psyc3122 Week 4

Behaviour-attitude relations
When behaviour changes attitudes

next week:
Attitude formation – nature, nurture, TV …

Today
- Discussion of book ch. 8
- Review of last week
- Spontaneous Behaviour – ‘direct’ attitude expression?
- Counter-intuitive behaviour-attitude links
  - When not doing something increases positivity
  - When being rewarded decreases positivity
  - Commitment – how it melts your brain …
Last week: Planned behaviour

- When do attitudes predict?
  - Misc methodological factors (lab, specificity, component of tripartite model)
  - Target prototypicality – prototype incompatibility (changing mental representation of attitude object)
  - "Other variable" issues: 1) control and subjective norm (TPB) 2) individual differences (e.g., self-monitoring), 3) behavioural or descriptive norms 4) past behaviour

- Key challenges
  - Referent informational influence: Both atts & beh are driven by norms of groups with which identify in particular social contexts
  - Need to consider "emotional" attitudes

What about non-rational behaviour?

- What if sometimes we don't think at all?
- Unplanned / spontaneous behaviour
  - "Direct" expression of attitudes
- Spontaneous/automatic processing model (Fazio, e.g. 1986)
- For attitudes to predict behaviour, model predicts they must first be accessed from memory

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attitude   selective   definition
activation --> perception --> of event --> behaviour
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Non-rational influences

- what makes attitudes **temporarily** more accessible / likely to be activated?
  
  - priming/reminding a person about his/her attitudes
    - Pre-establishing link between context and object (advertising)
    - Seeing the attitude object -> activation – impulse buys
  
  - increasing people’s self-awareness increases salience of chronic attitudes
    - E.g., mirrors; reflecting on values

Strangers to ourselves

- Wilson and colleagues:
  
  - Think about the reasons why you would take one course or another, choose one option or another
    - For inexperienced students, this *reduced* attitude-behaviour consistency
  
  - Think about the reasons to choose a new product, and then make an immediate choice
    - Can *reduce* satisfaction with the decision
  
  - Why???
Strangers to ourselves

Running through the reasons mentally increases the salience of factors that might not be important to us or likely to occur – creates unstable attitude

- “Availability” heuristic distorts impact
  - "Whoa, I never thought of that! But if I’m thinking about a reason, I must care about it! It must be probable!"
- Attitude is unstable b/c temporarily distorted by unimportant / unlikely ‘reasons’ to approach or avoid object (prototype incompatibility)
- By the time the decision is made attitude has reverted to evaluation based on costs and benefits that care about and believe are likely

Strangers to ourselves

For novices, cognitive-affective or cognitive-cognitive inconsistency is more likely because time and experience align emotions and beliefs

- You reconcile conflicting beliefs with knowledge + experience (some are right, others wrong)
- You find the beliefs that justify your emotions
- You develop emotions based on your beliefs

If there is inconsistency between salient beliefs & non-salient, and if the behaviour is performed primarily where salient beliefs at time of decision have faded THEN over-relying on salient beliefs reduces attitude-behaviour consistency

If there is inconsistency between beliefs & emotions, and if the behaviour is performed primarily where emotions are salient THEN over-relying on beliefs reduces attitude-behaviour consistency

And reduces satisfaction if the decision is evaluated primarily via beliefs or emotions that weren’t salient at the time of the decision
Strangers to ourselves

Take home message:
– Use your head when you can evaluate the importance and probability of costs and benefits
  ■ needs time to think and some knowledge/experience so your reflection is stable
– Go with your gut when satisfaction is about emotions
  ■ Don’t try to ponder costs and benefits unless you have time and some knowledge/experience

Spontaneous behaviour so far

Directly express attitudes that are temporarily activated because of:
■ Priming
  – “Field-dependent” behaviour
■ Self-awareness
  – Increased likelihood of “authentic” behaviour
■ Rumination
  – Increased likelihood of erratic, non-authentic behaviour among inexperienced
Chronic changes in accessibility

- strong attitude - strong association between the attitude object and evaluative response
- Means attitude chronically likely to activate when see object
  - Involvement
    - Motivates (and reflects) attention, thought, commitment, experience
  - Attitude confidence
    - Reflects consistency among components of attitude
    - Reflects certainty re value and likelihood of consequences
Chronic changes in accessibility

- Are attitudes formed on the basis of **direct experience** more chronically accessible?
  - Regan & Fazio: either play puzzles or see example solutions; measure atts -> puzzles; get chance to play

- Direct experience often reflects **repeatedly expressed attitudes**, which also increase acc.
  - Calls into play commitment processes: E.g., Sherman (1980): 700% increase in volunteers for American Cancer Society when 3 days before called & asked to predict what they wd say
  - Also cognitively consolidates link between attitude & context
  - **Response latency** - time taken to react to questions about attitude object; index of attitude accessibility

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Chronic changes in accessibility

![Graph showing the relationship between number of attitudinal expressions and response latency.](chart.png)
Chronic changes

Spontaneous behaviour can also express attitudes that are chronically activated because of:
- Involvement/importance
- Confidence (consistency among components, stability)
- Direct experience
- Repeated expression

And NB these factors in chronic accessibility mutually reinforce each other (e.g. involvement leads to repeated expression – and vice versa, etc.)

The MODE model

- **mode of behavioural decision-making**
  - Fazio (1990) proposed that the determinants of behavioural choice vary as a function of mode of decision-making
  - **deliberative processing** ---&gt; based on rationality as in TRA/TPB
  - **spontaneous processing** ---&gt; attitude accessibility
  - suggests the importance of ensuring that the attitude is highly salient
The full MODE model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>attitude</th>
<th>selective</th>
<th>immediate pns</th>
<th>definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>activation</td>
<td>--&gt; perception</td>
<td>--&gt; of the att. obj.</td>
<td>--&gt; of the event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Norms --> of situation

- MODE exciting because deals with key, under-theorized DV: spontaneous behaviour
- But doesn’t really grapple with interplay of social influence (norms) and attitudes
- Referent informational influence / social identity theorists would argue that when norms are active, they shape both behaviour and attitudes
- Still work to do

Implications for understanding behaviour

- Why do you / people do something “out of character”?
  - Time pressure / cognitive impairment -> attitude expression (no deliberation)
  - Spontaneous expression of attitude will be “non-authentic” if either
    - Attitude is unstable and not like normal attitude b/c of a change in temporary accessibility (priming, low self-awareness, novices’ rumination -> prototype incompatibility)
    - No chronic attitude exists owing to lack of involvement, confidence re attitude, experience, or previous expression
How can you increase the likelihood you’ll be happy with your choices?

- Don’t try to ponder costs and benefits unless you have time and some knowledge/experience - go with your gut.
- If you have inconsistency between beliefs and emotions (know something is dumb/wrong but still want to do it, or vv) think about how you’ll evaluate the behaviour.
  - If it’s about emotions, go with affect*.
    *especially if you’re experienced, if inexperienced, anticipated affect can also be wrong/unstable.
  - If it’s about consequences, go with beliefs.

Unplanned / spontaneous behaviour as a challenge to the TPB

- Often behaviour directly expresses salient attitudes.
- Once triggered/evoked (e.g. by context), these atts lead to selective perception & automatic behaviour.
- Salience is influenced by temporary and chronic changes in accessibility.
- MODE model: two processes lead to attitude-behaviour consistency.
  - behaviour can be deliberatively driven by reasons (infrequently) or spontaneous expressions of attitudes (most of the time).
  - Temporary changes in accessibility -> behaviour consistent with unstable attitudes (not underlying att) – feels ‘irrational’ or ‘out of character’ to actor.
- Vs. TPB att-beh inconsistency where actor can usually tell the reason they did not express their attitudes (lack of control or social pressure).
A new challenge:  
From behaviour to attitudes

- Correlational studies showing attitude-behaviour relations raise question of **direction of causality**
- Attitudes may cause behaviour through deliberation or direct expression
- But we have already alluded to paths by which behaviour impacts on aspects of attitudes
  1. Learning of link between attitudes and context increases likelihood the attitude will be temporarily primed / evoked by situation
  2. Behaviour / experience can increase chronic accessibility of attitude / attitude strength
  3. And stability of attitude (reduces erratic volatility)
Behaviour -> attitudes

4. Similarly have alluded to learning process proposed by Fishbein & Ajzen:
   - Through behaviour, learn more about consequences of action and this changes attitudes (as well as SN and PBC) – which in turn impacts on behaviour
   - If learn through behaviour that actions lead to valuable, certain benefits then attitudes become more positive (further behaviour is facilitated)
   - If learn through behaviour that actions lead to harmful, certain costs then attitudes become more negative (further behaviour is inhibited)

Behaviour can change accessibility, strength, stability, and content of attitudes through learning processes

Counter-intuitive behaviour-attitude relationships

1. Forbidden fruit
   - Heuristic of scarcity, white bear effect and ego-depletion, reactance
2. Permitted fruit
   - overjustification
3. Feet in the door
   - commitment
4. Insufficient justification (next week!)
   - Dissonance processes
Forbidden Fruit

- engaging in beh can lead to increased accessibility / attitude strength / stability -> likelihood of attitude expression
- what about not engaging in an action? Depends!
- Being banned (from an action, object, issue) can lead to increased positive attitudes
    - 2 toys, 1 behind 1 foot plexiglass 1 clear – no preference
    - 2 toys, 1 behind 2 foot plexiglass (i.e., must go around barrier), 1 clear – strong preference: 3 x more quick to access 1st than 2nd
  - Romeo & Juliet effect – Driscoll, Davis, & Lipetz (1972)
    - In study of 140 teenage dating couples, parental interference increased perceived love & desire for marriage; removal of parental interference weakened romantic feelings

A heuristic is a particular technique of directing one’s attention in learning, discovery, or problem-solving.

Why?

- 1. Heuristic of scarcity
  - Things easy to get are less groovy than things difficult to get. Thus if it is harder to get, it must be better. (Lynn, 1989)
  - Scarcity heuristic does not depend on prior access
  - Especially applies to resources
- Scarcity heuristic exploited by advertisers
  - “Limited time only”
  - “Only while stocks last”
  - Yep, it really works
Why?

2. “White bear” effect

- Part of our brain deals with attention and self-regulation – “executive function” (in the forebrain)
- We only have so much executive function to go around - Spending energy controlling your thoughts / behaviour reduces the energy you have for other tasks
- When told not to think about things we (a) activate link and (b) inhibit it – but energy to inhibit it can drain away leaving link accessibility heightened

For the next 2 minutes…

Go ahead and think of a white bear
Don’t think of a white bear (Wegner 1994)
Why?

2. “White bear” effect / Ego-depletion
- We only have so much executive function to go around - Spending energy controlling your thoughts / behaviour reduces the energy you have for other tasks
  - Baumeister et al. (1998): get no plate (control), or plate of cookies and radishes & told to spend 5” tasting only cookies (no self-control) or tasting only radishes (requires self-control). Then everyone gets unsolvable puzzle and told to persevere – radishes persevere half as much

Making choices reduces self-control

“Limited resource” model of executive function:
- We only have limited will-power / self-regulatory capacity
- Exerting will-power results in “ego-depletion”
  - < Physical stamina
  - < Persistence in the face of failure
  - > Procrastination
  - < Quality and quantity of arithmetic calculations

After 8 mins choosing courses would take to satisfy degree requirements (vs perusing options), Ps far less likely to practise sample math ?s for ’IQ test’ and more likely to read magazines / play videogames / do nothing

From Vohs et al. (2008), JPSP, 883-898
Forbidden Fruit

- Being banned (from an action, object, issue) can lead to increased positive attitudes (cont’d)
  - Worche & Arnold’s (1973) vietnam protests / police on campus
    - When prevented from hearing an argument, become more positive to that argument. Censorship effect occurs regardless of reason for censorship – though more pronounced if dislike censor
  - Mazi’s work on phosphate bans (1975; Mazis, Settle, & Leslie, 1973)
    - Dade county enacted pro-envt ban against laundry or cleaning products containing phosphates
    - Subsequent polling showed compared to neighbouring county, Dade county residents believed phosphate detergents = gentler, more effective in cold water, better whiteners, better @ stains, even poured more easily (!)
    - Massive hoarding, smuggling, non-compliance.

Why?

- 3. Theory of psychological reactance (Brehm, 1972):
  - Restricting freedom is aversive, motivates attempts to restore freedom
  - Whenever we are denied access to resource we previously could have had / action we could have done (even if we did not exercise that right), we react
  - we want it more and we are willing to work harder to access it
  - When our desire increases, we begin assigning the desired object positive qualities.
  - Reactance is triggered by threat to prior access & is especially likely for prohibited behaviours
Operation of reactance

When inaction leads to positive attitude change

- All of these situations show where inhibition produces MORE positive attitudes -> the repressed behaviour
- Point: Prohibitions and punishments may backfire relative to positive persuasion attempts
Permitted fruit / Overjustification

- Engaging in beh can lead to increased accessibility / attitude strength / stability -> likelihood of attitude expression
- Engaging in beh and being rewarded should lead to increased perception of benefits -> more positive attitude
- But engaging in action you enjoy and being rewarded for it can reduce positivity of attitude!
  - Lepper et al. (1973): kids draw with “magic markers” for no reward, expected reward (certificate), or unexpected reward (certificate) – then free play period – kids with expected reward draw 50% as long as controls || unexpected reward
Why?

- **Self-perception theory (Bem, 1972)**
  - Often don’t actually know own attitudes – have to guess what they are based on behaviour
  - If observe own behaviour and reason for it (e.g., expected reward), assume are reacting to situation – extrinsic motivation
  - If observe own behaviour unjustified by situation (no reward, unexpected reward) assume that are acting because *like* the behaviour
  - Therefore perceive positive attitude

- **Take home message:** don’t reward kids (or adults) for fun behaviours because undermines positive attitudes – perceptions of fun

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Feet in the door - Commitment

- we talked earlier about how repeatedly expressed attitudes engage commitment:
  - Sherman (1980): 700% increase in volunteers for American Cancer Society when 3 days before called & asked to predict what wd say

- Engaging commitment is an important way that behaviours change attitude & create a spiral of positive attitudes -> action

- “Foot in the door” study – Freedman & Fraser (1966):
  - California homeowners asked to display a 3-inch square sign that read “Be a Safe Driver” - 2 weeks later: display a large ugly orange billboard in the front lawn that read “Drive Carefully”
  - Only asked re billboard: 17% agreement
  - Sign + billboard: 76% agreement
Feet in the door - commitment

- Requires first request that is large and significant enough that people infer attitudes from behaviour
- But not too large!
- If refuse request, may infer negative attitude and become less likely to do larger request (DeJong, 1979)

Why?

- Many processes underlie commitment:
  - Through self-perception, when engage in behaviour, infer more positive attitudes (hence if there are external motivations for Time 1 compliance, won’t get Time 2 effect)
  - Engaging in beh can lead to increased accessibility / attitude strength / stability -> expression
  - Engaging in beh and being rewarded (unexpectedly) should lead to increased perception of benefits -> more positive attitude
  - But very often commitment leads to increased positivity in the absence of rewards for the behaviour, or despite costs!
Imagined incentives – mental behaviour?

- Role playing & active improvisation in preparing a speech on an issue can lead to attitude change in direction advocated (Janis & King, 1954 King & Janis, 1956)

- Heavy smokers (24+/day) improvise for 1 hr the role of lung cancer patient facing illness, hospitalisation & death – show less positivity to smoking, fewer cigarettes 1 month later (14/day) than controls who listened to session (17/day). (Mann & Janis, 1968)

‘irrational’ commitment

- “Low-balling”:
  - make an attractive offer, engage commitment processes (decision to buy, arduous forms, commitment to financing, ‘trial period’ with product), then REMOVE attractive features of offer – most people will still buy.

- Cialdini et al. (1978):
  - Psych students volunteer for 7 a.m. study: 24% agree
  - Psych students volunteer for study: 56% agree – learn it’s at 7am – none change their mind – 95% turned up

- Failure to adapt decision when learn of hidden costs (or benefits that disappear) – defend yourself!

- Similar to what we learned last week about prototype incompability – establish a prototype for an action, engage commitment, change attractive attributes of action or add aversive consequences – people act as though it’s the same decision
Implications for teaching your kids / significant others

- Create positive attitudes to novel behaviours
  - Commitment to first step
  - Insufficiently justified actions (self-perception)
  - Barriers (scarcity heuristic)
  - “Don’t think about it” (White bear effect)
- Erode positive attitudes to fun behs
  - Use rewards to “stamp out” intrinsic motives (over-justification)
- Create positivity to boring/aversive behaviours
  - Insufficiently justified actions (self-perception)
Has the world gone mad?

- Much of above advice runs directly counter to economic / learning models
  - Change behaviour by offering rewards and withholding punishments
- When should you try to “teach” rationally vs. irrationally?
  - Rewards & punishments ok if you control the environment (surveillance/coercive power)
  - Also ok if w/out surveillance target will experience ratio of benefits to costs, control perceptions, and referent support that favours desired action
  - Counter-productive or ineffective with committed behaviour
  - Counter-productive or ineffective if do not have total surveillance & control and beh is not easy / positive / supported by relevant referents

Resisting advertising and manipulations

- Beware of accessible attitudes
- Beware of commitment processes
  - Say no to minor requests?
  - Watch out for escalation when do commit
  - ‘Adjust’ for post-decision dissonance
  - Definitely monitor and dump changing products/costs (“low-balling”)
Summary: Processes of behaviour -> attitude change

- Learning – can change properties of attitude (strength, stability, accessibility) or attitude content (positive/negative)
- Forced inaction -> increased positivity (reactance, white bear / ego-depletion, scarcity heuristic)
- Over-justified action -> less positive attitudes (self-perception)
- Behaviour leads to more positive attitudes (Commitment: self-perception, learning, direct experience)
- Foreshadowing next week: “Free will” decision to engage in behaviour with foreseeable, negative consequences can lead to increased positive attitudes (dissonance)

Next week: Attitude formation (Where do attitudes come from?)
- Reading: chapters 4-5 of B&W

In the tutes this week:
- Optional work on Assignment 1
  - Finalise IV and DV
  - Formulate hypotheses
  - Prepare Q
  - Draft method section