

Group Processes

Group processes

- Group – collection of people who form a coherent unit
- *Entitativity* (Campbell, 1958) - The extent to which a group is perceived as being a single entity
 - Members interact often
 - Group is important to members
 - Members share common goals
 - Members are similar in important ways

Groups

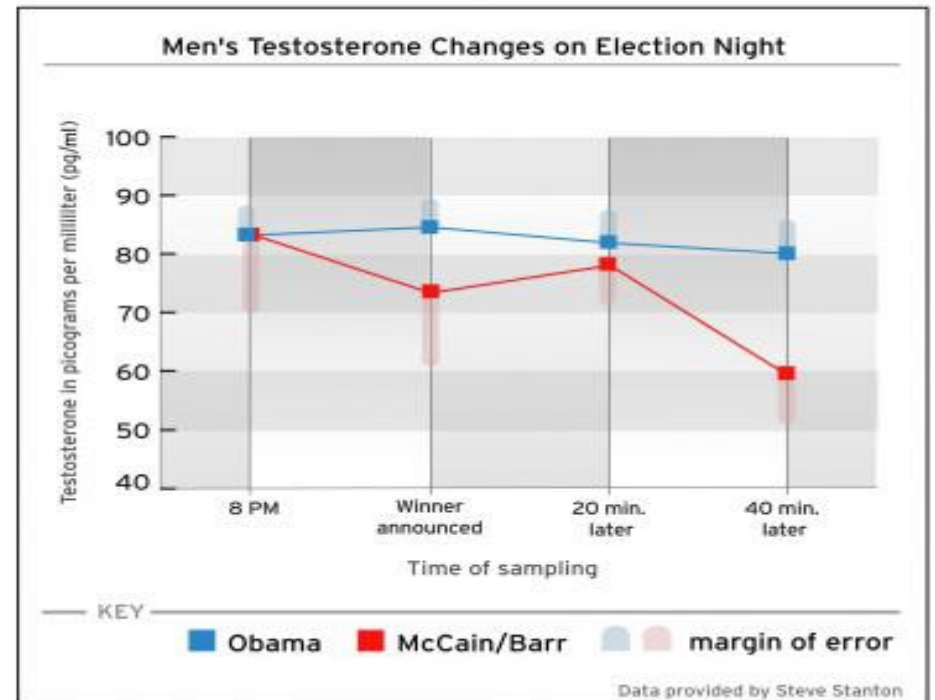
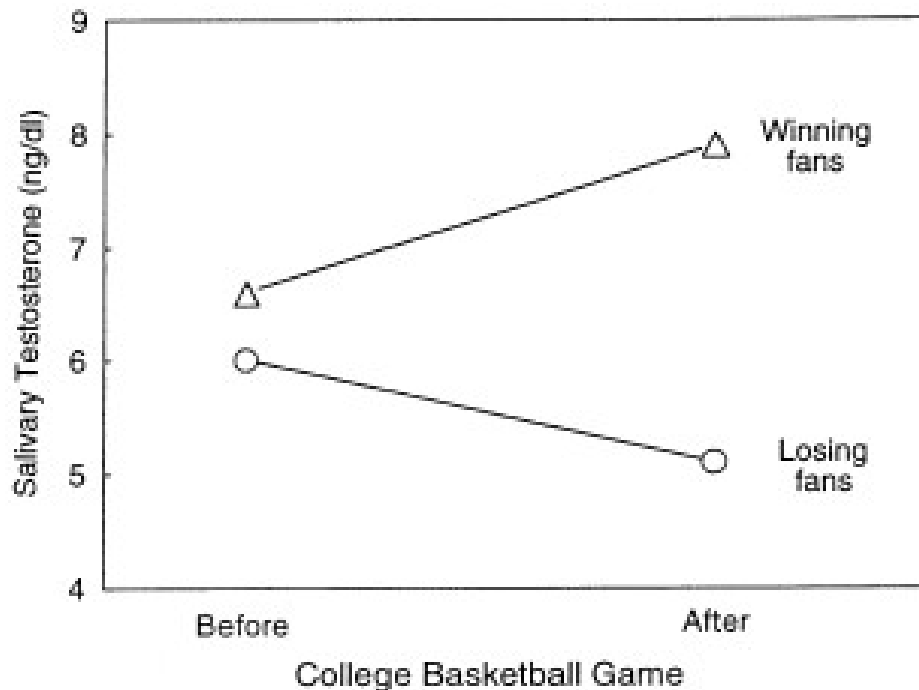
- Role differentiation can occur formally or informally
 - Zimbardo's Prison Experiment (Zimbardo, 1973)
- High status is often conferred on those who closely follow the group norms
 - Status confers advantage
 - Different groups have different social norms
- Group cohesiveness depends on:
 - Extent to which social identity is tied to membership
 - Difficulty gaining entry to group
 - Higher status
 - External threats to group

Groups

- Benefits of being part of a group:
 - Sense of self-concept
 - Possibility of affecting social change
 - Reduces effort required to engage in other positive activities
 - Self-esteem, self-enhancement (*basking in reflected glory*; BIRGing; Cialdini et al, 1976)

Groups

- Benefits of being part of a winning group
- Testosterone increases in response to winning dominance contests (Bernhardt et al, 1998; Stanton et al, 2010)
- But equivalent costs when the group loses



Groups

- Costs of group membership
 - Poorer decision making
 - Less personal freedom
 - Demands on time, money, effort
 - Difficulty of leaving group even when it is desirable
 - Feel bad when group loses or is punished (need to *cast off reflected failure*; CORFing)
- Members often leave group when they perceive that the other group members have changed significantly, and so no longer represent the old group

The presence of others

- Deindividuation – reduced self-awareness and social identity
- Strongly related to anonymity, particularly in large groups
 - Diffusion of responsibility, again
- Increased conformity to group norms
- I suspect this is highly relevant to online activities and video gaming, but to my knowledge it has not been studied extensively (Douglas, 2001)



The presence of others

- Social loafing – reduction in effort or motivation when working (and evaluated) in a group compared to alone
- Who has done a group project recently?
- Social loafing is stronger for men than women, and much stronger in individualistic cultures
- Reduced when contributions are identifiable

The presence of others

- Social facilitation – presence of others affects task performance
- The presence of others increases arousal, which increases the tendency to perform dominant responses
- When the task is easy and well-practiced (dominant response), performance improves in public
 - For example, pro athletes
 - BUT, stereotypes are often a form of dominant response (Lambert et al, 2003)
- When the task is difficult and unpracticed, performance gets worse in public
 - Public speaking

The presence of others

- Choking - the occurrence of inferior performance despite striving and incentives for superior performance (Baumeister & Showers, 1986)
 - Drive theories – too much desire to perform well causes anxiety which affects motor/cognitive control of task
 - Distraction theories – Anxiety occupies working memory, distracts from performance
 - Self-focus theories – Conscious monitoring/control of skill execution worsens performance

The presence of others

- Most teams in the NHL have a better record at home than on the road
 - Travel? Familiarity with conditions? Rule advantage?
- **Effect of the crowd?**
 - Does the crowd raise performance of home team, or influence the referees?
- Butler et al (1998) had participants perform a task in front of an adversarial or supportive audience
 - Performance was better with an adversarial audience
 - Self-attention in front of a supportive audience affects performance

Cooperation and competition

- Cooperation – working together to attain a goal shared by the group
- Social dilemmas – situations where a specific individual action results in benefits, unless the rest of the group behaves the same way

Prisoner's Dilemma

	Prisoner 1 stays silent	Prisoner 1 snitches
Prisoner 2 stays silent	Both go to jail for 1 year	Prisoner 1 goes free, Prisoner 2 goes to jail for 10 years
Prisoner 2 snitches	Prisoner 2 goes free, Prisoner 1 goes to jail for 10 years	Both go to jail 8 years

Prisoner's Dilemma

- For the sake of argument, assume that policies to combat global warming

	Other countries follow treaty	Other countries do not follow treaty
Canada follows treaty	Less pollution, better health, countries equally competitive	More pollution, worse health, Canada is less competitive
Canada does not follow treaty	Less pollution, better health, Canada is more competitive	More pollution, worse health, countries equally competitive

Cooperation and competition

- Related problem is called “the tragedy of the commons”
- With a finite resource, everyone benefits if it is used in moderation
 - There is little to no effect of *a single person* taking more than their share
 - But there is a major effect when *every individual* takes more than their share

Factors affecting cooperation

- Social norm of reciprocity
 - So prevalent that it is considered a near universal rule of social life
 - Reflected in numerous religious traditions
- Personality
 - Cooperative orientation
 - Competitive orientation
 - Individualistic orientation
- Communication
 - But only if strong social norms to cooperate are expressed

Conflict

- Caused by *perception* of incompatible interests
- Attributions (negative, hostile, internal)
- Communication (absent or negative)
- Status quo bias (particularly among the group with more power)

Fairness

- Distributive justice – Resources distributed according to what each member deserves
- Procedural justice – Resources are distributed based on fair, unbiased, and consistent rules
- Transactional justice – The way the distribution of rewards is explained to us
 - For example, last year the federal government emphasized that they cut their own pensions, while cutting old age benefits
- We deal with lack of fairness by publicly or privately “evening the score”, or by changing our attitudes

Decision making in groups

- Four basic ways of making decisions in groups:
 - Majority-wins rule
 - Truth-wins rule
 - First-shift rule
 - Unanimity

Decision making in groups

- Are decisions made by groups better than those made by individuals? No
- Individuals and groups end with more extreme attitudes and decisions following group discussion
- Social comparison makes us want to be like the group but “better”, or more strongly consistent with group values
- Initial arguments usually consistent with the perceived group's preference
- Interestingly, this effect seems *not to happen* online (Wu et al, 2008; Yardi et al, 2010)
 - More immediate “punishment” for extreme views?
 - Would this be true in “closed” groups?

Decision making in groups

- Groupthink – in highly cohesive groups, members tend to assume:
 - All are in agreement
 - They cannot be wrong
 - Contrary information can be ignored
- Emergent social norm of infallibility and superiority

Decision making in groups

- Confirmation bias – look for information that supports your own point of view
 - Sounds like schemas, right?
 - Occurs in individuals, and especially in groups (because others provide immediate reward/reinforcement for providing information consistent with group beliefs)
- Devil's advocate technique
 - Assign one group member the task of disagreeing and criticizing

Social psychology

Peripheral route

High cognitive load, not enough time, unimportant, low knowledge, tired, distracted

Fast, non-conscious, automatic, biased, more errors

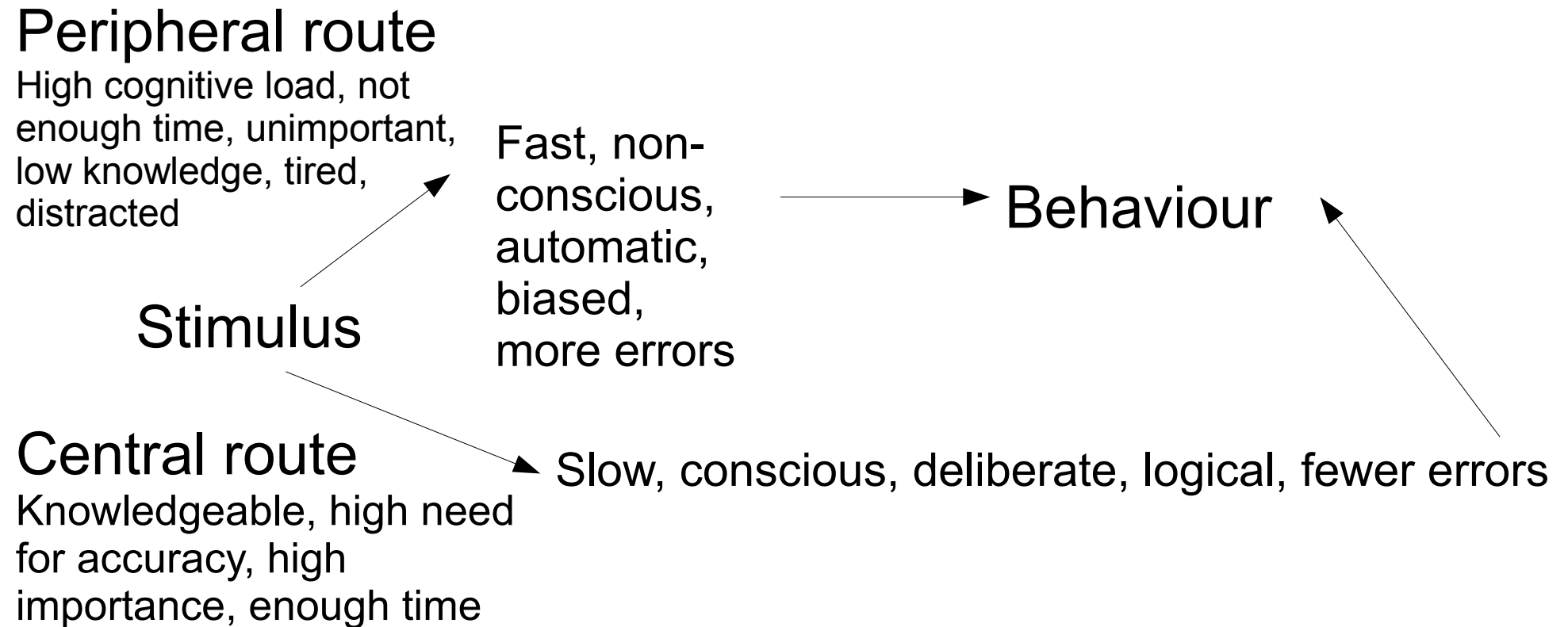
Stimulus

Behaviour

Central route

Knowledgeable, high need for accuracy, high importance, enough time

Slow, conscious, deliberate, logical, fewer errors



Social psychology

Schemas, availability heuristic, attribution errors, planning fallacy, non-verbal behaviour, deception cues, implicit personality theories, non-verbal impression management, easier persuasion, cognitive dissonance, implicit self-concept/esteem, stereotypes, prejudice, discriminatory behaviour, stereotype threat, evaluative conditioning, exposure effects, Halo effect, contrast effect, implicit egotism, generalization of arousal, more likely to obey/comply/comform, helping vs bystander effect, reciprocal altruism, deindividuation, group-think

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