Exam 1 Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Descriptive Stats</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Score</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 25</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Persuasion

• Source:
  – An attempt to change a person's (or people's) attitudes through a message.

• Target:
  – Changing one’s attitudes as a result of being exposed to a message.

Two Routes to Persuasion

• Central route persuasion

• Peripheral route persuasion
### Central Route

**Processing of Persuasive Messages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route to Persuasion</th>
<th>Most Likely to Occur When</th>
<th>Effect on Attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Route</td>
<td>People find the message personally relevant and involving. People are high in the need for cognition. People are in a neutral or mildly negative mood. The communicator speaks at a normal rate of speed.</td>
<td>Attitudes tend to be strong, resistant to counterarguments, and predictive of behavior.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Peripheral Route

**Processing of Persuasive Messages**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route to Persuasion</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral Route</td>
<td>People find the message to be irrelevant and noninvolving. People are low in need for cognition. People are in a positive mood. The communicator speaks rapidly.</td>
<td>Attitudes tend to be weak, susceptible to counterarguments, and not predictive of behavior.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distraction and Persuasion

• Common sense prediction:
  – Distraction would interfere with persuasive attempts
• But, following the ELM logic, what should happen if the audience is distracted from elaborating during central route processing?
  – If agreement would normally result from elaboration, distraction will result in less persuasion;
  – But, if disagreement (through counter-arguing) would normally result from elaboration, distraction will result in higher levels of persuasion.

Distraction and Persuasion

• Distraction prevents elaboration
• Examples of factors that prevent elaboration:
  – Fast talking
  – Talking softly
  – Noise
  – Flashy visual distracters (clothes; cigarette ash)
  – Slowing down heart
  – Laying supine
  – What else…?
Distraction & Persuasion

- IV₁: Level of odor
  - Normal
  - Aversive
- IV₂: Strength of message
  - Weak
  - Strong
- DV: Agreement with message

Operational Definitions

- Odor:
  - Normal (no detection of unusual smells)
  - Aversive (chemical combinations that result in significantly higher self-reports of obnoxious odor)
- Strength of Arguments
  - Weak: “My advisor took a comprehensive exam and now he has a prestigious academic position.”
  - Strong: “Prestigious universities have comprehensive exams to maintain academic excellence.”
- Agreement
  - Should we institute comprehensive senior exams at Purdue? (1 = absolutely not; 7 = yes, absolutely)

Photo 1. Using a Naval Ranger® to detect odors.

The odor in this room is:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not noticeable Highly noticeable

The odor in this room is:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Pleasant Unpleasant
Predicted Results

Should We Institute Comprehensive Exams?

Typical Results When nCog is Factored In
How To Resist Persuasion

• Our default nature is to accept persuasive messages…resisting takes effort, and sometimes, knowledge, and ability to critically analyze message.
  – Understanding = belief
• Inoculation (McGuire, 1964)
  – Build up reserves of counter-arguments
    • Weak attacks
• Forewarning (Petty & Brock, 1977)
  – “Forewarned is forearmed.”

How To Resist Persuasion

• Poison Parasites (Cialdini, 2003)
  – Poison (strong counterarguments) *
  – Parasite (retrieval cues that bring those arguments to mind when seeing opponent’s message)
How To Resist Persuasion

• **Stealing Thunder** (Williams, Bourgeois, & Croyle, 1993; Dolnik, Case, & Williams, 2003)
  – Revealing the worst first
    • In courtroom
    • In politics
    • In interpersonal relationships

Driving occasioning death

• With Australian participants and a new case, we replicated stealing thunder effect.
• Framing was not necessary.
• Credibility of defendant higher when he frames revelation by discounting its importance.

*From Dolnik, Case, & Williams, Study 1, (2003).*
Fighting the Stealing Thunder Tactic

- Stolen Thunder condition unaffected by whether or not prosecution also brought it up.
- Can be counteracted
- Evidence for change of meaning.