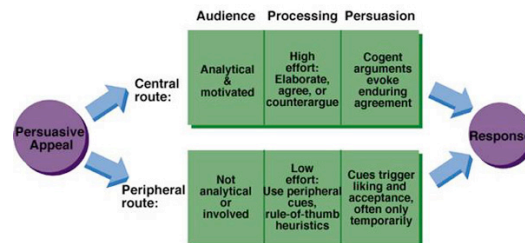
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# Two Routes to Persuasion

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- Central route persuasion
- Peripheral route persuasion

## Central & Peripheral Routes to Persuasion



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# Processing Messages

Stephen L. Franzoi, *Social Psychology*, Copyright © 1996, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

## Processing of Persuasive Messages

### Central Versus Peripheral Processing of Persuasive Messages

Route to Persuasion	Most Likely to Occur When	Effect on Attitudes
<b>Central Route</b>		
The person carefully scrutinizes all the available information in the persuasion environment in an attempt to determine the merits of the presented arguments.	People find the message personally relevant and involving. People are high in the need for cognition. People are in a neutral or mildly negative mood. The communicator speaks at a normal rate of speed.	Attitudes tend to be strong, resistant to counterarguments, and predictive of behavior.

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# Processing Messages

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## Processing of Persuasive Messages

### Central Versus Peripheral Processing of Persuasive Messages

Route to Persuasion	Most Likely to Occur When	Effect on Attitudes
<b>Peripheral Route</b>		
Instead of actively thinking about the attitude object, the person relies on incidental cues and simple rules of thumb, such as the attractiveness of the communicator or the length of the message.	People find the message to be irrelevant and noninvolving. People are low in need for cognition. People are in a positive mood. The communicator speaks rapidly.	Attitudes tend to be weak, susceptible to counterarguments, and not predictive of behavior.

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## Distraction and Persuasion

- Common sense prediction:
  - Distraction would interfere with persuasive attempts
- But, following the ELM logic, what should happen if the audience is distracted from elaborating during central route processing?
  - If agreement would normally result from elaboration, distraction will result in less persuasion;
  - But, if disagreement (through counter-arguing) would normally result from elaboration, distraction will result in higher levels of persuasion.

## Distraction and Persuasion

- Distraction prevents elaboration
- Examples of factors that prevent elaboration:
  - Fast talking
  - Talking softly
  - Noise
  - Flashy visual distracters (clothes; cigarette ash)
  - Slowing down heart
  - Laying supine
  - What else...?

# Distraction & Persuasion

- IV<sub>1</sub>: Level of odor
  - Normal
  - Aversive
- IV<sub>2</sub>: Strength of message
  - Weak
  - Strong
- DV: Agreement with message

# Operational Definitions

- Odor:
  - Normal (no detection of unusual smells)
  - Aversive (chemical combinations that result in significantly higher self-reports of obnoxious odor)
- Strength of Arguments
  - Weak: “My advisor took a comprehensive exam and now he has a prestigious academic position.”
  - Strong: “Prestigious universities have comprehensive exams to maintain academic excellence.”
- Agreement
  - Should we institute comprehensive senior exams at Purdue? (1 = absolutely not; 7 = yes, absolutely)



Photo 1. Using a Nasal Ranger® to detect odors.

The odor in this room is:

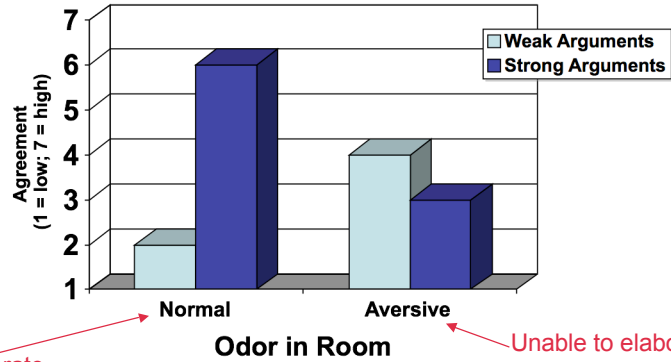
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not noticeable			Highly noticeable			

The odor in this room is:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pleasant			Unpleasant			

# Predicted Results

Should We Institute Comprehensive Exams?



Able to elaborate

Unable to elaborate

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