9.00 EXAM 3 NOTES
KOSSLYN CHAPTER 13 – *Social Psychology: Meeting of the Minds*

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY: focuses on how people perceive and think about other people (social cognition) and interact in relationships and groups (social behavior)

SOCIAL COGNITION: the ways that people perceive the social world and how they attend to, store, remember, and use information about other people and the social world

Attitude: an overall evaluation about some aspect of the world
- *Affective:* your feelings about the object / issue
- *Behavioral*: your predisposition to act in a particular way toward people, objects, issues
- *Cognitive*: what you believe or know about people, objects, issues

Attitudes play in important role in how we process information and remember events. In ambiguous social situations, our attitudes determine what information we pay attention to, process, and remember. This is how people in the same social situation can come away with different interpretations of what occurred.

Attitudes influence behavior, but they don't always lead you to behave in ways that are consistent with them. Attitudes are more likely to shape behavior when they are strong, relatively stable, directly relevant to the behavior, important, or easily accessed from memory.

Behavior can also affect attitudes. Repeatedly asserting an attitude can make the attitude stronger.

Cognitive dissonance: uncomfortable state that arises from a discrepancy between two attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors; accompanied by heightened arousal, people are motivated to reduce this dissonance by resolving the conflict

Dissonance Reduction:
Festinger & Carlsmith (1959): people who were paid less to tell someone that a boring task was enjoyable reported afterward that they enjoyed the task more than those who were paid a greater amount.
- People who were paid little – to reduce the cognitive dissonance between their initial attitude and their behavior, they changed their attitude about the task so they did not view it as boring.
- People who were paid a lot – didn't feel cognitive dissonance; the money they received was adequate compensation for telling someone that they liked the task

The less reason a person has to engage in a behavior that is counter to an attitude, the stronger the dissonance.
Cognitive dissonance is only experienced when people believe that they have a choice and that they are responsible for their course of action and thus for any negative consequences.

Methods of Reducing Dissonance:
1. Indirect strategies – trying to feel good about ourselves in other areas of life
2. Direct strategies – changing our attitudes / behavior
3. Trivialize an inconsistency between 2 conflicting attitudes as being unimportant, thereby making it less likely to cause cognitive dissonance

Attempts to reduce dissonance can help explain why people who are generally not immoral may act immorally → change how they understand their immoral act; minimize responsibility for it; disregard the negative consequences; blame / dehumanize the victims

Persuasion: attempts to change people's attitudes
Elaborate likelihood model of attitude change – 2 routes of persuasion:
1. Central – paying close attention to the content of the argument

2. Peripheral – attempts to sway opinions based on the quantity or attractiveness and expertise of the sources… i.e.: celebrity endorsements

Mere exposure effect: the change – generally favorable – in attitude that can result from simply becoming familiar with something (ex: political campaigns)

Characteristics of Persuasive People – identity, fast talking, seems honest

You are more likely to be persuaded if the message arouses strong emotions (ex: fear) and if it includes specific advice about what you can do to bring about a more positive outcome. This does not always bring about long-term changes in behavior.　　　　Ex: AIDS ads

When and where the message is delivered always affects how persuasive it is.

- If you are not paying full attention to an attempt at persuasion, you are less likely to be persuaded by a rational argument that requires you to think deeply. But you are more likely to be persuaded by a simplistic argument because your inattention makes you less able to develop a counterargument.

Social cognitive neuroscience: attempts to understand social cognition by specifying the cognitive mechanisms that underlie it and by discovering how those mechanisms are rooted in the brain

Lieberman et al. (2001) – Do people need to be consciously aware of cognitive dissonance in order to be motivated to reduce it?　　　　　　　　NO.

- Even amnesic patients – who immediately forgot having to make the choice – became more positive about the chosen object and more negative about the rejected one.

Stereotype: belief (or set of beliefs) about people in a particular category

Because stereotypes assign social information to a category, they can serve as useful cognitive shortcuts. But stereotypes are often caricatures, sometimes incorrect

We are less likely to process, attend to, encode, remember information that is inconsistent with our stereotypes. We tend to discard such information and preserve our stereotype.

Instead of changing the stereotype, we will create a new subtype within it to bridge the conflict between the stereotype and the actual behavior of someone in the stereotyped group.

If you are motivated to be accurate and willing to exert extra cognitive effort, you can minimize the impact of stereotypes by not assuming that a stereotype applies to a particular person.

You can change a stereotype when you think that a person's behavior results from his / her characteristics, not the situation.

Prejudice: an attitude (generally negative) towards members of a group

1. Cognitive prejudice – beliefs, expectations about the group
2. Emotional prejudice – negative feelings toward the group

Information inconsistent with a prejudice is less likely to be attended to and remembered accurately; *prejudices are self-perpetuating*

Discrimination – effect of prejudiced behavior; negative behavior toward individuals from a specific group that arises from unjustified negative attitudes about that group; based on anything that distinguishes groups

Becoming aware of the discrepancy between attitudes and behavior leads to the discomfort of cognitive dissonance, which can be reduced through changing future behaviors

Why Does Prejudice Exist?

Realistic Conflict Theory – competition for scarce resources leads to increasingly negative views of the other groups; prejudices dissipate when competition is eliminated

- Ex: Robber's Cave study

Social categorization theory – cognitive operation that leads people to sort others automatically into categories of "us" vs. "them"

- *Social identity theory* – social categorization is important because people usually think of their own group (**ingroup**) favorably and usually think about the other group (**outgroup**) unfavorably

- o People not only dislike members of the outgroup, but also assume that they possess more undesirable traits
- The ingroup is actively favored, and the outgroup is actively disfavored.
- Social categorization is efficient because once we've made an "us" vs. "them" distinction, we can then use our stereotypes about "us" vs. "them" to interpret people's behavior. This spares us the effort of paying close attention to other people and of actively processing our observations of their behavior.
- Social categorization perpetuates prejudice because once we classify an individual as a member of an outgroup, we induce that person to act according to our stereotypes about the outgroup.

Social Leaning theory – once a prejudicial attitude is established, it can be spread and passed through generations as a learned stereotype

Changing Prejudice
Increased contact / contact hypothesis – increased contact between different groups will decrease prejudice between them
- Both groups are more likely to become aware of similarities between the groups, which can deemphasize differences, enhance mutual attraction
- When faced with enough inconsistent information or exceptions to the stereotypes, people can change the stereotypes that give rise to their prejudice
- Increased change can shatter the illusion that the outgroup is homogeneous

Recategorization: shifting the categories of "us" and "them" so that the 2 groups are no longer distinct entities
Mutual interdependence – each member's contribution is a piece of the whole, each person depends on others (ex: jigsaw classroom)

Attributions: explanations for the causes of events or behaviors
1. **Internal attributions** (aka *dispositional attributions*): explain a person's behavior in terms of their preferences, beliefs, goals or other characteristics
2. **External attributions** (aka *situational attributions*): explain a person's behavior in terms of the situation

Attributional biases: tendencies to make certain types of attributions; generally occurs outside of conscious awareness; function as shortcuts to reduce the cognitive load required to make sense of the world
3 types:
1. **Fundamental Attribution Error** (aka *correspondence bias*) – strong tendency to interpret other people's behavior as arising from internal causes rather than external ones
   a. Ex: juries who hear that the defendant confessed to the crime after many hours of tough, coercive questioning by police – even if judge throws out confession, jurors are more likely to vote guilty than those who had not heard the testimony. The jurors can't just erase their attributions from their memories.
   b. Helps perpetuate discrimination because fault is attributed to the person, not to the circumstances
   c. Once a fundamental attribution error affects your understanding of why a person behaved a certain way, you are likely to continue to make internal, rather than external, attributions and to ignore situational factors that give rise to future behaviors → multiplies error!
   d. Fundamental attribution errors also apply to yourself as well.
2. **Self-serving bias**: a person's inclination to attribute his/her own failures to external causes and own successes to internal causes, but to attribute other people's failure to internal causes and their successes to external causes
3. **Belief in a just world**: assumes that people get what they deserve
   a. Ex: rape cases – victims deserved it 3

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SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Relationship – Why are you attracted to some people and not others?
Physical attraction
Repeated contact – leads you to think more positively about that person
Similarity – in attitudes, activities, styles of communication → attraction

Love ≠ very strong liking
Companionate love: altruistic type of love characterized by expending time, attention, and resources on behalf of another person (ex: parents love for their children)
Passionate love: intense, often sudden feeling of being "in love," which typically involves sexual attraction, a desire for mutual love and physical closeness, arousal, and a fear that the relationship will end

Triangular model of love: theory that love has 3 dimension – passion; intimacy, commitment

Attachment styles – manner of behaving with and thinking about a partner
3 types for adults:
1. Secure (59%)– adults seek closeness and interdependence in relationships, are not worried about possibly losing the relationship because they feel secure in it
2. Avoidant (25%) – uncomfortable with intimacy, closeness
3. Anxious-ambivalent (11%) – adults who want, but simultaneously fear a relationship

Evolutionary Reasons for Mate Selection
Men → physical attractiveness: women with well-proportioned bodies, symmetrical features signal fertility, health
Women → attractive men can protect and nourish them and their children (i.e.: good earning potential)

Non-Evolutionary Reasons
Romantically popular men were seen as confident, outgoing, trend-setting; but were not seen as likely to succeed financially or as being the best leaders (evolutionary favored qualities)
When women achieve economic power, their preference in maters is more similar to men's - physical attractiveness becomes more important.
Culture: what are considered attractive body types change with time

Group: social entity characterized by regular interaction among members, some emotional connection, a common frame of reference, and a degree of interdependence
- **Norms**: rules that implicitly or explicitly govern members of a group; shared beliefs that are enforced through the group's use of sanctions (penalties); can change (ex: attitudes about drugs, alcohol, sex)

Roles: behaviors that members in different positions in a group are expected to perform
Stanford Prison Experiment – we can slip into a role without intending to do so
Students assigned to be either guards or prisoners.
- "Prisoners" quickly began to behave passively, as if they realized that because they had no control over what happened to them, they should stop trying
- "Guards" began to act as if they had genuine power over the prisoners, explored the limits of their power
- Prisoners eventually staged a rebellion, Guards responded with force / put prisoners in solitary confinement

Students slipped easily and quickly into their opposing roles.
Assuming a role in a group can have profound effects!

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Conformity: change in beliefs or behavior in order to follow a group's norms
1. *Informational social influence*: we conform to others because we believe that their views are correct or their behavior is appropriate for the situation
    a. Occurs most often when: situation is ambiguous, there is a crisis, task is very difficult, other people are experts 's views / behavior because we want to be right and we believe that they are correct
2. *Normative social influence:* we conform because we want to be liked or thought of positively
    a. Solomon Asch – you are in a group with 5 confederates; they give you the wrong answer, what do you do?
        i. 76% went along with confederates at least once; overall, 33% of the total responses conformed with the obviously wrong majority
        ii. Participants wanted the sense of belonging to the group, and didn't like to contradict other group members publicly.
        iii. When they had to write down their answers, participants gave the correct response 98% of the time
3. *Social support* – if another group member openly disagrees with the group consensus, conformity is less likely
4. *Culture* – collectivist cultures have higher levels of conformity

Compliance: a change in behavior prompted by a direct request rather than by social norms
Principles
1. *Friendship/liking* – People are more likely to comply with a request from a friend than from a stranger
2. *Commitment/consistency* – people tend to be more likely to comply when the request is consistent with an idea or goal that they've previously embraced
3. *Scarcity* – people are more likely to comply with requests related to limited, short-term opportunities, rather than open-ended opportunities
4. *Reciprocity* – people tend to comply with a request that comes from someone who has provided a favor
5. *Social validation* – people are more likely to comply if they think that others similar to themselves would comply
6. *Authority* – people tend to comply with a request if it comes from someone who appears to be in authority

Techniques
Foot-in-the-door technique: achieves compliance by beginning with an insignificant request, which is then followed by a larger request; works because people want to seem consistent
Lowball technique: getting someone to make an agreement and then increasing the cost of that agreement
Door-in-the-face technique: someone makes a very large request, and then, when it is denied, as expected, makes a smaller request (for what is actually desired); works because of reciprocity

Obedience: compliance with an order
The Milgram Study – you are the teacher, must administer increasing shocks to confederate student when he incorrectly memorizes a list of pairs of common words
- Willingness of so many participants to obey orders to hurt others is disturbing ~
- Foot-in-the-door technique… teachers start out at trivial voltages
- People are more likely to obey a request if it comes from someone in authority (i.e.: obedience fell to 20% if college student gave instructions, instead of white-coated experimenter)
- Proximity to the learner or experimenter also affected obedience [ex: applying electrode directly to their skin → decreased obedience; experimenter telephones commands → decreased obedience]

Decision Making in Groups:

Majority-win rule: If a group is not initially unanimous in favor of a particular decision, it is likely that the view favored by the majority will prevail

Truth-win rule: the objectively correct answer

Group polarization: the tendency of group members' opinions to become more extreme (in the same direction as their initial opinions) after group discussion

Occurs because:
1. Some members of the group may give many very compelling reasons for their initial views
2. Once a consensus is established, members take a more extreme position in accordance with the group norm to increase their standing in the group or improve their view of themselves
3. Group members who have more extreme positions take more turns in the discussion and spend more time talking

Groupthink: group process that when people who try to solve problems together to accept one another's information and ideas without subjecting them to critical analysis

Groups tend to make poorer decisions when they are isolated from outside guidance, when the group leader is vocal about his/her opinion and expects others to go along, and when the members like each other and have a shared sense of identity. In such circumstances, members want to cooperate, and refrain from asking questions or making comments that might lead to conflict or controversy.

Social loafing: occurs when some members don't contribute as much to a shared group task as do others, and instead let other members work proportionally harder than they do

To avoid: instill each person with a sense of importance, responsibility; make each member clearly responsible for a particular task; make tasks attractive

Social facilitation: increase in performance that can occur simply as a result of being part of a group or in the presence of other people (presence of others increases arousal); occurs for well-learned, simple tasks; hinders performance on complicated, less well-learned tasks

Altruism: motivation to increase another's welfare

Prosocial behavior: acting altruistically, which includes sharing, cooperating, comforting, and helping others

Characteristics of helpers:
- High agreeableness, high need for approval, predisposition to take personal and social responsibility, tendency to feel concerned for others, belief in a just world, less concern for our own welfare

We are more likely to help if helping is reinforced, we see others helping, we're in a good mood.

We are more likely to help people we view as similar to ourselves, friends or people we like, people we believe are not responsible for their predicaments or give socially acceptable justification for his/her plight.

We are more likely to help in situations where the cost of helping is relatively low, rewards of helping are relatively high, there is an increased cost of not helping (ex: shame, guilt)

Bystander effect: the decrease in offers of assistance that occurs as the number of bystanders increases

Choice points / Steps of bystander intervention:
1. Is an emergency actually noticed by the bystander?
2. Is the bystander correctly perceiving the event as an emergency?
3. Does the bystander assume responsibility to intervene?
4. Does the bystander know what to do, how to be helpful?
5. Is the bystander motivated enough to help, despite possible negative consequences?

Diffusion of responsibility: diminished sense of responsibility to help that each person feels as the number of bystanders grows up

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