

# Stereotyping

Blaine Ch 2 & 3

## I. Stereotypes & Social Categories

1. Stereotype = a highly organized, abstract mental representation of a particular group.

- Abstract = Generalization based on a particular pieces of information
- - typically includes beliefs about personality traits, behaviors, and motives

## 2. Functions of Stereotypes

- They are functional – we need them
- a. **Generate Expectations & Organize Chaos**  
(William James: “The one great blooming buzzing confusion”)
- b. **Guide Attention**  
Walter Lippman “For the most part we do not first see and then define, we define first and then see”
- c. **Guide Interpretation of new information**
  - The Outside Experts?
- d. **Guide Memory**
  - activity
- Stereotypes are more important than Sex

- **Memory activity**
  - I will split you into groups.
  - Each group will be shown a list of words for 15 seconds
  - Use whatever strategy you can to try to remember the words, but you can not write the list down.
  - I will test your memory later.

**Group 1**

**Ocean Moon Tree  
Building Chair Salt  
Sand Fire**

**Group 2**

**Smile Face Lips  
Cheerful Teeth Party  
Eyes Happy**

### Memory Probe

- Name a famous athlete.
- Name a brand of coffee.
- Name a famous singer.
- Name a brand of laundry detergent.

## 2. Problems with Stereotypes

-Over-Use of stereotypes leads to problems

a. May be Inaccurate

(Michael Moore: Kill Whitey)

b. Substitute for Observation

For all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time.

c. Not revised when contradicted

The exception proves the rule

d. We become slaves to our own stereotypes and we enslave others

## II. Stereotype Formation

- 3 possible sources: Personal Experience, Illusory Correlation, & Socialization

### 1. Personal Experience

- Stereotypes grow from the grain of truth among the weeds of distortion

#### a. The grain of truth

- Members of different social categories occupy different social roles within society

#### b. The weeds of distortion

- Our explanations for the differences tend to be dispositional

### b. Weeds of Distortion Continued

- Dispositionism = attributing individual behavior to one's intentions, personality, or abilities [Internal Attributions vs. External Attributions (the situation)]
- Fundamental Attribution Error –
  - The person meant it
- Actor Observer Bias
  - You = you meant it
  - Me = it was an accident
- Self Serving Bias
  - You = Good = your lucky
  - Me = Good = I am good
  - You = Bad = your bad
  - Me = Bad = I am unlucky
- Just World Hypothesis – bad things happen to bad people, You get what you deserve

## 2. Demonstration (IC)

The following Slides will show positive and negative words that have been selected by group members as representative of themselves.

Each word will be paired with a label indicating group membership (X vs. Q)

Pay attention to the word pairing, but do not write them down.

- For the Next 60 Seconds please count backward from 1000 by 13s and write your answers down on a piece of paper.
  
- Estimate The following:
  1. # of Xs with Positive Self Descriptions
  2. # of Xs with Negative Self Descriptions
  3. # of Qs with Positive Self Descriptions
  4. # of Qs with Negative Self Descriptions

|           | Real #   | #      | #    |       |
|-----------|----------|--------|------|-------|
|           | Answer   | Corect | Over | Under |
| X Total = | 20       |        |      |       |
| X Pos     | 14 (70%) |        |      |       |
| X Neg     | 6 (30%)  |        |      |       |
| Q Total = | 10       |        |      |       |
| Q Pos     | 7 (70%)  |        |      |       |
| Q Neg     | 3 (30%)  |        |      |       |

## 2) Illusory Correlations: "Believing is Seeing"

- People tend to perceive that certain elements (e.g. people and events) co-occur in the world, even when the elements are no more likely to occur together than other element combinations
- Paired Distinctiveness IC: Grouping the Unusual when distinctive (salient) elements co-occur their distinctiveness makes them stand out in memory and people over estimate the frequency with which they co-occur.
  - e.g. Minority Status and Crime are both distinctive

### 3) Socialization -

- We've been greatly misinformed
  - The Media
  - The Family
  - Peers
  - Cultural Stereotypes – collective views of social groups (differ from culture to culture)

### III. Maintaining Stereotypes

- Stereotypes are Resistant to Change and Self Reinforcing
  1. The Perseverance Effect: “Believing is Believing”

We keep our stereotypes even when they are contradicted

    - a. Summative Nature
    - b. Subtyping: extremely stereotype incongruent information is categorized in its own schema, rather than changing the existing schema

**Stereotype:**

Nacirema: Eat Pork Intestines, Germ Phobic, Put Animal Fat in their hair, Career OCD.

|    | Pork Intestines | Germ Phobia | Hair Fat | Work OCD |
|----|-----------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| N1 | Y               | N           | N        | N        |
| N2 | Y               | Y           | Y        | Y        |
| N3 | Y               | Y           | Y        | Y        |

Result = No Attitude Change / Subtyping

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|----|-----------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| N1 | Y               | Y           | Y        | N        |
| N2 | Y               | Y           | N        | Y        |
| N3 | Y               | N           | Y        | Y        |

Result = Attitude Change

## 2. Self Fulfilling Prophecy: “Believing is Seeing”

- We change our behavior in ways that get others to conform to our expectations
- Further influenced by Perceptual Bias. We look for information that we expect & interpret new info in ways that we expect
- Rosenthal & Jacobson (1968)
  - SFP in the Classroom
  - Teachers changed behavior toward “bloomers”:  
warmer, more feedback, more challenging, called on bloomers more
  - Women and Minorities more likely experience SFP in the classroom
- SFP outside the classroom: Snyder, Tanke, & Bershied (1977). A pretty girl on the phone.

## IV. The Results of Stereotyping

1. Outgroup Homogeneity – “Those people are all alike”
  - Maximizing Between Group Difs. and Minimizing Within Group Difs.
2. Ingroup Bias / Outgroup Derogation- “We are better than they are”
  - The Minimal Groups Paradigm
3. The Ultimate Attribution Error- “They are always like that, we are just victims of the situation”
  - FAE at the group level

6) Stereotype Threat: “I know what you are thinking; and you are setting me up to fail!”

- The effort to avoid confirming stereotypes can interfere with performance, set people up to fail, and ultimately cause the stereotyped individual to avoid threatening activities.
- Examples:
  - African American and Low SES students tend not to identify with school to avoid confirming stereotypes regarding “academic deficiencies”
  - Females may avoid math and science to avoid confirming the stereotypes regarding women as “illogical and unscientific”.

## 7) Stereotyped Communication:

- We tend to use and reinforce stereotypes in our communication.
- **Linguistic Intergroup Bias:** (linguistic FAE), stereotype consistent behavior is described as constant and dispositional. Stereotype inconsistent behavior is described as transient and situational.
- Our communication reinforces outgroup homogeneity.
- Speech can covertly communicate our prejudices.
  - loud and slow =?
  - heavy use of imperatives =