Chapter 14: From Affect to Social Cognition

1. One's mood is shown to affect their helping behaviors. What are the four mechanisms offered to explain how mood affects helping? Briefly describe each one.

   a) Attention: mood can alter one's focus of attention on oneself or on other people.

   b) Separate process: mood impacts how people respond to different types of requests (i.e. when one is in a good mood, an emphasis on rewards for helping is more likely to result in helping than an emphasis on the guilt one should feel for not helping).

   c) Social outlook: one's social outlook impacts their mood, thus affecting their willingness to help (i.e. when one has experienced a positive interpersonal event resulting in a positive social outlook, they are more likely to help because they are focused on the goodness of people).

   d) Mood maintenance: people will help others depending on perceived effects on their mood (i.e. if one is in a good mood and helping will support a good mood, they will help. If helping will ruin their good mood, they won't help).

2. Most mood-congruence research finds uneven effects for negative moods. Provide at least two possible reasons that explain why this might be the case.

   a) People try to repair their negative moods, so attempting to induce negative moods through a manipulation does not work so well.

   b) The store of negative material in memory is less extensive and less well-integrated, so negative moods may not as effectively cue congruent material.

   c) If negative material is less organized in memory, it may be intrinsically harder to learn, thus resulting in the uneven effects found in the literature.

   d) There is greater differentiation among negative moods than among positive moods. Thus, these uneven effects may be a result of separate negative moods having fewer associations than an overall happy glow.

3. List the four processing modes proposed in the affect infusion model (AIM). How does affect impact each processing mode?

   a) Under heuristic, or automatic, processing, affect informs quick judgments ("if I am feeling good, I must like this").

   b) Under substantive, or controlled, processing affect primes judgments through selective attention, encoding, retrieval, and association.

   c) When people have direct access to prior judgment, affect may have little to no influence.

   d) Under motivated processing to further a preexisting goal, affect again may have little to no influence.

4. Briefly describe the network model of mood and memory. How has research supported or cast doubt upon this framework?

a) This model argues that emotion is a retrieval cue like any other. Memories or events that come to mind at the same time as a given emotion are linked to that emotion, and hence (indirectly) to other emotion-congruent memories or events. Thus, emotion provides an additional route to the item in memory.

b) Research was disappointing in its attempts to support the facilitating effects of mood on perception of similarly toned material (G. H. Bower, 1987) and on mood state-dependent retrieval. The combined effect of conceptual and emotional relatedness in memory networks is not well supported (E. J. Johnson & Tversky, 1983).

5. Describe the separate-systems view in your own words. Provide at least three examples described in the text that demonstrate the phenomenon:

a) The separate-systems view suggests that affective and cognitive processes proceed in parallel paths without influencing each other much, under at least some circumstances.

a) According to this view, the parallel paths phenomenon is demonstrated in several respects:

   o Affective reactions are primary. For example, evaluations are made and then justified, and decisions are based on preference rather than computation.

   o Affect is basic: evaluation is a major and universal component of virtually all perception and meaning.

   o Affective reactions are inescapable.

   o Affective reactions tend to be irrevocable, in contrast to cognitive judgments: one's feelings cannot be wrong, but one's beliefs can be.

   o Affect implicates the self where cognitive judgments do not.

   o Affective judgments are difficult to verbalize.

   o Affective reactions may not depend on cognition: the features that people use to discriminate a stimulus may not be the same features that they use to decide whether or not they like it.

   o Affective reactions may be separated from content knowledge.

6. Describe Lazarus's and Epstein's critiques to the separate-systems view.

a) Lazarus argued that cognition, defined as appraisal, is necessary for emotion. Appraisals interpret meaningful stimuli in terms of their significance for personal well-being. These appraisals occur from the very beginning of perceiving environmental inputs and are not regarded as deliberate, rational, and conscious.

b) Epstein argued that preconscious cognitions usually precede emotions, and that the Zajonc approach implicitly defined cognition as conscious, when it need not be. Thus, Epstein posited that preconscious cognitive appraisals are an integral part of emotion.