

Psychology 456 & 556: Attitudes and Social Behavior  
8:00 - 9:50

M. Rothbart  
Winter 1994  
146 Straub

### LECTURE SCHEDULE

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|-----------------|---|
| Jan 4           | Introduction to social psychology: some definitions and principles of social perception |
| Jan 6, 11, 13   | Evidence, inference and the maintenance of social beliefs                               |
| Jan 18 & 20     | Nature and measurement of attitudes   |
| Jan 25 & 27     | Theories of cognitive consistency and attitude change                                   |
| Feb 1, 3, 8, 10 | Aggression and prejudice  |
| Feb 15, 22, 24  | The nature of good and evil   |

**NOTE: No class Feb 17**

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| Mar 1, 3, 8, 10 | Organizational processes: Thinking about social problems and social change |
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### READING LIST

1. Selected readings in social psychology. Reproduced for use in this course, available at EMU Copy Center. (Abbreviation: SRISP)
2. Beliefs, attitudes, and human affairs. By D. Bem. Wadsworth, 1970. (Required)
3. The unresponsive bystander: Why doesn't he help?. By B. Latane & J. Darley. Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970. (Abbreviation: UB) (Optional -- No longer in print. Available used.)

NOTE: Attitude paper due February 1, 1994.  
Aggression/Prejudice paper due March 10, 1994.

ATTITUDES (Note: Paper on Attitudes due February 1, 1994.)

1. The nature and measurement of attitudes<sup>1</sup>

<u>Source</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
SRISP	Attitudes	Allport
SRISP	The method of constructing an attitude scale	Likert
SRISP	Response biases and response sets	Guilford
SRISP	On the fading of social stereotypes	Karlins et al.
SRISP	Current stereotypes: A little fading, a little faking	Sigall & Page
SRISP	Attitudes vs. actions	La Piere
SRISP	Attitudes vs. actions vs. attitudes vs. attitudes	Schuman
SRISP	When actions reflect attitudes	Snyder & Swann
SRISP	The indirect assessment of social attitudes	Campbell
SRISP	Beliefs, attitudes and human affairs	Bem

2. Cognitive consistency, attitude organization, and attitude change

SRISP	Cognitive dynamics in the conduct of human affairs	Osgood
SRISP	Attitudinal consequences of induced discrepancies between cognitions and behavior	Cohen
SRISP	Modes of resolution of belief dilemmas	Abelson
SRISP	The influence of source credibility on communication effectiveness	Hovland & Weiss
SRISP	Assimilation and contrast effects in reactions to communication and attitude change	Hovland et al.
SRISP	An experimental analysis of the contrast effect and its implications for intergroup communication and the indirect assessment of attitudes	Dawes et al.
SRISP	Compliance, identification, and Internalization: Three processes of attitude change	Kelman

<sup>1</sup>Although it will not be fatal to read the various articles out of order, there is an advantage to reading them in the order listed.

**AGGRESSION** (Note: Paper on Aggression & Prejudice due March 10, 1994.)

<u>Source</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
SRISP	Biological factors II: Physiology, genetics and sex	Johnson
SRISP	The frustration-aggression hypothesis	Miller et al.
SRISP	The stimulating vs. cathartic effects of a vicarious aggressive activity	Fishbach
SRISP	Some conditions of obedience & disobedience to authority	Milgram
SRISP	From individual to group impressions	Rothbart et al.
SRISP	Recall for confirming events	Rothbart et al.
SRISP	Arousal for ingroup-outgroup biases by a chance win or loss	Rabbie & Horwitz
SRISP	Social categorization & memory for ingroup and outgroup behavior	Howard & Rothbart
SRISP	Social categorization and similarity in intergroup behavior	Billig & Tajfel
SRISP	The perception of outgroup homogeneity and levels of social categorization	Park & Rothbart
SRISP	Ethnic tolerance: Social & personal control	Bettelheim & Janowitz
SRISP	The authoritarian personality	Frankel-Brunswick et al.
SRISP	Racial identification & preference in Negro children	Clark & Clark
SRISP	Black is beautiful: A reexamination of racial preference and identification	Hraba & Grant
SRISP	The effect of public policy in housing projects upon interracial attitudes	Deutsch & Collins
SRISP	Negro platoons in white companies	Starr et al.
SRISP	Superordinate goals in the reduction of intergroup conflict	Sherif
UB	The unresponsive bystander: Why doesn't he help?	Latane & Darley
SRISP	Efforts of group pressure upon their modification & distortion of judgment	Asch

<u>Source</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
SRISP	Why war? Freud's letter to Einstein	Freud
SRISP	Ritualized fighting	Lorenz
SRISP	Moral Equivalent of War	James

General References:

The Nature of Prejudice, by G. W. Allport. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1954.

Social learning & personality development, by A. Bandura & R. H. Walters. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963. Contains a good analysis of aggression from a behavioristic point of view.

Frustration & conflict: Selected readings, by A. J. Yates. New York: Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1965 (paperback). Contains some classic experiments on displaced aggression.

Aggression in man & animals, by R. N. Johnson. Philadelphia: Sanders Co., 1972.

Term Paper Topic #1  
Due: February 1, 1994

Psy 456  
PAPER TOPIC ON ATTITUDES

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Winter 1994

INTRODUCTION: Two of the most basic and enduring questions concerning the nature of social attitudes can be summarized as follows:)

1. What are we able to predict about a person when we know their attitude(s) toward some object (group, issue, nation, individual, etc.)?
2. In what ways, if any, can important social attitudes be changed?

The first paper topic requires that you address both these questions.

1. The meaning and predictive value of attitudes: Although it is possible to predict, with a high degree of accuracy, individuals' voting behavior from their previously expressed preferences for candidates (as with Gallup and Harris polls), some psychologists have been highly skeptical about the usefulness of the concept of attitude. These critics have argued that verbally expressed attitudes, such as those obtained in opinion polls and paper-and-pencil questionnaires, are often unrelated to a person's actual behavior, or even to other (logically related) attitudes that the person holds. Thus, it is possible to review the public opinion literature and find that Americans' attitudes toward the Vietnam war were "inconsistent" (supporting escalation in 1966, and supporting withdrawal in 1970), as are their racial attitudes (strong majority support for school integration and racial equality, and strong majority opposition to busing). It is evidence such as this, as well as from more controlled studies relating attitudes to behavior, that have led people to the conclusion that an individual's verbally expressed attitudes enable us neither to predict behavior, nor even their attitudes, toward similar or related topics.

Although it is possible to find some research (and personal anecdotes) that tend to support this criticism, it is your task to carefully evaluate this criticism and to answer the following question:

*What are the critical factors that produce a close correspondence (good predictability) between verbal attitudes and overt behavior under some circumstances, but a poor correspondence (poor predictability) between attitude and behavior under other circumstances?*

2. Attitude change: In 1906, the sociologist Sumner made the statement that "stateways cannot change folkways," in which he meant, roughly, that government-imposed regulation could not significantly alter the attitudes and values of the governed. More recently, the same principle has found popularity in the belief that "you can't legislate morality."

Re-examine Sumner's statement in the theory and research on the problems of cognitive consistency and attitude change. Consider the following questions:

*While governmental legislation is often directed toward changing social attitudes (e.g., toward pornography, disadvantaged groups, drug use, physical fitness), what does the relevant research and theory in the area of cognitive consistency suggest about the prospects for such change? Obviously, Sumner*

*believes such attempts are a "fool's errand," but your task is to consider to what degree the existing research corroborates or disconfirms Sumner's belief. According to research and theory on the problem of cognitive consistency, what are the conditions that limit the amount of attitude change that might occur through legislation?*

IMPORTANT NOTE: One common source of confusion in tackling this question concerns the application of Sumner's statement to overt behavior vs. internalized beliefs. We know that within limits, government legislation can influence overt behavior (e.g., stop lights, parking restrictions, tax laws), but Sumner's statement refers to the effects of legislation on the internal mores, norms, attitudes and values held by a group (i.e., what de Tocqueville had earlier called "habits of the heart").

### SUMMARY

Both of these questions refer to the general problem of consistency, where the first question refers to the degree of consistency between attitude and behavior; and the second refers to the degree of consistency between behavior change (compliance) and attitude change. In answering these questions it is important to cite the research whenever possible to strengthen your argument, but it is also worth examining the idea of consistency itself. By what standards do we determine whether two events are consistent or not? By whose standards do we decide if a person has behaved inconsistently?

After you have considered the above questions, answer them as clearly as you can, drawing extensively on the ideas and findings discussed in the readings and in lectures.

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This paper is to be typed (double-spaced) and no longer than 10 to 15 pages. Since this will be your first paper for this course, you should seriously consider the following recommendations:

1. This paper is not an essay in which the student pontificates for 15 pages, serving up paragraph after paragraph of unsubstantiated opinion. In a way, the first paper will be a test of your ability to produce a scholarly document. By this I mean a document in which you support your arguments with references to the readings (with standard bibliographic citations), cite empirical evidence whenever possible, and present your ideas in a well-organized, logical progression. Since the nature of the paper topic will require you to do some careful, critical thinking on your own, we do expect you to present your own point of view (and therefore your "opinion"). Your own point of view, however, should be substantiated by evidence whenever possible. Basically, this assignment is designed to see how well you understand and can think about the readings in this course, and how well you can express your ideas in written form.
2. There is obviously no one correct "answer" to the above set of questions, nor is there any single optimum way of approaching the paper topic. Every student is expected to see the problem in a slightly different perspective, and is accordingly expected to structure her/his paper in a unique manner. There are a great variety of ways in which the above question can be attacked.

3. The problem of listing: As a substitute for thinking, many students are in the habit of listing every relevant theory, experiment, or idea that they can think of in the hope that they have "hit" the correct answer. This probability model for writing term papers is not very satisfactory. As a substitute for the listing procedure, it is recommended that the student attempt to organize her/his thinking before writing the paper, and try to present a limited set of arguments as persuasively as possible; i.e., with as much clear thinking and documented evidence as s/he is able. In short, do not try to say everything; say a few important things persuasively.