Social Psychology Activity #1

Attitude Change and Advertisements (not original)

Procedure:

1. Give an overview of attitudes and how they are composed (emotional, cognitive, and behavioral).
2. Use youtube, radio, television, newspapers, magazines, billboards, ect. Use approximately twenty. You can either have students collect a few for an assignment or collect yourself for a classroom activity.
3. Does the advertisement appeal to the (E, C, B)? Combination?

1. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. P V A

2. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. P V A

3. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. P V A

4. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. P V A

5. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. P V A

6. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. P V A

7. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. P V A

8. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. P V A

1. Place students in small groups and have them discuss which ads they found most effective and least effective? Why did they find some more effective than others? Was it the source, the message, or the means in which the advertisement was produced?
2. Use this activity to discuss attitudes and how they are formed, their influence on behaviors, and what appeals are best used suited to change attitudes.

**Module 9**

**Physical Appearance Categorization Activity**

*Authors: Bridget Ryan and Marli D. Simpson*

***Objectives*:** The purpose of this activity is for students to explore how physical appearance cues affect our perceptions of others.Students will consider the cues people use to categorize others including cues based on social categories, such as race and gender, and cues based on clothing style and facial expression. Students will also consider the how they might have been socialized to think a certain way about social group members.

***Materials*:**

* Worksheets with photos (Pages 44-48)
* Discussion questions (Page 49)

***Estimated Time*:** 15-20 minutes

***Group Size:*** This activity works best with a class size of 30 or fewer, but could be modified for larger class by having students work in groups. During discussion, the instructor can rotate among the groups and/or have teaching assistants facilitate discussion in the smaller groups.

***Instructions*:**Instructors should choose the worksheets they wish to use and can give them to students individually or display them on a screen. Students look at each pair of photos and answer the questions. Students should be encouraged to base their responses on their first impressions and can be reminded that people often make snap judgments based on those first responses.

***Background Research*:** Categorization is the process of simplifying the social world by placing people into categories on the basis of characteristics such as age, race, gender, clothing style, height, ability status, or other cues. These categories are based on cognitive structures that contain a person’s knowledge and beliefs about social groups and that cue what people attend to and use to organize their social world (Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2000). Categorization happens very quickly and the first cues people attend to are another’s race and gender (Ito & Urland, 2003). However, people also attend to nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and posture (Zebrowitz, 1996) and to physical appearance cues such as attractiveness (Etcoff, 1999) and clothing (Stangor, Lynch, Changming, & Glas, 1992). Once a person has been categorized, the stereotypic beliefs associated with that category are activated, a process that often occurs automatically. However, stereotype activation can be inhibited when people are motivated to do so by goals such as the desire to see oneself in a positive light or the need to form accurate impressions of others (Kunda & Spencer, 2003).

***References:***

Etcoff, N. L. (1999). *Survival of the prettiest: The science of beauty*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Ito, T. A., & Urland, G. R. (2003). Race and gender on the brain: Electrocortical measures of attention to the race and gender of multiply categorizable individuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 85*, 616-626. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.4.616>

Kunda, Z., & Spencer, S. J. (2003). When do stereotypes come to mind and when do they color judgment? A goal-based theoretical framework for stereotype activation and application. *Psychological Bulletin, 129*, 522-544. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.4.522>

Macrae, C. N., & Bodenhausen, G. (2000). Social cognition: Thinking categorically about others. *Annual Review of Psychology, 51*, 93-120. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.51.1.93>

Stangor, C., Lynch, L., Changming, D., Glas, B. (1992). Categorization of individuals on the basis of multiple social features. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 62*, 207-218. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.62.2.207>

Zebrowitz, L. A. (1996). Physical appearance as a basis of stereotyping. In C. N. Macrae, C. Stangor, & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *Stereotypes and stereotyping* (pp. 79-120). New York, NY: Guilford.



What characteristics of each person did you notice first?

Person A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Person B\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Which person would you choose as partner to work with on a class project? Person A or Person B?

Why?

A B



A B

What characteristics of each person did you notice first?

Person A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Person B\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Which person is more likely to be a campus leader? Person A or Person B?

Why?



A B

What characteristics of each person did you notice first?

Person A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Person B\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Which person would be more likely to be hired after a job interview? Person A or Person B?

Why?

A B



What characteristics of each person did you notice first?

Person A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Person B\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Which person would you be most likely to introduce to your parents? Person A or Person B?

Why?

Why?

***Discussion Questions***

1. What characteristics of the people in the photos did you notice first? Were they the same or different for different pairs of photos?
2. Did those characteristics affect your judgments? Why or why not?
3. Do you think your first impressions of the people in the photos might affect your interactions with these individuals? Why or why not?
4. Think about the roles and stereotypes that are part of our cultural script. What are these? Where did they come from? Do you see any specific patterns in your answers that reflect these roles and stereotypes?
5. Do you think your parents would made different choices about the photos than you did? Why or why not?

**Module 10**

**Microaggression Activity**

*Authors: Kelly L. Meredith and LaDeidre Robinson*

***Objectives:*** Students will learn to identify microaggressions and will be able to reflect on how they can modify questions or comments in ways that are less likely to reflect stereotypic assumptions and beliefs. Using two versions of the worksheet provides more examples for students to consider, but the activity works equally well with either version.

***Materials:***

* Instructions and discussion questions (Page 52)
* Worksheet versions (Pages 53-54)

***Estimated Time:*** 10-20 minutes

***Group Size:*** This activity works best with a class size of 30 or fewer, but could be modified for larger class by having students work in groups. For larger classes, the instructor can rotate among the groups during discussion and/or have teaching assistants facilitate discussion in the smaller groups.

***Instructions:*** This activity will be more effective if the instructor first defines microaggressions and provides examples of how they operate. Then, pass out the worksheet so that half the class has Version A and half has Version B (or choose one version and distribute it to all students) and ask students to follow the provided instructions. Students then answer the discussion questions and discuss them in small groups or as a whole class.

***Background Research:***

In her book, *It’s the Little Things*, Lena Williams (2000) described how some comments that might seem to be small and unimportant to observers are viewed differently by the person who hears them. For example, when someone seems surprised that a Black woman is a Harvard graduate or assumes that a well-dressed Black man in a hotel is a bell-hop, the overall message is that Blacks are not expected to achieve. Lawrence Graham (1995), a successful Harvard-educated lawyer who worked for a time at an all-White country club, endured comments about how articulate he was and was told that it was easy to find the “Chinaman,” a supply clerk, because his office was by the laundry. Nadal (2013) pointed to comments made to gays and lesbians that reflect gender-based stereotypes, such as “Oh well you’re feminine, so how are you a lesbian?” (p. 114). Sue (2010) used the term “microaggressions” to describe these “brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership” (p. 24). As Sue noted, from the perspective of those who experience them (people of color, LGBTs, women, immigrants) these exchanges are frequent and automatic, but are often “glossed over as being innocent or innocuous” (p. 25). However, as Sue noted, microaggressions cause harm to people’s mental health and to their chances for success in the workplace and in educational settings. Recognizing the form microaggressions take and their impact on the recipient of such comments, is an important step toward addressing bias against marginalized group members (see also Nadal, 2013).

***References:***

Graham, L. O. (1995). *Member of the club: Reflections on life in a racially polarized world*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Nadal, K. L. (2013). *That's so gay: Microaggressions and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Williams, L. (2000). *It's the little things*. New York, NY: Harcourt.

***Instructions***

In the handout, draw a line connecting the statements in the first column with all the possible interpretations from the second column. Each statement from Column A may connect with more than one interpretation. Be ready to explain each choice. Think critically about how a person could interpret these statements as a “put down.”

After you have finished matching the statements with the interpretations, choose **four statements** and rewrite them so that they do not contain a hidden or negative message. For example, the statement “How long have you been in this country?” implies that the speaker believes the person was born in another country. This assumption could be right or wrong; a neutral wording of the statement might be “Where did you grow up?” or “How long have you lived in this town?”

After you have rewritten the statements, answer the questions below.

1. Alvin Poussaint refers to the cumulative impact of experiencing microaggressions as “death by a thousand nicks.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain your answer.
2. When people discuss microaggressions, a common response is that they are “innocent acts” and that the person who experiences them should “let go of the incident” and “not make a big deal out of it.” Do you agree or disagree with this point of view? Explain your reasoning.
3. If a person from a marginalized group pointed out to you that one of your comments was a microaggression, how would you respond at the time? Would it change the likelihood of your making a similar comment in the future? Why or why not?
4. Derald Wing Sue has argued that the impact of subtle prejudice, such as microaggressions, is more harmful than the impact of blatant discrimination. Do you agree or disagree with this proposition? Explain your answer.

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| **Version A** | | |
| **Column A: Statements** |  | **Column B: Possible Interpretations** |
| “You throw like a girl.” |  | Feminine traits are undesirable. |
| “Just ‘Google it’ when you get home.” |  | Society knows what is right and you are wrong. |
| “You are ‘trashy’ (or ‘ghetto’).” |  | You don’t belong. |
| “You are a credit to your race.” |  | Being gay is unacceptable. |
| “Everyone can succeed if they try hard enough.” |  | Your sexual orientation is your most important characteristic. |
| “That’s so gay.” |  | You are not man enough. |
| [To a girl] “Math is hard, isn’t it?” |  | If you don’t have “the basics,” you must be lazy. |
| “How long have you lived in our country?” |  | Your culture is your most defining feature. |
| “Being gay is just a phase.” |  | You people are all the same. |
|  |  | I see you as your skin color only. |
|  |  | People of your background are unintelligent. |
|  |  | You are lazy. |
|  |  | You are not American. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Version B** | | |
| **Column A: Statements** |  | **Column B: Possible Interpretations** |
| “Don’t be such a sissy.” |  | Feminine traits are undesirable. |
| “Of course you have a bad relationship with your parents. You’re gay.” |  | People with disabilities are less important, likeable or competent. |
| “You speak English very well.” |  | You don’t belong. |
| “America is a melting pot.” |  | Being gay is unacceptable. |
| “I don’t see color.” |  | Your sexual orientation is your most important characteristic. |
| “I have Black friends, so what I say isn’t offensive.” |  | You are not man enough. |
| “Everyone knows Blacks are more likely to shoplift.” |  | Your culture is your most defining feature. |
| [A professor asks a Latina student in front of a class] “What do Latinas think about this situation?” |  | People of your background are unintelligent. |
| “That’s retarded.” |  | You look like a criminal. |
|  |  | I see you as your skin color only. |
|  |  | You are not American. |