POLI 100M: Political Psychology

Lecture 10: Implicit Attitudes and Race
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Announcements

• Final project is due Saturday, Sept. 9, 11:30am
  – Submit to Turn it In on TritonEd
  – Review the rubric and detailed assignment guidelines on TritonEd

• Office hours this week: today 2:30-4:30.
Last Time

• Political Networks
  – Largely homogeneous, but more disagreement than we would expect
  – Psychological characteristics condition the effects of disagreement on political behavior

• Social Media
  – **Most** content is not political, yet the political content can be consequential
  – Online networks are more diverse than offline networks
  – Facilitates affective polarization
What questions do you have?
Today: Driving Questions

• What is the difference between implicit and explicit attitudes? How do they each impact behavior?

• What are the psychological explanations for racial bias?

• Should we care about psychology in understanding politics?
Today: Learning Outcomes

• Define the following key terms: implicit attitude, explicit attitude, implicit bias, explicit bias, linked fate, social identity theory, contact hypothesis, self-monitoring

• Describe the psychological mechanisms that might explain racial bias in the U.S.

• Evaluate whether we should care about psychology in understanding politics
Race in America
Population Distribution by Race: 1940-2010

*Data are shown for the White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and Some Other Race alone populations. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census of population, 1940 to 2010.
Population Distribution by Hispanic Origin: 1970-2010

Percent Minority: 1970-2042

*Projected population as of July 1.

Note: “Minority” refers to people who reported their ethnicity and race as something other than non-Hispanic White alone in the decennial census.

Stereotypes and Prejudice
Stereotypes & Prejudice: Definitions

• In-group: a group to which an individual belongs
• Out-group: any group other than the in-group
• Prejudice: a hostile or negative attitude toward a distinguishable group of people, based solely on their group membership
What causes prejudice?

• Is it learned? Or are we born with it?
• Evolutionary Psychology Research: animals have a tendency to feel more favorably toward genetically similar others and to express fear toward dissimilar organisms
• Social Psychology Research: Culture (parents, media) move us to assign negative qualities to people different from us
Social Cognitive Perspective: Categorization

• Social categorization simplifies the social world
• In group favoritism effect: we evaluate in-group members more positively, reward them more, and expect better treatment from them
• Out group homogeneity effect: we see out group members as different from us, but all the same as one another
Implicit and Explicit Attitudes

• Implicit attitudes: evaluations that occur without conscious awareness towards an attitude object or the self
  – “introspectively unidentified (or inaccurately identified) traces of past experience that mediate favorable or unfavorable feeling, thought, or action toward social objects” (Greenwald & Banaji)

• Explicit attitudes: evaluations that are expressed with conscious awareness toward an attitude object or the self
Dual Process Model

• Thoughts arise as a result of two processes
  – Implicit: automatic, unconscious
    • Very difficult to change, form new habits, form new implicit associations
  – Explicit: controlled, conscious
    • Can change with persuasion, education
Dual Process Model: Stereotyping

1. When we perceive an individual, salient stereotypes are activated automatically (Implicit)
2. Activated stereotypes guide our expressed (explicit) attitudes and/or behavior

• When we are *motivated* and *cognitively able*, we can overcome implicit biases by altering our explicit behavior
When are we likely to stereotype?

• Ambiguous, inadequate information
• Cognitively busy
• In a bad mood
How do we learn stereotypes?

• Social Learning Theory
  – Parents, peers, teachers
    • Children are not born with prejudice, but by age 7 most show signs of prejudice
    • Reinforcement: gender roles, tell kids who to be friends with, exposure to parent stereotyping behavior
  – Media
Social Learning Theory: The Media

• Social Psychology Study
  – Participants watched 7 college basketball games and 5 NFL playoff games
  – 77% of comments made about white players were about intelligence, whereas only about 22.5% of comments about black players were about intelligence
  – 65% of comments about black players were about athletics, whereas only about 12% of comments about white players were about athletics
Social Learning Theory: The Media

- Perez (2015) shows several examples of how the media exposes us to specific associations about minority groups
  - Immigration and Latinos
  - Illegal and Immigration [and Illegal and Latinos]
  - Crime and Latinos [other research shows Crime and African Americans as well]
Topic Attention Difference Between O'Reilly and Maddow

More O'Reilly Attention                                          More Maddow Attention

Illegal Immigration
Population Characteristics
Race as a Problem
City/Community Problems
Deaths of Black Americans
Racism
Tea Party racism
Discrimination
Immigration Reform
Civil/Voting Rights

Source: Engelhardt 2017
Examples of Discrimination in Politics
Candidate Evaluations: Experimental Evidence

• Terkildsen (1993)
  – White voters shown three hypothetical candidates running for governor: white male, light-skinned black male, dark-skinned black male
  – White voters were less likely to report voting for the darker skinned candidates

• Kam (2007)
  – Implicit negative attitudes toward Hispanics reduces support for a Hispanic political candidate in the absence of partisan cues

• Lajevardi *working paper*
  – Participants were less likely to report voting for a Muslim candidate of color than a non-Muslim, white candidate
Candidate Evaluations: Observational Data

• Highton (2004)
  – Exit poll data from the 1996 and 1998 House elections suggest little support for the hypothesis that white voters discriminate against black candidates

• Bullock (2000)
  – Precinct-level returns suggest that white support for Black Democratic incumbents was not different from white support for two most successful white Democratic candidates
  – Key advantage in this study is that party is held constant

• Krupnikov & Piston (2015)
  – When a prejudiced strong partisan shares the partisanship of a black candidate, s/he is likely to experience a decision conflict—prejudice and partisanship in opposite directions—decreasing the likelihood that s/he turns out to vote
Reducing Prejudice
Reducing Prejudice

• Contact Theory
  – Cooperative Interdependence
  – Equal Status
  – Acquaintance Potential
  – Institutional Support

• Example: Sherif (1961) Scout Camp
  – Used cooperative activities that required different groups working together
  – More likely to be friends with people in another group after the cross-group activities
Post-Racial or Most Racial?
Political Psychology
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Question(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>What is political psychology?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Differences</td>
<td>How do differences in personality, genetics, and psychophysiology impact political behavior?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>What are the psychological motivations behind why people vote and which candidates they support?</td>
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<td>(Mis)information</td>
<td>How do individuals process information? Why do people believe political rumors?</td>
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<td>Media</td>
<td>What role does the media play in informing the public? Why do individuals choose information sources?</td>
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<td>Campaigns</td>
<td>How do campaigns use psychology to win elections?</td>
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<td>Irrelevant and Apolitical Influences on Political Behavior</td>
<td>Do “irrelevant” events influence political behavior? Why?</td>
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<td>Polarization</td>
<td>Why and how are liberals and conservatives different?</td>
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<td>Social Networks, Political Discussion, and Social Media</td>
<td>Why and with whom do individuals discuss (or avoid discussing) politics? How do individuals engage with politics on social media?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implicit vs. Explicit Attitudes</td>
<td>What are the psychological explanations for racial bias in politics?</td>
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Reflections

• What are the advantages of thinking about politics from a political psychological perspective?
• What are the disadvantages of thinking about politics from a political psychological perspective?