Announcement:
390s Needed

- Contact Adrienne Carter-Sowell
  - arcarter@psych.purdue.edu
- Three main research topics:
  - How we experience social pain (loss, bereavement, ostracism, breaking up, etc.)
  - How ostracism affects us?
  - Cults: who is vulnerable and why?
  - Attitudes toward homosexuals and others who are stigmatized

Reminder:
Recitations Begin Next Week
What is Social Psychology?

- Effects of people on people.
  - Social thinking
  - Social influence
  - Social relations
Social Psychology and Theoretical Influences

- **Freud**
  - Self-serving biases, unconscious motivation, defense mechanisms
- **Skinner**
  - Behavior determined by reinforcement contingencies in the environment.
- **Darwin**
  - Behavioral reactions of humans may be related to what is adaptive and leads to success in the perpetuation of the species.
- **Becker**
  - Terror of knowing that we die can influence our thoughts and behaviors.
What Are Social Psychology’s Big Lessons?

• The Power of the Situation
• We construct our social reality
• Our social intuitions are often powerful but sometimes perilous
• Social influences shape our behavior, often outside our awareness.

• Personal attitudes and dispositions also shape behavior
  – But attitudes and dispositions are subject to social influence
• Social behavior is also biological behavior
• Social psychology’s principles are applicable to everyday life and other disciplines

Social Psychology: Related Disciplines & Levels of Explanation

• Specific comparisons:
  – Sociology
  – Personality

Partial Hierarchy of Disciplines

- Integrative Explanation
  - Theology
  - Philosophy
  - Sociology
  - Social Psychology
  - Psychology
  - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Physics

- Elemental Explanation

Psychological Social Psychology
- The central focus is on the individual
- Researchers attempt to understand people’s behavior, personality traits, psychologization states, and personality traits
- Prediction of behavior is the primary goal of research
- Experimentation is the primary method of inquiry

Sociological Social Psychology
- The central focus is on the group or society
- Researchers attempt to understand people’s behavior in terms of specific social factors, such as social role, social interaction, and social norms
- Description of behavior is the primary goal of research
- Survey and participant observation are the primary methods of inquiry
Social Psychology and Human Values

- Obvious ways in which values enter
  - Relationships are good
  - Prejudice is bad
- Not-so-obvious ways in which values enter
  - The subjective aspects of science
  - Example: Social Facilitation and Social Loafing
- Attempting to be value-free has benefits to science and applications.
  - Admitting when you are not at least puts research into proper perspective.

Is Social Psychology Just “Common Sense”?

- It’s easy to see how we might think social psychology’s findings are common sense
  - Out of sight; out of mind/Absence makes the heart grow fonder/early bird catches the worm; look before you leap
  - Birds of a feather flock together/Opposites attract
- Hindsight bias
  - The tendency to exaggerate, after learning an outcome, one’s ability to have foreseen it
  - the I-knew-it-all-along phenomenon
    - Important for test preparation
How Do We Do Social Psychology?
Two General Categories of Studies

1. Correlational
   - Detecting Natural Associations
   - Observational Studies
     • Naturalistic
     • Laboratory
   - Participant observation
   - Surveys
     • Questionnaires
     • Interviews
   - Diary Studies

• Concerns of Correlational designs
  • Question wording
  • Third variables
  • Social Desirability

Understanding Correlations

When 2 Variables Correlate

Possible Explanations

(1)  

(2)  

(3)
How Do We Do Social Psychology?
Two General Categories of Studies

2. **Experimental Designs**
   - To determine causation
     - Control
     - Random Assignment
   - Concerns:
     - Placebo Effects
     - Demand Characteristics
   - Solutions
     - Well thought out control and comparison conditions
     - Disguised cover stories

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**Understanding Experiments**

Random Assignment ≠ Random Selection

![Diagram](image)
Concepts to Know (hint: for the exam) in Social Psychological Research

- Theory
- Hypothesis
- Population
- Sample
- Representative sample
- Random sample
- Random Assignment
- Blind Procedures
- Independent variable
- Dependent variable
- Survey
- Placebo Effects
- Third variables
- Causation
- Reliability
- Validity

Understanding Experiments

Field v. Laboratory Experiments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison of Field and Laboratory Experiments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantages of the Field Experiment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental realism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimizes participants' suspicion and maximizes natural and spontaneous behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantages of the Laboratory Experiment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control over variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience and accuracy in collecting data</td>
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</tbody>
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Psy 240: Williams