Two Routes to Persuasion

- Central route persuasion
- Peripheral route persuasion
### Processing of Persuasive Messages

#### Central Versus Peripheral Processing of Persuasive Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route to Persuasion</th>
<th>Most Likely to Occur When</th>
<th>Effect on Attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Route</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Attitudes tend to be strong, resistant to counterarguments, and predictive of behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral Route</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Attitudes tend to be weak, susceptible to counterarguments, and not predictive of behavior.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Psy 240: Williams**
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

• IV₁: Level of odor
  – Normal
  – Aversive

• IV₂: 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)
Predicted Results

Should We Institute Comprehensive Exams?

Able to elaborate

Unable to elaborate

Odor in Room

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