Social Psychology

Brief Chapter Outline

I. How Others Influence Our Behavior
   A. Why We Conform
   B. Why We Comply
   C. Why We Obey
   D. How Groups Influence Us

II. How We Think About Our Own and Others’ Behavior
   A. How We Make Attributions
   B. How Our Behavior Affects Our Attitudes

Detailed Chapter Outline

To introduce social psychology, you may want to use some of the film clips that David Roskos-Ewoldsen and Beverly Roskos-Ewoldsen (2001) used to introduce their social psychology classes. Although not all the topics in the following table are included in the textbook, they can still whet students’ appetites for this chapter. The clips that pertain to text material could introduce this chapter, and the clips that do not could serve as a basis for covering material not in the text, if so desired.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film Clip</th>
<th>Movie</th>
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<tr>
<td>The sheepdog Rex’s reaction to Babe the pig</td>
<td><em>Babe</em></td>
<td>Introduction to social psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Torture scene</td>
<td><em>Princess Bride</em> (design and measurement)</td>
<td>Research methods</td>
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<td>Grandson interrupts grandfather’s reading</td>
<td><em>Princess Bride</em></td>
<td>Schemas and interpretation</td>
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<td>Witch scene</td>
<td><em>Monty Python and the Holy Grail</em></td>
<td>Heuristic decision making</td>
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<td>Meeting Muriel Prichard</td>
<td><em>The Accidental Tourist</em></td>
<td>Person perception</td>
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<td>The new coach meets the townspeople</td>
<td><em>Hoosiers</em></td>
<td>Attribution theory (internal vs. external attributions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ray Kinsella doesn’t know why he thinks what he thinks</td>
<td><em>Field of Dreams</em></td>
<td>The self (limits of introspection)</td>
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<td>Oliver overestimates his role in stealing the hot dogs</td>
<td><em>Oliver and Company</em></td>
<td>The self (totalitarian ego and egocentricity)</td>
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<td>Terrance Mann justifies lying to Ray Kinsella</td>
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<td>Selling aluminum siding</td>
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<td>Paden does not like the dog he saved</td>
<td><em>Silverado</em></td>
<td>Attitude-behavior correspondence</td>
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<td>The soldiers obey the witch and attack Dorothy</td>
<td><em>The Wizard of Oz</em></td>
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<td>Commander ignores soldier’s warning about weakness in Death Star</td>
<td><em>Star Wars: A New Hope</em></td>
<td>Groupthink</td>
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<td>Pee-Wee saves the animals in the pet shop</td>
<td><em>Pee-Wee’s Big Adventure</em></td>
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<td>King Arthur represses the peasants</td>
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<td>Causes of aggression</td>
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<td>The detective talks about why he does not like “toons”</td>
<td><em>Who Framed Roger Rabbit?</em></td>
<td>Stereotyping</td>
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Social psychology is the scientific study of how people influence one another’s behavior and thinking. Social psychology’s focus, as illustrated by the topics in the preceding table, is on how situational forces influence behavior and thinking.

The chapter introduction contains two excellent and well-known historical examples used in teaching social psychology. That said, these incidents occurred as long as a half-century ago and there are more contemporary examples to help connect students with events that likely occurred before their parents were born. Two excellent examples include the Branch Davidian standoff in Waco, Texas, and the Heaven’s Gate mass suicide. Both of these incidents were widely covered in the age of modern media, so web clips and other resources are more easily accessible.

I. How Others Influence Our Behavior

Worth Video Anthology for Introductory Psychology: Attitudes and Prejudicial Behavior (7:30)
This video provides a history of anti-Japanese sentiment, which includes the internment of U.S. citizens with Japanese ancestry during WWII. Terms such as social categorization and other associated concepts are related to these historical events. This video is an excellent introduction to the concepts covered in this section of the text.

Scientific American Introductory Psychology Videos: Social Influence (8:45)
This video highlights how we are socially influenced and how leaders and charismatic individuals appeal to the three basic motives involved in social influence. Basic hedonic theory is used as a foundation to explain human social motives. The video combines short clips, other visual examples, and interviews with prominent social psychologists to explain many of the topics and groundbreaking experiments discussed in this chapter as well as how they are applied to our day-to-day lives.

Social influence is the influence of other people and the social forces they create on an individual’s behavior.

A. Why We Conform
Conformity is defined as a change in behavior, belief, or both in order to conform to a group norm as a result of real or imagined group pressure. Although the word “conformity” has negative connotations in Western cultures, some conformity is needed for society to function. For instance, in the military, conformity is essential because in a time of war, an army must operate efficiently to succeed. To operate efficiently, soldiers must follow orders; they cannot follow their own desires while in battle.

1. In the Sherif study of informational social influence, participants thought they were in a visual perception experiment. Participants were placed in a completely dark room and exposed to a stationary point of light, and their task was to estimate the distance the light moved. The light never actually moved. The participants witnessed an illusion called the autokinetic effect: A stationary point of light appears to move in a dark room because there is no frame of reference and our eyes spontaneously move.

During the first session, each participant was alone in the dark room when making estimations. But during the next three sessions, they were in the room with two other participants and could hear one another’s estimates of the illusory light movement. Average individual estimates varied greatly during the first session. During the next three sessions, individual estimates converged on a group norm. A year later, participants were brought back and made estimates alone, which remained at the group norm (Figure 9.1).
This pattern of results suggests the impact of informational social influence—
influence that arises from the desire to be correct in situations in which the correct
action or judgment is uncertain and people need information. When a task is ambiguous
or difficult and people want to be correct, they look to others for information. For
instance, when visiting a foreign country with a different culture, it is usually a good
idea to watch how the people living there behave in various situations. They provide
information to outsiders on how to behave in their culture.

2. In the Asch study of normative social influence, the visual judgments were easy visual
discriminations: line-length judgments. Specifically, participants had to judge which
one of three lines was the same length as a “standard line.”

At this point, you might refer to text Figure 9.2, or draw a standard line on the
board, followed by three other lines, one that is the same length as the standard line, and
two other lines of different lengths.

In Asch’s study, the correct answer was obvious; when making the judgment alone,
almost no one made any mistakes. But things changed when there were other
“participants” in the room, who were in fact experimental confederates, part of the
experimental setting. Seating was arranged so that the actual participant was the next to
last person to respond. In each trial, judgments were made orally, and Asch structured
the situation so that the experimental confederates responded before the true
participants. The experimental confederates arranged to make mistakes in certain trials
in an effort to see how the actual participant would respond when asked to make line-
length judgments. About 75 percent of the participants gave an obviously wrong answer
at least once, and overall, conformity occurred 37 percent of the time, despite the fact
that the correct answer was obvious.

Asch’s results illustrate the power of normative social influence—influence
stemming from the desire to gain the approval from, and avoid the disapproval of, other
people. People change their behavior to meet the expectations of others and to court the
acceptance of others. During his lifetime, Asch often wondered whether these changes
occurred through a need to conform or if the situation actually changed the subjects’
perception. Recent research using fMRI techniques has found evidence to support this
second idea, specifically that often “seeing is not believing.”

If the line-length judgments were extremely difficult and the correct answer was not
clear, then informational social influence would probably lead to even higher levels of
conformity.

3. Situational, cultural, and gender factors affect conformity. If the group is unanimous,
conformity increases. Asch found that conformity decreased considerably if just one of
the experimental confederates gave the correct answer or even an incorrect answer that
was different from the incorrect answer all other confederates gave. As long as one
person is “different,” other people feel that they do not have to conform.

The mode of responding is also critical. Secret ballots lead to less conformity than
public verbal reports.

The status of the group members affects responses. More conformity is observed in
a person of lesser status than in the other group members and in a person who is
attracted to the group and wants to be a part of it.

A meta-analysis (Bond and Smith, 1996) reveals that multiple situational factors
influence conformity and that culture (individualism versus collectivism) has a
particularly noticeable impact on conformity. Further, Bond and Smith noted that
conformity has declined in the United States over the past half-century but that gender
differences in conformity (women conform more than men on average) had not
narrowed. This is an exciting and active area of research with new techniques being
developed to better understand these social factors.
Class Activities or Homework Assignments: Conformity, Reactance, and Need for Uniqueness

Michael Schmitt has developed a brief series of questions that may be readily adapted to generate a discussion of conformity and social norms. The questions are linked to the Course Resources On the Web (CROW; http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/crow/) site, which includes a wide variety of resources for teaching social psychology. The assignment (at http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/crow/socialnormhandout.html) includes the following seven questions.

1) Is conformity a good thing, or a bad thing? Why?
2) List 20 social norms, and if they are specific to a certain group or context, describe it.
3) For norms listed in number 2, how many of them do you think are positive, negative, or neutral? Positive _______ Negative _______ Neutral _________
4) Can you think of five social norms that you are glad exist? Describe them.
5) What would social life be like if there were no social norms?
6) In your opinion, why do people conform?
7) What determines whether a particular norm is good or bad?

To extend coverage of conformity to encompass individual differences in the tendency to resist conformity, you might ask students to complete a measure of the need for uniqueness or of psychological reactance. Students typically react positively to completing such measures, which also provide exposure to some of the tools used in psychological research. The scales, described below, are available at the end of this chapter of the Instructor’s Resource Manual.

Dowd, Milne, and Wise (1991) report that psychological reactance, a motivational state that occurs when one’s freedom is threatened, may be expressed by a wide range of oppositional behaviors (e.g., acting as a “devil’s advocate”). The Psychological Reactance Scale (Dowd et al. 1991) includes 28 items (e.g., “I am relatively opinionated”) to which students respond using 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) answer options. Prior to totaling their scores, students reverse-score seven items, changing a 1 to a 4, a 2 to a 3, etc. To explain the need for reverse scoring, you might indicate that researchers who develop scales intentionally include items for which agreement indicates a lack of the construct of interest. For example, the Psychological Reactance Scale includes the item, “In discussions, I am easily persuaded by others.” Such items are included to discourage respondents from answering all items in the same manner. Thus, reverse scoring is necessary so that the total score is readily interpretable; in this case, a higher score indicates greater psychological reactance.

Need for uniqueness is another construct that might reflect a resistance to conformity. Snyder and Fromkin (1977) conceptualized the need for uniqueness as a focus on being different from others in a positive way. As part of a validation procedure for the scale, Snyder and Fromkin showed that uniqueness scores were positively correlated with scores on a measure of autonomy. The scale contains 32 items (e.g., “I must admit I find it hard to work under strict rules and regulations”) to which students respond using 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) answer options. Prior to totaling their scores, students reverse-score 16 items (e.g., “Feeling different in a crowd of people makes me feel uncomfortable”), changing a 1 to a 5, a 2 to a 4, etc.

Students generally feel comfortable volunteering examples of when they did or did not express reactance or uniqueness. However, you might also remind the class that replication of Asch’s conformity experiment (Larsen, 1990) suggested that a majority of people still conformed.

B. Why We Comply

See Table 9.1 for a summary of the four techniques that follow.

Compliance is acting in accordance with a direct request from another person or group. Compliance occurs in people who come into contact with anyone who wants to get people to say “yes” to his or her requests, such as a salesperson, a fundraiser, and a politician.

1. Using the foot-in-the-door technique, compliance with a large request is gained by prefacing it with a very small, almost mindless request. The tendency is for people who have complied with the small request to comply with the next, larger request.

In Freedman and Fraser’s (1966) classic study, some people were asked directly to put a large, ugly sign in their front yard urging careful driving. Almost all the people refused the sign. However, some other people were first asked to sign a petition urging careful driving. Two weeks after signing the petition (agreeing to a rather small request), the majority of these people agreed to allow the large, ugly sign in their front yards.

The foot-in-the-door technique seems to work because behavior (here, complying with the initial request) affects attitudes, leading people to be more positive about helping and to view themselves as generally charitable. In addition, once people have made a commitment (such as signing a safe driving petition), they feel pressure to remain consistent (by putting up the large, ugly sign) with their earlier action.

The foot-in-the-door technique was used by the Chinese Communists on prisoners of war during the Korean War. Many prisoners returning home after the war praised the Chinese Communists because while in captivity, the prisoners did small things such as write out questions and the pro-Communist answers, which they often just copied from a notebook. Such minor actions induced more sympathy for the Communist cause. Always be wary of compliance requests of increasing size and your own tendencies to continue saying yes.

2. The door-in-the-face technique is the opposite of the foot-in-the-door technique. Compliance is gained by starting with a large, unreasonable request (that is turned down) and following it with a more reasonable smaller request. It is the smaller request that the person making the two requests wants someone to comply with. For instance, a teenager may ask his parents if he can have a new sports car for his 16th birthday. His parents are likely to refuse. Then the teenager asks his parents to help him pay for a used 20-year-old car, which is what he wanted all along.

The success of the door-in-the-face technique is due to people’s tendency toward reciprocity, or making mutual concessions. The person making the requests appears to have made a concession by moving to the much smaller request, so others feel they should reciprocate and comply with the smaller request.
3. The **low-ball technique** works as in the following situation. A husband and wife go in to buy a new car, and the salesperson gives them an incredibly good price, better than they ever hoped for. The potential buyers go into the salesperson’s office and start filling out the necessary paperwork. After leaving the room for a few minutes, the salesperson returns, looking sad, and tells them that the sales manager will never let the car go for the price originally quoted. The salesperson then quotes a higher price, claiming it is the lowest price that the sales manager will permit. Although this second quote is a good deal higher than the original quote, potential buyers feel obligated to go ahead with the sale because they have come this far anyway.

In the low-ball technique, compliance with a costly request is achieved by first getting compliance to an attractive, less costly request and then reneging on it. As in the foot-in-the-door technique, compliance with a second, larger request is the compliance desired all along.

Low-balling works because many people feel obligated to go through with the deal after they have agreed to the earlier request, even though the first request has changed for the worse. People want to remain consistent in their actions.

4. Users of the **that’s-not-all technique** know that people are more likely to comply with a request after a build-up to make the request sound “better.” For example, in infomercials on TV, the announcer often says, “But wait, that’s not all, there’s more!” and the price is lowered or more merchandise is added to sweeten the deal, usually before people even have a chance to respond. For example, a car salesperson is likely to throw in additional options as bonuses before potential buyers can answer yes or no to a price offered.

As in the door-in-the-face technique, reciprocity is at work here. The seller has done potential buyers a favor (thrown in bonus options, lowered the price), so the potential buyers feel they should reciprocate by accepting the offer (complying).

C. **Why We Obey**

Obedience is following the commands of a person in authority. Obedience is good in some instances, such as obeying societal laws. Obedience is bad in other instances, such as in the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War, when American soldiers obeyed orders to shoot innocent villagers.

1. **Milgram’s basic experimental paradigm** resulted from obedience studies he conducted primarily at Yale University in the early 1960s. Stanley Milgram was one of Asch’s graduate students and got the idea for his study while conducting conformity research for Asch. To get a feel for his work, students may imagine that they have volunteered to be in an experiment on learning and memory. They show up at the assigned time and place, and there is the experimenter and another participant. The experimenter tells the participants that the purpose of the study is to examine the effects of punishment by electric shock on learning—specifically, learning a list of word pairs. One of the participants will be the teacher and the other will be the learner. The two participants draw slips for these roles, and the student draws the slip of the teacher.

   The student “teacher” then accompanies the learner to an adjoining room, where he is strapped into a chair with one arm hooked up to the shock generator in the other room. The shock level in the study ranges from 15 volts to 450 volts. The experimenter gives the teacher a “test shock” of 45 volts so that the teacher can imagine how intense various shock levels will be. The teacher returns to the room with the shock generator and notices that on the shock generator, each shock switch has a label, starting at 15 volts and going to 450 volts in 15-volt increments. There are also verbal labels below the switches: “Slight Shock,” “Very Strong Shock,” “Danger: Severe Shock,” and under the last two switches, “XXX” in red.
Each time the learner makes a mistake, the teacher administers a shock, which should increase one 15-volt level for each additional mistake. As the experiment begins, the learner makes some mistakes, and the teacher throws the shock switches as instructed by the experimenter. At 120 volts, the learner cries out that the shock really hurts. As the learner continues to make mistakes, he protests and says that he has a heart condition and that he refuses to continue with the experiment, demanding to be let out of his chair. After a 330-volt shock, he fails to respond at all. The teacher turns to the experimenter for guidance about what to do, and the experimenter says to treat no response as an incorrect response and continue with the experiment.

Before this experiment was run, Milgram asked various types of people what they and other people would do. Most people thought the “teachers” would stop at relatively low shock levels; psychiatrists said that maybe one person in a thousand would administer the maximum possible shock.

2. In Milgram’s initial obedience finding, almost two out of every three participants (65 percent) continued to obey the experimenter and eventually administered the maximum possible shock of 450 volts. This finding was particularly disturbing because the learner had mentioned a heart condition before the experiment started and again during the experiment.

It is important to realize that the learner was a confederate who was programmed to make mistakes and was never really shocked. But the teacher thought that he was administering real shocks because of real mistakes.

The difference between what people say they will do and what they actually do illustrates the power of situational social forces on our behavior.

The technique used in the Milgram experiment was foot-in-the-door: Participants started off giving very mild shocks (15 volts) and increased the voltage relatively slowly. The learner did not protest the early shocks, and the teacher had obeyed several times before the learner started his protests.

It should be noted that later studies with female participants found similar obedience rates, and other researchers have replicated Milgram’s findings in many different cultures, such as those of Jordan, Spain, Italy, and Australia. Although ethical considerations limit the ability to replicate the original study, modifications to the original experimental design have yielded similar results as recently as 2009.

Student Video Tool Kit Activities: Obedience and Authority: A Laboratory Demonstration
This is an excellent resource with another example of the “white lab coat” effect of being asked to do things by a researcher as part of an experiment. In spite of compliance with the requests of the researcher, cameras in the digestive systems of the participants reveal symptoms of stress.

Worth Video Anthology for Introductory Psychology: Milgram’s Obedience Studies (5:08)
This video shows the shock generator and a participant/teacher watching the confederate/learner being hooked up to the shock apparatus. The remainder of the video illustrates the increasingly distressed reactions of another participant/teacher who, in response to the experimenter’s request to go on, continues to give shocks even when the confederate/learner remains silent for several trials.

3. Situational factors affect obedience (refer to Table 9.3).
   a. The physical presence of the experimenter (the person with authority) affected Milgram’s results. When the experimenter left the room and gave commands over the telephone, maximum obedience (administering the highest shock level) dropped to 21 percent.
b. The physical closeness of teacher and learner also affected obedience. Milgram brought the teacher and learner closer by having them both in the same room instead of different rooms, and maximum obedience declined to 40 percent. It dropped to 30 percent when the teacher had to administer the shock by forcing the learner’s hand onto a plate.

c. The setting of the study also made a difference, but not as much as physical presence of the experimenter and physical closeness of the teacher and learner. Milgram conducted part of the study in a run-down office building in Bridgeport, Connecticut, instead of at Yale. At that office, he found a 48 percent obedience rate.

d. To test the effect of experimenter unanimity, Milgram set up a situation with two experimenters who at some point during the experiment disagreed. One said to stop the teacher while the other said to let the teacher continue. In this case, it took only one of the people in authority saying stop for all the teachers to stop delivering shocks.

e. In another variation, Milgram assessed teacher responsibility. Instead of physically pushing the switch on the shock generator, participants simply indicated to another teacher (actually an experimental confederate) how much shock to administer. Here, 93 percent of the participants obeyed the experimenter, ordering shocks given to the maximum shock level.

4. Jerry Burger (2009) recently replicated Milgram’s classic research. To reduce ethical concerns, the investigation ended immediately after “teachers” pressed the 150-volt switch and began reading the next question; 150 volts was selected as the stopping point because, in Milgram’s research, this was the level at which disobedience was most apt to occur (Packer, 2008). Note from Table 9.2 that the “learner” first said, “Get me out of here” after “receiving” the 150-volt shock. Burger’s findings revealed that, insofar as obedience, people in 2009 were remarkably similar to people in the mid-1960s: Approximately two-thirds of Burger’s participants pressed the 150-volt switch and began asking the next item. A brief commentary from Burger about his work is available at http://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/getArticle.cfm?id=2264.

5. The “Astroten” study is another famous study of obedience. Participants were real nurses on duty alone in a real hospital ward. Each nurse received a call from a person using the name of a staff doctor not personally known to the nurse. The doctor ordered the nurse to give a dose exceeding the maximum daily dosage of an unauthorized medication called “Astroten” to a real patient on the ward.

This situation violated many hospital rules. Medication orders were supposed to be given by physicians in person, not over the phone; the dose was clearly an overdose; the medication was unauthorized. Amazingly, 21 of the 22 nurses phoned did not question the order and went to administer the medication, but they were intercepted before actually giving it to the patient.

In a separate sample, 33 nurses were asked what they would do if they were placed in this situation. All but 2 said they would not obey the doctor’s order, again demonstrating the difference between what we think we will do and what we actually do in a given situation.

6. In the infamous Jonestown massacre in 1978, more than 900 people who were members of Reverend Jim Jones’s religious cult in Jonestown, Guyana (South America), committed mass suicide by consuming a cyanide-laced drink. These people were Americans who had moved to South America from San Francisco in 1977.
Using various compliance techniques, Jones, as the cult leader, developed unquestioned faith in his followers and discouraged individualism. Using the foot-in-the-door technique, he was able to increase the financial donations required of the members until they had turned over essentially everything they owned to him. He had his recruiters ask people walking by to help the poor. When they refused, the recruiters then asked them to donate just 5 minutes of time to put letters in envelopes (door-in-the-face). When given information about other charitable work, having agreed to this small task, people returned later as a function of the consistency aspect of the foot-in-the-door technique.

Informational social influence was also at work, as the move from San Francisco to Guyana had created an uncertain environment in which the cult’s followers looked to others to guide their own actions.

PsychSim 5 Tutorial: Everybody’s Doing It
This module provides resources for reviewing information covered up to this point in the chapter. The module begins with examples of social influence in “everyday life” and explains and demonstrates the Sherif and Asch studies. Students explain, in their own words, why these two studies yielded the results they did. Normative and informational social influences are explained, along with factors influencing conformity rates and ways to resist social influence.

D. How Groups Influence Us
1. Social facilitation is the emergence of a dominant response to a task due to social arousal, leading to improvement on simple or well-learned tasks and worse performance on complex or unlearned tasks when other people are present. Social facilitation occurs on tasks for which a person is individually responsible.

A dominant response is the response that is most likely to occur on a given task. This effect occurs because the presence of others increases physiological arousal, and under conditions of increased arousal, people tend to give whatever response is most dominant. For example, for a professional basketball player, shooting free throws is a simple, easy task. Thus a professional player shoots free throws better when other people are around and watching than when shooting alone. However, someone not good at shooting a basketball would shoot even more poorly if other people are around and watching than when she is shooting alone.

2. Social loafing and the diffusion of responsibility occur when people are pooling their efforts to achieve a common goal. Social loafing is the tendency to exert less effort when working in a group toward a common goal than when individually accountable.

A major reason why social loafing occurs is the diffusion of responsibility. The responsibility for a task is spread across all members of the group, so individual accountability is lessened. The larger the group, the less likely it is that a social loafer will be detected and the more likely it is that responsibility for the task is spread (diffused) across group members. However, for groups in which individual contributions are identifiable and evaluated, social loafing decreases. For instance, in a group project for a shared grade, social loafing would decrease if each group member were assigned and responsible for a specific part of the project.

3. The Kitty Genovese case is a notorious example of the bystander effect. In New York in 1964, Kitty Genovese was returning home from work late one night when she was attacked in front of her apartment building. She screamed for help, and many apartment residents heard her cries for help and looked out their windows. The attacker fled, but no one intervened. The attacker returned and continued his assault for another 35 minutes before finally murdering her. The first person in the apartment complex to call the police did not do so until after Genovese had been killed.
Many media people said that this incident illustrated “big city apathy.” However, experiments by social psychologists suggested that it was more the result of a diffusion of responsibility. The bystander effect holds that the probability of an individual helping in an emergency is greater when there are fewer bystanders (and greatest when there is only one) than when there are many bystanders.

Darley and Latané (1968) conducted an experiment in which college students were ostensibly going to participate in a round-robin discussion of college adjustment problems over an intercom system. Thus participants could only hear each other, not see each other. The experimenter said that he would not listen to the conversation so that participants wouldn’t feel inhibited. After each student had a turn to talk, the first student was to talk again, but he seemed to be very anxious. Suddenly, he started having a seizure and began crying out for help. What did the other participants do in this situation?

Whether a participant helped the student having the seizure depended on how many other individuals the participant thought were available to help. The researchers manipulated the number of other participants (0, 1, or 4), but in reality no one else was present. The supposed other participants were tape recordings.

When no other participants were thought to be present, 85 percent of the participants tried to help the person, whereas only 31 percent of the participants did so when 4 other participants were supposedly present. The probability of helping decreased as the responsibility for helping was diffused across more participants.

In the case of Kitty Genovese, some of the bystanders could see each other staring out of their windows as they turned on their lights. Responsibility was diffused across all of them, and no one person assumed full responsibility to help. Genovese might have received help and possibly lived had there been only one person (rather than many people) available to call the police.

Class Activity: The Bystander Effect
Cerbin, Cary, Dixon, and Wilson (2007) have developed a comprehensive lesson plan for exploring factors that influence whether people will help others. Resources for the activity are published on the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of teaching (http://gallery.carnegiefoundation.org/collections/keep/bcerbin/bystander.html). The lesson plan includes individual pretests and posttests, group exercises, a handout with a bystander model, and an individual analysis linking the group exercises to the bystander model. If the time you devote to the topic of helping is limited, you may use a subset of these materials either as individual homework assignments or in class.

For example, there are two forms of the pretest, each of which includes a set of four brief scenarios. For each scenario, students indicate the likelihood of helping, using a scale ranging from 1 (very likely to help) to 7 (very unlikely to help). Students also list factors that would encourage and discourage helping. The forms differ in the situational factors influencing the likelihood of helping (e.g., the extent to which the person who needs help seems responsible for the predicament, the gender of person who needs help, and time of day), as illustrated below for one of the scenarios.

Form A: 1. On a snowy day, a car is traveling along a busy road. The driver weaves in and out of the passing lane and accelerates quickly to pass other cars, barely missing them. Suddenly the car hits a patch of ice and slides off the road and onto the shoulder. Motorists who have been following the driver slow down as they approach the car.

Form B: 1. On a snowy day, a car is traveling along a busy road. The car hits a patch of ice and slides onto the shoulder of the road. Motorists who have been following the driver slow down as they approach the car.
According to the lesson plan by Cerbin and colleagues, students complete the pretest individually (with half using each form) and submit the completed pretest to the instructor prior to class coverage of the bystander effect. Subsequently, in class, the instructor assigns the students to small groups (with each group including some members who had completed Form A and others who had completed Form B). In groups, students compare the scenarios on the two forms, develop a list of influences on helping, and provide examples of each influence. Each group prepares an overhead transparency, some of which are shared with the entire class. The instructor then distributes and discusses a handout that includes the four steps in Darley and Latané’s model of intervention and includes a brief explanation of seven influences on helping: situational ambiguity, perceived cost, diffusion of responsibility, similarity, mood, gender, attributions of the cause of need, and social norms. Cerbin et al. introduce a second group activity and an individual analysis prior to the posttest that includes descriptions of four published studies on helping, such as the “seizure study” (Darley and Latané, 1968) and a “fake smoke” study (Latané and Darley, 1968). Students predict the results of these studies and explain the rationale for their predictions.


**Worth Video Anthology for Introductory Psychology: Bystander Apathy: Failing to Help Others in Distress (4:25)**
This video illustrates a brawl (staged by the experimenters) between a driver and a bicyclist on a busy London street. Only one of multiple people witnessing the event stops to help, subsequently explaining that he would not be happy with himself if he left the situation without intervening. Psychologist Sandra Scott interprets the reasons why others did not help in the context of cost-benefit theory. In other words, people decide whether to help on the basis of the personal cost, which can vary for different individuals. She suggests that people weigh the advantages and the disadvantages of helping. In this video, the one person who did decide to help indicated that he felt confident in his ability to assist because he was a self-defense instructor.

4. **Deindividuation** is the loss of self-awareness and self-restraint in a group situation that fosters arousal and anonymity. Deindividuated people feel less restrained and so may forget their moral values and act spontaneously without thinking. Diffusion of responsibility also plays a role in deindividuation because of the anonymity of the group situation.

5. Group polarization and groupthink apply to more structured, task-oriented group situations.

   **Group polarization** is the strengthening of a group’s prevailing opinion about a topic following group discussion of the topic. Group members already share the same opinion on an issue, and when they discuss it among themselves, their opinion becomes stronger because members gain additional information from other members in support of the opinion.

   For instance, if students who don’t like a particular class all start talking about the class, they leave the discussion disliking the class even more because each student has picked up more reasons for disliking the class from the other students.
In addition, normative social influence is at work. People want others to like them, so they express stronger views on a topic to gain approval from others in the group. For instance, students who do not belong to fraternities or sororities tend to be more politically liberal, and this difference grows during college because people who are similar to them reinforce and polarize their views.

**Groupthink** is a mode of group thinking that impairs decision making; the desire for group harmony overrides a realistic appraisal of the possible decisions. Groupthink leads to an illusion of infallibility, the belief that the group cannot make mistakes. Examples of groupthink in history include the failure to anticipate Pearl Harbor, the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, and the Challenger and Columbia space shuttle disasters. In the case of the Space Shuttle Columbia, NASA apparently ignored safety warnings from engineers about possible technical problems.

**Worth Video Anthology for Introductory Psychology: Competition and Aggression:**
*Testosterone at Work (3:20)*
This video explores the influence of the hormone testosterone in competitive sports, with football players explaining the rush of excitement they feel before a game and after a victory. The narrator suggests that competitive sports serve as a substitute for violence. Research clearly indicates a relationship between testosterone levels and euphoria after a victory or dejection after a defeat, whether in sports or in other competitive life scenarios, though the direction of this relationship is not yet clear.

II. How We Think About Our Own and Others’ Behavior

**Attribution** is the process by which we explain our own behavior and the behavior of others—how we answer the question, “What are the causes of personal behavior and the behavior of others?” As mentioned in Chapter 8, how we explain our own behavior is fundamentally biased.

A. How We Make Attributions

See Table 9.4 for a summary of the major attributional biases that follow.

In our day-to-day lives, we make attributions about ourselves and others. If we watch someone trip or drop something, we may make an internal (dispositional) attribution suggesting that this person often trip or drops things. However, when we’re the ones tripping and dropping things we’re more likely to make external (situational) attributions by suggesting (or perhaps believing) that the ground was uneven or that the object we were holding was too slippery, too bulky, too heavy, or too hot.

**Scientific American Introductory Psychology Videos: Prejudice (6:30)**
This is an excellent resource to introduce the topics covered in the next section. Visual examples are combined with interviews with prominent social psychologists, including David Myers. The Robbers Cave experiment is also described in order to demonstrate how terms like in-group and out-group can be applied to groups.

1. In making attributions for the behavior of others, people tend to ignore external factors. This phenomenon is called the **fundamental attribution error**, the tendency of observers to overestimate internal dispositional influences and underestimate external situational influences on others’ behavior.

The fundamental attribution error may have played a role in Milgram’s results. The teachers figured that if the learner was stupid, he deserved the shocks. Placing such blame on victims involves the **just-world hypothesis**, the assumption that the world is just and that people get what they deserve. Thus, the just-world hypothesis helps justify cruelty to others.
The **primacy effect** is partially responsible for the fundamental attribution error. In the primacy effect, earlier information is weighted more heavily than later information in forming an impression of another person. Thus, people should be careful of the initial impression they make on others!

In the **self-fulfilling prophecy**, expectations of a person elicit behavior from the person that confirms initial expectations. For instance, if people think someone is uncooperative, they may act in an uncooperative way in their interactions with the person. The person responds to this uncooperative behavior by being uncooperative, confirming expectations.

*Class Activity: Making Social Judgments*

The representativeness heuristic, initially introduced in Chapter 6 (Thinking and Intelligence/Thinking Under Uncertainty) is often applied to making judgments about people. The representativeness heuristic is a rule of thumb for judging the probability of membership in a category based on how well the object resembles (represents) that category. You may opt to reintroduce the heuristic by using the following example.

Dr. Swinkels’s cousin, Rudy, is a bit on the peculiar side. He has unusual tastes in movies and art, he is married to a performer, and he has tattoos on various parts of his body. In his spare time Rudy takes yoga classes and likes to collect 78 rpm records. An outgoing and rather boisterous person, he has been known to act on a dare on more than one occasion. What do you think Rudy’s occupation most likely is?

A) Farmer  
B) Librarian  
C) Trapeze artist  
D) Surgeon  
E) Lawyer

Swinkels (2003) reports that students select “trapeze artist” frequently despite the fact that there are fewer trapeze artists than people engaged in each of the other occupations. Students’ judgments appear to be influenced by Rudy’s unique characteristics, which are judged as more representative of a performer than of a farmer, librarian, etc. If you have not already done so, you may opt to introduce the concept of base rate, how likely an event is to occur in the population. As Swinkels indicates, research has suggested that people tend to ignore the base rate and focus on case-specific information (e.g., Rudy’s odd characteristics); however, other researchers (e.g., Hinsz, Heimerdinger, Henkel, and Spieker, 2005) have found that people will consider base rate information if it seems particularly relevant to their decision.

You may also want to clarify that people’s use of heuristics will, at times, lead to accurate and time-saving judgments. For example, Sheppard and Koch (2005) point out that shoppers who are seeking assistance will attempt to find an individual who has a uniform, a badge, or some other feature that is characteristic of a prototypical store employee rather than approach everyone around them. Sheppard and Koch present evidence that instructors enhance students’ understanding of the use of heuristics by presenting a combination of situations in which heuristics are and are not effective rather than by exclusively focusing on errors in decision making.

2. In making attributions for our own behavior, we often have what’s called the **actor-observer bias**, the tendency to attribute personal behavior to situational influences and the behavior of others to dispositional influences. As actors, people’s attention is focused on the situation. But as observers, people’s attention is focused on the individual; hence, people make the fundamental attribution error.

*Class Activity: The Self-Serving Bias*

To introduce the notion of the **self-serving bias**, try an activity developed by Angela Lipsitz and Lance Gifford. First, give each student a handout that contains a randomized list of the letters of the alphabet such as the list that appears on the following page.

After students complete the handout, explain that the column “IYFN” stands for “In your first name,” the column “NIYFN” stands for “Not in your first name,” the column “IYLN” stands for “In your last name,” and the column “NIYLN” stands for “Not in your last name.” Now have students write their rating for each letter in the two of the four columns that apply. Ask students to calculate the mean for each of the four columns. Finally, ask how many students had means that were higher for the “IYFN” column than for the “NIYFN” column. Tally the results. Ask the same question for the “IYLN” and “NIYLN” columns. Tally the results. In both the authors’ experiences and our own, students tend to show a preference for letters in their own names.
**CLASS ACTIVITY**
On the line next to each letter, rate how much you like each letter listed below, using a 1 (do not like) to 5 (like a lot) range.

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3. The self-serving bias is people’s tendency to make attributions so they can perceive themselves favorably. As actors, people tend to overestimate dispositional influences when the outcome of personal behavior is positive and to overestimate situational influences when the outcome of personal behavior is negative. In short, people take credit for their successes but not for their failures. Ultimately this bias leads to a phenomenon known as overconfidence when making decisions.

Further, people tend to see themselves as above average when they compare themselves with others on positive dimensions such as intelligence and attractiveness. However, such traits tend to be normally distributed, with half of the population below average and half of the population above average.

Class Activity: Distracted Driving
One excellent activity to demonstrate self-serving bias is to poll students in your class on their confidence in operating a motor vehicle while texting. Now ask the students how confident they are when their friend is behind the wheel texting. Most people believe that talking on a cell phone does not impair their ability to drive, but laboratory research has demonstrated that nearly all people talking on a cell phone while driving (even with a hands-free device) show a level of impairment equivalent to a BAL at or near the legal limit in most states.

The information found at the following sites provides good summary information to start a class discussion:
http://evidencebasedliving.human.cornell.edu/2013/06/17/the-evidence-on-hands-free-cell-phone-devices-while-driving/

Self-serving bias can also influence people’s estimates of the extent to which others think and act as they do. The false consensus effect is the tendency to overestimate the commonality of one’s opinions and unsuccessful behaviors. For instance, if people like a certain type of food, they overestimate how many other people also like that type of food. If students fail an important exam, they tend to overestimate the number of their classmates who also failed the exam. The false uniqueness effect is the tendency to underestimate the commonality of one’s abilities and successful behaviors. For instance, people who are good pool players may think that few others are as good, thus enhancing their self-esteem.

B. How Our Behavior Affects Our Attitudes
Attitudes are evaluative reactions (positive or negative) toward objects, events, and other people.
1. When our behavior contradicts our attitudes. People’s attitudes tend to guide behavior when people feel strongly about their attitudes, when people are consciously aware of their attitudes, and when outside influences on behavior are not strong.

In a now-classic study by Festinger and Carlsmith (1959), participants were given an hour in which to complete an incredibly boring task, such as turning pegs on a pegboard or organizing spools in box, dumping them out, and organizing them again. (You may ask your students to imagine that they are participating in this experiment.) After the hour is over, the experimenter explains that the experiment is concerned with the effects of a person’s expectations on task performance and that the students were in the control group. The experimenter acts upset because his student assistant has not shown up for the next experimental session. The assistant was supposed to pose as a student who just participated in the experiment and tell the next participant who is waiting outside that the experiment was really enjoyable.
The experimenter asks current participants to play the role of the student assistant, offering either $1 or $20 for telling the next participant (who is really a confederate of the experimenter) how enjoyable and interesting the experiment was. After current participants tell the next participant how great the experiment was, they are asked to complete a questionnaire about how much they enjoyed the earlier experimental tasks. Participants who were paid only $1 rated the boring tasks as fairly enjoyable, whereas participants who were paid $20 rated the boring tasks as boring.

2. **Cognitive dissonance theory**, developed by Festinger, proposes that people change their attitudes to reduce the cognitive discomfort created by inconsistencies between their attitudes and their behavior. For instance, people who smoke, a behavior known to almost everyone to be unhealthy, may feel cognitive discomfort because of the inconsistency between their behavior and their attitude/knowledge that smoking is bad for their health. According to cognitive dissonance theory, many smokers change their beliefs about smoking and may begin to insist that the link between smoking and cancer is inconclusive, or they will point out errant cases of people unaffected by a lifetime of smoking (e.g. “Grandpa lived to 100 and he smoked every day of his life”).

Cognitive dissonance theory explains why, in the Festinger and Carlsmith (1959) study, participants who were paid only $1 indicated on the survey that they enjoyed the experiment more than did participants who were paid $20. The people paid $1 lied when they told another person that the task was interesting. So, there was an inconsistency between their actions (saying the experiment was interesting without any significant external incentive) and their attitudes (the experiment was in reality boring). To reduce this inconsistency, these participants changed their attitude to view the tasks as fairly enjoyable. Now, the inconsistency and resulting dissonance were gone.

A key aspect of cognitive dissonance is that people don’t suffer dissonance if they have sufficient justification for their behavior (the participants paid $20 in the study had a perfectly good reason to be inconsistent but not to experience dissonance) or if their behavior was coerced. Cognitive dissonance theory also posits that once people make a tough choice, they will strengthen their commitment to the choice to reduce cognitive dissonance.

3. Bem’s **self-perception theory** proposes that when people are unsure of their attitudes, they infer them by examining personal behavior and the context in which it occurs. People have no dissonance to reduce; they are merely engaging in the normal attribution process discussed earlier. For instance, in the experiment, people would examine their behavior (for example, lying for $1) and infer that the task must have been fairly interesting or else they would not have lied for only $1.

Self-perception theory contends that people don’t change their attitudes because of their behavior, but rather use their behavior to infer their attitudes. Cognitive dissonance theory is a better explanation for behavior that contradicts well-established attitudes. This behavior creates mental discomfort, and people change their attitudes to reduce that discomfort. Self-perception theory explains situations in which attitudes are not well-defined; people infer their attitudes from personal behavior.
Student Assignment (Computer-Based): Implicit Attitudes
To elaborate on the concept of attitudes as evaluative reactions toward objects, events, and other people, you may want to explain that just as memory can be classified as explicit or implicit, so can attitudes. Anthony Greenwald and his colleagues pioneered the recent development of implicit attitudes assessments by using an Implicit Association Test (IAT). Greenwald’s research suggests that people’s private attitudes are not always those they are willing to express in public, and in fact, that some attitudes—implicit attitudes—may not even be accessible to a person’s own conscious thoughts and feelings. Demonstrations of a variety of these measures are available via Project Implicit at https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/. You will be prompted to create an account but are also able to take the test as a guest.

The underlying principle of the demonstrations is that people will respond more quickly to pairs of items that they implicitly associate with each other (e.g., young and good). For example, on the Race IAT, people are asked to respond as quickly as possible to positive and negative words that are paired with faces of either European or African origin. Implicit attitudes are gauged according to the speed with which people respond to the different pairings. The site contains detailed answers to many questions that may arise about the IAT and provides links to research papers.

To reach the actual demonstrations, click the link to Project Implicit’s Web site, the Demonstration button, “Go to Demonstration Tests,” and the “I wish to proceed” link. The specific assessment you ask students to select will depend on your interests and those of your students. The assessments encompass implicit attitudes about topics such as weight, age, gender, race, and ethnicity. After completing a demonstration, participants receive feedback about their implicit attitudes and the overall attitudes of all people who have completed the demonstration. We personally have used the Race IAT in multiple classes, complemented by questions relating to personal experiences with blatant and subtle prejudice, and/or by questions relating to ways of promoting tolerance, starting with resources available at http://www.tolerance.org/.

4. The effect of role-playing was shown in another now-classic study (Zimbardo, 1970). A role is a social position that carries with it expected behaviors. Each role is defined by the socially expected pattern of behavior for it, and these role definitions affect both our behavior and our attitudes. New interest in this study has been aroused because of the prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib, an American military prison in Iraq. Zimbardo was an expert witness in the trial of one soldier accused of abusing Iraqi prisoners of war. Zimbardo has developed a 10-step program to build up people’s ability to withstand combat pressures that lead them to act abusively toward others (see http://www.prisonexp.org/ for more details and links to Zimbardo’s recent writings on the Abu Ghraib abuses, including his recent book The Lucifer Effect).
This video describes how Phil Zimbardo investigated the extent to which the situation shapes how people behave. Zimbardo explains how he converted the basement of the psychology department into a prison and recruited male college students whom he randomly assigned to be either prisoners or guards. The video contains several scenes from the 1971 study, with uniformed guards wearing sunglasses and prisoners dressed in dehumanizing white smocks inscribed with their numbers instead of their names. What differentiates this video from others that depict the study is the commentary by actual participants—a guard and two male prisoners—who reflect on their experiences 35 years ago. For example, the guard, known for his arrogant behavior during the actual study, indicated that he had seen the movie Cool Hand Luke shortly before the experiment and modeled his behavior after the warden in the movie. He also emphasizes how power corrupts and that the prisoners did little to support each other. Before viewing one segment of the video, in which a prisoner intentionally acts crazy in an attempt (eventually successful) to get released, you may want to warn students that they will hear some foul language. The video dramatically illustrates how a powerful situation can affect the behavior of average college students (who were all prescreened to be sure they did not have symptoms of a psychological disorder). It concludes with Zimbardo explaining why he ended the study sooner than originally anticipated and commenting on ethical concerns raised by the study.

This video contains a briefer segment about the Stanford Prison Study than is contained in the previous video described. In the video, students view footage from Phil Zimbardo’s classic experiment. In this study, Zimbardo created a mock prison in the basement of Stanford’s Psychology Department and divided participants into guards and prisoners by the flip of a coin. The “guards” were given appropriate uniforms and equipment and told to do periodic “counts” of the prisoners. The “prisoners” were arrested, given appropriate uniforms, and even assigned a crime that they had committed. The video includes an interview with Zimbardo. We find this video (and the one previously described) to be particularly helpful in stimulating discussion about a variety of topics, including the actor-observer difference in attributions, the fundamental attribution error (students say they would never behave like the guards did), and self-perception theory.
Online Resource: The BBC Prison Study
Another excellent resource mentioned in the text is the BBC Prison Study. This updated version of the original Stanford Prison Experiment can be viewed along with photos and videos that are more current than those typically found when discussing the Zimbardo study. A full link to all resources can be found at http://www.bbcprisonstudy.org.

PsychSim 5 Tutorial: Social Decision Making
This module provides an opportunity to extend information in the text. It begins with some examples of mundane social decisions, such as where to park your car, and how these decisions involve resources. The distinction is made between zero-sum environments and non-zero-sum environments, with zero-sum situations involving a fixed number of resources that only one of two parties can have. In zero-sum games, parties tend to adopt a minimax strategy: They attempt to minimize losses while maximizing gains. In non-zero-sum situations, resources are more flexible: One party’s gain is not necessarily the other party’s loss. However, in non-zero-sum situations, trust between the two parties is essential. Students have the chance to play the Prisoner’s Dilemma Game and the Trucking Game, the two games most widely used to study social traps. After the games, “real world” applications are discussed.
THE NEED FOR UNIQUENESS SCALE

The following statements concern your perceptions about yourself in a variety of situations. Indicate the strength of your agreement with each statement, using the scale below, which ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). There are no “right” or “wrong” answers. For each statement, please write the number that most closely reflects the extent of your personal agreement or disagreement on the line to the right of the statement. Take your time and consider each statement carefully.

1. When I am in a group of strangers, I am not reluctant to express my opinion openly. ___
2. I find that criticism affects my self-esteem. ___
3. I sometimes hesitate to use my own ideas for fear they may be impractical. ___
4. I think society should let reason lead it to new customs and throw aside old habits or mere traditions. ___
5. People frequently succeed in changing my mind. ___
6. I find it sometimes amusing to upset the dignity of teachers, judges, and “cultured” people. ___
7. I like wearing a uniform because it makes me proud to be a member of the organization it represents. ___
8. People have sometimes called me “stuck-up.” ___
9. Others’ disagreements make me uncomfortable. ___
10. I do not always need to live by the rules and standards of society. ___
11. I am unable to express my feelings if they result in undesirable consequences. ___
12. Being a success in one’s career means making a contribution that no one else has made. ___
13. It bothers me if people think I am being too unconventional. ___
14. I always try to follow rules. ___
15. If I disagree with a superior on his or her views, I usually do not keep it to myself. ___
16. I speak up in meetings in order to oppose those who I feel are wrong. ___
17. Feeling “different” in a crowd of people makes me feel uncomfortable. ___
18. If I must die, let it be an unusual death rather than an ordinary death in bed. ___
19. I would rather be just like everyone else than be called a “freak.” ___
20. I must admit I find it hard to work under strict rules and regulations. ___
21. I would rather be known for always trying new ideas than for employing well-trusted methods. ___
22. It is better always to agree with the opinions of others than to be considered a disagreeable person. ___
23. I do not like to say unusual things to people. ___
24. I tend to express my opinions publicly, regardless of what others say. ___
25. As a rule, I strongly defend my own opinions. ___
26. I do not like to go my own way. ___
27. When I am with a group of people, I agree with their ideas so that no arguments will arise. ___
28. I tend to keep quiet in the presence of persons of higher rank, experience, etc. ___
29. I have been quite independent and free from family rule. ___
30. Whenever I take part in group activities, I am somewhat of a nonconformist. ___
31. In most things in life, I believe in playing it safe rather than taking a gamble. ___
32. It is better to break rules than always to conform with an impersonal society. ___
Scoring the Need for Uniqueness Scale (32 items)

This scale was developed to measure not how different one actually may be but rather the magnitude of a person’s desire or need to be unique. To calculate the total Need for Uniqueness Scale score, reverse the score on each of the following items: 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 17, 19, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, and 31. That is, on these items, change 1 to 5, 2 to 4, 3 to 3, 4 to 2, and 5 to 1. Finally, add the scores for all 32 items. The higher the score, the higher the need for uniqueness.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTANCE SCALE

The following statements concern your personal attitudes and behaviors. Indicate the strength of your agreement with each statement, using the scale below, which ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). There are no “right” or “wrong” answers. For each statement, please write the number that most closely reflects the extent of your personal agreement or disagreement on the line to the right of the statement. Take your time and consider each statement carefully.

1. If I receive a lukewarm dish at a restaurant, I make an attempt to let that be known. ___
2. I resent authority figures who try to tell me what to do. ___
3. I find that I often have to question authority. ___
4. I enjoy seeing someone else do something that neither of us is supposed to. ___
5. I have a strong desire to maintain my personal freedom. ___
6. I enjoy playing “devil’s advocate” whenever I can. ___
7. In discussions, I am easily persuaded by others. ___
8. Nothing turns me on as much as a good argument. ___
9. It would be better to have more freedom to do what I want on a job. ___
10. If I am told what to do, I often do the opposite. ___
11. I am sometimes afraid to disagree with others. ___
12. It really bothers me when police officers tell people what to do. ___
13. It does not upset me to change my plans because someone in the group wants to do something else. ___
14. I don’t mind other people telling me what to do. ___
15. I enjoy debates with other people. ___
16. If someone asks a favor of me, I will think twice about what this person is really after. ___
17. I am not very tolerant of others’ attempts to persuade me. ___
18. I often follow the suggestions of others. ___
19. I am relatively opinionated. ___
20. It is important to me to be in a powerful position relative to others. ___
21. I am very open to solutions to my problems from others. ___
22. I enjoy “showing up” people who think they are right. ___
23. I consider myself more competitive than cooperative. ___
24. I don’t mind doing something for someone even when I don’t know why I’m doing it. ___
25. I usually go along with others’ advice. ___
26. I feel it is better to stand up for what I believe than to be silent. ___
27. I am very stubborn and set in my ways. ___
28. It is very important for me to get along well with the people I work with. ___
Scoring the Psychological Reactance Scale (28 items)

This scale was designed to measure individual differences in reactance potential or in the tendency to be oppositional. To calculate total reactance potential, reverse the score on each of the following items: 7, 11, 13, 14, 18, 21, 24, 25, and 28. That is, on these items, change 1 to 4, 2 to 3, 3 to 2, and 4 to 1. Finally, add the scores for all 28 items. The higher the score, the greater the tendency to be oppositional.