CAC 14

Identity and Stereotyping

OBJECTIVES

- Awareness of multiplicity of 'identity'
- Freedoms and constraints in identity choice
- Distinguish personal and social identity
- Introduction to 'stereotyping'

OUTLINE

- Identity
- Social and personal identity
- Stereotyping

Identity

- The sense, and continuity, of **self** that develops first as the child differentiates from parents and family and takes a place in society

  - **Self:** a mental construction of the person, by the person, but inevitably formed from social experience.
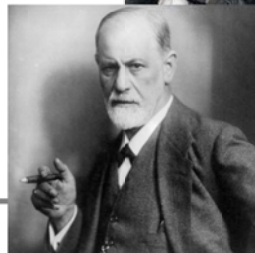
Collins Dictionary of Sociology (2000), p288/547

Approaches to identity

Jacques Lacan

- Psychoanalytical (Freud, Lacan)
- Psychological
- Sociological
- (Philosophical)

Sigmund Freud

Types of identity

- **Generally speaking...**
- **Psycho.:** concentrates of 'personal identity' – what makes the individual unique
- **Socio.:** concentrates on 'group/social identity' – what are the groups that define an individual
- **Social Identity**

Identification

- A process whereby identity is formed
- Imitation of other individuals' (parents, siblings etc) and social groups' values, beliefs etc.
  - +ve: I am (want to be) like this person/people
  - -ve: I am (want to be) **UNlike** this person/people

- **Categorisation → Identification→ Comparison**

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In Austin and Worchel(eds) *The social psychology of intergroup relations.*

Cultural Identity

- What groups do we belong to?

Identities...

regional

"support democracy"

vegetarian

sexual orientation

occupation

'race'

age

local

gender

super-national

religion

national

musical taste

"believe in UFOs"

"play football"

Cultural Identity

- How and why do we choose which identity to emphasise in each situation?
- How much is our choice constrained by social rules?
- How does one particular identity become seen as the *natural* choice for a situation?

Stereotyping

- "The process of ascribing characteristics to people on the basis of their group memberships"
  - For example...
    - "Women are emotional"
    - "Men are aggressive"
    - "Italians are romantic" etc...

Stereotyping and social reality (1994) Oakes, Haslam & Turner

Social Stereotypes

- "The stereotypes of a particular group shared by a certain group are referred to as **social stereotypes**"
  - We assume similarity with other members of the same group and difference from other groups
  - We assume groups to which we belong are superior to groups to which we don't

US stereotype of British

The Simpsons

Austin Powers

Walter Lippmann

- 1889-1974
- *Liberty and the News* (1920)
- *Public Opinion* (1922)

Public Opinion: http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/6456

Lippmann on Stereotypes

- **Partial** (biased and only dealing with 'part' of sthg.) and **inadequate**
- Defensive and preclude objective, balanced reasoning
- Obdurate (insensitive to education or reality)
  - **But....**

Public Opinion (1922) Walter Lippmann

Lippmann on Stereotypes

- "the need of economizing attention is so inevitable, that the abandonment of all stereotypes for a wholly innocent approach to experience would impoverish human life"
- **Generally negative but somehow inevitable** (and necessary?)

Public Opinion (1922) Walter Lippmann, 60

Early studies...

- Focussed strongly on stereotype *content*
- In 1940s/50s attempts to investigate:
  - Stereotypes as a **misrepresentation of reality** and sometimes...
  - Stereotypes contain a '**kernel of truth**'

Katz and Braly (1933)

- 100 US college students assigned 84 adjectives to 10 'races'

- Task was to 'characterise these people adequately'

Table 2.1 Stereotypes revealed by Katz and Braly's (1933) study: traits applied to different national groups by 100 Princeton students, the percentage of students endorsing each, and level of stereotype uniformity (U)

	%	U		%	U
Italians		6.9	*English*		7.0
artistic	53		sportsmanlike	53	
impulsive	44		intelligent	46	
passionate	37		conventional	34	
quick-tempered	35		tradition-loving	31	
musical	32		conservative	30	
imaginative	30				
Negroes		4.6	*Jews*		5.5
superstitious	84		shrewd	79	
lazy	75		mercenary	49	
happy-go-lucky	38		industrious	48	
ignorant	38		grasping	34	
Germans		5.0	*Irish*		8.5
scientifically-minded	78		pugnacious	45	
industrious	65		quick-tempered	39	
stolid	44		witty	38	
intelligent	32		honest	32	
Americans		8.8	*Japanese*		10.9
industrious	48		intelligent	45	
intelligent	47		industrious	43	
materialistic	33				
ambitious	33				
Turks		15.9	*Chinese*		12.0
cruel	47		superstitious	34	

Table only includes traits assigned by at least 30 per cent of subjects.
The index of uniformity (U) is the number of traits needed to include 50 per cent of subjects' assignments; where U_max = 2.5 and U_min = 42 (i.e., a lower number indicates greater uniformity).
(Adapted from Katz and Braly, 1933, tables 1 and 2)

From Oakes, Haslam and Turner (1994)

Stereotyping and Prejudice

- What was thought to be the relationship of **stereotyping** to **prejudice**?
- In crude terms...
  - People are prejudiced because they stereotype others.
  - Stereotyping is (only?) done by **bad** people.

Henri Tajfel and "Cognition"

- 1969: *Cognitive Aspects of Prejudice*

- *"The human mind must think with **the aid of categories** […] We cannot possible avoid this process"* (G. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*, 1954:20)

  - Allport distinguished between the cognitive processes of prejudiced and tolerant people

Tajfel, H. (1969). Cognitive aspects of prejudice. Journal of Social Issues, 25(4):79 – 97.

Henri Tajfel and "Cognition"

- 1969: *Cognitive Aspects of Prejudice*

- *"The human mind must think with **the aid of categories** […] We cannot possible avoid this process"* (G. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*, 1954:20)

  - **Tajfel argued that categorisation is an aspect of normal cognitive functioning.**

Tajfel, H. (1969). Cognitive aspects of prejudice. Journal of Social Issues, 25(4):79 – 97.
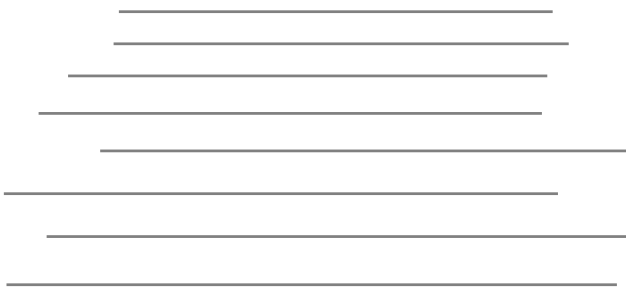
Three processes

- "Much of what happens to us is related to the activities of groups to which we do or do not belong" (p81)
  - Categorisation
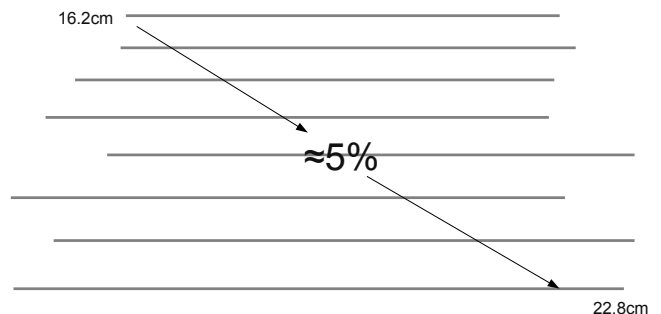 - Assimilation
  - Search for coherence

Henri Tajfel, 1919-1982

Tajfel and Wilkes (1963)

TAJFEL, H. and WILKES, A. L. (1963). Classification and quantitative judgement. British Journal of Psychology, 54(2):101–114.
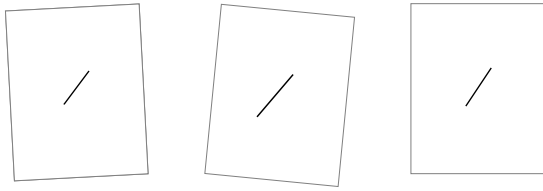
Tajfel and Wilkes (1963)

16.2cm

≈5%

22.8cm

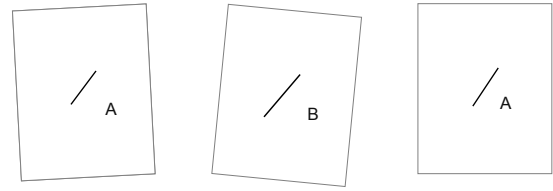TAJFEL, H. and WILKES, A. L. (1963). Classification and quantitative judgement. British Journal of Psychology, 54(2):101–114.

Stimuli...

Unclassified condition

Stimuli...

Classified condition
Longer Lines: B
Shorter Lines: A

Results (classified)

Class	Actual Length (cm)	**Actual** difference from next	**Judged** difference from next	**Judged/Actual** difference
A	16.2	0.8	1.1	1.4
A	17.0	0.9	0.8	0.9
A	17.9	0.9	1.2	1.3
A	18.8	0.9	1.9	**2.1**
B	19.7	1.0	1.3	1.3
B	20.7	1.0	1.1	1.1
B	21.7	1.1	1.9	1.7
B	22.8			

Summary

- Similarly labelled lines were perceived as **more similar** to each other

- Differently labelled lines were perceived as **more different** from the other group

  - **Intra**-group **similarities** emphasised
  - **Inter**-group **differences** emphasised

Stereotype formation

- *Illusory correlation*
- *Salient* groups/individuals may become cognitively linked with *salient* events.
- Salient = 'numerically distinctive' (minority)

http://xkcd.com/385/
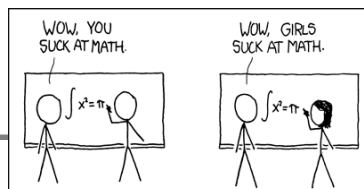
Prototypes & Exemplars

- What is a 'stereotype'?
- A list of all the expected characteristics of the members of the group?
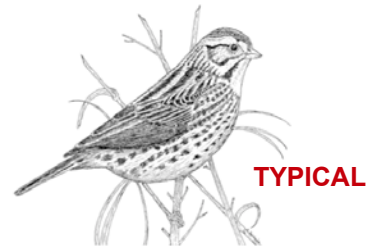- An abstract summary of what category members might be like?

Please draw a **bird**

"Category Prototype"

- "The best example of a category"

TYPICAL

"Category Prototype"

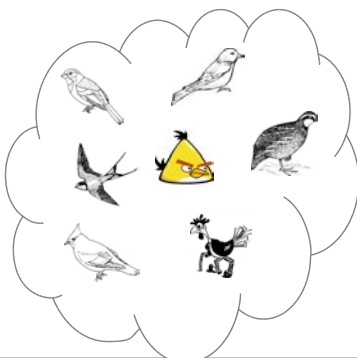- "The best example of a category"

"Category Prototype"

- "The best example of a category"

TYPICAL

Exemplars

"Membership decisions are based on retrieved exemplars rather than abstract prototype, […] estimates of its homogeneity also depend on assessments of exemplar information"

Stereotyping and social reality, Oakes, Haslam and Turner. Blackwell 1994, p54

Summary: 1

- Identity is a matter of personal choice
- But what choices you can make may be constrained by social rules
- Social identities depend on the groups we think/ feel we belong to *and* the groups other people put us in!

Summary: 2

- Stereotyping (categorisation) is normal, and perhaps necessary
- Awareness of how your brain does this and the effects it has on perception will help avoid 'stereotype abuse'!

Cat dog hybrid.

A warning...

- "**Self-fulfilling prophecy**"
  - Individual & Individual - dyadic level
  - Sociological / Group level
- "..occurs when an initially erroneous belief leads to its own fulfilment"

Jussim in *Stereotypes and Stereotyping,* Macrae, Guildford Press, 1996, p161-192

How it seems to work...

- Perceivers develop erroneous expectations
- Perceivers' expectations influence how they treat targets
- Targets react to this treatment with behaviour that confirms expectations
- **Perceiver expectation reinforced!**

XCC

- See you next time!