

The Attitude-Behavior Relationship

- First Generation of Research: *Whether*
 - "We tend to associate with people we like and avoid people we dislike, we mainly eat foods that are to our tastes, we speak out in opposition to policies we consider undesirable, and we generally seem to behave in ways that are consistent with our attitudes." (Ajzen, 1996)
 - To what extent, if at all, are attitudes predictive of behavior?
 - The LaPiere Study and its implications for the field. Wicker (1969) challenge to the predictive power of the *attitude* construct. But were investigators expecting too much? Remember Lewin.

- Second Generation of Research: *When*
 - The *moderator variable approach*: Under what *conditions* do what kinds of *attitudes of* what kinds of *individuals* predict what kinds of *behavior*? Identifying moderating factors contributes to our understanding of the processes involved in going from attitudes to behavior.
 - *Conditions*: Situational moderators (normative concerns, Campbell's situational threshold model; theory of planned behavior).
 - *Attitudes*: Predictor moderators (examples of attitudinal qualities, e.g., method of attitude formation, issue involvement and self-interest).
 - *Individuals*: Personal moderators (relevant individual differences, e.g., self-monitoring, Need for Cognition).
 - *Behavior*: Criterion moderators (properties of the behavior to be measured; principle of correspondence).

- Third Generation of Research: *How*
 - How and by what psychological mechanisms do attitudes guide behavior? To improve the accuracy of our prediction of specific action tendencies, it is necessary to examine the processes whereby attitudes guide behavior. Deliberative (reasoned action, planned behavior models) vs. automatic processing modes.
 - Process models (e.g., Fazio's *MODE* model and other automatic activation models; implicit vs. explicit attitudes revisited). Are only strongly held attitudes automatically activated?