

Chapter 14

Social Psychology

Outline

- I. Social Cognition: Making Sense of the World
 - A. **Social psychology** is the field of psychology concerned with how others influence the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of the individual.
 - B. Much of social psychology has taken on a cognitive flavor.
 - C. Social cognition involves two related questions.
 1. What information about the social nature of the world do we have stored in memory?
 2. How does that information influence social judgments, choices, attractions, and behaviors?
 - D. **Naïve realism** refers to the tendency for us to believe that *we* see the world in a more rational, objective way than other people do.
- II. The Nature of Attitudes
 - A. An **attitude** is a relatively stable evaluative disposition directed toward some object or event; it consists of feelings, behaviors, and beliefs.
 1. Attitudes are for or against, pro or con, positive or negative, i.e., *valenced*.
 2. There is a preparedness to respond to the object of an attitude.
 3. Attitudes must have objects.
 - B. Attitudes have three components: affective, behavioral, and cognitive.
 1. These three components need not be consistent.
 2. Some have argued that attitude is a two-dimensional concept involving affect and cognition only.
 3. Some add a component of **behavior intention**, that is, the intent to behave.
- III. Attitude formation
 - A. Most experts agree that attitudes are formed through learning.
 - B. *Observational learning* is the term used to describe those instances where one develops an attitude because he or she sees (values) others holding the same attitude, and even being reinforced for doing so.
 - C. *Classical conditioning* uses associative techniques of pairing an otherwise neutral object with one about which strong attitudes are already held.
 - D. *Operant conditioning* predicts that whenever attitudinal behaviors are reinforced the underlying attitude will develop and strengthen.
 - E. The **mere exposure phenomenon** (associated with Zajonc) suggests that the more one is exposed to an object, the greater the likelihood that he or she will develop positive attitudes about that object.
 - F. The media may be involved in attitude formation by **agenda setting**.
 1. First-level agenda setting has the media telling the audience which issues are the important ones.
 2. Second-level agenda setting involves how the media works to shape the audience's attitudes about the issues it chooses to discuss.

IV. Attitude Change Mechanisms

- A. Leon Festinger's theory of **cognitive dissonance** proposes that a negative motivational state arises when our attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors are out of balance or inconsistent.
 - 1. Dissonance theory can help people understand behaviors that are seemingly incomprehensible.
 - 2. Negative situations are more likely to arouse dissonance than positive ones.
 - 3. **Postdecisional dissonance** is the cognitive dissonance experienced after making a decision between two mutually exclusive, equally attractive, different alternatives.
- B. As an alternative to cognitive dissonance theory, Daryl Bem proposed **self-perception theory**, that says we keenly observe behavior, including our own, and look for an explanation for that behavior.

V. Attitude Change by Persuasion

- A. **Persuasion** is the application of rational and/or emotional arguments to convince others to change their attitudes and behaviors.
 - 1. The **Yale communication model**, the most widely accepted model of persuasion, considers the influence of the source of a message, the structure of a message, and the audience for a message.
 - 2. Persuasion depends on the source of the communication.
 - a. **Credibility**, the believability of the communicator involving expertise and trustworthiness, increases persuasion.
 - b. There are other factors that influence persuasion, including vocal pleasantness, facial expressiveness, attractiveness of the communicator, etc.
- B. Persuasion amounts to applying arguments meant to deliberately convince others to change their attitudes.
- C. Successful persuasion depends on the nature of the message and the audience.
 - 1. In a rational appeal, one uses facts and figures to persuade an audience.
 - 2. Emotional appeals can be even more effective.
 - 3. Fear appeals must arouse fear, convince listeners that dire consequences could happen, and include instructions on how to avoid the dire consequences.
 - 4. The **elaboration likelihood model** is a model of persuasion stating that there are two routes to persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route.

VI. SPOTLIGHT: Attitudes Toward People with Disabilities

- A. Nearly 30 million civilian, non-institutionalized Americans have one or more disabilities.
 - 1. About 2.5 million veterans received disability compensation between 1990 and 2003.
 - 2. This is a minority group which anyone can join at any time
- B. A person with a disability has difficulties performing certain functions (seeing, walking, etc.), has difficulty with the activities of daily life, or with certain social roles (school work, work on a job, etc.)
- C. Persons with disabilities are often the object of prejudice and discrimination (even with laws prohibiting such discrimination).
 - 1. They are often seen as less able in areas unrelated to their particular disability.
 - 2. People with disabilities often have lower than average economic status.
 - 3. People with disabilities may be seen as not just different, but also damaged.

VII. Prejudice, Stereotypes, and Discrimination

- A. Of particular interest to social psychologists are attitudes held about other people.
- B. **Prejudice** implies an attitude that represents a biased—often negative—disposition toward groups of persons.
 - 1. Negative prejudicial attitudes have real and often significant consequences for the target of such attitudes.
 - 2. Racism and sexism are two common prejudicial attitudes.
- C. A **stereotype** is a rigid set of positive or negative beliefs about a group of people.
 - 1. It amounts to a rigid, over-generalized, often biased schema.
 - 2. *Explicit stereotypes* are those of which one is consciously aware.

3. *Implicit stereotypes* are those which operate at an unconscious level of awareness.
- D. **Discrimination** is the behavioral component of prejudice and refers to the (usually) negative behavior(s) directed at a member of a group simply because of that person's membership in the group.

VIII. SPOTLIGHT: Racial Profiling of African Americans and Hispanic Americans

- A. Profiling occurs when members of law enforcement stop, search, or arrest persons on the basis of their race or ethnicity, national origin, or religion.
- B. Many African American males see profiling as "driving while Black."
 1. Blacks are stopped and search about 20 percent more often than are Caucasians.
 2. In fact, the problem is perceived (by all groups) as being worse than it actually is.
 3. When it does occur, racial profiling can be seen as a case of *aversive racism*.
- C. The federal government and thirty states have passed legislation outlawing racial profiling.

IX. Attribution Processes

- A. An **internal attribution** explains the source of a person's behavior in terms of a characteristic of the person (a trait or disposition).
- B. An **external attribution** explains the source of a person's behavior in terms of the situation or context outside the individual.
- C. When forming attributions, distinctiveness, consensus, and consistency are important determiners.
- D. Whether one uses internal or external attributions often depends upon a trait inference process (What kind of person is he?) or a situational inference process (What kind of party is this?).
- E. The **fundamental attribution error** is the tendency to favor internal attributions rather than external situational explanations.
- F. The **just world hypothesis** is a bias in which people come to believe that good things only happen to good people and bad things only happen to bad people.
- G. With the **self-serving bias**, success or positive outcomes are attributed to personal, internal sources, and failures or negative outcomes are attributed to situational or external sources.
- H. With the **actor-observer bias** one tends to use external attributions for his or her behaviors and internal attributions for the behaviors of others.

X. Interpersonal Attraction

- A. **Interpersonal attraction** can be seen as a favorable and powerful attitude toward another person.
- B. Several theories explain interpersonal attraction.
 1. The reinforcement-affect model claims that people are attracted to others who provide rewarding experiences.
 2. The social exchange model argues that what matters most is a comparison of the costs and benefits of establishing a relationship.
 3. Equity theory extends the social exchange model to add the appraisal of rewards and costs for both parties in a relationship.
 4. Attachment theory is based on feelings or affect more than cognitions, and suggests that people develop relationship styles that they maintain throughout their life span.
- C. Regardless of underlying theory, there are several factors that affect interpersonal attraction.
 1. Reciprocity says that a person tends to value and like others who like and value him or her.
 2. Proximity suggests that simple physical closeness yields attraction
 3. The **mere exposure phenomenon** claims that liking increases with repeated exposure.
 4. Physical attractiveness is related to interpersonal attraction.
 - a. Among college students, it may be the most important factor in interpersonal relationships.
 - b. In this context, the **matching phenomenon** suggests that one is often attracted to someone else of the same level of physical attractiveness and social status.

5. Considerable research supports the assertion that the more similar two people are, the more likely they will be attracted to each other.
 - a. One tends to be repelled or put-off by those perceived as dissimilar.
 - b. Opposites may attract, but similarity is more powerful over time.

XI. Conformity

- A. Modifying behavior under perceived pressure to do so, so that it is consistent with the behavior of others, is **conformity**.
- B. Solomon Asch found people susceptible to social pressure when in an ambiguous situation.
 1. Any social support for one's position minimizes conformity.
 2. This is known as the **true partner effect**.
- C. Several factors impact the degree of conformity.
 1. The more competent the majority, the greater the conformity.
 2. The more ambiguous the situation, the greater the conformity.
 3. There are small gender differences, with women conforming more than men in some circumstances.

XII. Obedience to Authority

- A. Obedience results when one yields to the pressure of perceived authority.
- B. Obedience was demonstrated in the laboratory by Stanley Milgram.
 1. "Teachers" were asked to shock "learners" in a task presented as a learning experiment.
 - a. In fact, no one was really shocked.
 - b. The person acting as the "learner" was a confederate of Milgram.
 2. Even when "learners" yelled in protest, many participants continued to deliver "shocks" when asked to by the experimenter.
 - a. 65% of participants (men and women) obeyed fully with the experimenter.
 - b. All of the participants reported feeling badly about what they had done, but they did it anyway.
- C. Milgram fully debriefed his subjects, but was severely criticized for placing people in such a stressful situation.

XIII. Bystander Intervention

- A. The social psychology of bystander intervention deals with conditions under which observers (bystanders) will come to the aid of someone perceived to be in trouble.
- B. Latané and Darley's cognitive model suggested that a series of cognitive events must occur before a bystander will intervene.
 1. First, the bystander must notice what is happening.
 2. The bystander must label the situation as an emergency.
 3. The bystander must decide that it is his or her responsibility to do something.
 4. The bystander must implement his or her decision.
- C. There are several factors that account for the **bystander effect**, or social inhibition of helping.
 1. **Audience inhibition** is the tendency to be hesitant to do anything in front of others, especially strangers.
 2. **Pluralistic ignorance** is one's tendency to believe that only he or she is confused and does not know what to do in an emergency, whereas everyone else is standing around doing nothing for some good reason.
 3. The principle of **diffusion of responsibility** states that the greater the number of other people present, the smaller is each individual's perceived obligation to intervene.
 4. The **empathy-altruism hypothesis** is a hypothesis stating that empathy is one reason for helping those in need.
 5. **Egoism** is a motive for helping someone in need to avoid personal distress for not helping.
 6. A person is more likely to help when he or she is alone rather than in a group.

XIV. Social Loafing and Facilitation

- A. **Social loafing** is the tendency to work less (decrease individual effort) as the size of the group in which one is working becomes larger.
 - 1. Loafing increases to the extent that the individual performance cannot be identified.
 - 2. Degrees of loafing vary significantly across cultures.
- B. When the presence of others improves an individual's performance, there is evidence of **social facilitation**.
- C. **Social interference** occurs when the presence of others leads to poor performance.

XV. Decision Making in Groups

- A. Groups can, and often do, outperform individuals in problem solving.
 - 1. Groups tend to recognize answers faster.
 - 2. Groups with high-quality members perform better than groups with low-quality members.
 - 3. Groups bring more resources to problem-solving tasks.
 - 4. Interpersonal cohesiveness and task-based cohesiveness increase productivity.
- B. The risky shift phenomenon occurs when groups make decisions that are riskier than those made by individuals.
- C. The **group polarization effect** claims that group participation will make any individual's reactions more extreme or polarized.
- D. **Groupthink** is an excessive concern for reaching a consensus in group decision-making to the extent that critical evaluations are withheld, and involves eight symptoms.
 - 1. An illusion of invulnerability
 - 2. Rationalization
 - 3. Unquestioned belief in the group's inherent morality
 - 4. Stereotyped views of the enemy
 - 5. Conformity pressures
 - 6. Self-censorship
 - 7. An illusion of unanimity
 - 8. Emergence of self-appointed "mindguards"

Practice Test Questions

Multiple Choice

1. Most psychologists believe that attitudes are made up of a number of different components or aspects. The one component that seems most central to an attitude is
 a. some attitudinal object. c. a tendency to behave in a certain way.
 b. a belief or cognition. d. an evaluative (+ or -) feeling.
2. When advertisers try to change your attitudes about their products or services, in which component of your attitude are they really most interested?
 a. cognitive c. affective
 b. evaluative d. behavioral
3. Advertisers who try to change attitudes about their product by showing satisfied customers providing testimonials about how wonderful that product is are using _____ as a technique for attitude change.
 a. classical conditioning c. observational learning
 b. stereotype development d. operant conditioning
4. If I can get you to do something that is contrary to an attitude you currently hold, you may change that attitude. If I am successful, I have changed your attitude using
 a. cognitive dissonance. c. coercive persuasion.
 b. classical conditioning. d. cognitive response theory.
5. A communicator is trying to persuade others to change their attitudes. Which characteristic of that communicator is LEAST important in predicting if the communication will be successful?
 a. credibility c. expertise
 b. celebrity d. trustworthiness
6. Attributions are typically made in terms of each of the following EXCEPT
 a. internal vs. external factors. c. learned vs. inherited factors.
 b. dispositional vs. situational factors. d. intrinsic vs. extrinsic factors.
7. When we overemphasize personal reasons in our explanations of another's behaviors and overlook the forces of the environment, we are
 a. making a fundamental attribution error.
 b. demonstrating a belief in the just world hypothesis.
 c. employing a self-serving bias in our judgment.
 d. failing to take into account the actor-observer bias.
8. Basically, attribution theory deals with
 a. different techniques for changing the attitudes of others.
 b. how we tend to explain the behaviors of ourselves and others in social situations.
 c. factors and processes that lead to interpersonal attractions.
 d. forming expectations about how we should behave in social situations.
9. Which of these is NOT a theory or model used to explain the basis of interpersonal attraction?
 a. equity model c. dissonance model
 b. social exchange model d. reinforcement model

10. One of the aspects of attachment theory suggests that
- a. everybody relates to others in essentially the same way.
 - b. the style with which one forms attachments as a child predicts how one will do so as an adult.
 - c. women tend to form interpersonal attachments that are different from those of men.
 - d. how one goes about forming attachments to others depends more upon the situation than on the people involved.
11. With regard to interpersonal attraction, which statement is FALSE?
- a. The “mere exposure” phenomenon tells us that familiarity breeds contempt.
 - b. We tend to like and value those who like and value us.
 - c. Physical attractiveness is correlated with attraction.
 - d. People tend to be attracted to those who have similar attitudes.
12. Which is likely to have the LEAST impact on attraction?
- a. physical proximity
 - b. physical attractiveness
 - c. attitudinal similarity
 - d. perceived sexuality
13. When Solomon Asch studied conformity, he found each of the following EXCEPT that
- a. even participants’ perceptual judgments could be influenced by group pressure.
 - b. most of his participants (more than 75%) conformed at least once.
 - c. the least amount of social support was sufficient to help a person resist group pressure.
 - d. most of the participants continued to conform even after they knew that the group’s members were confederates of the experimenter.
14. In an Asch conformity situation, when will conformity to group pressure be the greatest? When the other participants in the study group are presented as being
- a. friends and classmates.
 - b. architects and draftsmen.
 - c. social psychologists.
 - d. apathetic conformists.
15. The major difference between conformity and obedience is
- a. peer pressure.
 - b. the presence of an authority figure.
 - c. the nature of the task involved.
 - d. the person’s perception that there is social pressure.
16. Which result does NOT follow from Milgram’s studies of obedience?
- a. Personality characteristics of the subjects allowed Milgram to predict who would obey and who would not.
 - b. When told about the experiment, virtually no one believed that he or she would have delivered the shocks.
 - c. No participants in the experiment stopped delivering shocks before the 300-volt level, when the “learner” began protesting.
 - d. More than half of the participants delivered the highest level of shock to the “learner.”
17. Which conclusion from Milgram’s research is justified?
- a. Persons of some nationalities are more likely to obey than are others.
 - b. When told to harm others, few people felt guilty about it.
 - c. The perception of authority is a powerful force in conformity.
 - d. Women are more likely to conform than are men.
18. What is the major reason why some have criticized Milgram’s study of obedience as being unethical?
- a. He made a fundamental attribution error.
 - b. He shocked people without their consent.
 - c. He allowed participants to believe that they were hurting someone.
 - d. He failed to adequately debrief his participants.

19. Which of the following is NOT taken to be a necessary step in considering whether to intervene in an emergency?
- a. One must notice or perceive the situation as an emergency.
 - b. One must interpret the situation as an emergency.
 - c. One must know or care about the victim.
 - d. One must decide to take responsibility to do something.
20. Which of these best characterizes pluralistic ignorance?
- a. the feeling that one does not know what to do in an emergency
 - b. the perception that there is a good reason why others are not acting
 - c. the decision that there is nothing that can be done to help
 - d. the belief that intervention will cause more harm than good
21. What the concept of “diffusion of responsibility” tells us is that if you were in need of assistance, you would most likely receive that assistance if
- a. there were only a few people around at the time.
 - b. the persons who see you are women, not men.
 - c. you happen to be in a small town, not a big city.
 - d. there happens to be a large crowd nearby.
22. Based on his observations of bicycle riders in competition, Norman Triplett performed one of the first experiments in social psychology (in 1898) on the phenomenon called
- a. bystander apathy.
 - b. cognitive dissonance.
 - c. audience inhibition.
 - d. social facilitation.
23. Zajonc and others suggest that the presence of others is likely to improve or facilitate one’s performance if
- a. the task at hand is easy and well learned.
 - b. those others act in a supportive, approving fashion.
 - c. the task is difficult or complicated.
 - d. those others act in a hostile, disapproving fashion.
24. Janis’s concept of “groupthink” tells us that
- a. groups strive to reach consensus, right or wrong.
 - b. individuals are more likely to express divergent opinions in a group than when they are alone.
 - c. members of a group prefer that others in the group do most of the work.
 - d. group decisions tend to be conservative and unoriginal.

True/False

1. ___ True ___ False Social cognitions include those behaviors in which we engage when we are in groups, both large and small.
2. ___ True ___ False Attitudes have three components: personal, social, and environmental.
3. ___ True ___ False Attitude change can begin by bringing about a change in one's affect, behavior, or cognitions.
4. ___ True ___ False Most people attribute their own success to dispositional factors and their own failures to situational factors.
5. ___ True ___ False Even if someone likes us now, if they did NOT like us originally, we probably will not value them as a friend.
6. ___ True ___ False By definition, people are more likely to obey than to conform.
7. ___ True ___ False Asch found that some people will conform most of the time, no matter what their perception of the nature of the group applying pressure to conform.
8. ___ True ___ False Up to a point, the more people who express the same judgment, the more likely an individual will yield or conform to that judgment.
9. ___ True ___ False Even Milgram was surprised by the results of his experiments.
10. ___ True ___ False Social interference and social loafing are more common phenomena than is social facilitation.

Key Terms and Concepts

social psychology _____

social cognition _____

naïve realism _____

attitude _____

behavior intention _____

mere exposure phenomenon _____

agenda setting _____

cognitive dissonance _____

post-decisional dissonance _____

persuasion _____

Yale communication model _____

credibility _____

elaboration likelihood model _____

prejudice _____

stereotype _____

explicit stereotype _____

implicit stereotype _____

discrimination _____

modern racism _____

attribution theory _____

internal attribution _____

external attribution _____

fundamental attribution error _____

just world hypothesis _____

self-serving bias _____

actor-observer bias _____

interpersonal attraction _____

reinforcement-affect model _____

social exchange theory _____

equity theory _____

attachment theory _____

matching phenomenon _____

conformity _____

true partner effect _____

obedience _____

bystander effect _____

audience inhibition _____

pluralistic ignorance _____

diffusion of responsibility _____

category relationship _____

empathy _____

empathy-altruism hypothesis _____

social loafing _____

social facilitation _____

social interference _____

group polarization effect _____

groupthink _____

Answers to Practice Test Questions

Multiple Choice

1. **d** As you know, there is considerable disagreement on how best to characterize the structure of attitudes, but the one thing that all characterizations have in common is that attitudes involve some degree of evaluation of something.
2. **d** I like this one. What matters most is the behavioral component. The advertiser wants you to do something: buy the product or service.
3. **c** As the text suggests, this approach is based on Bandura's social learning theory—learning through observation and vicarious reinforcement—a sort of, “Well, it seemed to work for them, so maybe it'll work for me, too.”
4. **a** If I can get you to act contrary to your attitude, I will have established cognitive dissonance. This will then motivate you to do something, perhaps change your attitude.
5. **b** It may be helpful to have a communicator who is a celebrity, just to get people's attention, but if that celebrity is not perceived as credible, expert and trustworthy, it will do little good.
6. **c** Actually, alternatives **a**, **b**, and **d** are just different ways of saying exactly the same thing. I cannot imagine how learned vs. inherited factors fit into a discussion of attribution.
7. **a** These actions provide a good definition of the fundamental attribution error.
8. **b** Social psychologists are interested in each of these, of course, but attribution theory specifically concerns how one goes about explaining the behaviors of others and oneself.
9. **c** I suppose that it would not be too difficult to imagine a theory of interpersonal attraction based on cognitive dissonance (a very powerful notion). But, as far as I know, we'd have to imagine it, whereas each of the others is a well-known model.
10. **b** One of the appealing aspects of attachment theory is that it views the formation of interpersonal relationships as a life-long process and suggests that there is evidence that styles remain quite consistent.
11. **a** The first statement is, in fact, quite the opposite of reality. If anything, familiarity breeds attraction. (And please don't forget: As always, we're talking “in general.” There are exceptions.
12. **d** Sexuality is an important component of attraction for some, but compared to the others, it would be rated last, or least important.
13. **d** The last alternative is the best choice here because IF Asch's participants knew that the others in the “group” were confederates of Asch, the project would not have worked at all.
14. **b** Here you are, judging lines, surrounded by people you do not know, believing them to be architects and draftsmen—who work with lines all day long. Isn't it likely that you would defer to their judgment—no matter what your eyes were telling you?
15. **b** What makes obedience obedience is that it is conformity to the demands or wishes of an authority figure, real or perceived.
16. **a** The last three statements are quite true, although perhaps a bit picky, but there is no indication that the first is true.
17. **c** Of these choices, the only truly justified conclusion is that the perception of authority is a strong force in conformity.
18. **c** None of the other alternatives are at all true, but Milgram did put people through considerable stress when he led them to believe that they were actually delivering a shock to another person.
19. **c** We must notice, interpret, and take responsibility. It matters little whether the victim is known to us.
20. **b** Alternative **b** is a good statement of pluralistic ignorance. Again, as we have seen many times earlier, a lot of learning in introductory psychology is a matter of developing vocabulary.
21. **a** Alternatives **b** and **c** are basically irrelevant. Diffusion of responsibility tells us that you are less likely to be helped if you are in a large crowd.
22. **d** Triplett was interested in social facilitation, and he demonstrated it by having children reel in fishing line, either alone or in groups.

23. **a** When we are performing “in public,” the main thing that happens is that arousal levels go up, which is okay so long as we know what we are doing, and that what we are doing is simple and well rehearsed.
24. **a** The problem with groupthink is not that it is pressure to reach a consensus, but that it is pressure to reach a consensus no matter what, right or wrong.

True/False

1. **F** I hope I didn't get you on this one. Cognitions are beliefs, thoughts, ideas, etc. How can cognitions be behaviors—behaviors of any sort?
2. **F** Yes, attitudes are often said to have three components (although there is not total agreement on what they are), but they are usually the familiar affect, behavior, and cognition, not these.
3. **F** The logic is that if one (any one) component of an attitude changes, others will change as well.
4. **T** Here is a true piece of social psychology that may not conform to common sense.
5. **F** Actually, we are probably going to like someone who likes us now but didn't originally, even better than we might like someone who has liked us from the start—which is quite a mouthful, but makes sense if you go over it a couple of times.
6. **F** I'm not sure that I even know what this statement means! If anything, we are more likely to conform than to be in situations where obedience is even an issue.
7. **F** Yes, there are individual differences in the likelihood to conform, but group composition issues are significantly more important. As it is stated, this is not an accurate statement.
8. **T** This is precisely what Asch found in his experiments.
9. **T** He sure was.
10. **T** There is an unsettling, unpleasant side to this statement, which as put forward here is true. We are more likely, it seems, to be hindered by group membership than stimulated by it.

EXPERIENCING PSYCHOLOGY

Norms and Compliance

We live in a social world in which we all have formed expectations about the acceptability of behaviors in given situations. That is, we have learned how one is “expected to act,” or is “supposed to act,” in a social context. These expectations are called *norms*. This exercise asks you to see what happens when you violate those social norms. Can you get anyone else to change his or her behaviors just by violating a few simple social norms?

Please be very careful. Some people can become very upset when social norms are violated. Try these activities in good humor but **be sensitive to the feelings of others**, quickly explaining what you are doing at the sign of any discomfort.

- While others watch you, try eating a banana by peeling back only a part of the peel, and then eating it as you would an ear of corn. Or eat a chocolate bar with a knife and fork, cutting it into small, bite-sized pieces. (This violation of social norms became a running gag on the *Seinfeld* television comedy series for weeks.)
- Dress in a manner that is significantly different from how you usually do when you go to classes. How long does it take for your friends and acquaintances to comment on your choice of clothes?
- Note the reactions you get if you simply walk across campus holding hands with a friend of the same sex.
- Here’s a classic (from the old television program *Candid Camera*). Enter an elevator and ride up and down for a while facing the rear wall of the elevator compartment. Does anyone enter and join in facing the rear? Now try the same thing with some friends. What is the reaction of someone entering the elevator to find four of you facing the rear?
- (You’ll need the permission of one of your instructors for this one.) Arrive at class a bit early, go to your seat, but simply stand there—do not sit down, even as the class begins. Try the same thing with the aid of two or three classmates—and the permission of the instructor. How do people react when they come to a classroom and find you standing there? A simple variation is to just stand at some open location on campus with a few friends, all of you staring up into space, as if there were really something interesting up there. How many others do the same, or stop to ask you just what in the world you are looking at?

Using the Internet to Expand Your Appreciation of Psychology

1. THE NATURE OF ATTITUDES (pp. 488-505)

Psychologists see attitudes as reasonably stable dispositions to evaluate some object or event. Attitudes often reflect our feelings about something (affect), our beliefs about something (cognitions), and our tendencies to act toward something (behavior). How these components work together often has been the focus of research in social psychology. Here are a few good Internet sites on the nature of attitudes:

<http://www.socialpsychology.org/social.htm#attitudes>

(part of one of the largest websites on social psychology on the Internet)

<http://www.understandingprejudice.org>

(a fantastic website on prejudice and discrimination)

<http://www.beyondprejudice.com>

(simple and pleasant, with good links)

2. ATTITUDE FORMATION AND CHANGE (pp. 491-496)

Clearly, attitudes—no matter how one defines them—are not innate or inherited. In the most general terms, that means that they are learned. But, exactly how? In what ways, precisely? The answer, of course, is “in many different ways.” Exploring some of the ways in which attitudes are formed and changed is the focus of this section.

<http://www.chssc.salford.ac.uk/healthSci/psych2000/psych2000/attitudes.htm>

(a wordy, but useful summary presentation)

<http://www.rickross.com/reference/brainwashing/brainwashing8.html>

(a lengthy piece on coercive persuasion and brainwashing)

http://www.a2zpsychology.com/psychology_guide/attitude_change.htm

(a good summary of theories of attitude change in outline format)

<http://www.csudh.edu/dearhabermas/attpersuas03.htm>

(a most pleasant essay on persuasion—with contemporary examples)

3. ATTRIBUTION PROCESSES (pp. 506-509)

Whenever we behave in a particular way, we usually think that we know why we did so. We seem confident in our ability to attribute causes to our behaviors. We also like to attribute the behaviors of other people to known causes. As it happens, our skills of attribution are far less than perfect—and psychologists have come to understand many errors of attribution.

<http://www.as.wvu.edu/~sbb/comm221/chapters/attrib.htm>

(an easy-to-read essay on attribution theory)

<http://www.wilderdom.com/games/descriptions/LocusOfControlExercise.html>

(provides an explanation of the relationship between attribution and Locus of Control)

<http://www.usu.edu/psy3510/personatt3.html>

(a nice summary of attribution theory in outline form)

4. INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION (pp. 509-512)

A compelling and relevant issue that social psychologists have studied for many years is how and why people are attracted to (or repelled by) one another. Person A and Person B may become life-long friends, while Person C can barely stand to spend any time with either A or B. How can this be so? On what bases are people attracted to one another?

<http://www.psy.mq.edu.au/staff/kip/attraction.htm>

(interpersonal attraction summarized in outline form)

<http://users.ipfw.edu/bordens/social/attract.htm>

(another summary outline, this one by Ken Bordens, one of your authors)

<http://www.thedoctorwillseeyounow.com/articles/feature/behavior/index.shtml>

(a bit strange I would say, but quite a good article on “the psychology of close relationships)

5. CONFORMITY (pp. 512-515)

No one is immune to conformity. We all conform, and we do so nearly every day—most of the time without our conscious awareness. Social psychologists have long been intrigued by the factors that predict whether someone will yield to the perceived pressure of others to do, think, or feel as the group does, thinks, or feels.

<http://changingminds.org/explanations/needs/conformity.htm>

(an interesting site on the “need to conform”—check out their links)

<http://www.unhinderedliving.com/conformity.html>

(another excellent site on social conformity)

6. OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY (pp. 515-518)

As much as we may not like the idea that we all conform to social pressure, the notion that we may yield to the pressure of an authority figure to do something that is unethical or improper is even more difficult to accept. It happens all the time—as social psychologist Stanley Milgram demonstrated many years ago.

<http://www.new-life.net/milgram.htm>

(a simple summary of Milgram's research)

<http://www.stanleymilgram.com/milgram.php>

(the definitive website on the researcher and his work)

http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/psychology/milgram_perils_authority_1974.html

(the obedience to authority research in Milgram's own words)

<http://www.psychologymatters.org/milgram.html>

(a thoughtful piece from the APA on obeying and resisting malevolent orders)

7. BYSTANDER INTERVENTION (pp. 518-522)

The research tells us that there are many reasons why, in a perceived emergency, some people may rush to help while may stand by and not get involved. Searching for those factors that affect the intervention of bystanders has been a rich field of social psychological research since the mid-1960s.

http://changingminds.org/explanations/theories/bystander_effect.htm

(it is brief, but it has a couple of good links)

<http://users.ipfw.edu/bordens/social/help.htm>

(Ken Bordens again with a an outline on altruism and helping behaviors)

<http://psychology.uchicago.edu/socpsych/faculty/jtcreprints/cpl86.pdf>

(a copy of a 1986 article from the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology)

<http://www.holah.karoo.net/piliavinstudy.htm>

(the story of a classic article on good samaritanism)

<http://www.edc.org/hec/socialnorms/theory/misperceptions.html>

(a very informative summary article)

<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~kruger/dis2.html>

(an excellent essay on the psychology of helping)

8. SOCIAL LOAFING AND FACILITATION (pp. 522-524)

The effort—physical or mental—that one puts into a task can be a function of several factors. In some circumstances a person may “hide” within a group and expend little effort (social loafing) while in other situations being in the presence of others actually increases effort (social facilitation).

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/1650/htmlgroups16.html>

(an excellent summary article on social loafing)

http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m4035/is_n4_v34/ai_7997652

(although a bit dated, a good article on social loafing in the U.S. and The People’s Republic of China)

<http://www.econ.ucsb.edu/papers/wp16-03.pdf>

(a paper on social facilitation from the context of economics)

<http://scifunam.fisica.unam.mx/mir/termite.html>

(and here’s one on termites—what can I say!)

9. DECISION-MAKING IN GROUPS (pp. 524-526)

There is a job to be done, a problem to be solved. You have six assistants to help you get that job done. Will you be better off if you have the six people work independently on the issue at hand, or would it be better to have the six assistants work together as a group? As it happens, this is one of the oldest questions in the history of social psychology.

<http://www.iir.com/nygc/acgp/implementation/Appendix4.pdf>

(a 4-page summary essay on group decision-making)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consensus_decision_making

(an excellent article on how groups can make decisions by coming to a consensus)

<http://www.chacocanyon.com/pointlookout/041117.shtml>

(a two-part essay on effective group decision-making)

http://lynn_meade.tripod.com/id62.htm

(scroll down to the section: "TROUBLE WITH GROUPS")

<http://www.leadingtoday.org/Onmag/august01/groupthink82001.html>

(a pleasant summary article on Janis' groupthink)

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/army/groupthink.htm>

(an excellent summary of groupthink and how to counteract it)