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.
      1. We see the world rationally, while others do not.
      2. If others were rational, they would see the world as we do.
      3. If others do not see the world as we do then either they are irrational and harbor ulterior motives or they are simply misinformed.

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. Until recently, psychologists thought that attitudes had to exist at a conscious level of awareness.
      1. Explicit attitudes do exist and operate on a conscious level.
      2. Implicit attitudes exist below conscious awareness, but may still influence our behaviors.
   C. 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.
   D. The Importance of Attitudes in Real-Life Behavior: Sports Dominance
      1. That members of some groups (e.g., racial, national, ethnic, or gender) dominate in some sports and not others, may not be due entirely to biological differences.
2. Different groups may come to dominate in some sports because of positive cultural attitudes toward those sports.
3. Examples include the dominance of Russian women in tennis and African Americans in baseball.

III. Where Do Attitudes Come From?
   A. Most experts agree that attitudes are formed through learning.
   B. Observation learning is the term used to describe those instances where one develops an attitude because he or she sees (valued) 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. There are significant differences in how males and females respond to threats and fear in developing attitudes.
   5. 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. 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.
   3. A social dominance orientation occurs when an individual believes that his or her group is superior to others.

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.
   4. Although stereotypes are largely cognitive, they certainly have an emotional, or affective, component.

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.

E. Modern racism is the term for racism that is not expressed openly, but is manifest in an uncertainty in feelings and behaviors toward to members of minority groups.

VII. SPOTLIGHT: Gender, Race and Prejudice

A. Males show more prejudice toward homosexuals than do females, while females show a more negative bias toward bisexuals (regardless of gender) than to homosexuals.

B. Males tend to display more explicit prejudice while females display more implicit prejudice.

C. There is some evidence that Blacks have more negative attitudes about Whites than Whites have toward Blacks.
D. Both Whites and Blacks have more negative attitudes about darker-skinned Blacks than they do about lighter-skinned Blacks – the so-called “skin tone bias.”

VIII. 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.

IX. 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.
      a. The Internet provides opportunities for contact without physical closeness.
      b. Relationships formed via the Internet tend to be important and stable.
c. But, such relationships are more shallow and less interdependent than face-to-face relationships, and may decrease emotional well-being.

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. Attractiveness is more important for males than for females.
   c. 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 o be repelled or put-off by those perceived as dissimilar.
   b. Opposites may attract, but similarity is more powerful over time.

X. 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.

XI. 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.
   D. Recently, social psychologists have begun to consider the notion of **evil** as a possible characteristic of individuals and not necessarily a function of the situation.
1. *Moral monsters* are those who carry out evil deeds on their own, without direction from anyone else.

2. *Moral idiots* are those who perform evil deeds in response to directions from others.

**XII. 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.
7. When a social situation involves the perception of danger (especially extreme danger) bystanders are, in fact, more likely to intervene and try to be helpful.

D. There are some gender and racial differences in helping behaviors.

1. Females are more likely to engage in charitable giving than are males.
2. How much helping is evidenced by males or females seems mostly related to the extent to which helping is deemed appropriate for their gender role.
3. Blacks are less likely to receive help than are Whites when the help involves a long commitment of time
   - There is a bias against Black victims, but it is not extreme.
   - Whites and Blacks discriminate against the opposite race at about the same level.
   - Whites discriminate against Black victims more under remote conditions (e.g., over the telephone) than in face-to-face situations.
XIII. 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.

XIV. 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”
1. Define social psychology in terms of “social cognition” and “naïve realism.”

2. Define attitude, and list and explain the three major components of an attitude and the possible fourth component.

3. Explain the three ways attitudes are acquired.

4. Define cognitive dissonance and its accompanying processes, and explain how they relate to attitude change.

5. Explain the basic tenet of self-perception theory.

6. Discuss the Yale Communication Model and the three factors that influence persuasion.

7. Summarize the source factors that affect persuasion.

8. Discuss characteristics of the message that affect persuasion.

9. Describe the two routes to processing persuasive information proposed by the Elaboration Likelihood Model.

10. Explain two characteristics of a communicator that may affect persuasion, describing how the characteristics relate to the route used in processing the persuasive message.

11. Define prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination.

12. List the two basic types of attributions and the three types of information used in making attributions.

13. List four specific attributional biases, explaining how attributions become distorted or biased.

14. Describe the four theoretical models of interpersonal attraction.

15. Know the four determinants of interpersonal attraction and their effects.

16. Discuss the methodology and findings of Asch's studies.

17. Discuss Milgram's studies of obedience and the factors that influenced obedience in those studies.

18. Explain how the presence of others affects helping behavior.

19. Describe Latané and Darley's cognitive model of helping.
20. Discuss the psychological processes that account for what is called the social inhibition of helping.


22. Understand the relationship between empathy and altruism.

23. Explain social loafing, social interference, and social facilitation discuss some factors that affect the processes.

24. Discuss the factors that influence group decision-making.

25. Describe group polarization.

26. Explain groupthink and identify its "symptoms."

27. Discuss current research on the validity of groupthink.
Key Terms and Concepts

social psychology

social cognition

naïve realism

attitude

explicit attitude

implicit attitude

mere exposure phenomenon

agenda setting

cognitive dissonance

persuasion

credibility

elaboration likelihood model

prejudice

social dominance orientation
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

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
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 __________ as
   ___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
   ___b. social exchange model
   ___c. dissonance 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.   ___c. audience inhibition.
   ___b. cognitive dissonance.   ___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.
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. T 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.
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?
**Psychology on the Internet**

1. **THE NATURE OF ATTITUDES**

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**

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.


(a wordy, but useful summary presentation)
(a lengthy piece on coercive persuasion and brainwashing – certainly relevant these days!)

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

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)

4. INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION

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?

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

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 with 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 intriguing site on social conformity)

6. OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY

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)

(the obedience to authority research in Milgram’s own words)
7. Bystander Intervention

The research tells us that there are many reasons why, in a perceived emergency, some people may rush to help while many 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 – one of your authors – with an outline on altruism and helping behaviors)

http://www.holah.karoo.net/piliavinstudy.htm
(the story of a classic article on good samaritanism)

8. Social loafing and facilitation

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).

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

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

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

9. DECISION-MAKING IN GROUPS

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.

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

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

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

(scroll down to the section: “TROUBLE WITH GROUPS”)

http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m4035/is_n4_v34/ai_7997652
http://scifunam.fisica.unam.mx/mir/termite.html
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consensus_decision_making
http://www.chacocanyon.com/pointlookout/041117.shtml
http://lynn_meade.tripod.com/id62.htm
http://www.leadingtoday.org/Onmag/august01/groupthink82001.html
(a pleasant summary article on Janis’ groupthink)

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