CHAPTER 3 : SOCIAL BELIEFS AND JUDGMENT

PERCEIVING OUR SOCIAL WORLD

❖Priming :

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVWbrNls-Kw

•Our preconceptions strongly influence how we interpret and remember events.

•We respond to the reality that we construe.

•Our memory system is a web of associations.

•Priming is the awakening of these associations.

PERCEIVING OUR SOCIAL WORLD

Perceiving and Interpreting Events

- Our biases and prejudgments impact our attitudes and judgments.

    - Ex: Sports fans will see referees as partial to the other side.

    - Ex: Pro-Israeli and Pro-Arab groups perceived the news networks as hostile to the other side.

- Our assumptions can even make us see contradictory evidence as supportive.

PERCEIVING OUR SOCIAL WORLD

Construing memories of ourselves and our worlds

- We reconstruct our past by using our current feelings and expectations to combine information fragments.

- Before the fact *judgments bias* our perceptions and interpretations so after the fact judgments bias our recall/memory.

- Our memories are actually formed when we retrieve them and are impacted by how we are feeling at the time of retrieval.

- Some people hold on to their beliefs even these beliefs are discredited; this is called belief perseverance.

JUDGING OUR SOCIAL WORLD

<u>Intuitive Judgments and the Power of Intuition</u>

- Subconscious thoughts may control our behavior due to the fact that parts of our thinking is automatic
  - Ex: Remembering someone's name vs. driving a car
- Limits of Intuition include Hindsight bias, misinterpretation, illusory thinking, etc.

<u>Overconfidence</u>

- We often overestimate our judgment and engage in the overconfidence phenomenon as we have the tendency to imagine how we might be right more than how we might be wrong.

- So we end up engaging in the confirmation bias whereby we search for information to confirm our beliefs.

- Remedies: prompt feedback, breakdown a task into components, consider disconfirming information

JUDGING OUR SOCIAL WORLD

Heuristics: Mental Shortcuts

- We have information constantly coming into our heads so our cognitive system specializes in mental shortcuts and efficient thinking strategies.

- We have a tendency to presume that something or someone belongs to a particular group if they represent a typical member of that group (representative heuristic)
    - Ex: An Arab must be Muslim

- We also tend to use the availability heuristic: if something easily comes to mind than we presume it is commonplace.
    - Ex: Green means "go", red means "stop"

- We also engage in counterfactual thinking: imagining an alternative outcome that might have happened, but it didn't't.

RACISM VIDEOS

The psychology of racism:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNJUuYk8F3o

UCLA racism experiment:

 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMNphiI6Qxw

JUDGING OUR SOCIAL WORLD

TABLE : 3.1   Fast and Frugal Heuristics

Heuristic	Definition	Example	But May Lead to
Representativeness	Snap judgments of whether someone or something fits a category	Deciding that Carlos is a librarian rather than a trucker because he better represents one's image of librarians	Discounting other important information
Availability	Quick judgments of likelihood of events (how available in memory)	Estimating teen violence after school shootings	Overweighting vivid instances and thus, for example, to fearing the wrong things

JUDGING OTHERS

Illusory thinking: it's easy for us to see an association when in fact none exists
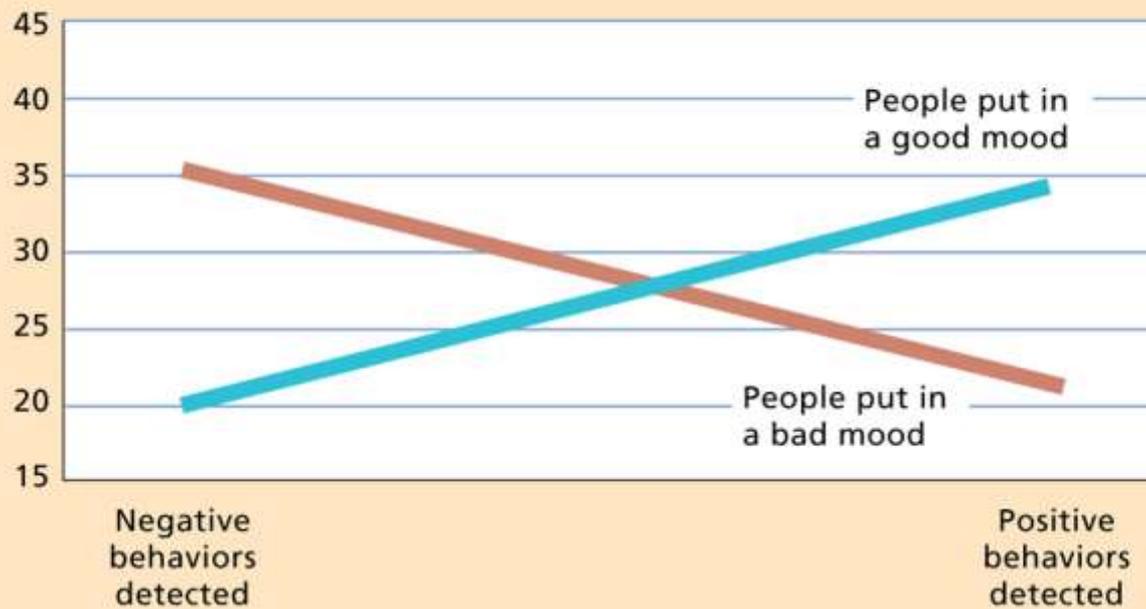
- Illusory correlation: associating random events
- Illusion of control: our belief that we can control events that aren't really controllable.

Moods and judgment

- Good and bad moods trigger memories of experiences associated with those events.
    - Ex: Chocolate chip cookies are associated with a good memory because you used to eat them as a kid at grandma's house
- Moods impact our interpretations and impact how deeply or superficially we think

MOODS AND JUDGMENT

Percent perceived behaviors

People put in a good mood

People put in a bad mood

Negative behaviors detected

Positive behaviors detected

EXPLAINING OUR SOCIAL WORLD

Attributing Causality: To the Person or the Situation

- *Misattribution*: attributing a behavior to the wrong source (a woman pushing people out of her way- she may be attending to an emergency)

Attribution Theory

- How people explain behavior
- Dispositional vs. situational attributions

Inferring traits

- We often infer that people's actions are due to their dispositions
- We usually make rational and reasonable attributions, however.

ATTRIBUTION THEORIES

David G. Myers, *Social Psychology*, 6ed. Copyright © 1999. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Kelly's Theory of Attributions

Consistency:
Does person usually
behave this way
in this situation?
(If yes, we seek an explanation)

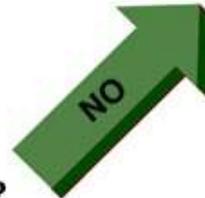**External attribution** (to the person's situation)   ← **YES**   **Distinctiveness:** Does person behave differently in different situations?   **NO** →   **Internal attribution** (to the person's disposition)
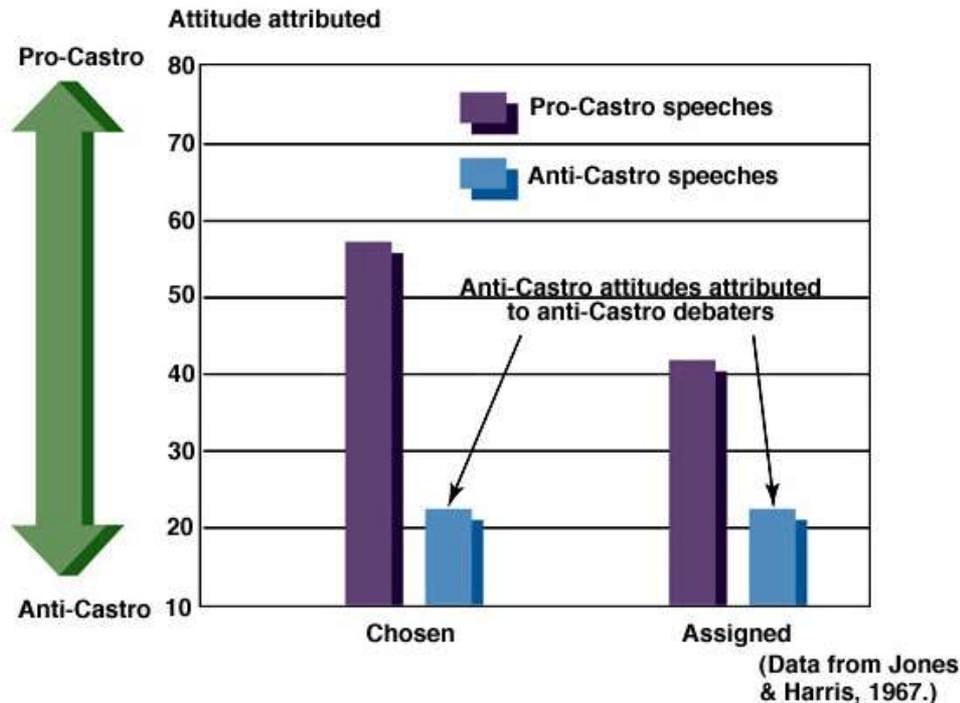
YES   **NO**

Consensus:
Do others behave
similarly in this situation?

THE FUNDAMENTAL ATTRIBUTION ERROR

Fundamental Attribution Error-ex. I

Attitude attributed

Pro-Castro 80

Pro-Castro speeches

Anti-Castro speeches

70

60

Anti-Castro attitudes attributed
to anti-Castro debaters

50

40

30

20

Anti-Castro 10

Chosen   Assigned

(Data from Jones & Harris, 1967.)

- When explaining other people's behavior we often attribute their behavior to inner traits and attitudes and tend to ignore obvious situational influences.

- Why do we make this error?
  - Perspective and self-awareness

  - Cultural differences

ATTRIBUTION AND REACTION
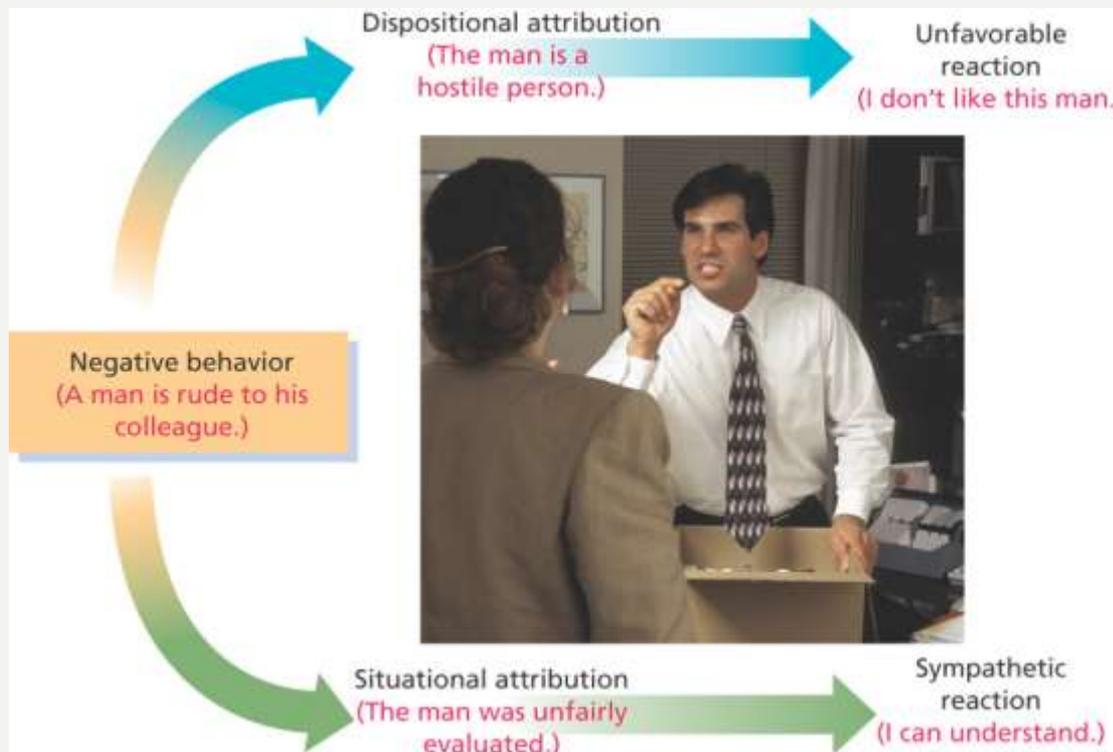
EXPECTATION OF OUR SOCIAL WORLD

- Self-Fulfilling Prophecy:

- Teacher Expectations and Student Performance

- Getting from Others What We Expect

Influences on Academic Achievement

Possible Causes of Academic Achievement Due to Locus, Stability, and Controllability

	Internal		External	
	Stable	**Unstable**	**Stable**	**Unstable**
Controllable	Typical effort	Temporary effort exerted for a particular exam	Some forms of teacher bias	Unusual help from others
Uncontrollable	Exerted ability	Mood	Exam difficulty	Luck

SELF FULFILLING PROPHECY

Teacher's expectation

"Rena's older brother was brilliant. I bet she is, too."

Teacher's behavior

Smiling more at Rena, teaching her more, calling on her more, giving more time to answer.

Student's behavior

Rena responds enthusiastically.

Confirming