

Social Psychology

Attitudes



What We Will Cover in This Section

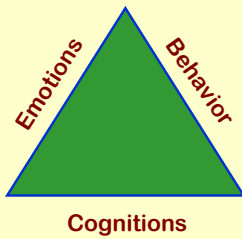
- What attitudes are.
- The relationship between attitudes and behavior.
- Theories of attitudes.



Attitudes

A favorable or unfavorable evaluative reaction toward something or someone.

Attitude Influence



1/26/2008



4

Types of Attitudes

- **Explicit Attitudes.**
- **Implicit Attitudes.**
- **Dual Attitudes.**

1/26/2008



5

Origins of Attitudes

1. **Mere Exposure**
2. **Social Learning**
3. **Classical Conditioning**
4. **Operant Conditioning**

1/26/2008



6

Mere Exposure Effect

The more we are exposed to an object the more we will like them.

1/26/2008



7

How Attitudes are Learned

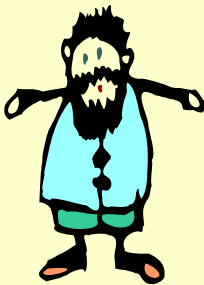


1/26/2008



8

Classical Conditioning



1/26/2008



9

What Is It?

A kind of learning that occurs when

- a neutral stimulus (A) becomes so strongly associated with another stimulus(B) that results in a learned response.
- Then A alone causes that response.

1/26/2008



10

Natural Behavior

Neutral Stimulus



1/26/2008



11

Natural Behavior



1/26/2008



12

Learning

1/26/2008 Altitudes.com 13

Later

1/26/2008 Altitudes.com 14

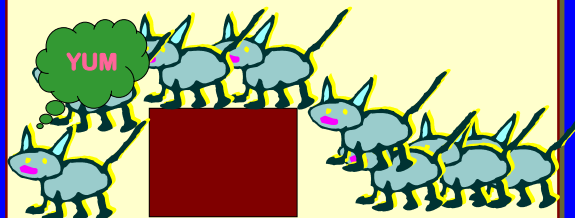
Operant Conditioning

- **The consequences of behavior lead to learning.**
 - Positive reinforcement.
 - Negative reinforcement.

1/26/2008 Altitudes.com 15

Positive Reinforcement

Behavior that gets something you want.



1/26/2008

Attitudes.mca

16

Examples

- A parent praising a child for good grades.
- Learning that slowing down where the policeman usually lurks avoids getting a speeding ticket.
- Learning that smiling when shaking someone's hand leads to a good initial impression.

1/26/2008

Attitudes.mca

17

Observational Learning



1/26/2008

Attitudes.mca

18

What is It?

Learning that occurs when our behavior is influenced by the actions of others called models.

1/26/2008



19

Examples

- Wearing clothes worn by a popular entertainment figure.
- Voting Democratic because your parents are Democrats.
- Learning not to call your father a *%#@*\$%!\\ when you see your brother getting hit for doing so.

1/26/2008



20

Genetics

Innate emotional responses that are biologically determined.

1/26/2008



21

Major Issue

*WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN ATTITUDES AND
BEHAVIOR?*

1/26/2008



22

When Attitudes Predict Behavior

- **Attitude Specificity.**
- **Potency.**
- **Vested interest.**
- **Self-Aware, when reminded.**
- **Developed through experience.**

1/26/2008



23

When Behavior Predicts Attitudes

At times we adjust our
attitudes to make them
consistent with our
[expected] behavior.

1/26/2008



24

When behavior influences attitudes.

- Role playing.
- Saying something leads to belief.
- Escalating wrongdoing.
- Social action.

Why Actions Affect Attitudes

BALANCE THEORIES



Self-Presentation Theory

Expressing oneself and behaving in ways designed to create a favorable impression or an impression that corresponds to one's ideals.

Self-Monitoring

Changing our behavior to meet the demands of a situation or the expectations of others.

1/26/2008



28

Cognitive Dissonance Theory



1/26/2008



29

Have you ever faced a situation like this?

1. You are on a diet but you just ate a dozen chocolate chip cookies.
2. You waited in line for an hour for concert tickets then found the music to be disappointing.
3. You bake in the sun or a tanning bed even though you know that there are risks of skin cancer and you might look like an overcooked pork chop.
4. You leave work on a paper to the last minute knowing that the delay will probably harm your grade.

1/26/2008



30

Dissonance

...a lack of harmony among musical notes.

...the tension or clash that comes from two or more unharmonious elements.

1/26/2008



31

Self-Perception Theory

People assess their attitudes, beliefs, and other internal states through the observation of their own behavior.

1/26/2008



32

Cognitive Dissonance

- Tension arises from holding two thoughts or beliefs that are psychologically inconsistent.
 - Can be inconsistency in attitudes.
 - Can be inconsistency between attitudes and behavior.
- We will adjust to make these beliefs consistent to relieve this tension.

1/26/2008



33

Festinger & Carlsmith (1959) Stage 1

- First, participants were asked to twist wooden pegs placed in a board for 30 minutes.
- Second participants were asked to put spools of thread on to pegs and take them off again for 30 minutes.

1/26/2008



34

Festinger & Carlsmith, Stage 2

- Participants were told that to test the effects of motivation in this study tell the next participant that the study was enjoyable and fun.
- Two groups.
 - Group A paid \$1.00 for doing the briefing.
 - Group B paid \$20.00 for doing the briefing.
- Then, after the briefing the participants were asked how they felt about the study.

1/26/2008



35

Festinger & Carlsmith, Results

Step 1	Step 2 Payment	Step 3 Evaluation of task enjoyment
All participants do the boring peg twisting then spool activity. All participants were asked to brief another group	Group A, Lie Paid \$1.00	23.5
	Group B, Lie Paid \$20.00	9.8
	Group C, No lie No pay	5.9

1/26/2008



36

Cognitive Dissonance (Cont.)

INSUFFICIENT JUSTIFICATION

We reduce dissonance by internally justifying our behavior when external justification is weak.

Typically occurs when people freely perform an attitude-discrepant behavior without strong external pressure.

1/26/2008



37

Cognitive Dissonance (Cont.)

POST-DECISION DISSONANCE

After making a decision we reduce dissonance by upgrading the chosen alternative and disparaging the alternatives.

1/26/2008



38

Cognitive Dissonance (Cont.)

SELECTIVE EXPOSURE

Seeking out information that supports the decisions we have made and avoiding information that is inconsistent with our choice.

1/26/2008



39

Cognitive Dissonance Summary

1. Tends to occur when we feel personal responsibility for our actions (internal attribution).
2. We must be aware of alternatives.
3. We must feel some level of psychological arousal.
4. We must link the arousal to the competing cognitions.

1/26/2008



40

How Dissonance can be Reduced

SELF AFFIRMATION

People who deal with dissonance deal with it by seeking to assert their adequacy as individuals.

1/26/2008



41

Quiz Question

Under what conditions are attitudes related to behavior?



1/26/2008



42