Welcome to Social Cognition Psychology 380

Professor: Dr. Stephanie Madon

Syllabus

Required Textbooks:

Syllabus

Quizzes: 3 quizzes. 1 prior to each exam.

Exams: 3 exams, all non-cumulative. Need to decide when Exam 3 will be.

Syllabus

Extra Credit: Unannounced class activities you can do to get extra credit

Grading: 180 points total.

Syllabus

Missed Exam: Take a makeup at end of semester with 10% penalty.

Meeting Times: Do you really want to take a 3 hour class?

What is Social Cognition?

Interface between social and cognitive psychology

Examines how people understand and make sense of their world, themselves, and others
An attribution is an explanation for an event.

Attributions

Two kinds of attributions:
- Internal attribution
- External attribution

Attributions are explanations for events.
People make attributions to predict and control the future.

Internal attributions assign causality to factors within a person (e.g., personality).
External attributions assign causality to factors outside of a person (e.g., situation).

Attributions affect behavior.

Neatness Study
Miller, Brickman & Bolen (1975): Study 1

Used internal attributions to make kids neater:
- Attribution group
- Persuasion group
- Control group
Neatness Study
Miller, Brickman & Bolen (1975): Study 1

Step 1: Measured baseline neatness

Step 2: Administered Treatment
- Attribution group: repeatedly told they were neat and tidy
- Persuasion group: repeatedly told students should be neat and tidy
- Control group: not told anything

Math Study
Miller, Brickman & Bolen (1975): Study 2

Used internal attributions to improve kids’ math:

- Attribution group
- Persuasion group
- Positive reinforcement group

Math Study
Miller, Brickman & Bolen (1975): Study 1

Step 1: Measured baseline math performance

Step 2: Administered Treatment
Teachers made statements to students about their math ability for 8 days

- Attribution Group
  - You seem to know your math assignments very well
  - You really work hard in math
  - You’re trying more, keep at it!

- Persuasion Group
  - You should be good at math
  - You should be getting better grades in math
  - You should be doing well in math
Math Study
Miller, Brickman & Bolen (1975): Study 1

Reinforcement Group
- I'm proud of your work
- I'm pleased with your progress
- Excellent progress

Math Study
Miller, Brickman & Bolen (1975): Study 2

Magic Marker Study
Lepper, Greene, & Nisbett (1975)

Observed that 3-5 year old kids love playing with magic markers

Created 3 groups of kids to see whether external attributions change behavior

Expected reward group:
• Expected a reward
• Got a reward

External Attribution:
Should attribute playing with magic markers to reward

Unexpected reward group:
• Did not expect a reward
• Got reward

Internal Attribution:
Should attribute playing with magic markers to liking

No reward group:
• Did not expect a reward
• Did not get one

Internal Attribution:
Should attribute playing with magic markers to liking
Magic Marker Study
Lepper, Greene, & Nisbett (1975)

Overjustification Effect

When rewards undermine intrinsic motivation