



ADVANCED INTRODUCTORY SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY



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SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

PSYCHOLOGY 302

- TO PREPARE YOU FOR ADVANCED COURSES AND INDEPENDENT STUDY IN SOCIAL AND PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY
- TO GET YOU TO THINK ABOUT THE RATHER ODD IDEA OF DOING SCIENCE ON SENSATE HUMAN BEINGS

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

- TRANSITION FROM TEXTBOOKS TO ORIGINAL SOURCES
- DEVELOP A SOPHISTICATED UNDERSTANDING OF EXPERIMENTATION--THE PREFERRED RESEARCH METHOD OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Social Psychology is the scientific study of the ways in which people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the real or imagined presence of other people.

**...people's conscious or
unconscious thoughts,
cognitions, concepts, feelings,
moods, actions, plans, and goals
are...**

Social psychology can be characterized in terms of

1. The phenomena it studies

2. The assumptions it makes

3. The methods it uses

1. Phenomena:

A. Social Behavior

B. Psychological level of analysis

a. Unemployment > anti-social behavior

b. Social disintegration > anti-social behavior

c. Frustration > anti-social behavior

Focuses on “Psychological Questions.” Focuses on effects of psychological states, however they are produced

2. Assumptions

A. The power of the situation (vs. individual dispositions)

**Contextual (non-historical)
causes of behavior**

**Social psychological forces
dominate non-psychological
factors**

**Social Puzzles vs. Social
Problems**

Social Puzzles VS. Social Problems

B. Situational Construal

**The role of subjectivity in
social behavior**

Social construction of reality

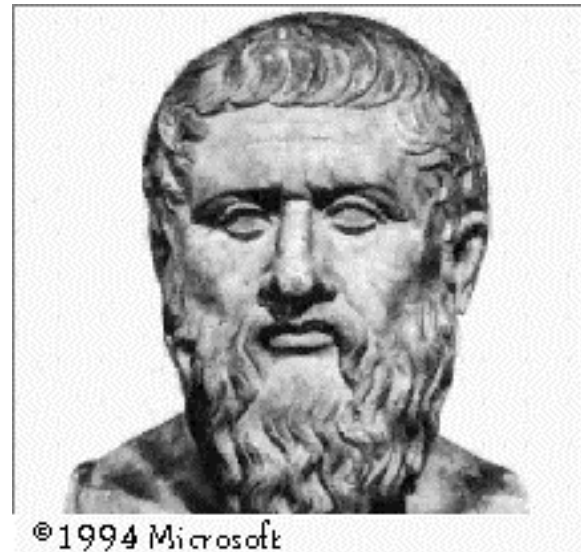
**The individual's constructions of
reality are constrained by
culture, the groups in which she
finds herself, and "physical
realities."**

A few Themes for the Course

- We frequently fail to appreciate the power that situations have to shape behavior.
- The mere presence of others (real or imagined) changes our behavior.
- Our beliefs and expectations determine much of what we “see.”
- Social behavior is open to close, scientific analysis and this analysis is, in turn, relevant to our daily lives.

Plato

- Tried to explain irrational behavior in terms of group influence
- “Had every Athenian Citizen been a Socrates, every Athenian assembly would still have been a mob.”



Social Psychology in 20th Century

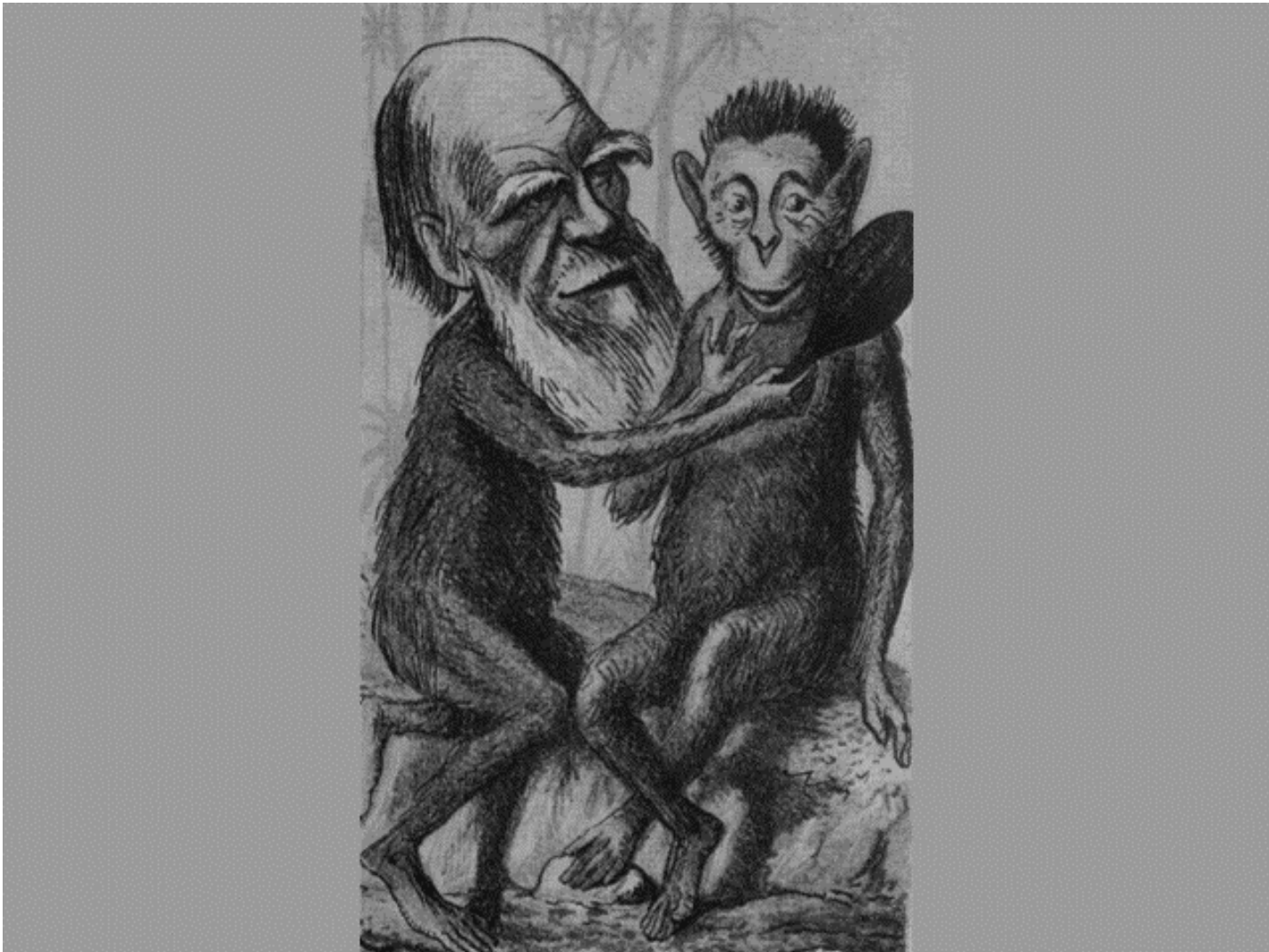
Three things happen at the turn of the Century.

Social Psychology by the sociologist Ross, 1908

Social Psychology by the psychologist McDougall, 1908

First social psychology “experiment” by Triplett in 1898

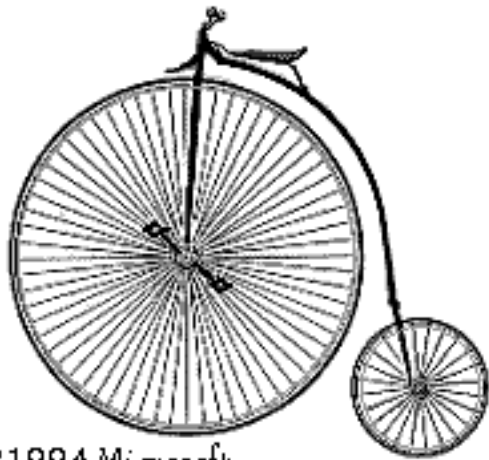
McDougall's bet on Darwin



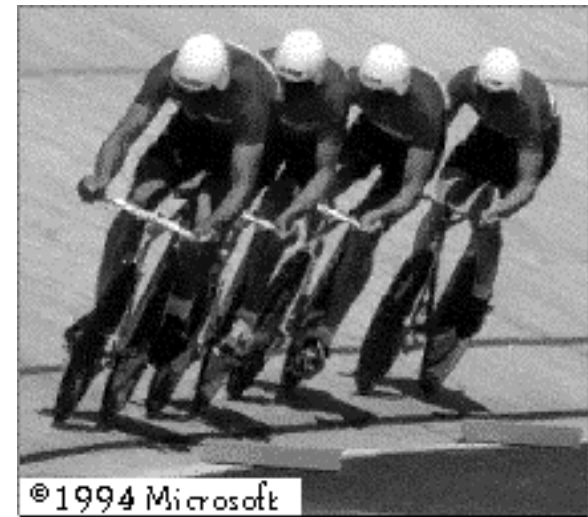
Why didn't Instinct Concept Dominate as Predicted?

- The explanations seemed circular.
- Philosophical tensions with the notion of behavior originating in heredity (remember intro. psych. and what's going on in the field.)

Triplett, 1898



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Emergence of social psychology as a separate discipline

McDougall, 1908

Triplet, 1898

Lewin, Lippett, & White, 1939

WWII

What is social psychology?

Social psychology versus personality

Social psychology versus sociology

Social psychology versus common sense

“Modern Social Psychology”

The Influence of WWII

- Brain Drain from Germany
- Tremendous Social Upheaval
- Practical Problems in U.S. and Government Funding

Kurt Lewin and the Leadership Study

- Wanted to study various leadership styles and find the most effective.
- To this end, ran Saturday morning “clubs” for kids and varied the leadership style of the adult.
- Found that the democratic group handled unexpected events best and that they produced the “best” products.

But what is social psychology today?

The study of how the real or imagined presence of others influences individuals' behaviors.

Reactions of People to Three Social Situations

	Meeting a friend for dinner	Learning that war has been declared	Encountering two friends arguing
Mary	Ignores him	Seeks a friend	Ignores them
John	Acts politely	Seeks a friend	Breaks up the argument
George	Hurries to appointment	Seeks a friend	Joins the argument

Social Psychology and Everyday Experience

Or...Didn't we already know all of
that?

Consider these “truths”

Self-esteem is positively related to grades

As the temperature rises, so do the number of
“beanballs” in professional baseball

In Denmark, the human birth rate is related to the
presence of storks

Ice cream consumption and drowning are positively
correlated

The NIMH estimates that 50% of deaths are
attributable to behavioral factors

Dads are older than teen Moms

The Goals of Science

Description of events

Explanation of why things occur

Prediction of future events

Theories and Hypotheses

Theories tell you why a relationship exists. They are explanations. Statements about the way things work.

Hypotheses are predictions about what should happen if the theory is true. They are “educated” guesses.

THINGS TO DO

- Pick up text book at U-Store
- Pick up course pack at Pequod
- Sign up for precepts on form. Return form to Salomon mailbox by Thursday noon
- Note website URL.
WWW.Princeton.edu/~Psych302/