

Origin of the Term "Social Judgment Theory"

From the archives of the Brunswik list:

Date: Wed, 12 Jul 1995 11:30:30 -0700
From: Kenneth Hammond <KHAMMOND@CLIPR.COLORADO.EDU>

A short while ago i was asked to explain the origin of the term "Social Judgment Theory".

In the early 60's several of us (berndt brehmer, tom stewart, john gillis,

jeryl mumpower, len adelman, mike doherly, et al) realized that we had developed a systematic approach to j/dm, and need a name for it. i suggested SJT (to the best of my recollection) bcs i thot of myself as a social psychologist (tho' i gave that up shortly thereafter) and wanted to emphasize that aspect of our work, and 2) i wanted to distinguish our approach from Social Learning Theory (very prominent at the time). all approved (with the exception of jeryl mumpower, wholater....called my att'n to muzafir sherif's use of this term to identify his approach to social psychology in the 40's and 50's, and thot that i was usurping the name of his theory. jeryl was prbly correct, tho' no harm seems to have come from this mistake.) i don't know how long this label will live, altho it already has had a much longer life by far than is awarded to psychological theories.

do i think it was a good idea? definitely, particularly in view of the great increase in interest in evolutionary psychology. sjt is made for this development. unfortunately, it has escaped the att'n of the evolutionary psychols with the exception of david buss, who has made very good use of it in his very interesting work (q.v.). i hope for more; the move shld occur in both directions. (i shld have also mentioned lew petrinovich 's papers).perhaps we can persuade an evolutionary psychol to talk to us at the brunswik mtg in november.

ken hammond