

The social self

Kelly G. Shaver

College of Charleston

shaverk@cofc.edu

www.cofc.edu/~shaverk

Self-perception

- Looking-glass self
 - The original version: people
 - A revision: red dots on your head
- Self-perception of behavior
- Facial feedback
- Intrinsic motivation
 - Feedback or control?

Influences of others

- Social comparison theory
 - Abilities vs. opinions
 - Locate and evaluate; downward
 - Similar on relevant attributes
- Two-factor theory of emotion
 - Arousal plus cognition (often from others)
 - Milder emotions, others present before the emotional experience

Self-esteem

- Individual worth
- Terror management (not)
- Sociocultural variables
 - Blacks higher, others lower than whites (Twenge & Crocker, 2002, meta-analysis)
 - Males slightly higher (Kling, et al., 1999, another meta-analysis)

Feelings about the self

- Objective self-awareness
 - Self-discrepancy reduction leads to
 - Matching the standards, or withdrawal
- Public vs. private self-consciousness
 - Outer image and its maintenance
 - Internal feelings and emotions
- Self-control is limited: the white bear

Self-enhancement

- Self-serving biases
- Self-handicapping
- Basking in reflected glory (BIRGing)
- Downward social comparison ("Yes, but I'm better than _____.")
- Self-deception: illusions can be shattered by the world

Self-presentation

- Strategic self-presentation (ingratiation)
- Self-verification
- Self-monitoring
 - Low (*principled*, or just inattentive?)
 - High (*pragmatic*, or just perceptive)