

What is social psychology?

Three potential definitions:

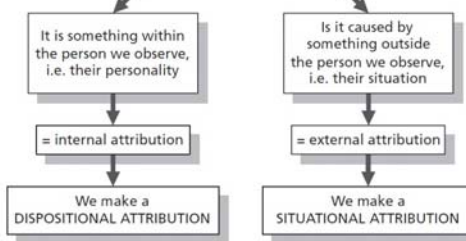
1. The study of how people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by other people, real or imagined. (Gordon Allport)
2. The study of how, when, and why completely normal people think and behave in ways that appear very abnormal.
3. The study of "normal" people.



1

ATtribution

What causes certain behaviour?



People have a strong tendency toward making dispositional attributions about other people's behavior. This bias is called the correspondence bias. Because it's often in error, it's also called the fundamental attribution error.

2

Fundamental Attribution Error



You probably think this guy is pretty mean even though you've only "met" him during a show where he is almost certainly told to act really mean.

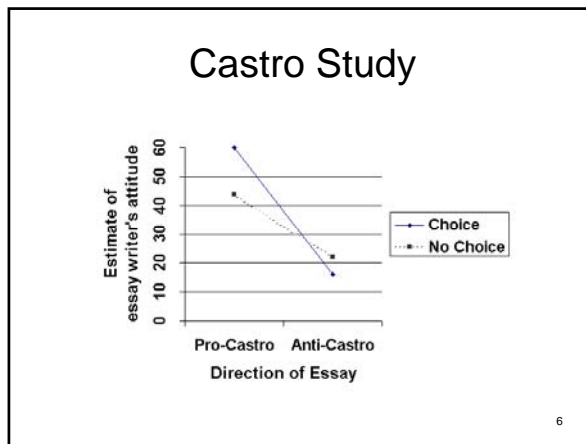
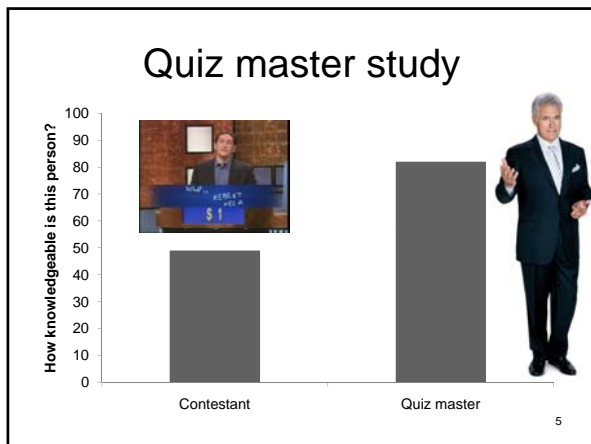
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Fundamental Attribution Error



How much do you want to bet the average person assumes these guys support the Mafia (I bet at least some people think they're in the Mafia)?

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Fundamental Attribution Error

"During my last night in captivity, my captors forced me to participate in a propaganda video. They told me they would let me go if I cooperated. I was living in a threatening environment, under their control, and wanted to go home alive. I agreed... Things that I was forced to say while captive are now being taken by some as an accurate reflection of my personal views. They are not."
 ---Jill Carroll, reporter, *Christian Science Monitor*

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Attitudes and Behavior

- An attitude is an evaluation of something - positive or negative.
- Attitudes often guide our behaviors.
- Attitudes and behaviors are often consistent.
 - I like pizza, thus I eat pizza.
 - I hate broccoli, thus I avoid it.
- Are our behaviors always consistent with our attitudes? NO!!! (LaPierre study)

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Attitude/Behavior Consistency

Nearly every establishment did serve the Chinese couple during their trip

BEHAVIOR

ATTITUDE

When called later, 92% said that they would not serve the Chinese couple.

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Heider's Balance Theory

Attitude – Attitude Consistency

We prefer it when our attitudes toward various things are consistent.

Balanced

Unbalanced

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Cognitive Dissonance

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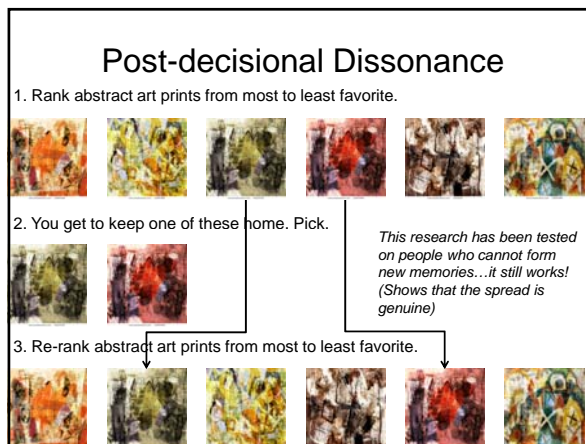
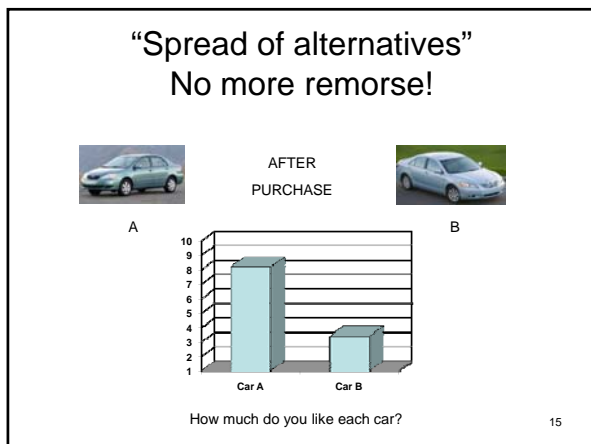
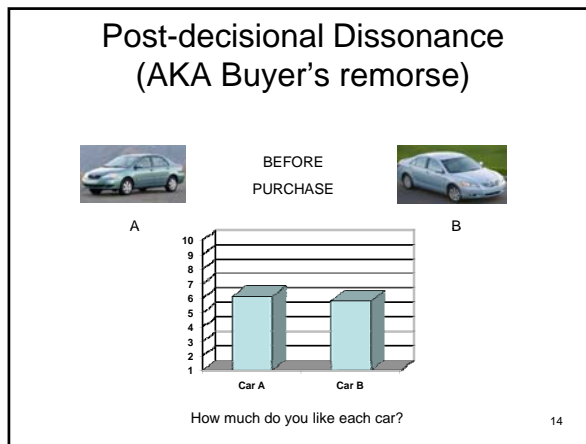
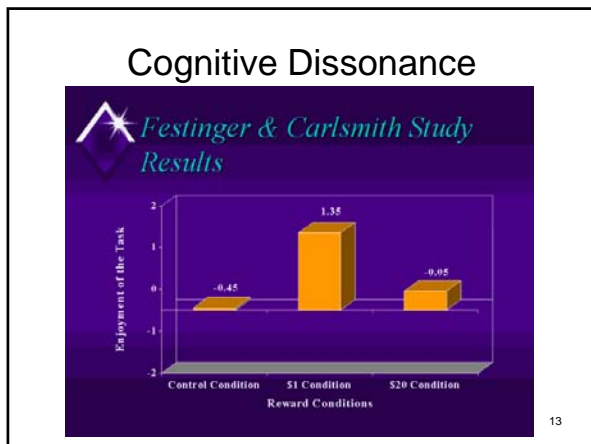
Festinger & Carlsmith, 1957

Induced Compliance Study

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Arguably, the most influential study in the history of social psychology.

It was Carlsmith's undergraduate senior honors thesis!!!



Aesop's The Fox and the Grapes

One hot summer's day a Fox was strolling through an orchard till he came to a bunch of Grapes just ripening on a vine which had been trained over a lofty branch.

"Just the thing to quench my thirst," quoth he. Drawing back a few paces, he took a run and a jump, and just missed the bunch. Turning round again with a One, Two, Three, he jumped up, but with no greater success.

Again and again he tried after the tempting morsel, but at last had to give it up, and walked away with his nose in the air, saying: "I am sure they are sour."

It is easy to despise what you cannot get.



Post-decisional Dissonance in Children and Monkeys

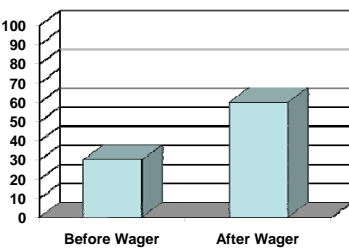
- Children as young as four show spread of alternatives when given choice between toys.
- Capuchin monkeys show spread of alternatives when given choice between different colored Skittles.



Post-decision Confidence



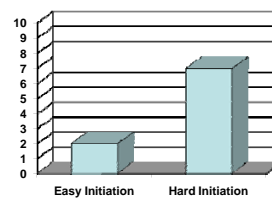
What are the chances that your horse will win the race?



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Effort Justification

- Only an idiot would work really hard at something that isn't worth it.



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Sunk Costs

- Once you've put a lot into something, it's hard to change course—even when you clearly should. (To do so, you have to admit that you've wasted time and resources.)
- Trivial example: You pay \$8 to see a movie and movie sucks. Do you sit through it to the bitter end (stay the course), or do you leave and do something else that's more fun (change course)?
- More significant example: You're the CEO of a company that has spent \$200 million out of a \$300 million budget on a project that is now obviously going to fail. Do you spend the remainder of the budget (stay the course) or terminate the project (change course)?
- It's hard to admit failure!*

Pretend the misspent resources of the past will only be "wasted" if we stop mispending resources.

Think of all the money we have committed to this stock. Selling it will waste it all!

It often helps to act like you are defending that which was sacrificed.

These hard working men and women have diligently spent years designing this cockroach-mounted death ray. We must not discard such hard work.

We have bulldozed the homes of 14 families with the simple, yet noble, goal of creating a 10 story tall gelatin sculpture.

Do not let the sacrifice of these families be in vain.

TheGuy.com

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3 types of social influence

- Conformity
- Compliance
- Obedience

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Conformity

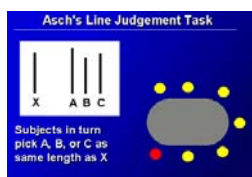
- Conformity: Freely doing what others are doing.

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- Conformity has important survival implications.

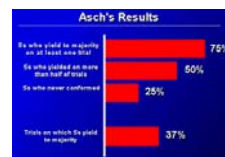
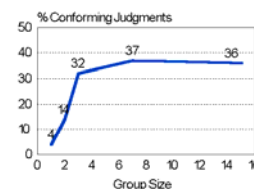
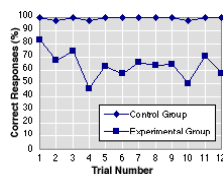
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Asch's (1955) Conformity Study



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Asch's (1955) Conformity Study



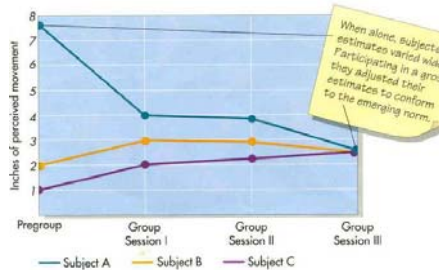
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Sherif (1936)

How much is this point of light moving?

Sherif (1936)



When alone, subjects' estimates varied widely. Participating in a group, they adjusted their estimates to conform to the emerging norm.

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- People conform more when:
 - Situation is ambiguous.
 - They are made to feel incompetent or insecure.
 - Group has at least 3 people.
 - Group is unanimous.
 - They admire the group's status or attractiveness.
 - They have no prior commitment to any response.
 - Their culture strongly encourages respect for group standards (e.g., collectivistic cultures).

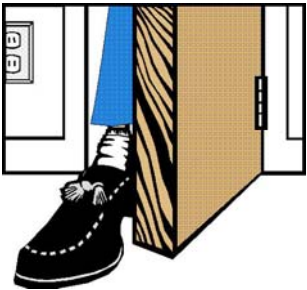
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Compliance

- Doing what someone (not in authority) asks you to do.
- This is what salespeople try to increase!

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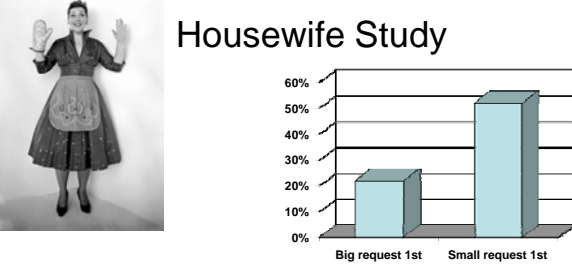
Foot-in-the-door



The illustration shows a person's foot in a black high-heeled shoe with a white sole, stepping into a doorway. The door is partially open, and the foot is positioned as if it's just entered, symbolizing the 'foot-in-the-door' technique.

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Housewife Study




The illustration shows a woman in a dark dress and apron, standing with her hands raised in a gesture of surprise or compliance. To her right is a bar chart showing the results of the Housewife Study.

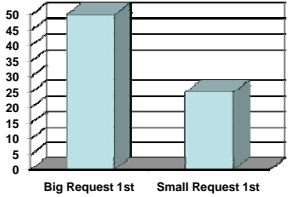
Request Sequence	Compliance Rate
Big request 1st	~20%
Small request 1st	~55%

- Why are we more likely to comply with bigger requests when followed by small requests?
- We've already put ourselves in a position where we are helping person. It's hard to say no once you've already said yes to something previously.³²

Door-in-the-face



- What if we make a big request first, then follow it up with a small request?






Request Sequence	Success Rate (%)
Big Request 1st	~45
Small Request 1st	~25

- Big request: be a Big Brother or Sister at a detention center for two hours per week for two years.
- Small request: chaperone a group of kids to the zoo.

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Reciprocity

- Norm of reciprocity: Universal rule of "if you do something for me, I'll do something for you."
 - Very powerful
 - Applies even when first favor is uninvented
 - Can create unequal exchanges


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Obedience



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Stanley Milgram--Obedience



"Each individual possesses a conscience which to a greater or lesser degree serves to restrain the unimpeded flow of impulses destructive to others. But when he merges his person into an organizational structure, a new creature replaces autonomous man, unhindered by the limitations of individual morality, freed of humane inhibition, mindful only of the sanctions of authority."

"The social psychology of this century reveals a major lesson: often it is not so much the kind of person a man is as the kind of situation in which he finds himself that determines how he will act."

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Milgram's Obedience Studies

objection	milgram's response
first	"He's fine. go on."
second	"The experiment requires you to go on."
third	"It is absolutely essential to go on."
fourth	"You have no choice. You must go on."

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How many went all the way?

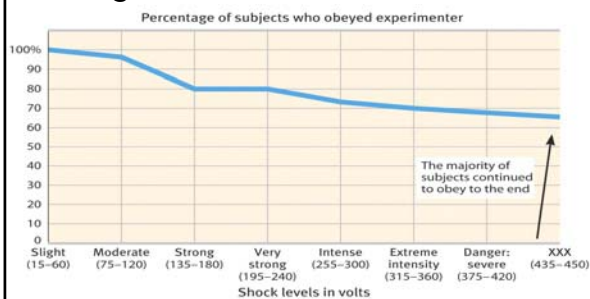
- A panel of medical doctors were asked this by Milgram at a medical conference at Yale. Their response...

ABOUT 4% WOULD GO ALL THE WAY

ABOUT 96% WOULD STOP AT SOME POINT

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Milgram's Obedience Studies



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"I observed a mature and initially poised businessman enter the laboratory smiling and confident. Within 20 minutes he was reduced to a twitching, stuttering wreck, who was rapidly approaching nervous collapse. He constantly pulled on his ear lobe, and twisted his hands. At one point he pushed his fist into his forehead and muttered 'Oh God, lets stop it'. And yet he continued to respond to every word of the experimenter, and obeyed to the end."



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Milgram's Obedience Studies

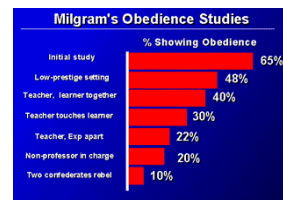
- What factors led to the highest obedience?
 - The experimenter was close to the teacher.
 - The experimenter was supported by a prestigious institution (e.g., Yale U.).
 - The learner was placed some distance (either physically or psychologically) from the teacher.
 - The teachers did not witness anyone else defying the orders to continue.



Teacher is close to learner (has to place hand on the shocker). Not good for obedience.

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Milgram's Obedience Studies



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Physical Attractiveness

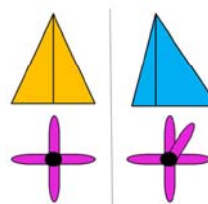
Importance of physical attractiveness

1. Attractive people are less likely to be hospitalized with mental illnesses.
2. Attractive people tend to have higher paying jobs.
3. Attractive people tend to have better social skills.
4. Less attractive people tend to get harsher prison sentences.
5. Attractive people tend to be seen as more intelligent and fun.
6. Mothers pay more attention to their attractive babies!
7. Babies prefer to look at attractive faces.

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Symmetry and Attractiveness

- We prefer things that are bilaterally symmetric in nature (one side equals the other).

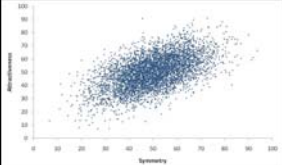
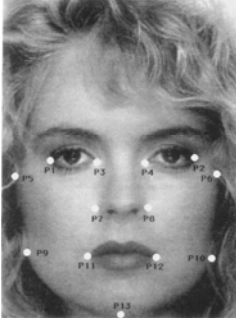


Which is more pleasing?

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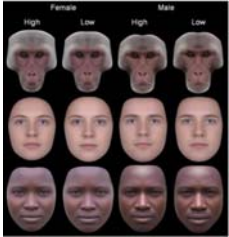
Symmetry and Attractiveness

- Can measure symmetry in humans by marking features and measuring how consistent a feature on one side is with the same feature on the other side.

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Facial Symmetry Experiments





Symmetry is attractive across gender, culture, ethnicity, and even species.

Left = Original Face
Right = Symmetrical face

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Characteristics of Sexy Faces




FEMALES:

- Suntanned skin
- Narrower facial shape
- Less fat
- Fuller lips
- Slightly bigger distance of eyes
- Darker, narrower eye brows
- More, longer and darker lashes
- Higher cheek bones
- Narrower nose
- No eye rings
- Thinner lids

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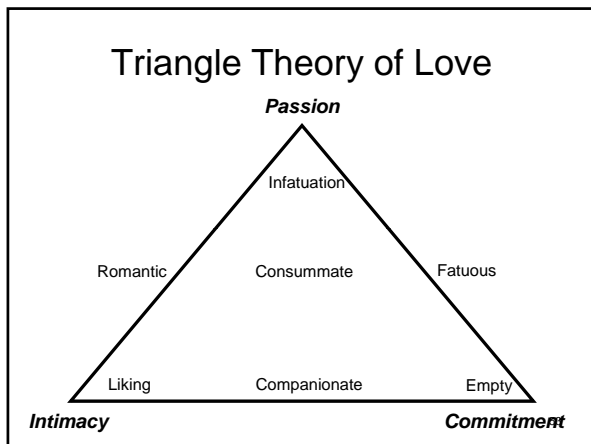
Characteristics of Sexy Faces



MALES:


- Browner skin
- Narrower facial shape
- Less fat
- Fuller and more symmetrical lips
- Darker eye brows
- More and darker lashes
- Upper half of the face broader in relation to the lower
- Higher cheek bones
- Prominent lower jaw
- More prominent chin
- No receding hairline
- Thinner lids
- No wrinkles between nose and corner of the mouth

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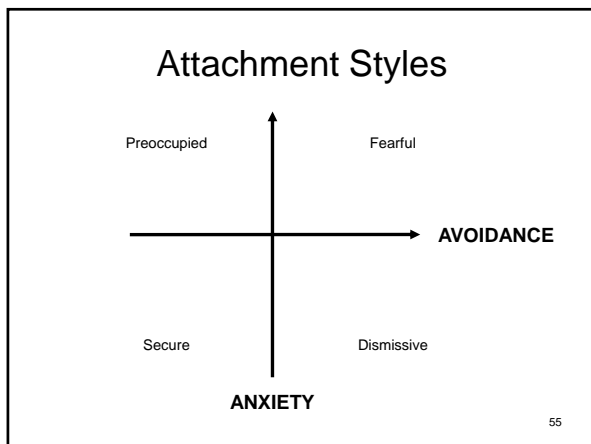


Attachment Styles

- Theorized to develop at infancy.
 - Based on the bond between child and attachment figure (usually mother).
- Ainsworth described 3 styles:
 - Secure
 - Avoidant
 - Anxious/ambivalent
- “Strange situation” procedure



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Attachment Styles

- **A.** It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me.
- **B.** I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.
- **C.** I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don't value me as much as I value them.
- **D.** I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

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