

Lecture Outline
Stigmatization

Stigma

Stigma classifications

Stigma characteristics

Functions of stigmas

Stigma

Consensual beliefs about
undesirable attributes or
characteristics

Stigma Classifications

(Goffman, 1963)

1. Tribal identities
2. Abominations of the body
3. Blemishes of individual character

Stigma Classifications

(Goffman, 1963)

Tribal identities:

Social groups into which individuals are born

- religious groups
- ethnic groups
- racial groups
- national groups

Stigma Classifications
(Goffman, 1963)

Abominations of the
body:

Physical ailments:

- deformities
- illnesses
- paralysis

Stigma Classifications
(Goffman, 1963)

Blemishes of individual
character:

Moral transgressions,
weakness of will:

- drug addiction
- prostitution
- homosexuality
- mental illnesses

Stigma

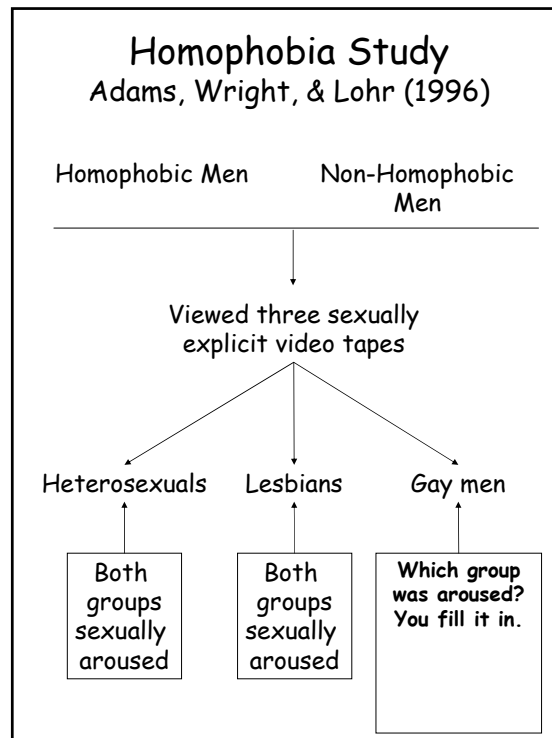
According to Goffman
(1963):

Stigmatized groups
regarded by many as
flawed

People report that they do
not emulate, or try to be
like, the stigmatized

Stereotypes about
stigmatized groups are
negative

Individuals with stigmas are
victims of prejudice,
discrimination, hate crimes



Stigma Characteristics

Dimensions along which stigmas can differ

Concealability

Extent to which a stigma
can be hidden from others

Stability

Extent to which a stigma
can change over time

Disruptiveness

Extent to which a stigma
disrupts social interactions

Aesthetic Qualities

Extent to which a stigma is
physically unappealing to
others

Responsibility

Extent to which a
stigmatized
person is seen as personally
responsible for their stigma

Danger (Peril)

Extent to which a
stigmatized
person is seen as dangerous

What we do know...

Stigma characteristics are
not all-or-none

What we do know...

Stigma characteristics are
not mutually exclusive

What we do know...

People can hold different beliefs about a stigma's characteristics

Functions of Stigmas

Self-enhancement function

Social identity function

System justification function

Terror management function

Self-Enhancement Function

Stigmatizing out-groups
make people feel better
about themselves

Based on Downward
Comparison Theory

Social Identity Theory

Assumptions:

People categorize others into in/out
groups

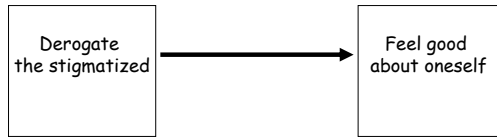
Categorization creates a social
identity

People want to be in groups held in
high esteem

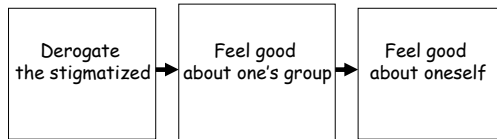
People sustain positive identity by
derogating out-groups

Self-Enhancement vs. Social Identity Theory

Self-Enhancement:



Social Identity Theory:



Self-Enhancement & Social Identity Functions

Limitations

Consensual nature
of stigmas

Self-devaluation

Self-Enhancement

Self-Enhancement

Social Identity

Self-Devaluation Study
Clark & Clark (1939)

253 African American
children

Presented with 4 dolls

- 2 brown with black hair
- 2 white with yellow hair

Children asked questions

Self-Devaluation Study
Clark & Clark (1939)

Identify actual color of
doll

Example questions:

"Give me the brown doll"

"Give me the white doll"

Self-Devaluation Study
Clark & Clark (1939)

Result:

Children correctly identified
the doll's color

- 93% gave the brown doll
when asked
- 94% gave the white doll
when asked

Self-Devaluation Study
Clark & Clark (1939)

Identify racial identity of
doll

Example questions:

"Give me the doll that looks
like an African American
child"

"Give me the doll that looks
like a White child"

Self-Devaluation Study
Clark & Clark (1939)

Results:

Children able to identify the
doll's racial identity

- 93% gave the brown doll when asked for the one that looked like an African American child
- 93% gave white doll when asked for the one that looked like a White child

Self-Devaluation Study
Clark & Clark (1939)

Identify child's racial
identity

Example questions:

"Give me the doll that
looks like you"

Self-Devaluation Study
Clark & Clark (1939)

Results:

Children not as good at identifying their own racial identity

- 66% gave the brown doll when asked which looked like them
- 33% gave the white doll when asked which looked like them

Self-Devaluation Study
Clark & Clark (1939)

Identify racial preference

Example questions:

"Give me the doll you like best"

"Give me the doll that looks bad"

"Give me the doll that is a nicer color"

Self-Devaluation Study

Clark & Clark (1939)

Results:

Children devalued own racial identity:

- 66% liked the white doll best
- 59% said the brown doll looked bad
- only 38% said the brown doll was a nice color

System Justification Theory

Assumptions:

Group inequalities in every society

Advantaged groups derogate stigmatized groups to justify why they have more

Justifications show how the system is fair

System Justification Theory

Through system justification people:

1. Come to believe that they deserve their privilege
2. The system under which their culture operates is fair
3. Perception of fairness reduces intergroup conflict

System Justification Theory

Limitations:

Cannot explain social revolutions that initially heighten intergroup conflict

Terror Management Function

Assumptions:

People are aware of their own
mortality

This awareness creates anxiety

People protect self from this
anxiety by subscribing to a
cultural view that provides
order & meaning to an
otherwise random world

Terror Management

Stigmatization serves to
reject those who are
different and who violate
and challenge cultural
views

Prejudice

Theories of Racism

Theories of Prejudice

Prejudice

Definition:

A positive or negative attitude, belief, or feeling about a person generalized from attitudes, beliefs, or feelings about the person's group.

Components of Prejudice

Stereotypic beliefs

typical attributes

Symbolic beliefs

values, traditions,
customs

Emotions

affective reactions (e.g.,
disgust)

Theories of Racism

Old Fashioned Racism

Modern (Symbolic) Racism

Old Fashioned Racism

Premise:

People are consciously aware they are racist, but may conceal that from others.

Examples of Self-Report Measures of Prejudice

Old Fashioned Racism Scale

Generally speaking, do you feel blacks are smarter, not as smart, or about as smart as whites?

If a black family with about the same income and education as you moved next door, would you mind it a lot, a little or not at all?

Modern (Symbolic) Racism

Premise:

People feel ambivalent toward the stigmatized - torn between the egalitarian values they truly hold and the racism they harbor.

Modern (Symbolic) Racism

Theory proposes that....

People deal with their ambivalence by letting it come out in disguised form - as support for conservative American values.

Examples of Self-Report
Measures of Prejudice

Modern Racism Scale

Over the past few years,
blacks have gotten more
economically than they
deserve

Blacks are getting too
demanding in their push for
equal rights

Self-Reported Prejudice

General pattern:

Prejudice is subsiding

Explanations

People are less prejudiced
now

Social Desirability