



MODULES 41–44

Social Psychology

Dirk Willems faced a moment of decision in 1569. Threatened with torture and death as a member of a persecuted religious minority, he escaped from his Asperen, Holland, prison and fled across an ice-covered pond. His stronger and heavier jailer pursued him but fell through the ice and, unable to climb out, pleaded for help.

With his freedom in front of him, Willems acted with ultimate selflessness. He turned back and rescued his pursuer, who, under orders, took him back to captivity. A few weeks later Willems was condemned to be “executed with fire, until death ensues.” For his martyrdom, present-day Asperen has named a street in honor of its folk hero (Toews, 2004).

What drives people to feel contempt for minority-group members, such as Dirk Willems, and to act so spitefully? What motivates people, such as his jailer, to carry out unfair orders? And what inspired the selflessness of Willems’ response, and of so many who have died trying to save others? Indeed, what motivates any of us who volunteer kindness and generosity toward others?

We are social animals. As novelist Herman Melville remarked, “We cannot live for ourselves alone. Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads.” *Social psychologists* explore these connections by scientifically studying how we *think about* and *influence* others (Modules 41 and 42), and also how we *relate* to one another (Modules 43 and 44).

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MODULE 41

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Social Thinking

LOQ LEARNING OBJECTIVE QUESTION 41-1 What do social psychologists study? How do we tend to explain others' behavior and our own?

Unlike sociology, which studies societies and social groupings, social psychologists focus more on how *individuals* view and affect one another.

Personality psychologists focus on the person. They study the personal traits and dynamics that explain why, in a given situation, *different people* act differently. (Would you have acted as Willems did, helping the jailer out of the icy water?) **Social psychologists** focus on the situation. They study the social influences that explain why *the same person* acts differently in *different situations*. (Might the jailer have acted differently—opting not to march Willems back to jail—under differing circumstances?)



Mennonite Library and Archives/Bethel College

An etching of Dirk Willems by Dutch artist Jan Luyken (from *The Martyrs Mirror*, 1685)

The Fundamental Attribution Error

Our social behavior arises from our social cognition. Especially when the unexpected occurs, we want to understand and explain why people act as they do. After studying how people explain others' behavior, Fritz Heider (1958) proposed an **attribution theory**: We can attribute the behavior to the person's stable, enduring traits (a *dispositional attribution*), or we can attribute it to the situation (a *situational attribution*).

For example, in class, we notice that Juliette seldom talks. Over coffee, Jack talks nonstop. That must be the sort of people they are, we decide. Juliette must be shy and Jack outgoing. Such attributions—to their dispositions—can be valid. People do have enduring personality traits. But sometimes we fall prey to the **fundamental attribution error** (Ross, 1977): We overestimate the influence of personality and underestimate the influence of situations. In class, Jack may be as quiet as Juliette. Catch Juliette at a party and you may hardly recognize your quiet classmate.

David Napolitan and George Goethals (1979) demonstrated the fundamental attribution error in an experiment with Williams College students. They had students talk, one at a time, with a woman who acted either cold and critical or warm and friendly. Before the conversations, the researchers told half the students that the woman's behavior would be spontaneous. They told the other half the truth—that they had instructed her to *act* friendly (or unfriendly).

Did hearing the truth affect students' impressions of the woman? Not at all! If the woman acted friendly, both groups decided she really was a warm person. If she acted unfriendly, both decided she really was a cold person. They attributed her behavior to her personal disposition *even when told that her behavior was situational*—that she was merely acting that way for the purposes of the experiment.

We all commit the fundamental attribution error. Consider: Is your psychology instructor shy or outgoing?

If you answer “outgoing,” remember that you know your instructor from one situation—the classroom, where teaching demands talking. Your instructor might disagree: “Me, outgoing? It all depends on the situation. In class or with good friends, yes, I’m outgoing. But at professional meetings I’m really rather shy.” Outside their assigned roles, professors seem less professorial, presidents less presidential, managers less managerial.

What Factors Affect Our Attributions?

One factor is culture. Individualist Westerners more often attribute behavior to people's personal traits. People in East Asian cultures are somewhat more sensitive to the power of the situation (Kitayama et al., 2009; Riemer et al., 2014). In experiments that asked people to view scenes, such as a big fish swimming, Americans focused more on the attributes of the individual fish. Japanese viewers focused more on the scene—the situation (Chua et al., 2005; Nisbett, 2003).

social psychology the scientific study of how we think about, influence, and relate to one another.

attribution theory the theory that we explain someone's behavior by crediting either the situation or the person's disposition.

fundamental attribution error the tendency for observers, when analyzing others' behavior, to underestimate the impact of the situation and to overestimate the impact of personal disposition.

When we explain *our own* behavior, we are sensitive to how behavior changes with the situation (Idson & Mischel, 2001). We also are sensitive to the power of the situation when we explain the behavior of people we have seen in many different contexts. We more often commit the fundamental attribution error when a stranger acts badly. Having only seen that enraged fan screaming at the referee in the heat of competition, we may assume he is a bad person. But outside the stadium, he may be a good neighbor and a great parent.

As we act, our eyes look outward; we see others' faces, not our own. Would taking an observer's viewpoint make us more aware of our own personal style? Researchers tested this idea by using separate cameras to film two people interacting. When they showed each person a replay of the interaction—filmed from the other person's perspective—participants credited their behavior more to their disposition, much as an observer typically would (Lassiter & Irvine, 1986; Storms, 1973).

Two important exceptions to our usual view of our own actions: Our deliberate and *admirable* actions we often attribute to our own good reasons, not to the situation (Malle, 2006; Malle et al., 2007). And as we age, we tend to attribute our younger selves' behavior mostly to our traits (Pronin & Ross, 2006). In five or ten years, your current self may seem like another person.

How Do Our Attributions Matter?

The way we explain others' actions (attributing them to the person or the situation) can have important real-life effects (Fincham & Bradbury, 1993; Fletcher et al., 1990). Does a warm greeting reflect romantic interest or social courtesy? Does a manager's tart-tongued remark reflect a job threat or a bad day? Was a shooting malicious or an act of self-defense? Attributions matter. In one study, 181 state judges gave lighter sentences to a violent offender who a scientist testified had a gene that altered brain areas related to aggressiveness (Aspinwall et al., 2012).

Do you attribute poverty and unemployment to social circumstances or to personal traits? In Britain, India, Australia, and the United States, political conservatives have tended to attribute responsibility to the personal dispositions of the poor and unemployed (Furnham, 1982; Pandey et al., 1982; Wagstaff, 1982; Zucker & Weiner, 1993). "People generally get what they deserve. Those who take initiative can still get ahead." In experiments, those who reflect on the power of choice—either by recalling their own choices or taking note of another's choices—become more likely to think that people get what they deserve (Savani & Rattan, 2012). Political liberals, and those not primed to consider the power of choice, are more likely to blame past and present situations: "If you or I had to live with the same poor education, lack of opportunity, and discrimination, would we be any better off?"

The point to remember: Our attributions—to a person's disposition or to the situation—have real consequences.

 For a quick interactive tutorial, engage online with **Concept Practice: Making Attributions.**

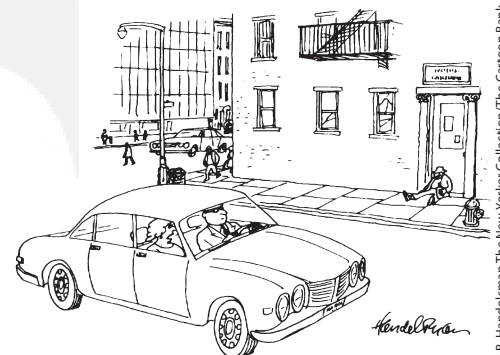


Lee Snider/The Image Works

An attribution question

Whether we attribute poverty and homelessness to social circumstances or to personal dispositions affects and reflects our political views.

Some 7 in 10 college women report having experienced a man misattributing her friendliness as a sexual come-on (Jacques-Tiura et al., 2007).



"Otis, shout at that man to pull himself together."

J.B. Handelman The New Yorker Collection/The Cartoon Bank

Dispositional versus situational attributions

Should the 2015 slaughter of nine African-Americans attending a church Bible study in Charleston, West Virginia, be attributed to the shooter's disposition? ("There is one person to blame here. A person filled with hate," said South Carolina governor Nikki Haley.) Or to America's gun culture? ("At some point, we as a country will have to reckon with the fact that this type of mass violence does not happen in other advanced countries . . . with this kind of frequency," said President Obama.) Or to both?



Richard Ellis/Alamy

Attitudes and Actions

LOQ 41-2 How do attitudes and actions interact?

Attitudes are feelings, often influenced by our beliefs, that predispose our reactions to objects, people, and events. If we *believe* someone is threatening us, we may *feel* fear and anger toward the person and *act* defensively. The traffic between our attitudes and our actions is two-way. Our attitudes affect our actions. And our actions affect our attitudes.

Attitudes Affect Actions

In any debate, people on both sides attempt to convert the opposition and sway the undecided. These efforts to *persuade* generally take two forms:

- **Peripheral route persuasion** uses attention-getting cues to trigger emotion-based snap judgments. Endorsements by beautiful or famous people can influence people's attitudes, whether the judgment is about choosing a political candidate or buying the latest smart phone. When green activist star Leonardo DiCaprio urges action to counter climate change, or when Pope Francis (2015) states that "Climate change is a global problem with grave implications," they hope to harness their credibility for peripheral route persuasion. Even if it doesn't engage systematic thinking, it may produce fast results.
- **Central route persuasion** offers evidence and arguments that trigger careful thinking. To persuade buyers to purchase a particular phone, an ad might itemize the phone's great features. To marshal support for climate change intervention, effective arguments have focused on accumulating greenhouse gases, melting Arctic ice, rising world temperatures and seas, and extreme weather (van der Linden et al., 2015). Central route persuasion works well for people who are naturally analytical or involved in an issue. And because it is more thoughtful and less superficial, it is more durable.

Persuaders try to influence our behavior by changing our attitudes. But situational factors, such as strong social pressures, can override the attitude-behavior connection (Wallace et al., 2005). In roll-call votes, politicians may vote as their supporters demand, despite privately disagreeing (Nagourney, 2002).

Attitudes are especially likely to affect behavior when external influences are minimal, and when the attitude is stable, specific to the behavior, and easily recalled (Glasman & Albarracín, 2006). One experiment used vivid, easily recalled information to persuade White college student tanners that repetitive tanning put them at risk for future skin cancer. One month later, 72 percent of the participants, and only 16 percent of those in a waitlist control group, had lighter skin (McClendon & Prentice-Dunn, 2001). Persuasion changed attitudes (about skin cancer risk), which changed behavior (less tanning).

attitude feelings, often influenced by our beliefs, that predispose us to respond in a particular way to objects, people, and events.

peripheral route persuasion occurs when people are influenced by incidental cues, such as a speaker's attractiveness.

central route persuasion occurs when interested people focus on the arguments and respond with favorable thoughts.

foot-in-the-door phenomenon the tendency for people who have first agreed to a small request to comply later with a larger request.

role a set of expectations (norms) about a social position, defining how those in the position ought to behave.

Actions Affect Attitudes

Now consider a more surprising principle: Not only will we stand up for what we believe, we also will more strongly believe in what we have stood up for. Many streams of evidence confirm that *attitudes follow behavior* (FIGURE 41.1).

THE FOOT-IN-THE-DOOR PHENOMENON How would you react if someone induced you to act against your beliefs? In many cases, people adjust their attitudes. During the Korean war, many U.S. prisoners were held in Chinese communist war camps. Without using brutality, the captors secured prisoners' collaboration in various activities, ranging from simple tasks (running errands to gain privileges) to more serious actions (false confessions, informing on other prisoners, and divulging military information). When the war ended, 21 prisoners chose to stay with the communists. More returned home "brainwashed"—convinced that communism was a good thing for Asia.

How did the Chinese captors achieve these amazing results? A key ingredient was their use of the **foot-in-the-door phenomenon**: They knew that people who agree to a small request will find it easier to comply later with a larger one. The Chinese began with harmless requests, such as copying a trivial statement, but gradually escalated their demands (Schein, 1956). The next statement to be copied might list flaws of capitalism. Then, to gain privileges, the prisoners participated in group discussions, wrote self-criticisms, or uttered public confessions. After doing so, they often adjusted their beliefs to be more consistent with their public acts. The point is simple: To get people to agree to something big, start small and build (Cialdini, 1993). A trivial act makes the next act easier. Succumb to a temptation and you will find the next temptation harder to resist.

In dozens of experiments, researchers have coaxed people into acting against their attitudes or violating their moral standards, with the same result: Doing becomes believing. After giving in to a request to harm an innocent victim—by making nasty comments or delivering presumed electric shocks—people begin to disparage their victim. After speaking or writing on behalf of a position they have qualms about, they begin to believe their own words.

Fortunately, the attitudes-follow-behavior principle works with good deeds as well. In one classic experiment, researchers sought permission to place a large "Drive Carefully" sign in people's front yards (Freedman & Fraser, 1966). The 17 percent rate of agreement soared to 76 percent among those who first did a small favor—placing a 3-inch-high "Be a Safe Driver" sign in their window.

The foot-in-the-door tactic has helped boost charitable contributions, blood donations, and U.S. school desegregation. With the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, school desegregation became law. In the years that followed, White Americans expressed diminishing racial prejudice. And as Americans in different regions came to act more alike—thanks to more uniform national standards against discrimination—they began to think more alike.

ROLE-PLAYING AFFECTS ATTITUDES When you adopt a new **role**—when you become a college student, marry, or begin a new job—you strive to follow the social prescriptions. At first, your behaviors may feel phony, because you are acting a role. Soldiers may at first feel they are playing war games. Before long, however, what began as play acting in the theater of life becomes *you*. As *Mad Men*'s Bobbie Barrett advised, "Pick a job and then become the person that does it."

Role playing morphed into real life in one famous and controversial study in which male college students volunteered to spend time in a simulated prison. Stanford psychologist Philip Zimbardo (1972) randomly assigned some volunteers to be guards. He gave them uniforms, clubs, and whistles and instructed them to enforce certain rules. Others became prisoners, locked in barren cells and forced to wear humiliating outfits. For a day or two, the volunteers self-consciously "played" their roles. Then the simulation became real—too real. Some guards developed disparaging attitudes and a third "became tyrannical," devising cruel and degrading routines. One by one, the prisoners broke down, rebelled, or became passively resigned. After only six days, Zimbardo called off the study.



▲ FIGURE 41.1

Attitudes follow behavior Cooperative actions, such as those performed by people on sports teams (including Germany, shown here celebrating their World Cup 2014 victory), feed mutual liking. Such attitudes, in turn, promote positive behavior.

"If the King destroys a man, that's proof to the King it must have been a bad man."

Thomas Cromwell, in Robert Bolt's
A Man for All Seasons, 1960

"Fake it until you make it."

Alcoholics Anonymous saying

The power of the situation In his 1972 Stanford Prison simulation, Philip Zimbardo created a toxic situation (left). Those assigned to the guard role soon degraded the prisoners. In real life in 2004, some U.S. military guards tormented Iraqi prisoners at the U.S.-run Abu Ghraib prison (right). To Zimbardo (2004, 2007), it was a bad barrel rather than a few bad apples that led to the Abu Ghraib atrocities: “When ordinary people are put in a novel, evil place, such as most prisons, Situations Win, People Lose.”



Philip G. Zimbardo

AP Photo

To view Philip Zimbardo's 14-minute illustration and explanation of his famous prison simulation, see the **Video—The Stanford Prison Study: The Power of the Situation**.

Critics question the reliability of Zimbardo's results (Griggs, 2014). But this much seems true: Role playing can train people to become torturers in the real world (Staub, 1989). In the early 1970s, the Greek military government eased men into their roles. First, a trainee stood guard outside an interrogation cell. After this “foot in the door” step, he stood guard inside. Only then was he ready to become actively involved in the questioning and torture. In one study of German men, military training toughened their personalities, leaving them less agreeable even five years later, after leaving the military (Jackson et al., 2012). What we do, we gradually become: Every time we act like the people around us, we slightly change ourselves to be more like them, and less like who we used to be.

Yet people differ. In Zimbardo's simulation and in real-life atrocity-producing situations, some people have succumbed to the situation and others have not (Carnahan & McFarland, 2007; Haslam & Reicher, 2007, 2012; Mastroianni & Reed, 2006; Zimbardo, 2007). Person and situation interact.

COGNITIVE DISSONANCE: RELIEF FROM TENSION So far, we have seen that actions can affect attitudes, sometimes turning prisoners into collaborators, doubters into believers, and compliant guards into abusers. But why? One explanation is that when we become aware that our attitudes and actions don't coincide, we experience tension, or *cognitive dissonance*. Indeed, the brain regions that become active when people experience other forms of mental tension and negative arousal also become active when people experience cognitive dissonance (Harmon-Jones et al., 2015; Kitayama et al., 2013). To relieve this tension, according to Leon Festinger's (1957) **cognitive dissonance theory**, we often bring our attitudes into line with our actions.

Dozens of experiments have tested the cognitive dissonance theory. Many have made people feel responsible for behavior that clashed with their attitudes and had foreseeable consequences. As a participant in one of these experiments, you might agree for a measly \$2 to help a researcher by writing an essay supporting something you don't believe in (perhaps a tuition increase). Feeling responsible for the statements (which are inconsistent with your attitudes), you would probably feel dissonance, especially if you thought your essay might influence an administrator. To reduce the uncomfortable tension, you might start believing your phony words. It's as if we rationalize, “If I chose to do it (or say it), I must believe in it.” The less coerced and more responsible we feel for a troubling act, the more dissonance we feel. The more dissonance we feel, the more motivated we are to find and project consistency, such as changing our attitudes to help justify the act.

The attitudes-follow-behavior principle has a heartening implication: We cannot directly control all our feelings, but we can influence them by altering our behavior. If we are depressed, we can alter our attributions and explain events in more positive terms, with more self-acceptance and fewer self-put-downs (Rubenstein et al., 2016). If we are unloving, we can become more loving by behaving *as if* we were loving—by doing thoughtful things, expressing affection, giving affirmation. “Each time you

To check your understanding of cognitive dissonance, engage online with **Concept Practice: Cognitive Dissonance**.

cognitive dissonance theory the theory that we act to reduce the discomfort (dissonance) we feel when two of our thoughts (cognitions) are inconsistent. For example, when we become aware that our attitudes and our actions clash, we can reduce the resulting dissonance by changing our attitudes.

ask yourself, ‘How should I act?’” observes Robert Levine (2016), “you are also asking, ‘Who is the person I want to become?’” That helps explain why teens’ doing volunteer work promotes a compassionate identity. Pretense can become reality. Conduct sculpts character. What we do we become.

The point to remember: We can act ourselves into a way of thinking about as easily as we can think ourselves into a way of acting.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

- RP-1 Driving to school one snowy day, Marco narrowly misses a car that slides through a red light. “Slow down! What a terrible driver,” he thinks to himself. Moments later, Marco himself slips through an intersection and yelps, “Wow! These roads are awful. The city plows need to get out here.” What social psychology principle has Marco just demonstrated? Explain.
- RP-2 How do our attitudes and our actions affect each other?
- RP-3 When people act in a way that is not in keeping with their attitudes, and then change their attitudes to match those actions, _____ theory attempts to explain why.

“Sit all day in a moping posture, sigh, and reply to everything with a dismal voice, and your melancholy lingers. . . . If we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must . . . go through the outward movements of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate.”

William James, *Principles of Psychology*, 1890

MODULE 41 REVIEW Social Thinking

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Test yourself by taking a moment to answer each of these Learning Objective Questions (repeated here from within this module). Then check your answers—a click away in the e-book, and in Appendix C of the printed text. Research suggests that trying to answer these questions on your own will improve your long-term retention (McDaniel et al., 2009, 2015).

LOQ 41-1 What do social psychologists study? How do we tend to explain others’ behavior and our own?

LOQ 41-2 How do attitudes and actions interact?

TERMS AND CONCEPTS TO REMEMBER

Test yourself on these terms by trying to compose the definition before checking your answers.

social psychology, p. 478

attribution theory, p. 478

fundamental attribution error, p. 478

attitude, p. 480

peripheral route persuasion, p. 480

central route persuasion, p. 480

foot-in-the-door phenomenon, p. 480

role, p. 480

cognitive dissonance theory, p. 482

MASTER THE MATERIAL

Test yourself repeatedly throughout your studies. This will not only help you figure out what you know and don’t know; the testing itself will help you learn and remember the information more effectively thanks to the *testing effect*.

- If we encounter a person who appears to be high on drugs, and we make the fundamental attribution error, we will probably attribute the person’s behavior to
 - moral weakness or an addictive personality.
 - peer pressure.
 - the easy availability of drugs on city streets.
 - society’s acceptance of drug use.
- Celebrity endorsements in advertising often lead consumers to purchase products through _____ (central/peripheral) route persuasion.
- We tend to agree to a larger request more readily if we have already agreed to a small request. This tendency is called the _____ phenomenon.
- Jamal’s therapist has suggested that Jamal should “act as if” he is confident, even though he feels insecure and shy. Which social psychological theory would best support this suggestion, and what might the therapist be hoping to achieve?

Answers are a click away in the e-book, and available in Appendix D, at the back of the printed text.

Use  **LearningCurve** to create your personalized study plan, which will direct you to the Macmillan resources that will help you most.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWERS

RP-1 By attributing the other person’s behavior to the person (“he’s a terrible driver”) and his own to the situation (“these roads are awful”), Marco has exhibited the *fundamental attribution error*. **RP-2** Our attitudes often influence our actions as we behave in ways consistent with our beliefs. However, our actions also influence our attitudes; we come to believe in what we have done. **RP-3** cognitive dissonance

MODULE 42 Social Influence

Social psychology's great lesson is the enormous power of social influence. This influence stems in part from *social norms*—rules for expected and acceptable behavior. On campus, jeans are the norm; on New York's Wall Street or London's Bond Street, business attire is expected. When we know how to act, how to groom, how to talk, life functions smoothly.

But sometimes social pressure moves people in dreadful directions. Isolated with others who share their grievances, dissenters may gradually become rebels, and rebels may become terrorists. Suicides, bomb threats, airplane hijackings, and mass shootings all have a curious tendency to come in clusters. After a mass killing (of four or more people), the probability of another such attack increases for the ensuing 13 days (Towers et al., 2015). The 100+ U.S. school shootings since 2012 are a modern phenomenon. Let's examine the pull of these social strings. How strong are they? How do they operate? When do we break them?

"Have you ever noticed how one example—good or bad—can prompt others to follow? How one illegally parked car can give permission for others to do likewise? How one racial joke can fuel another?"

Marian Wright Edelman,
The Measure of Our Success, 1992



"Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else's opinions, their lives a mimicry."

Irish dramatist Oscar Wilde
"The Soul of Man Under Socialism," 1895

"When I see synchrony and mimicry—whether it concerns yawning, laughing, dancing, or aping—I see social connection and bonding."

Primatologist Frans de Waal
"The Empathy Instinct," 2009

Conformity: Complying With Social Pressures

LOQ 42-1 What is *social contagion*, and how do conformity experiments reveal the power of social influence?

Social Contagion

Fish swim in schools. Birds fly in flocks. And humans, too, tend to go with their group, to think what it thinks and do what it does. Behavior is contagious. If one of us yawns, laughs, coughs, scratches, stares at the sky, or checks our phone, others in our group will often do the same (Holle et al., 2012). Even just reading about yawning increases people's yawning (Provine, 2012), as perhaps you have noticed? Yawn mimicry also occurs in other species—among chimpanzees, for example (Anderson et al., 2004)—and even across species: Dogs more often yawn after observing their owner yawn (Silva et al., 2012).

Tanya Chartrand and John Bargh (1999) call this social contagion the *chameleon effect*, likening it to chameleon lizards' ability to take on the color of their surroundings. They captured it by having students work in a room alongside another person (actually a "confederate" working for the experimenters). Sometimes the confederates rubbed their own face. Sometimes they shook their foot. Sure enough, students tended to rub their face when with the face-rubbing person and shake their foot when with the foot-shaking person.

Social contagion is not confined to behavior. We human chameleons also take on the emotional tones of those around us—their expressions, postures, inflections—and even their grammar (Ireland & Pennebaker, 2010). Just hearing someone reading a neutral text in either a happy- or sad-sounding voice creates *mood contagion* in listeners (Neumann & Strack, 2000).

This natural mimicry enables us to *empathize*—to feel what others are feeling. This helps explain why we feel happier around happy people than around depressed people. It also helps explain why studies of groups of British workers have revealed *mood linkage*, or the sharing of moods (Totterdell et al., 1998). Empathic mimicking fosters fondness (Chartrand & van Baaren, 2009; Lakin et al., 2008). Perhaps you've noticed that when someone nods their head as you do and echoes your words, you feel a certain rapport and liking?

Social networks serve as contagious pathways for moods, such as happiness and loneliness, drug use, and even the behavior patterns that lead to obesity and sleep loss (Christakis & Fowler, 2009). On websites, positive ratings generate more positive ratings—a

phenomenon called *positive herding* (Muchnik et al., 2013). In a massive experiment on the 2010 U.S. congressional election day, Facebook showed 61 million people a message that encouraged voting, with a link to a local voting place and a clickable “I voted” button. For some recipients, the messages also contained pictures of Facebook friends who had already voted. Those who received “tell your friends you voted” messages were slightly more likely to vote, and that difference generated an estimated 282,000 additional votes.

Suggestibility and mimicry sometimes lead to tragedy. In the eight days following the 1999 shooting rampage at Colorado’s Columbine High School, every U.S. state except Vermont experienced threats of copycat violence. Pennsylvania alone recorded 60 such threats (Cooper, 1999). Spikes in suicide rates sometimes follow a highly publicized suicide (Phillips et al., 1985, 1989). In the wake of screen idol Marilyn Monroe’s suicide on August 5, 1962, the number of suicides in the United States exceeded the usual August count by 200.

What causes behavior clusters? Do people act similarly because of their influence on one another? Or because they are simultaneously exposed to the same events and conditions? Seeking answers to such questions, social psychologists have conducted experiments on conformity.

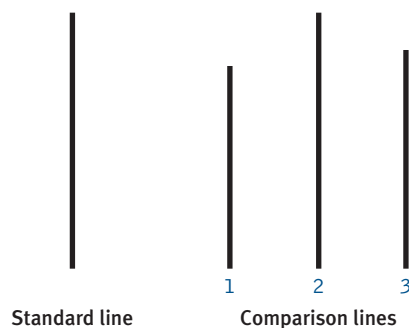
Conformity and Social Norms

Suggestibility and mimicry are subtle types of **conformity**—adjusting our behavior or thinking toward some group standard. To study conformity, Solomon Asch (1955) devised a simple test. Imagine yourself as a participant in a supposed study of visual perception. You arrive in time to take a seat at a table with five other people. The experimenter asks the group to state, one by one, which of three comparison lines is identical to a standard line. You see clearly that the answer is Line 2, and you wait your turn to say so. Your boredom begins to show when the next set of lines proves equally easy.



Social contagion Laughter, like yawns, is infectious. That’s what “Chewbacca Mom’s” (Candace Payne’s) viewers discovered after her spontaneous hilarity became, with 164 million views, Facebook Live’s most watched 2016 video (tinyurl.com/ThatLaugh).

conformity adjusting our behavior or thinking to coincide with a group standard.



▲ FIGURE 42.1

Asch's conformity experiments Which of the three comparison lines is equal to the standard line? What do you suppose most people would say after hearing five others say, "Line 3"? In this photo from one of Asch's experiments, the student in the center shows the severe discomfort that comes from disagreeing with the responses of other group members (in this case, accomplices of the experimenter).



William Vandivert/Scientific American

Now comes the third trial, and the correct answer seems just as clear-cut (FIGURE 42.1). But the first person gives what strikes you as a wrong answer: "Line 3." When the second person and then the third and fourth give the same wrong answer, you sit up straight and squint. When the fifth person agrees with the first four, you feel your heart begin to pound. The experimenter then looks to you for your answer. Torn between the unanimity voiced by the five others and the evidence of your own eyes, you feel tense and suddenly unsure. You hesitate before answering, wondering whether you should suffer the discomfort of being the oddball. What answer do you give?

In Asch's experiments, college students, answering questions alone, erred less than 1 percent of the time. But what happened when several others—confederates—answered incorrectly? Although most people told the truth even when others did not, Asch was disturbed by his result: More than one-third of the time, these "intelligent and well-meaning" college students were "willing to call white black" by going along with the group.

Later investigations have not always found as much conformity as Asch found, but they have revealed that we are more likely to conform when we

- are made to feel incompetent or insecure.
- are in a group with at least three people.
- are in a group in which everyone else agrees. (If just one other person disagrees, the odds of our disagreeing greatly increase.)
- admire the group's status and attractiveness.
- have not made a prior commitment to any response.
- know that others in the group will observe our behavior.
- are from a culture that strongly encourages respect for social standards.

Why do we so often think as others think and do as they do? Why, when asked controversial questions, are students' answers more similar when they raise their hands and more diverse when they use anonymous electronic clickers (Stowell et al., 2010)? Why do we clap when others clap, eat as others eat, believe what others believe, say what others say, even see what others see?

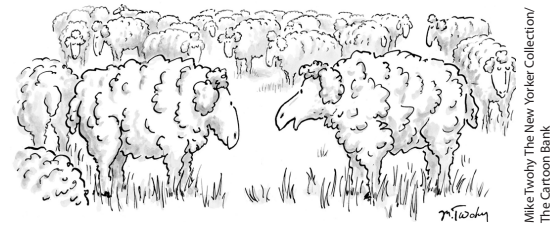
Frequently, we conform to avoid rejection or to gain social approval (Williams & Sommer, 1997). In such cases, we are responding to **normative social influence**. We are sensitive to social norms because the price we pay for being different can be severe. We need to belong. At other times, we conform because we want to be accurate. Groups provide information, and only an uncommonly stubborn person will never listen to others. When we accept others' opinions about reality, as when reading online movie and restaurant reviews, we are responding to **informational social influence**. As one female Welsh driver demonstrated in 2004, sometimes it pays to assume others are right and to follow their lead. She set a record for the longest distance driven on the wrong side of a British divided highway—30 miles, with only one minor sideswipe, before the motorway ran out and police were able to puncture her tires. The driver, who was intoxicated, later explained that she thought the hundreds of other drivers coming at her were all on the wrong side of the road (Woolcock, 2004).

Tattoos: Yesterday's nonconformity, today's conformity? As tattoos become perceived as fashion conformity, their popularity may wane.




Sanneberg/Getty Images

Is conformity bad or good? Conformity can be bad—leading people to agree with falsehoods or go along with bullying. Or it can be good—leading people to give more generously after observing others’ generosity (Nook et al., 2016). The answer also depends partly on our culturally influenced values. People in many Asian, African, and Latin American countries place a high value on *collectivism* (honoring group standards). Western Europeans and people in most English-speaking countries tend to prize *individualism* (giving priority to personal goals over group goals). Experiments across 17 countries have found lower conformity rates in individualist cultures (Bond & Smith, 1996). American university students, for example, tend to see themselves as less conforming than others (Pronin et al., 2007). We are, in our own eyes, individuals amid a crowd of sheep.



"I love the little ways you're identical to everyone else."

 To review the classic conformity studies and experience a simulated experiment, visit **PsychSim 6: Everybody's Doing It!**

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

RP-1 Despite her mother's pleas to use a more ergonomic backpack, Antonia insists on trying to carry all of her books to high school in an oversized purse the way her fashionable friends all seem to do. Antonia is affected by what type of social influence?

Obedience: Following Orders

LOQ 42-2 What did Milgram's obedience experiments teach us about the power of social influence?

Social psychologist Stanley Milgram (1963, 1974), a high school classmate of Philip Zimbardo and then a student of Solomon Asch, knew that people often give in to social pressures. But how would they respond to outright commands, as did those who carried out Holocaust atrocities? (Some of Milgram's family members were Nazi concentration camp survivors.) To find out, he undertook what have become social psychology's most famous and controversial experiments (Benjamin & Simpson, 2009).

Imagine yourself as one of the nearly 1000 people who took part in Milgram's 20 experiments. You respond to an ad for participants in a Yale University psychology study of the effect of punishment on learning. Professor Milgram's assistant asks you and another person to draw slips from a hat to see who will be the "teacher" and who will be the "learner." You draw a "teacher" slip (unknown to you, both slips say "teacher"). The supposed learner, a mild and submissive-seeming man, is led to an adjoining room and strapped into a chair. From the chair, wires run through the wall to your machine. You sit down in front of a shock machine and are given your task: Teach and then test the learner on a list of word pairs. If the learner gives a wrong answer, you are to flip a switch to deliver a brief electric shock. For the first wrong answer, you will flip the switch labeled "15 Volts—Slight Shock." With each succeeding error, you will move to the next higher voltage. With each flip of a switch, lights flash and electronic switches buzz.

The experiment begins, and you deliver the shocks after the first and second wrong answers. If you continue, you hear the learner grunt when you flick the third, fourth, and fifth switches. After you activate the eighth switch ("120 Volts—Moderate Shock"), the learner cries out that the shocks are painful. After the tenth switch ("150 Volts—Strong Shock"), he begins shouting. "Get me out of here! I won't be in the experiment anymore! I refuse to go on!" You draw back, but the stern experimenter prods you: "Please continue—the experiment requires that you continue." You resist, but the experimenter insists, "It is absolutely essential that you continue," or "You have no other choice, you *must* go on."

If you obey, you hear the learner shriek in apparent agony as you continue to raise the shock level after each new error. After the 330-volt level, the learner refuses to answer and falls silent. Still, the experimenter pushes you toward the final, 450-volt switch. "Ask the question," he says, "and if no correct answer is given, administer the next shock level."

Like humans, migrating and herding animals conform for both informational and normative reasons (Claidière & Whiten, 2012). Following others is informative; compared with solo geese, a flock of geese migrate more accurately. (There is wisdom in the crowd.) And staying with the herd also sustains group membership.

normative social influence influence resulting from a person's desire to gain approval or avoid disapproval.

informational social influence influence resulting from one's willingness to accept others' opinions about reality.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWER

RP-1 Normative social influence

Would you follow the experimenter's commands to shock someone? At what level would you refuse to obey? Before undertaking the experiments, Milgram asked nonparticipants what they would do. Most were sure they would stop soon after the learner first indicated pain, certainly before he shrieked in agony. Forty psychiatrists agreed with that prediction. Were the predictions accurate? Not even close. When Milgram conducted the experiment with other men aged 20 to 50, he was astonished. More than 60 percent complied fully—right up to the last switch. When he ran a new study, with 40 new “teachers” and a learner who complained of a “slight heart condition,” the results were similar. A full 65 percent of the new teachers obeyed the experimenter, right up to 450 volts (**FIGURE 42.2**). In 10 later studies, women obeyed at rates similar to men's (Blass, 1999).

Were Milgram's results a product of the 1960s American mindset? No. When Jerry Burger (2009) substantially repeated Milgram's basic experiment, 70 percent of the participants complied up to the 150-volt point—only a slight reduction from Milgram's 83 percent. And when a French reality TV show replicated Milgram's study, 81 percent of the teachers, egged on by a cheering audience, obeyed and tortured a screaming victim (Beauvois et al., 2012).

Did Milgram's teachers figure out the hoax—that no real shock was being delivered and the learner was in fact a confederate pretending to feel pain? Did they realize the experiment was really testing their willingness to comply with commands to inflict punishment? No. The teachers typically displayed genuine distress: They perspired, trembled, laughed nervously, and bit their lips.

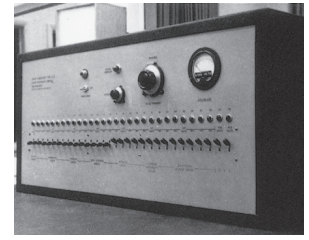
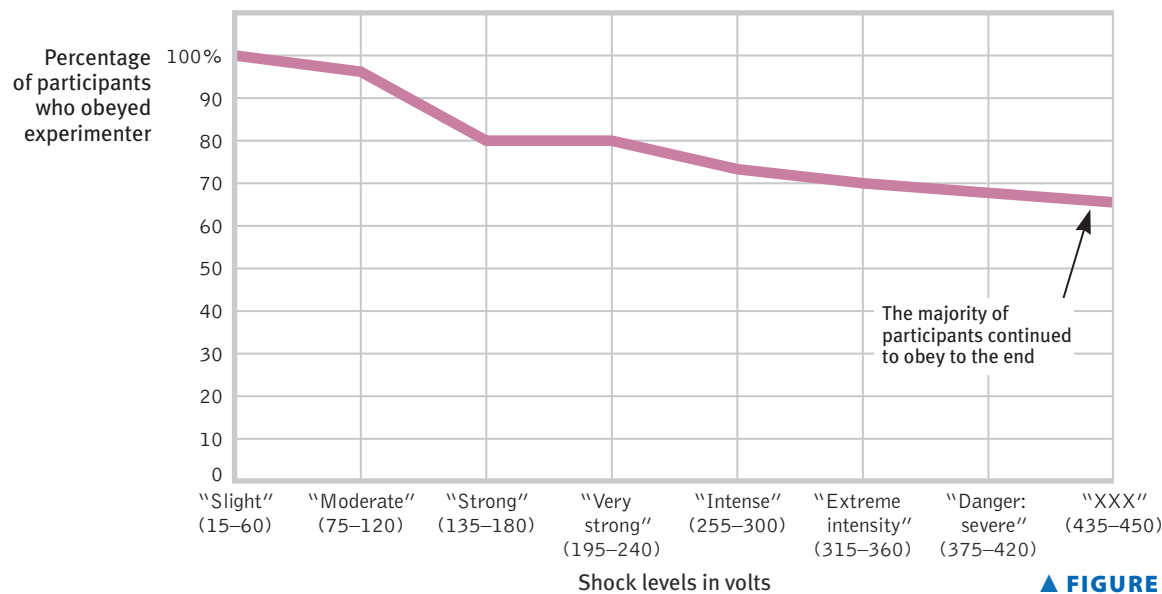
Milgram's use of deception and stress triggered a debate over his research ethics. In his own defense, Milgram pointed out that, after the participants learned of the deception and actual research purposes, virtually none regretted taking part (though perhaps by then the participants had reduced their cognitive dissonance—the discomfort they felt when their actions conflicted with their attitudes). When 40 of the teachers who had agonized most were later interviewed by a psychiatrist, none appeared to be suffering emotional aftereffects. All in all, said Milgram, the experiments provoked less enduring stress than university students experience when facing and failing big exams (Blass, 1996). Other scholars, however, after delving into Milgram's archives, report that his debriefing was less extensive and his participants' distress greater than he had suggested (Nicholson, 2011; Perry, 2013). Critics have also speculated that participants may have been identifying with the researcher and his scientific goals rather than being blindly obedient (Haslam et al., 2014, 2016).

In later experiments, Milgram discovered some conditions that influence people's behavior. When he varied the situation, full obedience ranged from 0 to 93 percent. Obedience was highest when

- *the person giving the orders was close at hand and was perceived to be a legitimate authority figure.* Such was the case in 2005 when Temple University's basketball coach sent a 250-pound bench player, Nehemiah Ingram, into a game with instructions to commit “hard fouls.” Following orders, Ingram fouled out in four minutes after breaking an opposing player's right arm.
- *the authority figure was supported by a powerful or prestigious institution.* Compliance was somewhat lower when Milgram dissociated his experiments from Yale University. People have wondered: Why, during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, did so many Hutu citizens slaughter their Tutsi neighbors? It was partly because they were part of “a culture in which orders from above, even if evil,” were understood as having the force of law (Kamatali, 2014).
- *the victim was depersonalized or at a distance, even in another room.* Similarly, many soldiers in combat either have not fired their rifles at an enemy they could see, or have not aimed them properly. Such refusals to kill are rarer among soldiers operating long-distance artillery or aircraft weapons (Padgett, 1989). Those who kill from a distance—by operating remotely piloted drones—also suffer much less posttraumatic stress than do veterans of on-the-ground conflict (Miller, 2012a).
- *there were no role models for defiance.* “Teachers” did not see any other participant disobey the experimenter.

Stanley Milgram (1933–1984) This social psychologist's obedience experiments “belong to the self-understanding of literate people in our age” (Sabini, 1986).





Stanley Milgram, from the film "Obedience." Rights held by Alexandra Milgram

▲ FIGURE 42.2

Milgram's follow-up obedience experiment

In a repeat of the earlier experiment, 65 percent of the adult male "teachers" fully obeyed the experimenter's commands to continue. They did so despite the "learner's" earlier mention of a heart condition and despite hearing cries of protest after they administered what they thought were 150 volts and agonized protests after 330 volts. (Data from Milgram, 1974.)

The power of legitimate, close-at-hand authorities was apparent among those who followed orders to carry out the Nazis' Holocaust atrocities. Obedience alone does not explain the Holocaust—anti-Semitic ideology produced eager killers as well (Fenigstein, 2015; Mastroianni, 2015). But obedience was a factor. In the summer of 1942, nearly 500 middle-aged German reserve police officers were dispatched to German-occupied Jozefow, Poland. On July 13, the group's visibly upset commander informed his recruits, mostly family men, of their orders. They were to round up the village's Jews, who were said to be aiding the enemy. Able-bodied men would be sent to work camps, and the rest would be shot on the spot.

The commander gave the recruits a chance to refuse to participate in the executions. Only about a dozen immediately refused. Within 17 hours, the remaining 485 officers killed 1500 helpless women, children, and elderly, shooting them in the back of the head as they lay face down. Hearing the victims' pleas, and seeing the gruesome results, some 20 percent of the officers did eventually dissent, managing either to miss their victims or to slip away and hide until the slaughter was over (Browning, 1992). In real life, as in Milgram's experiments, those who resisted usually did so early, and they were the minority.

A different story played out in the French village of Le Chambon. There, villagers openly defied orders to cooperate with the "New Order": They sheltered French Jews destined for deportation to Germany, and they sometimes helped them escape across the Swiss border. The villagers' Protestant ancestors had themselves been persecuted, and their pastors taught them to "resist whenever our adversaries will demand of us obedience contrary to the orders of the Gospel" (Rochat, 1993). Ordered by police to give a list of sheltered Jews, the head pastor modeled defiance: "I don't know of Jews, I only know of human beings." At great personal risk, the people of Le Chambon made an initial commitment to resist. Throughout the long and terrible war, they suffered poverty and were punished for their disobedience. Still, supported by their beliefs, their role models, their interactions with one another, and their own initial acts, they remained defiant to the war's end.

Lest we presume that obedience is always evil and resistance is always good, consider the heroic obedience of British soldiers who, in 1852, were traveling with civilians aboard the steamship *Birkenhead*. As they neared their South African port, the *Birkenhead* became impaled on a rock. To calm

Standing up for democracy Some individuals—roughly one in three in Milgram's experiments—resist social coercion, as did this unarmed man in Beijing, by single-handedly challenging an advancing line of tanks the day after the 1989 Tiananmen Square student uprising was suppressed.



Jeff Widener/AP Photo

the passengers and permit an orderly exit of civilians on the three available lifeboats, soldiers who were not assisting the passengers or working the pumps lined up at parade rest. “Steady, men!” said their officer as the lifeboats pulled away. Heroically, no one frantically rushed to claim a lifeboat seat. As the boat sank, all were plunged into the sea, most to be drowned or devoured by sharks. For almost a century, noted James Michener (1978), “the Birkenhead drill remained the measure by which heroic behavior at sea was measured.”

Lessons From the Conformity and Obedience Studies

LOQ 42-3 What do the social influence studies teach us about ourselves? How much power do we have as individuals?

How do the laboratory experiments on social influence relate to everyday life? How does judging the length of a line or flicking a shock switch relate to everyday social behavior? Psychology’s experiments aim not to re-create the literal behaviors of everyday life but to capture and explore the underlying processes that shape those behaviors. Solomon Asch and Stanley Milgram devised experiments that forced a familiar choice: Do I adhere to my own standards, even when they conflict with the expectations of others?

In Milgram’s experiments and their modern replications, participants were torn. Should they respond to the pleas of the victim or the orders of the experimenter? Their moral sense warned them not to harm another, yet it also prompted them to obey the experimenter and to be a good research participant. With kindness and obedience on a collision course, obedience usually won.

These experiments demonstrated that strong social influences can make people conform to falsehoods or capitulate to cruelty. Milgram saw this as the fundamental lesson of this work: “Ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process” (1974, p. 6).

Focusing on the end point—450 volts, or someone’s real-life violence—we can hardly comprehend the inhumanity. But Milgram did not entrap his teachers by asking them first to zap learners with enough electricity to make their hair stand on end. Using the foot-in-the-door technique, he instead began with a little tickle of electricity and escalated step by step. In the minds of those throwing the switches, the small action became justified, making the next act tolerable. So it happens when people succumb, gradually, to evil.

In any society, great evils often grow out of people’s compliance with lesser evils. The Nazi leaders suspected that most German civil servants would resist shooting or gassing Jews directly, but they found them surprisingly willing to handle the paperwork of the Holocaust (Silver & Geller, 1978). Milgram found a similar reaction in his experiments. When he asked 40 men to administer the learning test while someone else did the shocking, 93 percent complied. Cruelty does not require devilish villains. All it takes is ordinary people corrupted by an evil situation. Ordinary students may follow orders to haze initiates into their group. Ordinary employees may follow orders to produce and market harmful products. Ordinary soldiers may follow orders to punish and then torture prisoners (Lankford, 2009).

In Jozefow and Le Chambon, as in Milgram’s experiments, those who resisted usually did so early. After the first acts of compliance or resistance, attitudes began to follow and justify behavior.

What have social psychologists learned about the power of the individual? *Social control* (the power of the situation) and *personal control* (the power of the individual) interact. Much as water dissolves salt but not sand, so rotten situations turn some people into bad apples while others resist (Johnson, 2007).

“I was only following orders.”

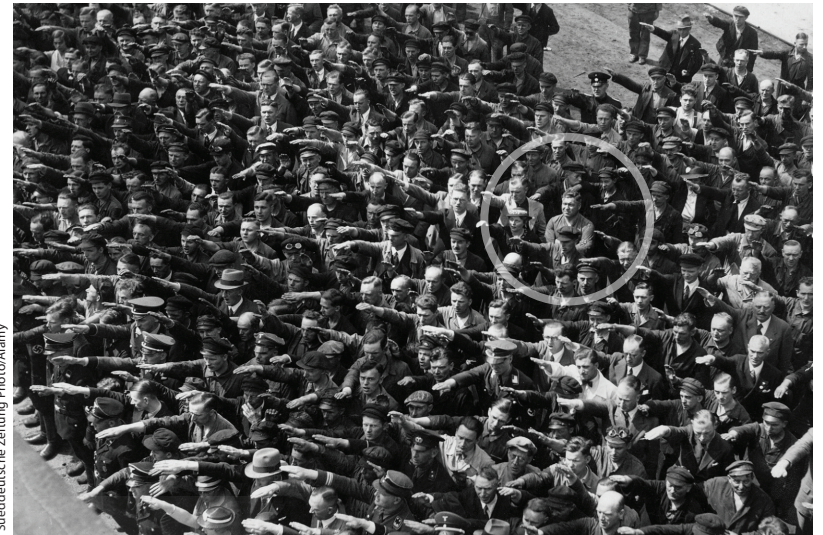
Adolf Eichmann, Director of Nazi
deportation of Jews to
concentration camps

“All evil begins with 15 volts.”

Philip Zimbardo, Stanford lecture, 2010

Some people do resist. When feeling pressured, some react by doing the opposite of what is expected (Brehm & Brehm, 1981). The power of one or two individuals to sway majorities is *minority influence* (Moscovici, 1985). In studies, one finding repeatedly stands out. When you are the minority, you are far more likely to sway the majority if you hold firmly to your position and don't waffle. This tactic won't make you popular, but it may make you influential, especially if your self-confidence stimulates others to consider why you react as you do. Even when a minority's influence is not yet visible, people may privately develop sympathy for the minority position and rethink their views (Wood et al., 1994).

The powers of social influence are enormous, but so are the powers of the committed individual. Were this not so, communism would have remained an obscure theory, Christianity would be a small Middle Eastern sect, and Rosa Parks' refusal to sit at the back of the bus would not have ignited the U.S. civil rights movement. Social forces matter. But individuals matter, too.



Sueddeutsche Zeitung Photo/Alamy

A minority of one To be August Landmesser, standing defiantly with arms folded as everyone else salutes their allegiance to the Nazi Party and Adolph Hitler, requires extraordinary courage. But sometimes such individuals have inspired others, demonstrating the power of minority influence.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

- RP-2 Psychology's most famous obedience experiments, in which most participants obeyed an authority figure's demands to inflict presumed painful, dangerous shocks on an innocent participant, were conducted by social psychologist _____.
- RP-3 What situations have researchers found to be most likely to encourage obedience in participants?

Group Behavior

LOQ 42-4 How does the presence of others influence our actions, via social facilitation, social loafing, and deindividuation?

Imagine standing in a room holding a fishing pole. Your task is to wind the reel as fast as you can. On some occasions you wind in the presence of another participant, who is also winding as fast as possible. Will the other's presence affect your own performance?

In one of social psychology's first experiments, Norman Triplett (1898) reported that adolescents would wind a fishing reel faster in the presence of someone doing the same thing. Although a modern reanalysis revealed that the difference was modest (Stroebe, 2012), Triplett inspired later social psychologists to study how others' presence affects our behavior. Group influences operate both in simple groups—one person in the presence of another—and in more complex groups.

Social Facilitation

Triplett's claim—of strengthened performance in others' presence—is called **social facilitation**. But further studies revealed that the truth is more complicated: The presence of others strengthens our most *likely* response—the correct one on an easy task, an incorrect one on a difficult task (Guerin, 1986; Zajonc, 1965). Why? Because when others observe us, we become aroused, and this arousal amplifies our reactions. Thus, expert pool players who made 71 percent of their shots when alone made 80 percent when four people came to watch them (Michaels et al., 1982). Poor shooters, who made 36 percent of their shots when alone, made only 25 percent when watched.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWERS

RP-2 Stanley Milgram. RP-3 The Milgram studies showed that people were most likely to follow orders when the experimenter was nearby and perceived to be a legitimate authority figure, the victim was not nearby, and there were no models for defiance.

social facilitation improved performance on simple or well-learned tasks in the presence of others.

TABLE 42.1
Home Advantage in Team Sports

Sport	Years	Percentage of home games won
Nippon League Baseball	1998–2009	53.6
Major League Baseball	1903–2009	53.9
National Hockey League	1917–2009	55.7
International Rugby	1871–2009	56.9
National Football League	1966–2009	57.3
International Cricket	1877–2009	57.4
National Basketball Association	1946–2009	60.5
Women’s National Basketball Association	2003–2009	61.7
English Premier League Soccer	1993–2009	63.0
NCAA Men’s Basketball	1947–2009	68.8
Major League Soccer	2002–2009	69.1

Data from Moskowitz & Wertheim, 2011.

The energizing effect of an enthusiastic audience helps explain the home-team advantage that has shown up in studies of more than a quarter-million college and professional athletic events in various countries (Allen & Jones, 2014; Jamieson, 2010). Home teams win about 6 in 10 games, with the home advantage being greatest for teamwork-centered sports, such as soccer and basketball (Jones, 2015). For most sports, home cooking is best (see TABLE 42.1).

The point to remember: What you do well, you are likely to do even better in front of an audience, especially a friendly audience. What you normally find difficult may seem all but impossible when you are being watched.

Social facilitation also helps explain a funny effect of crowding. Comedians know that a “good house” is a full one. What they may not know is that crowding triggers arousal. Comedy routines that are mildly amusing in an uncrowded room seem funnier in a densely packed room (Aiello et al., 1983; Freedman & Perlick, 1979). When seated close to one another, people like a friendly person even more and an unfriendly person even less (Schiffenbauer & Schiavo, 1976; Storms & Thomas, 1977). So, to increase the chances of a lively interaction at your next event, choose a room or set up seating that will just barely accommodate everyone.

Social Loafing

Social facilitation experiments test the effect of others’ presence on the performance of an individual task, such as shooting pool. But what happens when people perform as a group—say, in a team tug-of-war? Would you exert more, less, or the same effort as in a one-on-one match?

To find out, a University of Massachusetts research team asked blindfolded students “to pull as hard as you can” on a rope. When they fooled the students into believing three others were also pulling behind them, students exerted only 82 percent as much effort as when they knew they were pulling alone (Ingham et al., 1974). And consider what happened when blindfolded people seated in a group clapped or shouted as loudly as they could while hearing (through headphones) other people clapping or shouting loudly (Latané, 1981). When they thought they were part of a group effort, the participants produced about one-third less noise than when clapping or shouting “alone.”

This diminished effort is called **social loafing** (Jackson & Williams, 1988; Latané, 1981). Experiments in the United States, India, Thailand, Japan, China, and Taiwan

Social facilitation Skilled athletes often find they are “on” before an audience. What they do well, they do even better when people are watching.



Hope College

have found social loafing on various tasks, though it was especially common among men in individualist cultures (Karau & Williams, 1993). What causes social loafing? When people act as part of a group, they may

- feel *less accountable* and therefore worry less about what others think.
- view their individual contributions as *dispensable* (Harkins & Szymanski, 1989; Kerr & Bruun, 1983).
- *overestimate* their own contributions, neglecting others’ actions (Schroeder et al., 2016).
- slack off (as you perhaps have observed on group assignments) if they share equally in the benefits, regardless of how much they contribute. Unless highly motivated and strongly identified with the group, people may *free ride* on others’ efforts.

social loafing the tendency for people in a group to exert less effort when pooling their efforts toward attaining a common goal than when individually accountable.

deindividuation the loss of self-awareness and self-restraint occurring in group situations that foster arousal and anonymity.

Deindividuation

We’ve seen that the presence of others can arouse people (social facilitation), or it can diminish their feelings of responsibility (social loafing). But sometimes the presence of others does both. The uninhibited behavior that results can range from a food fight to vandalism or rioting. This process of losing self-awareness and self-restraint, called **deindividuation**, often occurs when group participation makes people both *aroused* and *anonymous*. Compared with identifiable women in a control group, New York University women dressed in depersonalizing Ku Klux Klan–style hoods delivered twice as much presumed electric shock to a victim (Zimbardo, 1970).

Deindividuation thrives, for better or for worse, in many settings. The anonymity of online discussion boards and blog comment sections can unleash mocking or cruel words. Online bullies, who would never say “You’re the ugliest person I know” to someone’s face, will hide behind their anonymity. Tribal warriors who depersonalize themselves with face paints or masks are more likely than those with exposed faces to kill, torture, or mutilate captured enemies (Watson, 1973). When we shed self-awareness and self-restraint—whether in a mob, at a rock concert, at a ballgame, or at worship—we become more responsive to the group experience—bad or good. For a comparison of social facilitation, social loafing, and deindividuation, see **TABLE 42.2**.

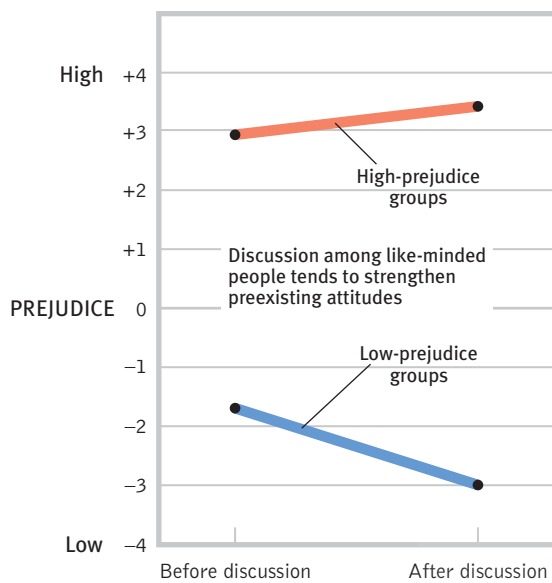
We have examined the conditions under which the *presence* of others can motivate people to exert themselves or tempt them to free ride on the efforts of others, make easy tasks easier and difficult tasks harder, and enhance humor or fuel mob violence. Research also shows that *interacting* with others can similarly have both bad and good effects.



Deindividuation During England’s 2011 riots and looting, rioters were disinhibited by social arousal and by the anonymity provided by darkness and their hoods and masks. Later, some of those arrested expressed bewilderment over their own behavior.

TABLE 42.2
Behavior in the Presence of Others: Three Phenomena

Phenomenon	Social context	Psychological effect of others’ presence	Behavioral effect
<i>Social facilitation</i>	Individual being observed	Increased arousal	Amplified dominant behavior, such as doing better what one does well (or doing worse what is difficult)
<i>Social loafing</i>	Group projects	Diminished feelings of responsibility when not individually accountable	Decreased effort
<i>Deindividuation</i>	Group setting that fosters arousal and anonymity	Reduced self-awareness	Lowered self-restraint



▲ FIGURE 42.3

Group polarization If a group is like-minded, discussion strengthens its prevailing opinions. Talking over racial issues increased prejudice in a high-prejudice group of high school students and decreased it in a low-prejudice group. (Data from Myers & Bishop, 1970.)

“Dear Satan, thank you for having my Internet news feeds tailored especially for ME!”

Comedian Steve Martin, 2016 tweet

Group Polarization

LOQ 42-5 How can group interaction enable group polarization?

We live in an increasingly polarized world. The Middle East is torn by warring factions. The European Union is struggling with nationalist divisions. In 1990, a one-minute speech in the U.S. Congress would enable you to guess the speaker’s party just 55 percent of the time; by 2009, partisanship was evident 83 percent of the time (Gentzkow et al., 2016). In 2016, for the first time in survey history, most U.S. Republicans and Democrats reported having “very unfavorable” views of the other party (Doherty & Kiley, 2016). And a record 77 percent of Americans perceived their nation as divided (Jones, 2016).

A powerful principle helps us understand our increasingly polarized world: The beliefs and attitudes we bring to a group grow stronger as we discuss them with like-minded others. This process, called **group polarization**, can have beneficial results, as when low-prejudice students become even more accepting while discussing racial issues. And it can be socially toxic, as when high-prejudice students who discuss racial issues become more prejudiced (Myers & Bishop, 1970; FIGURE 42.3). Our repeated finding: Like minds polarize.

Analyses of terrorist organizations reveal that the terrorist mentality emerges slowly, among people who share a grievance (McCauley, 2002; McCauley & Segal, 1987; Merari, 2002). As they interact in isolation (sometimes with other “brothers” and “sisters” in camps or in prisons), their views grow more and more extreme. Increasingly, they categorize the world as “us” against “them” (Chulov, 2014; Moghaddam, 2005). Knowing that group polarization occurs when like-minded people segregate, a 2006 U.S. National Intelligence estimate speculated that “the operational threat from self-radicalized cells will grow.”

The Internet offers us a connected global world, yet also provides an easily accessible medium for group polarization. When I [DM] got my start in social psychology with experiments on group polarization, I never imagined the potential dangers, or the creative possibilities, of polarization in *virtual* groups. Progressives friend progressives and share links to sites that affirm their shared views. Conservatives connect with conservatives and likewise share conservative perspectives. With news feeds and retweets, we feed one another information—and misinformation—and click on content we agree with (Bakshy et al., 2015; Barberá et al., 2015). Thus, within the Internet’s echo chamber of the like-minded, views become more extreme. Suspicion becomes conviction. Disagreements with the other tribe can escalate to demonization. (For more on the Internet’s role in group polarization—toward ends that are good as well as bad—see Thinking Critically About: The Internet as Social Amplifier.)

Groupthink

LOQ 42-7 How can group interaction enable groupthink?

Does group influence ever distort important national decisions? Consider the Bay of Pigs fiasco. In 1961, U.S. President John F. Kennedy and his advisers decided to invade Cuba with 1400 CIA-trained Cuban exiles. When the invaders were easily captured and quickly linked to the U.S. government, Kennedy wondered aloud, “How could I have been so stupid?”

Social psychologist Irving Janis (1982) studied the decision-making process leading to the ill-fated invasion. He discovered that the soaring morale of the recently elected president and his advisers fostered undue confidence. To preserve the good feeling, group members suppressed or self-censored their dissenting views, especially after President Kennedy voiced his enthusiasm for the scheme. Since no one spoke strongly against the idea, everyone assumed the support was unanimous. To describe this harmonious but unrealistic group thinking, Janis coined the term **groupthink**.

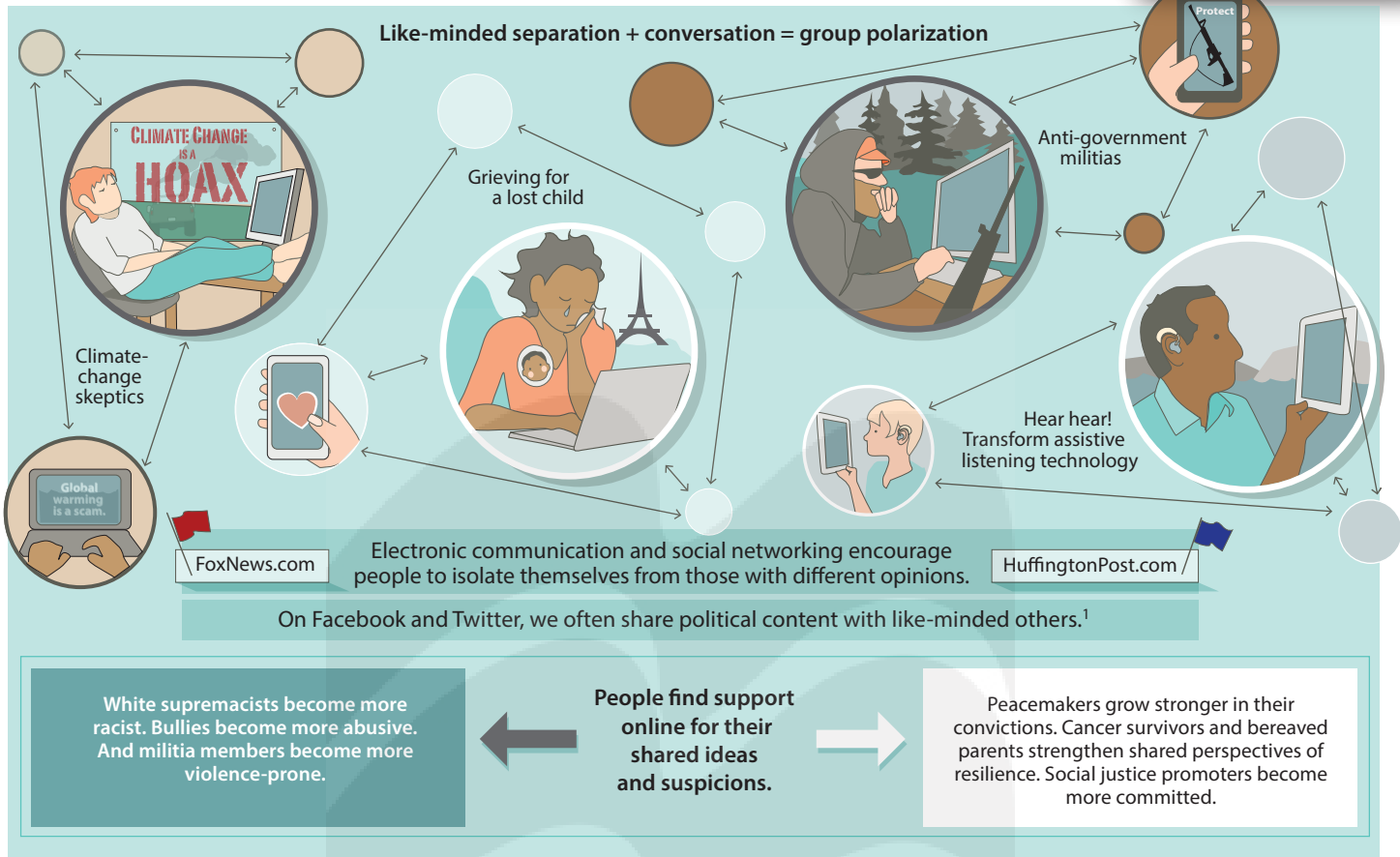
group polarization the enhancement of a group’s prevailing inclinations through discussion within the group.

groupthink the mode of thinking that occurs when the desire for harmony in a decision-making group overrides a realistic appraisal of alternatives.

Thinking Critically About: The Internet as Social Amplifier

LOQ 42-6 What role does the Internet play in group polarization?

The Internet connects like-minded people and strengthens their ideas.



1. Bakshy et al., 2015; Barberá et al., 2015.

Later studies showed that groupthink—fed by overconfidence, conformity, self-justification, and group polarization—contributed to other fiascos as well. Among them were the failure to anticipate the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor; the escalation of the Vietnam war; the U.S. Watergate cover-up; the Chernobyl nuclear reactor accident (Reason, 1987); the U.S. space shuttle *Challenger* explosion (Esser & Lindoerfer, 1989); and the Iraq war, launched on the false idea that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee, 2004).

Despite the dangers of groupthink, two heads are often better than one. Knowing this, Janis also studied instances in which U.S. presidents and their advisers collectively made good decisions, such as when the Truman administration formulated the Marshall Plan, which offered assistance to Europe after World War II, and when the Kennedy administration successfully prevented the Soviets from installing missiles in Cuba. His conclusion? Groupthink is prevented when a leader—whether in government or in business—welcomes various opinions, invites experts' critiques of developing plans, and assigns people to identify possible problems. Just as the suppression of dissent bends a group toward bad decisions, open debate often shapes good ones. This is especially the case with diverse groups, whose varied perspectives often enable creative or superior outcomes (Nemeth & Ormiston, 2007; Page, 2007). Teams of smart people tend to surpass individual smart people at predicting political events (Mellers et al., 2015). None of us is as smart as all of us.

"One of the dangers in the White House, based on my reading of history, is that you get wrapped up in groupthink and everybody agrees with everything, and there's no discussion and there are no dissenting views."

Barack Obama,
December 1, 2008, press conference

"If you have an apple and I have an apple and we exchange apples then you and I will still each have one apple. But if you have an idea and I have an idea and we exchange these ideas, then each of us will have two ideas."

Attributed to dramatist
George Bernard Shaw, 1856–1950

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

- RP-4 What is social facilitation, and why is it more likely to occur with a well-learned task?
- RP-5 People tend to exert less effort when working with a group than they would alone, which is called _____.
- RP-6 You are organizing a meeting of fiercely competitive political candidates. To add to the fun, friends have suggested handing out masks of the candidates' faces for supporters to wear. What phenomenon might these masks engage?
- RP-7 When like-minded groups discuss a topic, and the result is the strengthening of the prevailing opinion, this is called _____.
- RP-8 When a group's desire for harmony overrides its realistic analysis of other options, _____ has occurred.

MODULE
42

REVIEW

Social Influence

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Test yourself by taking a moment to answer each of these Learning Objective Questions (repeated here from within this module). Then check your answers—a click away in the e-book, and in Appendix C of the printed text. Research suggests that trying to answer these questions on your own will improve your long-term retention (McDaniel et al., 2009, 2015).

LOQ 42-1 What is *social contagion*, and how do conformity experiments reveal the power of social influence?

LOQ 42-2 What did Milgram's obedience experiments teach us about the power of social influence?

LOQ 42-3 What do the social influence studies teach us about ourselves? How much power do we have as individuals?

LOQ 42-4 How does the presence of others influence our actions, via social facilitation, social loafing, and deindividuation?

LOQ 42-5 How can group interaction enable group polarization?

LOQ 42-6 What role does the Internet play in group polarization?

LOQ 42-7 How can group interaction enable groupthink?

TERMS AND CONCEPTS TO REMEMBER

Test yourself on these terms by trying to compose the definition before checking your answers.

conformity, p. 485

normative social influence, p. 487

informational social influence, p. 487

social facilitation, p. 491

social loafing, p. 493

deindividuation, p. 493

group polarization, p. 494

groupthink, p. 494

Use  **LearningCurve** to create your personalized study plan, which will direct you to the Macmillan resources that will help you most.

MASTER THE MATERIAL

Test yourself repeatedly throughout your studies. This will not only help you figure out what you know and don't know; the testing itself will help you learn and remember the information more effectively thanks to the *testing effect*.

- Researchers have found that a person is most likely to conform to a group if
 - the group members have diverse opinions.
 - the person feels competent and secure.
 - the person admires the group's status.
 - no one else will observe the person's behavior.
- In Milgram's experiments, the rate of compliance was highest when
 - the "learner" was at a distance from the "teacher."
 - the "learner" was close at hand.
 - other "teachers" refused to go along with the experimenter.
 - the "teacher" disliked the "learner."
- Dr. Huang, a popular music professor, delivers fascinating lectures on music history but gets nervous and makes mistakes when describing exam statistics in front of the class. Why does his performance vary by task?
- In a group situation that fosters arousal and anonymity, a person sometimes loses self-consciousness and self-control. This phenomenon is called _____.
- Sharing our opinions with like-minded others tends to strengthen our views, a phenomenon referred to as _____.

Answers are a click away in the e-book, and available in Appendix D, at the back of the printed text.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWERS

RP-4 This improved performance in the presence of others is most likely to occur with a well-learned task, because the added arousal caused by an audience tends to strengthen the most likely response. This also predicts poorer performance on a difficult task in others' presence. **RP-5** social loafing. **RP-6** The anonymity provided by the masks, combined with the arousal of the contentious setting, might create *deindividuation* (lessened self-awareness and self-restraint). **RP-7** group polarization. **RP-8** groupthink

MODULE
43

Antisocial Relations

Social psychology studies how we think about and influence one another, and also how we *relate* to one another. What causes people sometimes to hate and harm, and other times to love and help one another? And when destructive conflicts arise, how can we move toward a just peace? In this section we ponder insights into *antisocial* relations gleaned by researchers who have studied prejudice and aggression.

Prejudice

LOQ 43-1 What is *prejudice*? How do explicit and implicit prejudice differ?

Prejudice means “prejudgment.” It is an unjustifiable and usually negative *attitude* toward a group and its members—who often are people of a particular racial or ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation, or belief system. You may recall that *attitudes* are feelings, influenced by beliefs, that predispose us to act in certain ways. In prejudice, the ingredients in this three-part mixture are

- **negative emotions**, such as hostility or fear.
- **stereotypes**, which are generalized beliefs about a group of people. Our stereotypes sometimes reflect reality. If you presume that young men tend to drive faster than elderly women, you may be right. But stereotypes often overgeneralize or exaggerate—as when liberals and conservatives overestimate the extremity of the other’s views, or Christians and atheists misperceive each other’s values (Graham et al., 2012; Simpson & Rios, 2016).
- a predisposition to **discriminate**—to act in negative and unjustifiable ways toward members of the group. Sometimes prejudice is blatant. Other times it is more subtle, taking the form of *microaggressions*, such as race-related traffic stops, a reluctance to choose a train seat next to someone of a different race, or longer Uber wait times and less Airbnb acceptance for people with African-American names (Edelman et al., 2017; Ge et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2011).

Prejudice is a negative *attitude*. To believe that obese people are gluttonous, and to feel dislike for an obese person, is to be prejudiced. Discrimination is a negative *behavior*. To pass over obese people on a dating site, or to reject an obese job candidate, is to discriminate.

Explicit and Implicit Prejudice

Again and again, we have seen that our brain processes thoughts, memories, and attitudes on two different tracks. Sometimes that processing is *explicit*—on the radar screen of our awareness. More often, it is *implicit*—an unthinking knee-jerk response

prejudice an unjustifiable (and usually negative) attitude toward a group and its members. Prejudice generally involves stereotyped beliefs, negative feelings, and a predisposition to discriminatory action.

stereotype a generalized (sometimes accurate but often overgeneralized) belief about a group of people.

discrimination unjustifiable negative behavior toward a group and its members.

“We’re also guarding against the subtle impulse to call Johnny back for a job interview but not Jamal.”

President Barack Obama, funeral for Clementa Pinkney, 2015



Home-grown terrorism In the 16 years following the terror of September 11, 2001, many Americans feared attacks from foreign terrorists. Yet since that time, attacks by homegrown White supremacists and other non-Muslim extremists were nearly twice as likely (Shane, 2015)—as when a neo-Nazi slaughtered six people in a 2012 shooting at a Wisconsin Sikh temple.

operating below the radar, leaving us unaware of how our attitudes are influencing our behavior. In 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court, in upholding the Fair Housing Act, recognized implicit bias research, noting that “unconscious prejudices” can cause discrimination even when people do not consciously intend to discriminate.

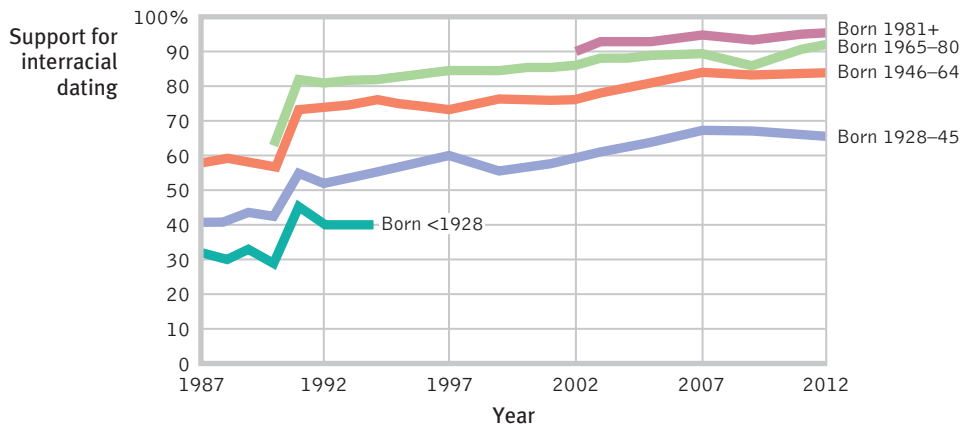
Psychologists study implicit prejudice by

- **Testing for unconscious group associations:** Tests in which people quickly pair a person’s image with a trait demonstrate that even people who deny any racial prejudice may harbor negative associations (Banaji & Greenwald, 2013). Millions of people have taken the Implicit Association Test (as you can, too, at Implicit.Harvard.edu). Although the test is useful for studying automatic prejudice, critics caution against using it to assess or label individuals (Oswald et al., 2013, 2015). Defenders counter that implicit biases predict behaviors ranging from simple acts of friendliness to the evaluation of work quality (Greenwald et al., 2015).
- **Considering unconscious patronization:** In one experiment, White university women assessed flawed student essays they believed had been written by either a White or a Black student. The women gave low evaluations, often with harsh comments, to the essays supposedly written by a White student. When the same essay was attributed to a Black student, their assessment was more positive (Harber, 1998). Did the evaluators calibrate their evaluations to their racial stereotypes, leading to less exacting standards and a patronizing attitude? In real-world evaluations, such low expectations and the resulting “inflated praise and insufficient criticism” could hinder minority student achievement, the researcher noted.
- **Monitoring reflexive bodily responses:** Even people who consciously express little prejudice may give off telltale signals as their body responds selectively to an image of a person from another ethnic group. Neuroscientists can detect signals of implicit prejudice in the viewer’s facial-muscle responses and in the activation of the emotion-processing amygdala (Cunningham et al., 2004; Eberhardt, 2005; Stanley et al., 2008).

Targets of Prejudice

LOQ 43-2 What groups are frequent targets of prejudice?

RACIAL AND ETHNIC PREJUDICE Americans’ expressed racial attitudes have changed dramatically in the last half-century. Support for interracial dating between Blacks and Whites, for example, has increased dramatically, from a 48 percent approval rate in 1987 to 86 percent in 2012 (Pew, 2012; see also **FIGURE 43.1**). Similarly, 4 percent of Americans approved of “marriage between Blacks and Whites” in 1958, but 87 percent approved in 2013 (Newport, 2013b). Six in ten Americans—double the number in most European countries—agree that “an increasing number of people of many different races, ethnic groups, and nationalities in our country makes it a better place to live” (Drake & Poushter, 2016).



► **FIGURE 43.1**
Prejudice over time Over the last quarter-century, Americans have increasingly approved interracial dating, with each successive generation expressing more approval. (Data from Pew, 2012.)

Yet as blatant interracial prejudice wanes, *subtle* prejudice lingers. People with darker skin tones experience greater criticism and accusations of immoral behavior (Alter et al., 2016). In one study of White medical students and residents, 1 in 3 believed “black people’s skin is thicker than white people’s skin,” which led them to make harmful treatment recommendations (Hoffman et al., 2016). And although many people *say* they would feel upset with someone making racist or homophobic slurs, they respond indifferently when they actually hear prejudice-laden language (Kawakami et al., 2009).

Other studies reveal prejudice that is not just subtle, but unconscious (implicit). For example, in an Implicit Association Test, 9 in 10 White respondents took longer to identify pleasant words (such as *peace* and *paradise*) as “good” when presented with Black-sounding names (such as *Latisha* and *Darnell*) rather than with White-sounding names (such as *Katie* and *Ian*). Moreover, people who more quickly associate good things with White names or faces also are the quickest to perceive anger and apparent threat in Black faces (Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2003). In the 2008 U.S. presidential election, those demonstrating explicit *or* implicit prejudice were less likely to vote for candidate Barack Obama. His election in turn served to reduce implicit prejudice (Bernstein et al., 2010; Payne et al., 2010; Stephens-Davidowitz, 2014).

Our perceptions can also reflect implicit bias. In 1999, Amadou Diallo was accosted as he approached his apartment house doorway by police officers looking for a rapist. When he pulled out his wallet, the officers, perceiving a gun, riddled his body with 19 bullets from 41 shots. In one analysis of 59 unarmed suspect shootings in Philadelphia over seven years, 49 involved the misidentification of an object (such as a cell phone) or movement (such as pants tugging). Black suspects were more than twice as likely to be misperceived as threatening, even by Black officers (Blow, 2015). Across the United States, nearly 40 percent of the unarmed people shot and killed by police during 2015 and 2016 were Black (*Washington Post*, 2017).

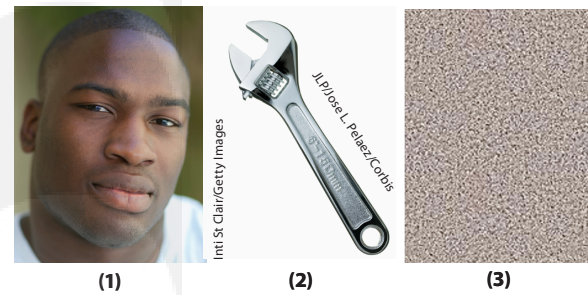
To better understand such tragic shootings of unarmed, innocent people, two research teams simulated the situation (Correll et al., 2007, 2015; Plant & Peruche, 2005; Sadler et al., 2012a). They asked viewers to press buttons quickly to “shoot” or not shoot men who suddenly appeared on screen. Some of the on-screen men held a gun. Others held a harmless object, such as a flashlight or bottle. People (both Blacks and Whites, and police officers) more often shot Black men holding the harmless object. Priming people with a flashed Black face rather than a White face also made them more likely to misperceive a flashed tool as a gun (**FIGURE 43.2**). Fatigue, which diminishes one’s conscious control and increases automatic reactions, amplifies racial bias in decisions to shoot (Ma et al., 2013).

“Unhappily, the world has yet to learn how to live with diversity.”

Pope John Paul II, Address to the United Nations, 1995

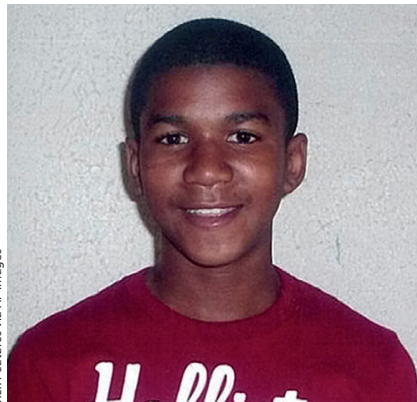
▼ FIGURE 43.2

Race primes perceptions In experiments by Keith Payne (2006), people viewed (1) a White or Black face, immediately followed by (2) a flashed gun or hand tool, which was then followed by (3) a masking screen. Participants were more likely to misperceive a tool as a gun when it was preceded by a Black rather than White face.



“If we can’t help our latent biases, we can help our behavior in response to those instinctive reactions, which is why we work to design systems and processes that overcome that very human part of us all.”

U.S. FBI Director James B. Comey,
“Hard Truths: Law Enforcement
and Race,” 2015



When tragedy triggers a national response

Does implicit bias research—which is now being integrated into both police and corporate diversity training programs—help us understand the 2013 death of Trayvon Martin (shown here 7 months before he was killed)? As he walked alone to his father’s fiancée’s house in a gated Florida neighborhood, a suspicious resident started following him. A confrontation led to the unarmed Martin being shot. Martin’s death sparked public outrage related to racism, gun control, and social justice. Commentators wondered: Had Martin been an unarmed White teen, would he have been perceived and treated the same way?

“Until I was a man, I had no idea how good men had it at work. . . . The first time I spoke up in a meeting in my newly low, quiet voice and noticed that sudden, focused attention, I was so uncomfortable that I found myself unable to finish my sentence.”

Thomas Page McBee, 2016, after transitioning from female to male

GENDER PREJUDICE Overt gender prejudice has declined sharply. The one-third of Americans who in 1937 told Gallup pollsters that they would vote for a qualified woman whom their party nominated for president soared to 95 percent in 2012 (Jones, 2012; Newport, 1999). Although women worldwide still represent nearly two-thirds of illiterate adults, and 30 percent have experienced intimate partner violence, 65 percent of all people now say it is very important that women have the same rights as men (UN, 2015c; WHO, 2016b; Zainulbhai, 2016b).

Nevertheless, both implicit and explicit gender prejudice and discrimination persist. In Western countries, we pay more to those (usually men) who care for our streets than to those (usually women) who care for our children. Gender bias even applies to beliefs about intelligence: Despite equality between the sexes in intelligence scores, people have tended to perceive their fathers as more intelligent than their mothers (Furnham & Wu, 2008).

Unwanted female infants are no longer left out on a hillside to die of exposure, as was the practice in ancient Greece. Yet the normal male-to-female newborn ratio (105-to-100) hardly explains the world’s estimated 163 million (say that number slowly) “missing women” (Hvistendahl, 2011). In many places, sons are valued more than daughters. In India, there are 3.5 times more Google searches asking how to conceive a boy than how to conceive a girl (Stephens-Davidowitz, 2014). With scientific testing that enables sex-selective abortions, some countries are experiencing a shortfall in female births. India’s newborn sex ratio was recently 112 boys for every 100 girls. China’s has been 111 to 100—despite China’s declaring sex-selective abortions—gender genocide—a criminal offense (CIA, 2014). With under-age-20 males exceeding females by 32 million, many Chinese bachelors will be unable to find mates (Zhu et al., 2009). A shortage of women also contributes to increased crime, violence, prostitution, and trafficking of women (Brooks, 2012).

LGBTQ PREJUDICE In most of the world, gay and lesbian people cannot openly and comfortably disclose who they are and whom they love (Katz-Wise & Hyde, 2012; UN, 2011). Although by 2016 two dozen countries had allowed same-sex marriage, dozens more had laws criminalizing same-sex relationships. But cultural variation is enormous—ranging from the 98 percent in Ghana who say that “homosexuality is morally unacceptable” to 6 percent in Spain (Pew, 2014b). Worldwide, anti-gay attitudes are most common among men, older adults, and those who are unhappy, unemployed, and less educated (Haney, 2016; Jäckle & Wenzelburger, 2015).

Explicit anti-gay prejudice, though declining in Western countries, persists. When experimenters sent thousands of responses to employment ads, those whose resumes included “Treasurer, Progressive and Socialist Alliance” received more replies than did resumes that specified “Treasurer, Gay and Lesbian Alliance (Agerström et al., 2012; Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2003; Drydakis, 2009). Other evidence has appeared in national surveys of LGBTQ Americans:

- 39 percent reported having been “rejected by a friend or family member” because of their sexual orientation or gender identity (Pew, 2013c).
- 58 percent reported being “subject to slurs or jokes” (Pew, 2013c).
- 80 percent of LGBTQ adolescents reported sexual orientation-related harassment in the prior year (GLSEN, 2012). Gays and lesbians are also America’s most at-risk group for hate crimes (Sherman, 2016).

Do attitudes and practices that label, disparage, and discriminate against gay and lesbian people increase their risk of psychological disorder and ill health? In U.S. states without protections against LGBTQ hate crime and discrimination, gay and lesbian people experience substantially higher rates of depression and related disorders, even after controlling for income and education differences. In communities where anti-gay prejudice is high, so are gay and lesbian suicide and cardiovascular deaths. In 16 states that banned same-sex marriage between 2001 and 2005, gays and lesbians (but not heterosexuals) experienced a 37 percent increase in depressive disorder rates, a 42 percent increase in alcohol use disorder, and a 248 percent increase in generalized anxiety disorder. Meanwhile, gays and lesbians in other states did not experience increased psychiatric disorders (Hatzenbuehler, 2014).

BELIEF SYSTEMS PREJUDICE In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, 4 in 10 Americans acknowledged “some feelings of prejudice against Muslims,” and about half of non-Muslims in Western Europe and the United States perceived Muslims as “violent” (Saad, 2006; Wike & Grim, 2007). With many Americans feeling threatened by Arab Muslims, and as opposition to Islamic mosques and immigration flared in 2010, one observer noted that “Muslims are one of the last minorities in the United States that it is still possible to demean openly” (Kristof, 2010; Lyons et al., 2010).

Roots of Prejudice

LOQ 43-3 What are some social, emotional, and cognitive roots of prejudice, and what are some ways to eliminate prejudice?

Prejudice springs from a culture’s divisions, the heart’s passions, and the mind’s natural workings.

SOCIAL INEQUALITIES AND DIVISIONS When some people have money, power, and prestige and others do not, the “haves” usually develop attitudes that justify things as they are. The **just-world phenomenon** reflects an idea we commonly teach our children—that good is rewarded and evil is punished. From this it is but a short leap to assume that those who succeed must be good and those who suffer must be bad. Such reasoning enables the rich to see both their own wealth and the poor’s misfortune as justly deserved. When slavery existed in the United States, slaveholders perceived slaves as innately lazy, ignorant, and irresponsible—as having the very traits that justified enslaving them. Stereotypes rationalize inequalities.

Victims of discrimination may react with either self-blame or anger (Allport, 1954). Either reaction can feed others’ prejudice through the classic *blame-the-victim* dynamic. Do the circumstances of poverty breed a higher crime rate? If so, that higher crime rate can be used to justify discrimination against those who live in poverty.

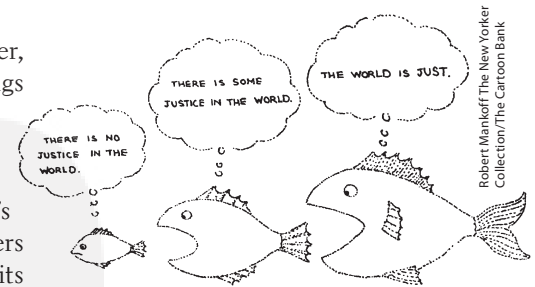
Dividing the world into “us” and “them” can entail conflict, racism, and war, but it also provides the benefits of communal solidarity. Thus, we cheer for our groups, kill for them, die for them. Indeed, we define who we are—our *social identity*—partly in terms of our groups (Greenaway et al., 2016; Hogg, 1996, 2006; Turner, 1987, 2007). When Ian identifies himself as a man, an Aussie, a University of Sydney student, a Catholic, and a MacGregor, he knows who he is, and so do we. Mentally drawing a circle defines “us,” the **ingroup**. But the social definition of who we are also states who we are not. People outside that circle are “them,” the **outgroup**. An **ingroup bias**—a favoring of our own group—soon follows. In experiments, people have favored their own group (arbitrarily created by a simple coin toss) when dividing rewards (Tajfel, 1982; Wilder, 1981). Outside the lab, discrimination is often triggered not by outgroup hostility but by ingroup networking and mutual support, such as hiring a friend’s child at the expense of other candidates (Greenwald & Pettigrew, 2014).

just-world phenomenon the tendency for people to believe the world is just and that people therefore get what they deserve and deserve what they get.

ingroup “us”—people with whom we share a common identity.

outgroup “them”—those perceived as different or apart from our ingroup.

ingroup bias the tendency to favor our own group.



Robert Mankoff/The New Yorker Collection/The Cartoon Bank



Mike Hewitt/Getty Images

The ingroup Scotland’s famed “Tartan Army” soccer fans, shown here during a match against archrival England, share a social identity that defines “us” (the Scottish ingroup) and “them” (the English outgroup).



“For if [people were] to choose out of all the customs in the world [they would] end by preferring their own.”
Greek historian Herodotus, 440 B.C.E.

“If the Tiber reaches the walls, if the Nile does not rise to the fields, if the sky doesn’t move or the Earth does, if there is famine, if there is plague, the cry is at once: ‘The Christians to the lion!’”
Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 197 C.E.

“The misfortunes of others are the taste of honey.”
Japanese saying

scapegoat theory the theory that prejudice offers an outlet for anger by providing someone to blame.

other-race effect the tendency to recall faces of one’s own race more accurately than faces of other races. Also called the *cross-race effect* and the *own-race bias*.

We have inherited our Stone Age ancestors’ need to belong, to live and love in groups. There was safety in solidarity: Whether hunting, defending, or attacking, 10 hands were better than 2. Evolution prepared us, when encountering strangers, to make instant judgments: friend or foe? This urge to distinguish enemies from friends, and to “otherize” as different those not like us, predisposes prejudice against strangers (Whitley, 1999). To Greeks of the classical era, all non-Greeks were “barbarians.” In our own era, most children believe their school is better than all other schools in town. Many high school students form cliques—jocks (sorted by sport), gangsters, preps, nerds—and disparage those outside their own group. Even

chimpanzees have been seen to wipe clean the spot where they were touched by a chimpanzee from another group (Goodall, 1986). They also display ingroup empathy by yawning more after seeing ingroup (rather than outgroup) members yawn (Campbell & de Waal, 2011). An ideal world might equally prioritize justice and love for all. But in our real world, ingroup love often outranks universal justice.

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS Negative emotions nourish prejudice. When facing death, fearing threats, or experiencing frustration, people cling more tightly to their ingroup and their friends. As fears of terrorism heighten patriotism, they also produce loathing and aggression toward “them”—those who threaten our world (Pyszczynski et al., 2002, 2008). **Scapegoat theory** notes that when things go wrong, finding someone to blame can provide a target for our negative emotions. Following the 9/11 attacks, some outraged people lashed out at innocent Arab-Americans. A decade later, anti-Muslim animosities still flared. In 2015, anti-Muslim hate crimes rose 67 percent from the year before (FBI, 2016). And after anti-immigrant sentiments flared in 2016 during the Brexit referendum in Britain and the contentious presidential election in the United States, reports of harassment, bullying, and hate crime rose (Crandall & White, 2016; Hassan, 2016; Kenyon, 2016; North, 2016). “Fear and anger create aggression, and aggression against citizens of different ethnicity or race creates racism and, in turn, new forms of terrorism,” noted Philip Zimbardo (2001).

Evidence for the scapegoat theory of prejudice comes in two forms: (1) Economically frustrated people tend to express heightened prejudice. (2) Experiments that create temporary frustration intensify prejudice. Students who experience failure or are made to feel insecure often restore their self-esteem by disparaging a rival school or another person (Cialdini & Richardson, 1980; Crocker et al., 1987). Denigrating others may boost our own sense of status, which explains why a rival’s misfortune sometimes provides a twinge of pleasure. (The German language has a word—*Schadenfreude*—for this secret joy that we sometimes take in another’s failure.) By contrast, those made to feel loved and supported become more open to and accepting of others who differ (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2001).

COGNITIVE SHORTCUTS Stereotyped beliefs are in part a by-product of how we cognitively simplify the world. To help understand the world around us, we sometimes *form categories*. Chemists categorize molecules as organic and inorganic. Therapists categorize psychological disorders. We all categorize people by gender, ethnicity, race, age, and many other characteristics. But when we categorize people into groups, we often stereotype. We recognize how greatly we differ from other individuals in *our* groups. But we overestimate the extent to which members of other groups are alike (Bothwell et al., 1989). We perceive *outgroup homogeneity*—uniformity of attitudes, personality, and appearance. Our greater recognition for individual own-race faces—called the **other-race effect** (or *cross-race effect* or *own-race bias*)—emerges during



▲ FIGURE 43.3

Categorizing mixed-race people When New Zealanders quickly classified 104 photos by race, those of European descent more often than those of Chinese descent classified the ambiguous middle two as Chinese (Halberstadt et al., 2011).

infancy, between 3 and 9 months of age (Anzures et al., 2013; Telzer et al., 2013). (We also have an *own-age bias*—better recognition memory for faces of our own age group [Rhodes & Anastasi, 2012]).


Sometimes, however, people don't fit easily into our racial categories. For example, mixed-race people are often assigned to their minority identity. Researchers believe this happens because, after learning the features of a familiar racial group, the observer's selective attention is drawn to the distinctive features of the less-familiar minority. Jamin Halberstadt and his colleagues (2011) illustrated this learned-association effect by showing New Zealanders blended Chinese-Caucasian faces. Compared with participants of Chinese descent, European-descent New Zealanders more readily classified ambiguous faces as Chinese (see FIGURE 43.3). With effort and with experience, people get better at recognizing individual faces from another group (Hugenberg et al., 2010; Young et al., 2012).



▼ FIGURE 43.4

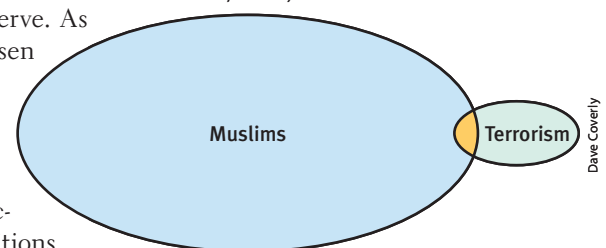
Vivid cases feed stereotypes The 9/11 Muslim terrorists created, in many minds, an exaggerated stereotype of Muslims as terrorism-prone. Actually, reported a U.S. National Research Council panel on terrorism, when offering this inexact illustration, most terrorists are not Muslim and “the vast majority of Islamic people have no connection with and do not sympathize with terrorism” (Smelser & Mitchell, 2002).

REMEMBERING VIVID CASES We also simplify our world by employing *heuristics*—mental shortcuts that enable snap judgments. The *availability heuristic* is the tendency to estimate the frequency of an event by how readily it comes to mind. Vivid cases are memorable and they come to mind easily, so it's no surprise that they feed our stereotypes. In a classic experiment, researchers showed two groups of University of Oregon students lists containing information about 50 men (Rothbart et al., 1978). The first group's list included 10 men arrested for *nonviolent* crimes, such as forgery. The second group's list included 10 men arrested for *violent* crimes, such as assault. Later, both groups were asked how many men on their list had committed *any* sort of crime. The second group overestimated the number. Violent crimes form vivid memories (FIGURE 43.4).

 To experience a simulation of how stereotypes form, visit **PsychSim 6: Not My Type**. And for a 6.5-minute synopsis of the cognitive and social psychology of prejudice, see the **Video: Prejudice**.

VICTIM BLAMING As we noted earlier, people often justify their prejudices by blaming victims. If the world is just, they assume, people must get what they deserve. As one German civilian is said to have remarked when visiting the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp shortly after World War II, “What terrible criminals these prisoners must have been to receive such treatment.”

Hindsight bias amplifies victim blaming (Carli & Leonard, 1989). Have you ever heard people say that rape victims, abused spouses, or people with AIDS got what they deserved? In some countries, such as Pakistan, rape victims have been sentenced to severe punishment for violating adultery prohibitions



aggression any physical or verbal behavior intended to harm someone physically or emotionally.

(Mydans, 2002). In one experiment, two groups of people were given a detailed account of a date (Janoff-Bulman et al., 1985). The first group's account reported that the date ended with the woman being raped. Members of that group perceived the woman's behavior as at least partly to blame, and in hindsight, they thought, "She should have known better." The second group, given the same account with the rape ending deleted, did not perceive the woman's behavior as inviting rape. Hindsight bias promoted a blame-the-victim mentality among members of the first group. Blaming the victim also serves to reassure people that it couldn't happen to them.

People also have a basic tendency to justify their culture's social systems (Jost et al., 2009; Kay et al., 2009). We're inclined to see the way things are as the way they ought to be and deserve to be. If people are rich, they must be smart (Hussak & Cimpian, 2015). This natural conservatism makes it difficult to legislate major social changes, such as health care or climate change policies. Once such policies are in place, our "system justification" tends to preserve them.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

RP-1 When prejudiced judgment causes us to blame an undeserving person for a problem, that person is called a _____.

If your own gut-check reveals you sometimes have feelings you would rather not have about other people, remember this: It is what we *do* with our feelings that matters. By monitoring our feelings and actions, and by replacing old habits with new ones based on new friendships, we can work to free ourselves from prejudice.

Do guns in the home save or take more lives?

"Personal safety/protection" is the #1 reason U.S. gun owners give for firearm ownership (Swift, 2013). Yet in the last 40 years, well over one million Americans have suffered nonwar firearm deaths—more than all American war deaths. Compared with people of the same sex, race, age, and neighborhood, those who keep a gun in the home have been twice as likely to be murdered and three times as likely to commit suicide (Anglemyer et al., 2014; Stroebe, 2013). States and countries with high gun ownership rates also tend to have high gun death rates (VPC, 2013).

Aggression

LOQ 43-4 How does psychology's definition of *aggression* differ from everyday usage? What biological factors make us more prone to hurt one another?

Prejudice hurts, but aggression sometimes hurts more. In psychology, **aggression** is any physical or verbal behavior intended to harm someone, whether done out of hostility or as a calculated means to an end. The assertive, persistent salesperson is not aggressive. Nor is the dentist who makes you wince with pain. But the gossip who passes along a vicious rumor about you, the bully who torments you in person or online, and the attacker who mugs you for your money are aggressive.

Aggressive behavior emerges from the interaction of biology and experience. For a gun to fire, the trigger must be pulled; with some people, as with hair-trigger guns, it doesn't take much to trip an explosion. Let's look first at some biological factors that influence our thresholds for aggressive behavior, then at the psychological factors that pull the trigger.

The Biology of Aggression

Aggression varies too widely from culture to culture, era to era, and person to person to be considered an unlearned instinct. But biology does *influence* aggression. We can look for biological influences at three levels—genetic, neural, and biochemical.

GENETIC INFLUENCES Genes influence aggression. Animals have been bred for aggressiveness—sometimes for sport, sometimes for research. The effect of genes also appears in human twin studies (Miles & Carey, 1997; Rowe et al., 1999). If one identical twin admits to "having a violent temper," the other twin will often independently admit the same. Fraternal twins are much less likely to respond similarly.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWER

RP-1 scapegoat



Gilbert Laurie/Getty Images

Researchers continue to search for genetic markers in those who commit violent acts. One is already well known and is carried by half the human race: the Y chromosome. Another such marker is the *monoamine oxidase A (MAOA) gene*, which helps break down neurotransmitters such as dopamine and serotonin. Sometimes called the “warrior gene,” people who have low MAOA gene expression tend to behave aggressively when provoked. In one experiment, low (compared with high) MAOA gene carriers gave more unpleasant hot sauce to someone who provoked them (McDermott et al., 2009; Tiihonen et al., 2015).

NEURAL INFLUENCES There is no one spot in the brain that controls aggression. Aggression is a complex behavior, and it occurs in particular contexts. But animal and human brains have neural systems that, given provocation, will either inhibit or facilitate aggression (Falkner et al., 2016; Moyer, 1983; Wilkowski et al., 2011). Consider:

- Researchers implanted a radio-controlled electrode in the brain of the domineering leader of a caged monkey colony. The electrode was in an area that, when stimulated, inhibits aggression. When researchers placed the control button for the electrode in the colony’s cage, one small monkey learned to push it every time the boss became threatening.
- A neurosurgeon, seeking to diagnose a disorder, implanted an electrode in the amygdala of a mild-mannered woman. Because the brain has no sensory receptors, she was unable to feel the stimulation. But at the flick of a switch she snarled, “Take my blood pressure. Take it now,” then stood up and began to strike the doctor.
- Studies of violent criminals have revealed diminished activity in the frontal lobes, which play an important role in controlling impulses. If the frontal lobes are damaged, inactive, disconnected, or not yet fully mature, aggression may be more likely (Amen et al., 1996; Davidson, 2000; Raine, 2013).

BIOCHEMICAL INFLUENCES Our genes engineer our individual nervous systems, which operate electrochemically. The hormone testosterone, for example, circulates in the bloodstream and influences the neural systems that control aggression. A raging bull becomes a gentle giant when castration reduces its testosterone level. Conversely, when injected with testosterone, gentle, castrated mice once again become aggressive.

Humans are less sensitive to hormonal changes. But as men’s testosterone levels diminish with age, hormonally charged, aggressive 17-year-olds mature into quieter and gentler 70-year-olds.

Facial width is testosterone-linked. A high facial width-to-height ratio is a predictor of men’s aggressiveness and prejudicial attitudes (Carré et al., 2009; Hehman et al., 2013; Stirrat & Perrett, 2010). Women apparently pick up on this by *perceiving* men with higher facial width-to-height ratios as more dominant (Valentine et al., 2014). Other high-testosterone-linked traits among males include irritability, assertiveness, impulsiveness, hard drug use, and low tolerance for frustration (Dabbs et al., 2001; McAndrew, 2009; Montoya et al., 2012; Olweus et al., 1988). Drugs that sharply reduce testosterone levels subdue men’s aggressive tendencies.



“It’s a guy thing.”

Donald Reilly The New Yorker Collection/The Cartoon Bank

“We could avoid two-thirds of all crime simply by putting all able-bodied young men in cryogenic sleep from the age of 12 through 28.”

David T. Lykken,
The Antisocial Personalities, 1995



Chris Courteau/AGE Fotostock

A lean, mean fighting machine—the testosterone-laden female hyena The hyena’s unusual embryology pumps testosterone into female fetuses. The result is revved-up young female hyenas who seem born to fight.

Another drug that sometimes circulates in the bloodstream—alcohol—*unleashes* aggressive responses to frustration. Across police data, prison surveys, and experiments, aggression-prone people are more likely to drink, and to become violent when intoxicated (White et al., 1993). Alcohol is a disinhibitor—it slows brain activity that controls judgment and inhibitions. Under its influence, people may interpret ambiguous acts (such as being bumped in a crowd) as provocations and react accordingly (Bègue et al., 2010; Giancola & Gorman, 2007). Alcohol has been a factor in 73 percent of homicides in Russia and 57 percent in the United States (Landberg & Norström, 2011).

Just *thinking* you've imbibed alcohol can increase aggression (Bègue et al., 2009). But so, too, does unknowingly ingesting alcohol slipped into a drink. Thus, alcohol affects aggression both biologically and psychologically (Bushman, 1993; Ito et al., 1996; Taylor & Chermack, 1993).

Psychological and Social-Cultural Factors in Aggression

LOQ 43-5 What psychological and social-cultural factors may trigger aggressive behavior?

Biological factors influence how easily aggression is triggered. But what psychological and social-cultural factors pull the trigger?

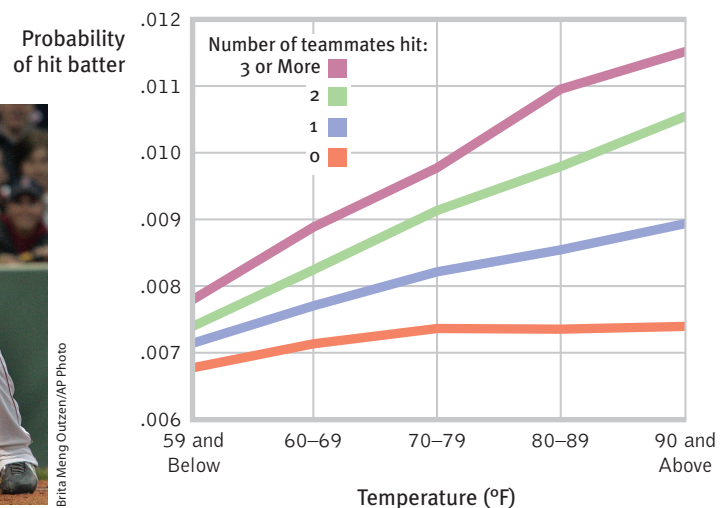
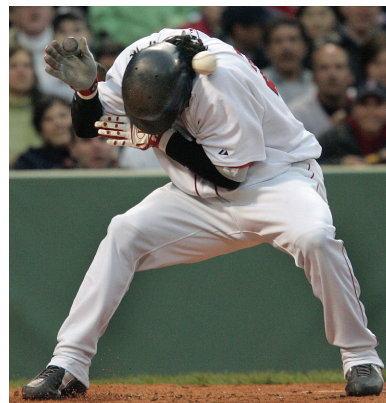
AVERSIVE EVENTS Suffering sometimes builds character. In laboratory experiments, however, those made miserable have often made others miserable (Berkowitz, 1983, 1989). Aversive stimuli—hot temperatures, physical pain, personal insults, foul odors, cigarette smoke, crowding—can evoke hostility. A prime example of this phenomenon is the **frustration-aggression principle**: Frustration creates anger, which can spark aggression.

The frustration-aggression link was illustrated in an analysis of 27,667 hit-by-pitch Major League Baseball incidents between 1960 and 2004 (Timmerman, 2007). Pitchers were most likely to hit batters when they had been frustrated by one of three events: the previous batter had hit a home run; the current batter had hit a home run the last time at bat; or the pitcher's teammate had been hit by a pitch in the previous half inning. A separate study found a similar link between rising temperatures and the number of hit batters (Reifman et al., 1991; see **FIGURE 43.5**). When overheated, we think, feel, and act more aggressively.


In the wider world, violent crime and spousal abuse rates have been higher during hotter years, seasons, months, and days (Anderson et al., 1997). Studies from

► **FIGURE 43.5**
Temperature and retaliation

Richard Larrick and his colleagues (2011) looked for occurrences of batters hit by pitchers during 4,566,468 pitcher-batter matchups across 57,293 Major League Baseball games since 1952. The probability of a hit batter increased if one or more of the pitcher's teammates had been hit, and also with temperature.



archaeology, economics, geography, political science, and psychology converge in finding that throughout human history, higher temperatures have predicted increased individual violence, wars, and revolutions (Hsiang et al., 2013). Craig Anderson and his colleagues (2000, 2011) have projected that, other things being equal, global warming of 4 degrees Fahrenheit (about 2 degrees Celsius) could induce tens of thousands of additional assaults and murders—and that’s before the added violence inducements from climate change–related drought, poverty, food insecurity, and migration.

 How have researchers studied these concepts? Learn more by engaging online with **Immersive Learning: How Would You Know If Hot Temperatures Cause Aggression?**

REINFORCEMENT AND MODELING Aggression may naturally follow aversive events, but learning can alter natural reactions. We learn when our behavior is reinforced, and we learn by watching others.

In situations where experience has taught us that aggression pays, we are likely to act aggressively again. Children whose aggression has successfully intimidated other children may become bullies. Animals that have successfully fought to get food or mates become increasingly ferocious. To foster a kinder, gentler world we had best model and reward sensitivity and cooperation from an early age, perhaps by training parents to discipline without modeling violence.

Parent-training programs often advise parents to avoid modeling violence by screaming and hitting. Instead, parents should reinforce desirable behaviors and frame statements positively. (“When you finish loading the dishwasher you can go play,” rather than “If you don’t load the dishwasher, there’ll be no playing.”)

Different cultures model, reinforce, and evoke different tendencies toward violence. For example, crime rates have also been higher and average happiness lower in times and places marked by a great disparity between rich and poor (Messias et al., 2011; Oishi et al., 2011; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). In the United States, cultures and families in which fathers are minimally involved have had high violence rates (Triandis, 1994). Even after controlling for parental education, race, income, and teen motherhood, American male youths from father-absent homes are incarcerated at twice the rate of their peers (Harper & McLanahan, 2004).

Violence can vary by culture within a country. Richard Nisbett and Dov Cohen (1996) analyzed violence among White Americans in southern towns settled by Scots-Irish herders whose tradition emphasized “manly honor,” the use of arms to protect one’s flock, and a history of coercive slavery. Compared with their White counterparts in New England towns settled by the more traditionally peaceful Puritan, Quaker, and Dutch farmer-artisans, the cultural descendants of those herders had triple the homicide rates and were more supportive of physically punishing children, of warfare initiatives, and of uncontrolled gun ownership. “Culture-of-honor” states also had higher rates of students bringing weapons to school and of school shootings (Brown et al., 2009).

MEDIA MODELS FOR VIOLENCE Parents are hardly the only aggression models. In the United States and elsewhere, TV, films, video games, and the Internet offer supersized portions of violence. An adolescent boy faced with a real-life challenge may “act like a man”—at least like an action film man—by intimidating or eliminating the threat. Violent video game playing tends to make us less sensitive to cruelty (Arriaga et al., 2015). It also primes us to respond aggressively when provoked. And media violence teaches us **social scripts**—culturally provided mental files for how to act in certain situations. As more than 100 studies confirm, we sometimes imitate what we’ve viewed. Watching risk-glorifying behaviors (dangerous driving, extreme sports, unprotected sex) increases real-life risk-taking (Fischer et al., 2011).

Music lyrics also write social scripts. German university men who listened to woman-hating lyrics administered the most hot chili sauce to a woman. They also recalled more negative feelings and beliefs about women. Listening to man-hating lyrics had a similar effect on women (Fischer & Greitemeyer, 2006).

frustration-aggression principle the principle that frustration—the blocking of an attempt to achieve some goal—creates anger, which can generate aggression.

social script a culturally modeled guide for how to act in various situations.

How does repeatedly watching pornographic films affect viewers? As pornography has become more easily available, rates of reported sexual violence have decreased in the United States (though not in Canada, Australia, and Europe). Nevertheless, just as repeated viewing of onscreen violence helps immunize us to aggression, repeated viewing of pornography—even nonviolent pornography—makes sexual aggression seem less serious (Harris, 1994). In one experiment, undergraduates viewed six brief films each week for six weeks (Zillmann & Bryant, 1984). Some viewed sexually explicit films; others viewed films with no sexual content. Three weeks later, both groups, after reading a report about a man convicted of raping a hitchhiker, suggested an appropriate prison term. Compared with sentences recommended by the control group, the sex film viewers recommended terms that were half as long. In other studies that explored pornography's effects on aggression toward relationship partners, pornography consumption predicted both self-reported aggression and participants' willingness to administer laboratory noise blasts to their partner (Lambert et al., 2011; Peter & Valkenburg, 2016).

Pornography with violent sexual content can increase men's readiness to behave aggressively toward women. A statement by 21 social scientists noted, "Pornography that portrays sexual aggression as pleasurable for the victim increases the acceptance of the use of coercion in sexual relations" (Surgeon General, 1986). Contrary to much popular opinion, viewing such scenes does not provide an outlet for bottled-up impulses. Rather, "in laboratory studies measuring short-term effects, exposure to violent pornography increases punitive behavior toward women."

DO VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES TEACH SOCIAL SCRIPTS FOR VIOLENCE? Experiments worldwide indicate that playing positive games produces positive effects (Greitemeyer & Mügge, 2014; Prot et al., 2014). For example, playing *Lemmings*, where a goal is to help others, increases real-life helping. So, might a parallel effect occur after playing games that enact violence? Violent video games became an issue for public debate after teenagers in more than a dozen places seemed to mimic the carnage in the shooter games they had so often played (Anderson, C. A., 2004, 2013).

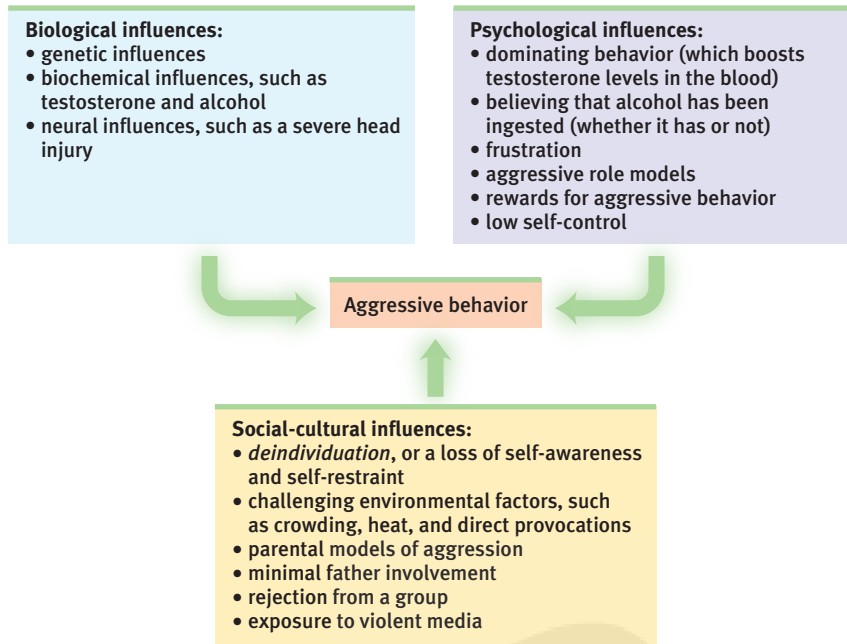
In 2002, three young men in Michigan spent part of a night drinking beer and playing *Grand Theft Auto III*. Using simulated cars, they ran down pedestrians, then beat them with fists, leaving a bloody body behind (Kolker, 2002). These same young men then went out for a real drive. Spotting a 38-year-old man on a bicycle, they ran him down with their car, got out, stomped and punched him, and returned home to play the game some more. (The victim, a father of three, died six days later.)

This is but one anecdote, and, as we say in psychological science, "the plural of anecdote is not evidence." Yet such incidents of violent mimicry make us wonder: What *are* the effects of actively role-playing aggression? Does it cause young people to become less sensitive to violence and more open to violent acts? Nearly 400 studies of 130,000 people offer some answers, report some researchers (Anderson et al., 2010): Video games can prime aggressive thoughts, decrease empathy, and increase aggression.

University men who spend the most hours playing violent video games have also tended to be the most physically aggressive (Anderson & Dill, 2000). (For example, they more often acknowledged having hit or attacked someone else.) And people randomly assigned to play a game involving bloody murders with groaning victims (rather than to play nonviolent *Myst*) became more hostile. On a follow-up task, they were more likely to blast intense noise at a fellow student. Studies of young adolescents reveal that those who play a lot of violent video games become more aggressive and see the world as more hostile (Bushman, 2016; Exelmans et al., 2015; Gentile, 2009). Compared with nongaming kids, they get into more arguments and fights and earn poorer grades.

Coincidence or cause? In 2011, Norwegian Anders Behring Breivik bombed government buildings in Oslo, and then went to a youth camp where he shot and killed 69 people, mostly teens. As a player of first-person shooter games, Breivik stirred debate when he commented that "I see MW2 [*Modern Warfare 2*] more as a part of my training-simulation than anything else." Did his violent game playing—and that of the 2012 mass murderer of Newtown, Connecticut's first-grade children—contribute to the violence, or was it a merely coincidental association? To explore such questions, psychologists experiment.



◀ **FIGURE 43.6**

Biopsychosocial understanding of aggression Because many factors contribute to aggressive behavior, there are many ways to change such behavior, including learning anger management and communication skills, and avoiding violent media and video games.

Ah, but is this merely because naturally hostile kids are drawn to such games? Apparently not. Comparisons of gamers and nongamers who scored low on hostility measures revealed a difference in the number of fights they reported. Almost 4 in 10 violent-game players had been in fights, compared with only 4 in 100 of the nongaming kids (Anderson, C. A., 2004). Some researchers believe that, due partly to the more active participation and rewarded violence of game play, violent video games have even greater effects on aggressive behavior and cognition than do violent TV shows and movies (Anderson & Warburton, 2012).

Other researchers are unimpressed by such findings (Ferguson, 2013b, 2014, 2015). They note that from 1996 to 2006, video game sales increased yet youth violence declined. They argue that other factors—depression, family violence, peer influence—better predict aggression. The focused fun of game playing can also satisfy basic needs for a sense of competence, control, and social connection (Granic et al., 2014).

To sum up, research reveals biological, psychological, and social-cultural influences on aggressive behavior. Complex behaviors, including violence, have many causes, making any single explanation an oversimplification. Asking what causes violence is therefore like asking what causes cancer. Those who study the effects of asbestos exposure on cancer rates may remind us that asbestos is indeed a cancer cause, but it is only one among many. Like so much else, aggression is a biopsychosocial phenomenon (**FIGURE 43.6**).

A happy concluding note: Historical trends suggest that the world is becoming less violent over time (Pinker, 2011). That people vary across time and place reminds us that environments differ. Yesterday's plundering Vikings have become today's peace-promoting Scandinavians. Like all behavior, aggression arises from the interaction of persons and situations.

“Research demonstrates a consistent relation between violent video game use and increases in aggressive behavior, aggressive cognitions and aggressive affect, and decreases in prosocial behavior, empathy and sensitivity to aggression.”

American Psychological Association Task Force on Violent Media, 2015

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

RP-2 What biological, psychological, and social-cultural influences interact to produce aggressive behaviors?

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWER

RP-2 Our biology (our genes, neural systems, and biochemistry—including testosterone and alcohol levels) influences our aggressive tendencies. Psychological factors (such as frustration, previous rewards for aggressive acts, and observation of others' aggression) can trigger any aggressive tendencies we may have. Social influences, such as exposure to violent media or being ostracized from a group, and cultural influences, such as whether we've grown up in a “culture of honor” or a father-absent home, can also affect our aggressive responses.

MODULE
43

REVIEW

Antisocial Relations

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Test yourself by taking a moment to answer each of these Learning Objective Questions (repeated here from within this module). Then check your answers—a click away in the e-book, and in Appendix C of the printed text. Research suggests that trying to answer these questions on your own will improve your long-term retention (McDaniel et al., 2009, 2015).

LOQ 43-1 What is *prejudice*? How do explicit and implicit prejudice differ?

LOQ 43-2 What groups are frequent targets of prejudice?

LOQ 43-3 What are some social, emotional, and cognitive roots of prejudice, and what are some ways to eliminate prejudice?

LOQ 43-4 How does psychology's definition of *aggression* differ from everyday usage? What biological factors make us more prone to hurt one another?

LOQ 43-5 What psychological and social-cultural factors may trigger aggressive behavior?

TERMS AND CONCEPTS TO REMEMBER

Test yourself on these terms by trying to compose the definition before checking your answers.

prejudice, p. 497

stereotype, p. 497

discrimination, p. 497

just-world phenomenon, p. 501

ingroup, p. 501

outgroup, p. 501

ingroup bias, p. 501

scapegoat theory, p. 502

other-race effect, p. 502

aggression, p. 504

frustration-aggression principle, p. 507

social script, p. 507

MASTER THE MATERIAL

Test yourself repeatedly throughout your studies. This will not only help you figure out what you know and don't know; the testing itself will help you learn and remember the information more effectively thanks to the *testing effect*.

1. Prejudice toward a group involves negative feelings, a tendency to discriminate, and overly generalized beliefs referred to as _____.

2. If several well-publicized murders are committed by members of a particular group, we may tend to react with fear and suspicion toward all members of that group. What psychological principle can help explain this reaction?
3. The other-race effect occurs when we assume that other groups are _____ (more/less) homogeneous than our own group.
4. Evidence of a biochemical influence on aggression is the finding that
 - a. aggressive behavior varies widely from culture to culture.
 - b. animals can be bred for aggressiveness.
 - c. stimulation of an area of the brain's limbic system produces aggressive behavior.
 - d. a higher-than-average level of the hormone testosterone is associated with violent behavior in males.
5. Studies show that parents of delinquent young people tend to use beatings to enforce discipline. This suggests that aggression can be
 - a. learned through direct rewards.
 - b. triggered by exposure to violent media.
 - c. learned through observation of aggressive models.
 - d. caused by hormone changes at puberty.
6. A conference of social scientists studying the effects of pornography unanimously agreed that violent pornography
 - a. has little effect on most viewers.
 - b. is the primary cause of reported and unreported rapes.
 - c. leads viewers to be more accepting of coercion in sexual relations.
 - d. has no effect, other than short-term arousal and entertainment.
7. The aspect of pornographic films that most directly influences men's aggression toward women seems to be the
 - a. length of the film.
 - b. eroticism portrayed.
 - c. depictions of sexual violence.
 - d. attractiveness of the actors.

Answers are a click away in the e-book, and available in Appendix D, at the back of the printed text.

Use  **LearningCurve** to create your personalized study plan, which will direct you to the Macmillan resources that will help you most.

MODULE 44 Prosocial Relations

As social animals—as people who need people—we often approach people not with closed fists, but with open arms. Social psychologists focus not only on the dark side of social relationships, but also on the bright side, by studying *prosocial* behavior—behavior that intends to help or benefit someone. Our positive behaviors toward others are evident from explorations of attraction, altruism, and peacemaking.

Attraction

Pause a moment and think about your relationships with two people—a close friend, and someone who has stirred your romantic feelings. What psychological chemistry binds us together in friendship or love? Social psychology suggests some answers.

The Psychology of Attraction

LOQ 44-1 Why do we befriend or fall in love with some people but not others?

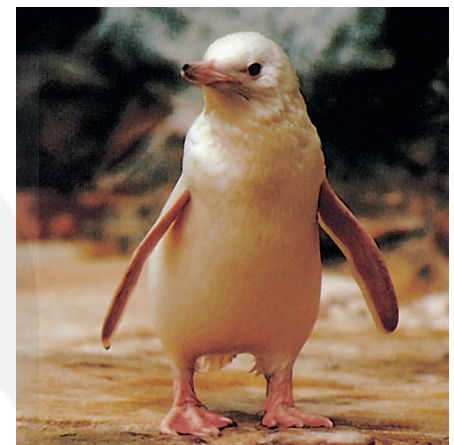
We endlessly wonder how we can win others' affection and what makes our own affections flourish or fade. Does familiarity breed contempt, or does it amplify affection? Do birds of a feather flock together, or do opposites attract? Is it what's inside that counts, or does physical attractiveness matter too? To explore these questions, let's consider three ingredients of our liking for one another: proximity, attractiveness, and similarity.

PROXIMITY Before friendships become close, they must begin. *Proximity*—geographic nearness—is friendship's most powerful predictor. Proximity can provide opportunities for aggression. But much more often it breeds liking (and sometimes even marriage) among those who live in the same neighborhood, sit nearby in class, work in the same office, share the same parking lot, or eat in the same dining hall. Look around. Mating starts with meeting.

Proximity breeds liking partly because of the **mere exposure effect**. Repeated exposure to novel stimuli increases our liking for them. By age 3 months, infants prefer photos of the race they most often see—usually their own race (Kelly et al., 2007). For our ancestors, this mere exposure effect likely had survival value. What was familiar was generally safe and approachable. What was unfamiliar was more often dangerous and threatening. Evolution may therefore have hard-wired into us the tendency to bond with those who are familiar and to be wary of those whose looks are unfamiliar (Sofer et al., 2015; Zajonc, 1998).

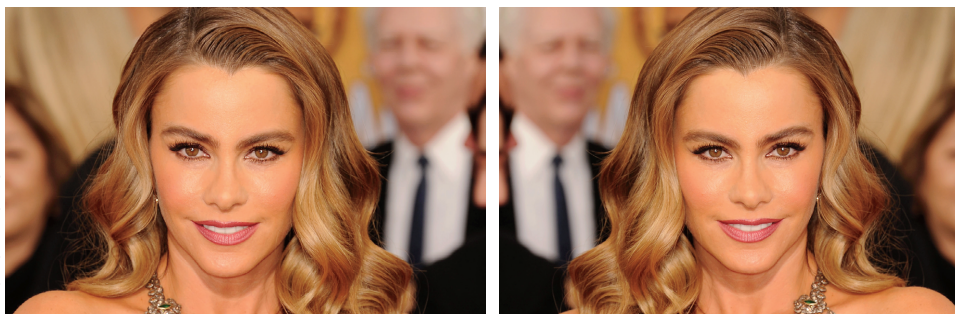
Mere exposure increases our liking not only for familiar faces, but also for nonsense syllables, musical selections, geometric figures, Chinese characters, and the letters of our own name (Moreland & Zajonc, 1982; Nuttin, 1987; Zajonc, 2001). So, within certain limits, familiarity feeds fondness (Bornstein, 1989, 1999). This would come as no surprise to the young Taiwanese man who wrote more than 700 letters to his girlfriend, urging her to marry him. She did marry—the mail carrier (Steinberg, 1993).

mere exposure effect the phenomenon that repeated exposure to novel stimuli increases liking of them.



Brendan Berne/REX/Shutterstock

Familiarity breeds acceptance When this rare white penguin was born in the Sydney, Australia zoo, his tuxedoed peers ostracized him. Zookeepers thought they would need to dye him black to gain acceptance. But after three weeks of contact, the other penguins came to accept him.



Jeffrey Mayer/Getty Images

Which is the real Sofia Vergara? The mere exposure effect applies even to ourselves. Because the human face is not perfectly symmetrical, the face we see in the mirror is not the same face our friends see. Most of us prefer the familiar mirror image, while our friends like the reverse (Mita et al., 1977). The person actress Sofia Vergara sees in the mirror each morning is shown at right, and that's the photo she would probably prefer.

No face is more familiar than your own. And that helps explain an interesting finding by Lisa DeBruine (2002, 2004): We like other people when their faces incorporate some morphed features of our own. When McMaster University students played a game with a supposed other player, they were more trusting and cooperative when the other person's image had some of their own facial features morphed into it. In me I trust.

MODERN MATCHMAKING Those who have not found a romantic partner in their immediate proximity may cast a wider net by joining an online dating service. Millions search for love on one of the 8000 online dating services (Hatfield, 2016). In 2015, 27 percent of 18- to 24-year-old Americans tried an online dating service or mobile dating app (Smith, 2016).

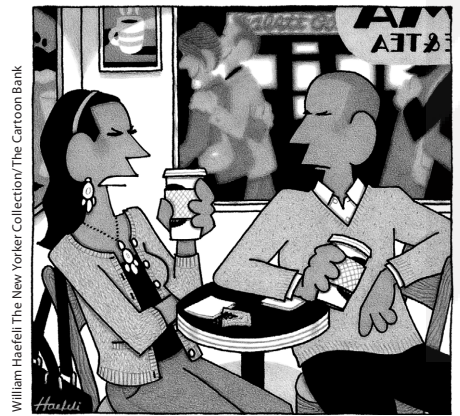
Online matchmaking definitely expands the pool of potential mates (Finkel et al., 2012a,b). But how effective is the matchmaking? Compared with those formed in person, Internet-formed friendships and romantic relationships are, on average, slightly more likely to last and be satisfying (Bargh & McKenna, 2004; Bargh et al., 2002; Cacioppo et al., 2013; McKenna et al., 2002). In one study, people disclosed more, with less posturing, to those whom they met online (McKenna et al., 2002). When conversing online with someone for 20 minutes, they felt more liking for that person than they did for someone they had met and talked with face to face. This was true even when (unknown to them) it was the same person! Internet friendships often feel as real and important as in-person relationships.

Small wonder that one survey found a leading online matchmaker enabling more than 500 U.S. marriages a day (Harris Interactive, 2010). By one estimate, online dating now is responsible for about a fifth of U.S. marriages (Crosier et al., 2012). And in a national survey of straight and gay/lesbian couples, nearly a quarter of heterosexual couples and some two-thirds of same-sex couples met online (Rosenfeld & Thomas, 2012; see **FIGURE 44.1**).

Speed dating pushes the search for romance into high gear. In a process pioneered by a matchmaking Jewish rabbi, people meet a succession of prospective partners, either in person or via webcam (Bower, 2009). After a 3- to 8-minute conversation, people move on to the next prospect. (In an in-person heterosexual meeting, one group—usually the women—remains seated while the other group circulates.) Those who want to meet again can arrange for future contact. For many participants, 4 minutes is enough time to form a feeling about a conversational partner and to register whether the partner likes them (Eastwick & Finkel, 2008a,b).

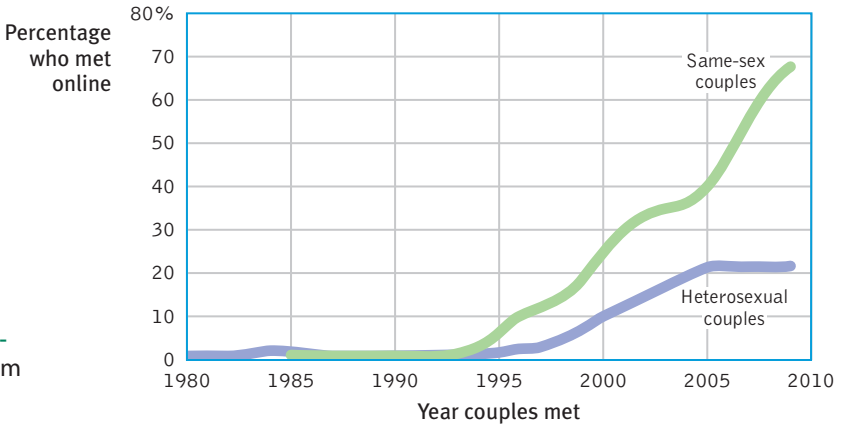
For researchers, speed dating offers a unique opportunity for studying influences on our first impressions of potential romantic partners. Some recent findings:

- *People who fear rejection often elicit rejection.* After a 3-minute speed date, those who most feared rejection were least often selected for a follow-up date (McClure & Lydon, 2014).
- *Given more options, people make more superficial choices.* When people meet lots of potential partners, they focus on more easily assessed characteristics, such as height and weight (Lenton & Francesconi, 2010).



"I'd like to meet the algorithm that thought we'd be a good match."

► **FIGURE 44.1**
Percentage of heterosexual and same-sex couples who met online (Data from Rosenfeld & Thomas, 2012.)



- *Men wish for future contact with more of their speed dates; women tend to be choosier.* But this difference disappears if the conventional roles are reversed, so that men stay seated while women circulate (Finkel & Eastwick, 2009).

PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS Once proximity affords us contact, what most affects our first impressions? The person’s sincerity? Intelligence? Personality? Hundreds of experiments reveal that it is something more superficial: physical appearance. This finding is unnerving for those of us taught that “beauty is only skin deep” and “appearances can be deceiving.”

In one early study, researchers randomly matched new University of Minnesota students for a Welcome Week dance (Walster et al., 1966). Before the dance, the researchers gave each student a battery of personality and aptitude tests, and they rated each student’s physical attractiveness. During the blind date, the couples danced and talked for more than two hours and then took a brief intermission to rate their dates. What predicted whether they liked each other? Only one thing: appearance. Both the men and the women liked good-looking dates best. Women are more likely than men to say that another’s looks don’t affect them (Lippa, 2007). But studies show that a man’s looks do affect women’s behavior (Eastwick et al., 2014a,b). In speed-dating experiments, as in Tinder swipes, attractiveness influences first impressions for both sexes (Belot & Francesconi, 2006; Finkel & Eastwick, 2008).

Physical attractiveness also predicts how often people date and how popular they feel. And it affects initial impressions of people’s personalities. We don’t assume that attractive people are more compassionate, but we do perceive them as healthier, happier, more sensitive, more successful, and more socially skilled (Eagly et al., 1991; Feingold, 1992; Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986).

For those of us who find the importance of looks unfair and unenlightened, three other findings may be reassuring.

- People’s attractiveness is surprisingly unrelated to their self-esteem and happiness (Diener et al., 1995; Major et al., 1984). Unless we have just compared ourselves with superattractive people, few of us (thanks, perhaps, to the mere exposure effect) view ourselves as unattractive (Thornton & Moore, 1993).
- Strikingly attractive people are sometimes suspicious that praise for their work may simply be a reaction to their looks. Less attractive people have been more likely to accept praise as sincere (Berscheid, 1981).
- For couples who were friends before lovers—who became romantically involved long after first meeting—looks matter less (Hunt et al., 2015). With slow-cooked love, shared values and interests matter more.

Beauty is also in the eye of the culture. Hoping to look attractive, people across the globe have pierced and tattooed their bodies, lengthened their necks, bound their feet, and artificially lightened or darkened their skin and hair. They have gorged themselves to achieve a full figure or liposuctioned fat to achieve a slim one, applied chemicals to rid themselves of unwanted hair or to regrow wanted hair, strapped on leather garments to make their breasts seem smaller or relied on push-up bras and surgery to make them look bigger. Cultural ideals change over time. For women in North America, the ultra-thin ideal of the Roaring Twenties gave way to the soft, voluptuous Marilyn Monroe ideal of the 1950s, only to be replaced by today’s lean yet busty ideal.

Some aspects of heterosexual attractiveness, however, do cross place and time (Cunningham et al., 2005; Langlois et al., 2000). By providing reproductive clues, bodies influence sexual attraction. As evolutionary psychologists explain, men in many cultures, from Australia to Zambia, judge women as more attractive if they have a youthful, fertile appearance, suggested by a low waist-to-hip ratio (Karremans et al., 2010; Perilloux et al., 2010; Platek & Singh, 2010). Women feel attracted to healthy-looking men, but especially—and more so when ovulating—to those who seem mature, dominant, masculine, and affluent (Gallup & Frederick, 2010; Gangestad et al., 2010).

“Personal beauty is a greater recommendation than any letter of introduction.”
Aristotle, *Apothegems*, 330 B.C.E.

Percentage of Men and Women Who “Constantly Think About Their Looks”

	Men	Women
Canada	18%	20%
United States	17	27
Mexico	40	45
Venezuela	47	65

From Roper Starch survey, reported by McCool (1999).

Women have 91 percent of cosmetic procedures (ASPS, 2010). Women also recall others’ appearances better than do men (Mast & Hall, 2006).

Estimated length of human nose removed by U.S. plastic surgeons each year: 5469 feet (Harper’s, 2009).

In the eye of the beholder Conceptions of attractiveness vary by culture and over time. Yet some adult physical features, such as a healthy appearance and a relatively symmetrical face, seem attractive everywhere.



Sean Caffrey/Getty Images



Blend Images/Getty Images



svetk/Getty Images

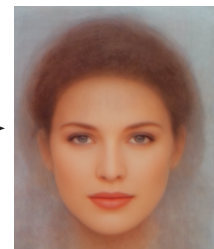
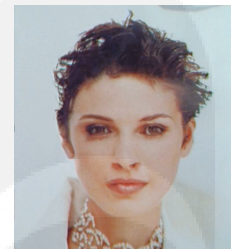
Faces matter, too. When people rate opposite-sex faces and bodies separately, the face tends to be the better predictor of overall physical attractiveness (Currie & Little, 2009; Peters et al., 2007). So what makes a face attractive? Part of the answer is features that are neither unusually large nor small. Symmetrical faces and bodies are also perceived as more sexually attractive (Rhodes et al., 1999; Singh, 1995; Thornhill & Gangestad, 1994). This helps explain why an averaged (and therefore symmetrical) face is attractive (**FIGURE 44.2**). In one clever demonstration, researchers digitized the faces of up to 32 college students and used a computer to average them (Langlois & Roggman, 1990). The result? Viewers judged the averaged, composite faces as more attractive than 96 percent of the individual faces. (If only we could merge either half of our face with its mirror image: Our symmetrical new face would be a notch more attractive.)

► **FIGURE 44.2**

Average is attractive Which of these faces offered by University of St. Andrews psychologist David Perrett (2002, 2010) is most attractive? Most people say it's the face on the right—of a nonexistent person that is the average composite of these 3 plus 57 other actual faces.



David Perrett/University of St. Andrews



Our feelings also influence our attractiveness judgments. Imagine two people: One is honest, humorous, and polite. The other is rude, unfair, and abusive. Which one is more attractive? Most people perceive the person with the appealing traits as more physically attractive (Lewandowski et al., 2007). Or imagine being paired with a stranger of the sex you find attractive—someone who listens intently to your self-disclosures. Might you feel a twinge of sexual attraction toward that empathic person? Student volunteers did, in several experiments (Birnbau & Reis, 2012). Our feelings influence our perceptions. Those we like we find attractive.

In a Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, Prince Charming asks Cinderella, “Do I love you because you’re beautiful, or are you beautiful because I love you?” Chances are it’s both. As we see our loved ones again and again, their physical imperfections grow less noticeable and their attractiveness grows more apparent (Beaman & Klentz, 1983; Gross & Crofton, 1977). Shakespeare said it in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*: “Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind.” Come to love someone and watch beauty grow. Love sees loveliness.



Zachary Kanin/The New Yorker Collection/The Cartoon Bank

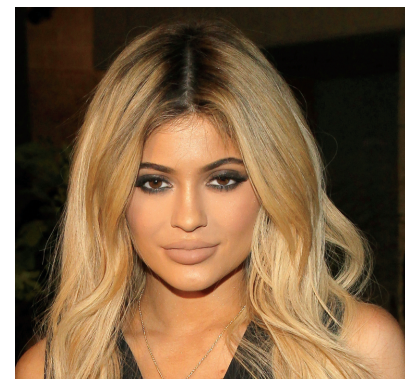
Kanin

“Play coy if you like, but no one can resist a perfectly symmetrical face.”

Extreme makeover In affluent, beauty-conscious cultures, increasing numbers of people, such as reality TV star Kylie Jenner, have turned to cosmetic procedures to change their looks.



John Shearer/Getty Images



Bennett Raglin/Getty Images

SIMILARITY So proximity has brought you into contact with someone, and your appearance has made an acceptable first impression. What influences whether you will become friends? As you get to know each other, will the chemistry be better if you are opposites or if you are alike?

It makes a good story—extremely different types liking or loving each other: Rat, Mole, and Badger in *The Wind in the Willows*, Frog and Toad in Arnold Lobel's books, Edward and Bella in the *Twilight* series. The stories delight us by expressing what we seldom experience. In real life, opposites retract (Rosenbaum, 1986; Montoya & Horton, 2013). Compared with randomly paired people, friends and couples are far more likely to share common attitudes, beliefs, and interests (and, for that matter, age, religion, race, education, intelligence, smoking behavior, and economic status). Moreover, the more alike people are, the more their liking endures (Byrne, 1971; Hartl et al., 2015). Journalist Walter Lippmann was right to suppose that love lasts “when the lovers love many things together, and not merely each other.” Similarity breeds content.

Proximity, attractiveness, and similarity are not the only determinants of attraction. We also like those who like us. This is especially true when our self-image is low. When we believe someone likes us, we feel good and respond to them warmly, which leads them to like us even more (Curtis & Miller, 1986). To be liked is powerfully rewarding.

Indeed, all the findings we have considered so far can be explained by a simple *reward theory of attraction*: We will like those whose behavior is rewarding to us, including those who are both able and willing to help us achieve our goals (Montoya & Horton, 2014). When people live or work in close proximity to us, it requires less time and effort to develop the friendship and enjoy its benefits. When people are attractive, they are aesthetically pleasing, and associating with them can be socially rewarding. When people share our views, they reward us by validating our beliefs.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

RP-1 People tend to marry someone who lives or works nearby. This is an example of the _____ in action.

RP-2 How does being physically attractive influence others' perceptions?

Romantic Love

LOQ 44-2 How does romantic love typically change as time passes?

Sometimes people move quickly from initial impressions, to friendship, to the more intense, complex, and mysterious state of romantic love. If love endures, temporary *passionate love* will mellow into a lingering *companionate love* (Hatfield, 1988).

PASSIONATE LOVE *Passionate love* mixes something new with something positive (Aron et al., 2000; Coulter & Malouff, 2013). We intensely desire to be with our partner (Hatfield et al., 2015). Seeing our partner stimulates blood flow to a brain region linked to craving and obsession (Acevedo et al., 2012).

Stanley Schachter and Jerome Singer's *two-factor theory of emotion* can help us understand the intense positive absorption of romantic love (Hatfield, 1988). That theory assumes that

- emotions have two ingredients—*physical arousal* plus *cognitive appraisal*.
- arousal from any source can enhance one emotion or another, depending on how we interpret and label the arousal.

In tests of the two-factor theory, college men have been aroused by fright, by running in place, by viewing erotic materials, or by listening to humorous or repulsive monologues. They were then introduced to an attractive woman and asked to rate

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWERS

RP-1 mere exposure effect. RP-2 Being physically attractive tends to elicit positive first impressions. People tend to assume that attractive people are healthier, happier, and more socially skilled than others are.



Similarity attracts; perceived dissimilarity does not.

“I like the Pope unless the Pope doesn't like me. Then I don't like the Pope.”

Donald Trump, February 18, 2016

Snapshots at jasonlove.com



Bill looked at Susan, Susan at Bill. Suddenly death didn't seem like an option. This was love at first sight.

passionate love an aroused state of intense positive absorption in another, usually present at the beginning of a romantic relationship.

companionate love the deep affectionate attachment we feel for those with whom our lives are intertwined.

equity a condition in which people receive from a relationship in proportion to what they give to it.

self-disclosure the act of revealing intimate aspects of oneself to others.

altruism unselfish regard for the welfare of others.

“When two people are under the influence of the most violent, most insane, most delusive, and most transient of passions, they are required to swear that they will remain in that excited, abnormal, and exhausting condition continuously until death do them part.”

George Bernard Shaw, “Getting Married,” 1908



Love is an ancient thing In 2007, a 5000- to 6000-year-old “Romeo and Juliet” young couple was unearthed locked in embrace, near Rome.

her (or their girlfriend). Unlike unaroused men, the stirred-up men attributed some of their arousal to the woman or girlfriend, and felt more attracted to her (Carducci et al., 1978; Dermer & Pyszczynski, 1978; White & Kight, 1984). In one classic experiment, researchers studied people crossing two bridges above British Columbia’s rocky Capilano River (Dutton & Aron, 1974, 1989). One, a swaying footbridge, was 230 feet above the rocks; the other was low and solid. As men came off each bridge, an attractive young woman (working for the researchers) intercepted them and asked them to fill out a short questionnaire. She then offered her phone number in case they wanted to hear more about her project. Far more of the men who had just crossed the high bridge—which left their hearts pounding—accepted the number and later called the woman.

To be revved up and to associate some of that arousal with a desirable person is to feel the pull of passion. Adrenaline makes the heart grow fonder. Sexual desire + a growing attachment = passionate love (Berscheid, 2010).

COMPANIONATE LOVE Although the desire and attachment of romantic love often endure, the intense absorption in the other, the thrill of the romance, the giddy “floating on a cloud” feelings typically fade. Does this mean the French are correct in saying that “love makes the time pass and time makes love pass”? Or can friendship and commitment keep a relationship going after the passion cools?

As love matures, it typically becomes a steadier **companionate love**—a deep, affectionate attachment (Hatfield, 1988). Like a passing storm, the flood of passion-facilitating hormones (testosterone, dopamine, adrenaline) subsides. But another hormone, *oxytocin*, remains, supporting feelings of trust, calmness, and bonding with the mate. This shift from passion to attachment may have adaptive value (Reis & Aron, 2008). Passionate love often produces children, whose survival is aided by the parents’ waning obsession with each other.

In the most satisfying marriages, attraction and sexual desire endure, minus the obsession of early stage romance (Acevedo & Aron, 2009). Indeed, failure to appreciate passionate love’s limited half-life can doom a relationship (Berscheid et al., 1984). Recognizing the short duration of obsessive passionate love, some societies deem such feelings an irrational reason for marrying. Better, they say, to search for (or have someone choose for you) a partner with a compatible background and interests. Non-Western cultures, where people rate love as less important for marriage, do have lower divorce rates (Levine et al., 1995).

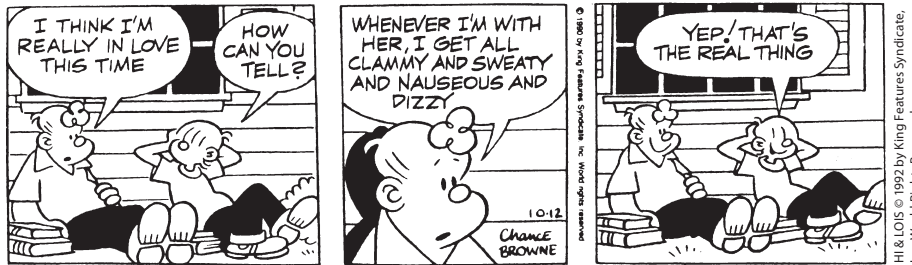
One key to a gratifying and enduring relationship is **equity**. When equity exists—when both partners receive in proportion to what they give—their chances for sustained and satisfying companionate love have been good (Gray-Little & Burks, 1983; Van Yperen & Buunk, 1990). In one national survey, “sharing household chores” ranked third, after “faithfulness” and a “happy sexual relationship,” on a list of nine things people associated with successful marriages. As the Pew Research Center (2007) summarized, “I like hugs. I like kisses. But what I really love is help with the dishes.”

Equity’s importance extends beyond marriage. Mutually sharing one’s self and possessions, making decisions together, giving and getting emotional support, promoting and caring about each other’s welfare—all of these acts are at the core of every type of loving relationship (Sternberg & Grajek, 1984). It’s true for lovers, for parent and child, and for close friends.

Sharing includes **self-disclosure**, revealing intimate details about ourselves—our likes and dislikes, our dreams and worries, our proud and shameful moments. “When I am with my friend,” noted the Roman statesman Seneca, “me thinks I am alone, and as much at liberty to speak anything as to think it.” Self-disclosure breeds liking, and liking breeds self-disclosure (Collins & Miller, 1994). As one person reveals a little, the other reciprocates, the first then reveals more, and on and on, as friends or lovers move to deeper levels of intimacy (Baumeister & Bratslavsky, 1999).

One experiment marched some student pairs through 45 minutes of increasingly self-disclosing conversation—from “What is the greatest accomplishment of your life?” to “When did you last cry in front of another person? By yourself?” Other pairs spent the time with small-talk questions, such as “What was your high school like?” (Aron

HI & LOIS



et al., 1997). By the experiment's end, those experiencing the escalating intimacy felt much closer to their conversation partner than did the small-talkers. Likewise, after dating couples spent 45 minutes answering such questions, they felt increased love (Welker et al., 2014).

In addition to equity and self-disclosure, a third key to enduring love is *positive support*. Relationship conflicts are inevitable, but hurtful communications are not. Do we more often express sarcasm or support, scorn or sympathy, sneers or smiles? For unhappy couples, disagreements, criticisms, and put downs are routine. For happy couples in enduring relationships, positive interactions (compliments, touches, laughing) outnumber negative interactions (sarcasm, disapproval, insults) by at least 5 to 1 (Gottman, 2007; see also Sullivan et al., 2010).

In the mathematics of love, self-disclosing intimacy + mutually supportive equity = enduring companionate love.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

RP-3 How does the two-factor theory of emotion help explain *passionate love*?

RP-4 Two vital components for maintaining companionate love are _____ and _____.

Altruism

LOQ 44-3 What is *altruism*? When are people most—and least—likely to help?

Altruism is an unselfish concern for the welfare of others. In rescuing his jailer, Dirk Willems exemplified altruism. Willems fits the definition of a *hero*—moral, courageous, and protective of those in need (Kinsella et al., 2015). Carl Wilkens and Paul Rusesabagina displayed another heroic example of altruism in Kigali, Rwanda. Wilkens, a Seventh-day Adventist missionary, was living there in 1994 with his family when militia from the Hutu ethnic group began to slaughter members of a minority ethnic group, the Tutsis. The U.S. government, church leaders, and friends all implored Wilkens to leave. He refused. After evacuating his family, and after every other American had left Kigali, he alone stayed and contested the 800,000-person genocide. When the militia came to kill him and his Tutsi servants, Wilkens' Hutu neighbors deterred them. Despite repeated death threats, he spent his days running roadblocks to take food and water to orphanages and to negotiate, plead, and bully his way through the bloodshed, saving lives time and again. "It just seemed the right thing to do," he later explained (Kristof, 2004).

Why do genocides occur? An estimated 800,000 people died during the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, when Hutu groups carried out mass killings of Tutsis. Social psychology research helps us understand some of the factors motivating genocides. We tend to categorize our world into us and them, and, when threatened, to feel greater animosity toward outside groups.



RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWERS

RP-3 Emotions consist of (1) physical arousal and (2) our interpretation of that arousal. Researchers have found that any source of arousal (running, fear, laughter) may be interpreted as passion in the presence of a desirable person.

RP-4 equity; self-disclosure

bystander effect the tendency for any given bystander to be less likely to give aid if other bystanders are present.

Elsewhere in Kigali, Rusesabagina, a Hutu married to a Tutsi and the acting manager of a luxury hotel, was sheltering more than 1200 terrified Tutsis and moderate Hutus. When international peacekeepers abandoned the city and hostile militia threatened his guests in the “Hotel Rwanda” (as it came to be called in a 2004 movie), the courageous Rusesabagina began cashing in past favors. He bribed the militia and telephoned influential people abroad to exert pressure on local authorities, thereby sparing the lives of the hotel’s occupants, despite the surrounding chaos. Both Wilkens and Rusesabagina were displaying altruism, an unselfish regard for the welfare of others.

Altruism became a major concern of social psychologists after an especially vile act. On March 13, 1964, a stalker repeatedly stabbed Kitty Genovese, then raped her as she lay dying outside her Queens, New York, apartment at 3:30 A.M. “Oh, my God, he stabbed me!” Genovese screamed into the early morning stillness. “Please help me!” Windows opened and lights went on as some neighbors heard her screams. Her attacker fled and then returned to stab and rape her again. Until it was too late, no one called police or came to her aid.

Bystander Intervention

Although initial reports of the Genovese murder overestimated the number of witnesses, the reports triggered outrage over the bystanders’ apparent “apathy” and “indifference.” Rather than blaming the onlookers, social psychologists John Darley and Bibb Latané (1968b) attributed their inaction to an important situational factor—the presence of others. Given certain circumstances, they suspected, most of us might behave similarly. To paraphrase the French writer Voltaire, we all are guilty of the good we did not do.

After staging emergencies under various conditions, Darley and Latané assembled their findings into a decision scheme: We will help only if the situation enables us first to *notice* the incident, then to *interpret* it as an emergency, and finally to *assume responsibility* for helping (FIGURE 44.3). At each step, the presence of others can turn us away from the path that leads to helping.

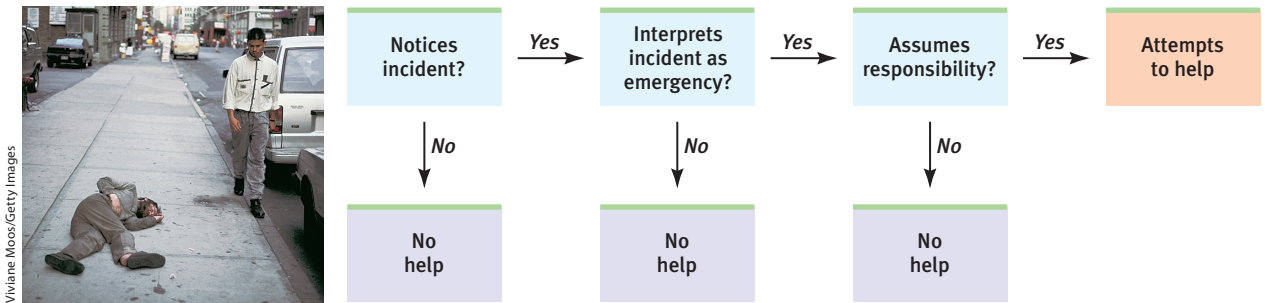
One of Darley and Latané’s experiments staged a fake emergency as students in separate laboratory rooms took turns talking over an intercom. Only the person whose microphone was switched on could be heard. When his turn came, one student (an accomplice of the experimenters) pretended to have an epileptic seizure, and he called for help (Darley & Latané, 1968a).

How did the others react? As FIGURE 44.4 shows, those who believed only they could hear the victim—and therefore thought they alone were responsible for helping him—usually went to his aid. Students who thought others could also hear the victim’s cries were more likely to do nothing. When more people shared responsibility for helping—when there was a *diffusion of responsibility*—any single listener was less likely to help. Inattention and diffused responsibility also contribute to the “global bystander nonintervention” as millions of far-away people die of hunger, disease, and genocide (Pittinsky & Diamante, 2015).

“Probably no single incident has caused social psychologists to pay as much attention to an aspect of social behavior as Kitty Genovese’s murder.”
R. Lance Shotland (1984)

▼ **FIGURE 44.3**
The decision-making process for bystander intervention Before helping, one must first notice an emergency, then correctly interpret it, and then feel responsible. (Adapted from Darley & Latané, 1968b.)

For a review of research on emergency helping, engage online with **Concept Practice: When Will People Help Others?**



Hundreds of additional experiments have confirmed this **bystander effect**. For example, researchers and their assistants took 1497 elevator rides in three cities and “accidentally” dropped coins or pencils in front of 4813 fellow passengers (Latané & Darley, 1968). When alone with the person in need, 40 percent helped; in the presence of 5 other bystanders, only 20 percent helped. The presence of bystanders reduces brain activation in the motor cortex, signaling that we don’t need to take action (Hortenhuis & de Gelder, 2014).

Observations of behavior in thousands of these situations—relaying an emergency phone call, aiding a stranded motorist, donating blood, picking up dropped books, contributing money, giving time—show that the odds of our helping someone depend on the characteristics of the person, the situation, and our own internal state. The odds of helping are highest when

- the person appears to need and deserve help.
- the person is in some way similar to us.
- the person is a woman.
- we have just observed someone else being helpful.
- we are not in a hurry.
- we are in a small town or rural area.
- we are feeling guilty.
- we are focused on others and not preoccupied.
- we are in a good mood.

This last result, that happy people are helpful people, is one of psychology’s most consistent findings. As poet Robert Browning (1868) observed, “Oh, make us happy and you make us good!” It doesn’t matter how we are cheered. Whether by being made to feel successful and intelligent, by thinking happy thoughts, by finding money, or even by receiving a posthypnotic suggestion, we become more generous and more eager to help (Carlson et al., 1988). And if our feeling of elevation follows witnessing or learning of someone else’s self-giving deed, our helping will become even more pronounced (Schnall et al., 2010).

So happiness breeds helpfulness. But it’s also true that helpfulness breeds happiness. Helping those in need activates brain areas associated with reward (Harbaugh et al., 2007; Kawamichi et al., 2015). That helps explain a curious finding: People who give money away are happier than those who spend it almost entirely on themselves. In one controlled experiment, researchers gave people an envelope with cash and instructed one group to spend it on themselves and another to spend it on others (Dunn et al., 2008; Dunn & Norton, 2013). Which group was happiest at the day’s end? It was, indeed, those assigned to the spend-it-on-others condition. And in a survey of more than 200,000 people worldwide, people in both rich and poor countries were happier with their lives if they had donated to a charity in the last month. Just reflecting on an instance of spending money on others provides most people with a mood boost (Aknin et al., 2013).

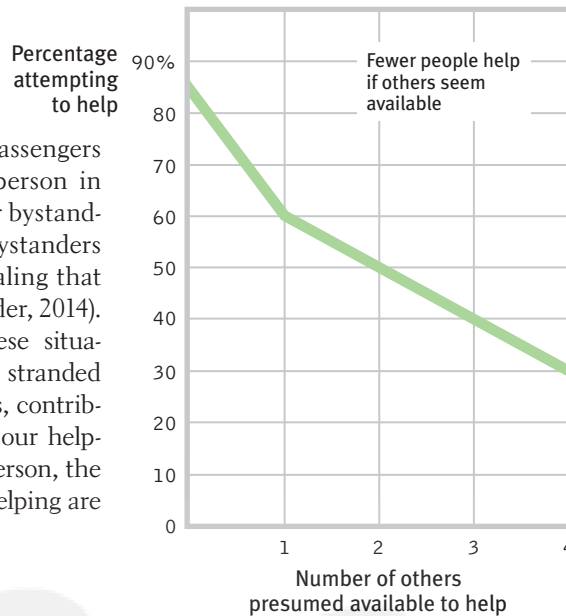


FIGURE 44.4

Responses to a simulated emergency When people thought they alone heard the calls for help from a person they believed to be having an epileptic seizure, they usually helped. But when they thought four others were also hearing the calls, fewer than one-third responded. (Data from Darley & Latané, 1968a.)



RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

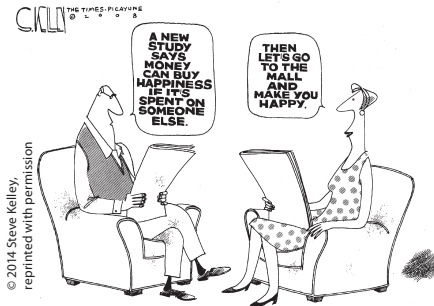
RP-5 Why didn’t anybody help Kitty Genovese? What social psychology principle did this incident illustrate?

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWER

RP-5 In the presence of others, an individual is less likely to notice a situation, correctly interpret it as an emergency, and take responsibility for offering help. The Kitty Genovese case demonstrated this *bystander effect*, as each witness assumed many others were also aware of the event.

Helping—Self-Interest or Socialization?

LOQ 44-4 How do social exchange theory and social norms explain helping behavior?



Why do we help? One widely held view is that self-interest underlies all human interactions, that our constant goal is to maximize rewards and minimize costs. Accountants call it *cost-benefit analysis*. Philosophers call it *utilitarianism*. Social psychologists call it **social exchange theory**. If you are considering donating blood, you may weigh the costs of doing so (time, discomfort, anxiety) against the benefits (reduced guilt, social approval, good feelings). If the rewards exceed the costs, you will help.

Others believe we help because we have been socialized to do so, through norms that prescribe how we *ought* to behave (Everett et al., 2015). Two such norms are the *reciprocity norm* and the *social-responsibility norm*:

The **reciprocity norm** is the expectation that we should return help, not harm, to those who have helped us. In our relations with others of similar status, this norm compels us to give (in favors, gifts, or social invitations) about as much as we receive. Sometimes this means “paying it forward,” as happened in one experiment, when people who were treated generously became more likely to be generous to a stranger (Tsvetkova & Macy, 2014). Returning favors feels good, making the norm of reciprocity a pleasant strategy to help others (Hein et al., 2016).

The reciprocity norm kicked in after Dave Tally, a Tempe, Arizona, homeless man, found \$3300 in a backpack that an Arizona State University student had misplaced on his way to buy a used car (Lacey, 2010). Instead of using the cash for much-needed bike repairs, food, and shelter, Tally turned the backpack in to the social service agency where he volunteered. To reciprocate Tally’s help, the backpack’s owner thanked him with a reward. Hearing about Tally’s self-giving deeds, dozens of others also sent him money and job offers.

The **social-responsibility norm** is the expectation that we should help those who need our help—young children and others who cannot give as much as they receive—even if the costs outweigh the benefits. Europeans are most welcoming of asylum seekers who are most vulnerable—those, for example, who have been tortured or have no surviving family (Bansak et al., 2016). Construction worker Wesley Autrey exemplified the social-responsibility norm on January 2, 2007. He and his 6- and 4-year-old daughters were awaiting a New York City subway train when, before them, a man collapsed in a seizure, got up, then stumbled to the platform’s edge and fell onto the tracks. With train

headlights approaching, “I had to make a split-second decision,” Autrey later recalled (Buckley, 2007). His decision, as his girls looked on in horror, was to leap from the platform, push the man off the tracks and into a foot-deep space between them, and lay atop him. As the train screeched to a halt, five cars traveled just above his head, leaving grease on his knit cap. When Autrey cried out, “I’ve got two daughters up there. Let them know their father is okay,” onlookers erupted into applause.

Many world religions encourage their followers to practice the social-responsibility norm, and sometimes this leads to prosocial behavior. Between 2006 and 2008, Gallup polls sampled more than 300,000 people across 140 countries, comparing the “highly religious” (who said religion was important to them and who had attended a religious service in the prior week) to those less religious. The highly religious, despite being poorer, were about 50 percent more likely to report having “donated money to a charity in the last month” and to have volunteered time to an organization (Pelham & Crabtree, 2008).



Subway hero Wesley Autrey:

“I don’t feel like I did something spectacular; I just saw someone who needed help.” Five years later, a similar situation occurred when another man was shoved onto subway tracks—but this time, no one helped (Nocera, 2012). Social psychologists have wondered: Under what conditions will people help?

Conflict and Peacemaking

Positive social norms encourage generosity and enable group living. But conflicts often divide us. One response to recent mass migrations has been increasing nationalism and nativism. Moreover, *every day*, the world continues to spend almost \$5 billion for arms and armies—money that could be used for badly needed housing, nutrition, education, and health care. Knowing that wars begin in human minds, psychologists have wondered: What in the human mind causes destructive conflict? How might the perceived threats of social diversity be replaced by a spirit of cooperation?

Elements of Conflict

LOQ 44-5 How do social traps and mirror-image perceptions fuel social conflict?

To a social psychologist, a **conflict** is a perceived incompatibility of actions, goals, or ideas. The elements of conflict are much the same, whether partners sparring, political groups feuding, or nations at war. In each situation, conflict may seed positive change, or be a destructive process that can produce unwanted results. Among these processes are *social traps* and *distorted perceptions*.

SOCIAL TRAPS In some situations, pursuing our personal interests also supports our collective well-being. As capitalist Adam Smith wrote in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), “It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest.” In other situations, we *harm* our collective well-being by pursuing our personal interests. Such situations are **social traps**.

Researchers have created mini social traps in laboratory games that require two participants to choose between pursuing their immediate self-interest, at others’ expense, versus cooperating for mutual benefits. Many real-life situations similarly pit our individual interests against our communal well-being. Individual fish trawlers reasoned that the fish they took would not threaten the species and that if they didn’t take them, others would anyway. The result: Some fish stocks have been depleted. Ditto for the buffalo hunters of yesterday and the elephant-tusk poachers of today. Individual car owners and home owners reason, “Electric cars are more expensive. Besides, the fuel that I burn in my one car doesn’t noticeably add to the greenhouse gases.” When enough people reason similarly, the collective result threatens disaster—climate change, rising seas, and more extreme weather.

Social traps challenge us to reconcile our right to pursue our personal well-being with our responsibility for the well-being of all. Psychologists have therefore explored ways to convince people to cooperate for their mutual betterment—through agreed-upon *regulations*, through better *communication*, and through promoting *awareness* of our responsibilities toward community, nation, and the whole of humanity (Dawes, 1980; Linder, 1982; Sato, 1987). Given effective regulations, communication, and awareness, people more often cooperate, whether playing a laboratory game or the real game of life.

ENEMY PERCEPTIONS Psychologists have noted that those in conflict have a curious tendency to form diabolical images of one another.

social exchange theory the theory that our social behavior is an exchange process, the aim of which is to maximize benefits and minimize costs.

reciprocity norm an expectation that people will help, not hurt, those who have helped them.

social-responsibility norm an expectation that people will help those needing their help.

conflict a perceived incompatibility of actions, goals, or ideas.

social trap a situation in which the conflicting parties, by each pursuing their self-interest rather than the good of the group, become caught in mutually destructive behavior.



Not in my ocean! Many people support alternative energy sources, including wind turbines. But proposals to construct wind farms in real-world places elicit less support. Potential wind turbines in the Highlands and off the coast of Scotland produced heated debate over the benefits of clean energy versus the costs of altering treasured scenic views.

These distorted images are, ironically, so similar that we call them **mirror-image perceptions**: As we see “them”—as untrustworthy, with evil intentions—so “they” see us. Each demonizes the other. My political party has benevolent motives; the other party is malevolent (Waytz et al., 2014).

Mirror-image perceptions can often feed a vicious cycle of hostility. If Juan believes Maria is annoyed with him, he may snub her, causing her to act in ways that justify his perception. As with individuals, so with countries. Perceptions can become **self-fulfilling prophecies**—beliefs that confirm themselves by influencing the other country to react in ways that seem to justify them.

Individuals and nations alike tend to see their own actions as responses to provocation, not as the causes of what happens next. Perceiving themselves as returning tit for tat, they often hit back harder, as University College London volunteers did in one experiment (Shergill et al., 2003). Their task: After feeling pressure on their own finger, they were to use a mechanical device to press on another volunteer’s finger. Although told to reciprocate with the same amount of pressure, they typically responded with about 40 percent more force than they had just experienced. Despite seeking only to respond in kind, their touches soon escalated to hard presses, much as when each child after a fight claims that “I just poked him, but he hit me harder.”

Mirror-image perceptions feed similar cycles of hostility on the world stage. To most people, torture seems more justified when done by “us” rather than “them” (Tarrant et al., 2012). In American media reports, Muslims who kill have been portrayed as fanatical, hateful terrorists, while an American who allegedly killed 16 Afghans was portrayed as stressed out from marriage problems, four tours of duty, and a friend’s having had his leg blown off (Greenwald, 2012).

The point is not that truth must lie midway between two such views (one may be more accurate). The point is that enemy perceptions often form mirror images. Moreover, as enemies change, so do perceptions. In American minds and media, the “blood-thirsty, cruel, treacherous” Japanese of World War II later became our “intelligent, hardworking, self-disciplined, resourceful allies” (Gallup, 1972).

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

RP-6 Why do sports fans tend to feel a sense of satisfaction when their archival team loses? Do such feelings, in other settings, make conflict resolution more challenging?

Promoting Peace

LOQ 44-6 What can we do to promote peace?

How can we make peace? Can contact, cooperation, communication, and conciliation transform the antagonisms fed by prejudice and conflicts into attitudes that promote peace? Research indicates that, in some cases, they can.

CONTACT Does it help to put two conflicting parties into close contact? It depends. Negative contact increases *disliking* (Graf et al., 2014; Paolini et al., 2014). But positive contact—especially noncompetitive contact between parties of equal status, such as fellow store clerks—typically helps. Initially prejudiced co-workers of different races have, in such circumstances, usually come to accept one another. This finding is confirmed by a statistical digest of more than 500 studies of face-to-face contact between majority

mirror-image perceptions mutual views often held by conflicting people, as when each side sees itself as ethical and peaceful and views the other side as evil and aggressive.

self-fulfilling prophecy a belief that leads to its own fulfillment.

superordinate goals shared goals that override differences among people and require their cooperation.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWER

RP-6 Sports fans may feel they are part of an *ingroup* that sets itself apart from an *outgroup* (fans of the archival team). Ingroup bias tends to develop, leading to prejudice and the view that the outgroup “deserves” misfortune. So, the archival team’s loss may seem justified. In conflicts, this kind of thinking is problematic, especially when each side in the conflict develops *mirror-image perceptions* of the other (distorted, negative images that are ironically similar).

people and outgroups (such as ethnic minorities, older people, and people with disabilities). Among the quarter-million people studied across 38 nations, contact has been correlated with, or in experimental studies has led to, more positive attitudes (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013; Lemmer & Wagner, 2015; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011). Some examples:

- With cross-racial contact, South Africans' interracial attitudes have moved "into closer alignment" (Dixon et al., 2007; Finchilescu & Tredoux, 2010; Swart et al., 2011).
- Heterosexuals' attitudes toward gay people are influenced not only by *what* they know but also by *whom* they know (Collier et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2009). In surveys, the reason people most often give for becoming more supportive of same-sex marriage is "having friends, family, or acquaintances who are gay or lesbian" (Pew, 2013b). And in the United States, where attitudes toward gays have become more positive, 87 percent of people now say they know someone who is gay (Pew, 2016).
- Friendly contact, say between Blacks and Whites as roommates, improves attitudes toward others of the different race, and even toward other racial groups (Gaither & Sommers, 2013; Tausch et al., 2010).

However, contact is not always enough. In most desegregated schools, ethnic groups resegregate themselves in lunchrooms, in classrooms, and elsewhere on school grounds (Alexander & Tredoux, 2010; Clack et al., 2005; Schofield, 1986). People in each group often think that they would welcome more contact with the other group, but they assume the other group does not reciprocate the wish (Richeson & Shelton, 2007). "I don't reach out to them, because I don't want to be rebuffed; they don't reach out to me, because they're just not interested." When such mirror-image misperceptions are corrected, friendships may form and prejudices melt.

COOPERATION To see if enemies could overcome their differences, researcher Muzafer Sherif (1966) set a conflict in motion. He separated 22 Oklahoma City boys into two separate camp areas. Then he had the two groups compete for prizes in a series of activities. Before long, each group became intensely proud of itself and hostile to the other group's "sneaky," "smart-alecky stinkers." Food wars broke out. Cabins were ransacked. Fistfights had to be broken up by camp counselors. Brought together, the two groups avoided each other, except to taunt and threaten. Little did they know that within a few days, they would be friends.

Sherif accomplished this by giving them **superordinate goals**—shared goals that could be achieved only through cooperation. When he arranged for the camp water supply to "fail," all 22 boys had to work together to restore the water. To rent a movie in those pre-Netflix days, they all had to pool their resources. To move a stalled truck, the boys needed to combine their strength, pulling and pushing together. Having used isolation and competition to make strangers into enemies, Sherif used shared predicaments and goals to turn enemies into friends. What reduced conflict was not mere contact, but *cooperative* contact.

A shared predicament likewise can have a powerfully unifying effect on other groups as well. Children and youth exposed to war, and minority group members facing rejection or discrimination, likewise develop strong ingroup identification (Bauer et al., 2014; Ramos et al., 2012). Israeli children growing up in conflict areas often develop a conflict-supportive narrative of perceptions, beliefs, and emotions regarding their shared adversary (Nasie et al., 2016). Such narratives build ingroup solidarity but also insensitivity to the pain experienced by outgroup members (Levy et al., 2016). In the aftermath of a divisive political primary election, party members will usually reunify when facing their shared threat—the opposition party candidate.

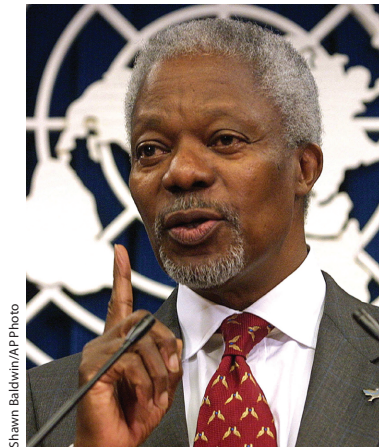
At such times, cooperation can lead people to define a new, inclusive group that dissolves their former subgroups (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1999). If this were a social psychology experiment, you might seat members of two groups not on opposite sides, but alternately around a table. Give them a new, shared name. Have them work together.

"Me against my brother, my brothers
and me against my cousins, then my
cousins and me against strangers."

Bedouin proverb

“Most of us have overlapping identities which unite us with very different groups. We *can* love what we are, without hating what—and who—we are *not*. We can thrive in our own tradition, even as we learn from others.”

Kofi Annan, Nobel Peace Prize lecture, 2001.



Shawn Baldwin/AP Photo

Then watch “us” and “them” become “we.” After 9/11, one 18-year-old New Jersey man described this shift in his own social identity: “I just thought of myself as Black. But now I feel like I’m an American, more than ever” (Sengupta, 2001). In a real experiment, White Americans who read a newspaper article about a terrorist threat against all Americans subsequently expressed reduced prejudice against Black Americans (Dovidio et al., 2004).

If cooperative contact between rival group members encourages positive attitudes, might this principle bring people together in multicultural schools? Could cooperative learning in classrooms create interracial friendships, while also enhancing

student achievement? Experiments with adolescents from 11 countries confirm that the answer is *Yes* (Roseth et al., 2008). In the classroom as in the sports arena, members of interracial groups who work together on projects typically come to feel friendly toward one another. Knowing this, thousands of teachers have made interracial cooperative learning part of their classroom experience.

The power of cooperative activity to make friends of former enemies has led psychologists to urge increased international exchange and cooperation. Some experiments have found that just imagining the shared threat of global climate change reduces international hostilities (Pyszczynski et al., 2012). From adjacent Brazilian tribes to European countries, formerly conflicting groups have managed to build interconnections, interdependence, and a shared social identity as they seek common goals (Fry, 2012). As we engage in mutually beneficial trade, as we work to protect our common destiny on this fragile planet, and as we become more aware that our hopes and fears are shared, we can transform misperceptions that feed conflict into feelings of solidarity based on common interests.

COMMUNICATION When real-life conflicts become intense, a third-party mediator—a marriage counselor, labor mediator, diplomat, community volunteer—may facilitate much-needed communication (Rubin et al., 1994). Mediators help each party voice its viewpoint and understand the other’s needs and goals. If successful, mediators can replace a competitive *win-lose* orientation with a cooperative *win-win* orientation that leads to a mutually beneficial resolution. A classic example: Two friends, after quarreling over an orange, agreed to split it. One squeezed his half for juice. The other used the peel from her half to flavor a cake. If only the two had communicated their motives to one another, they could have hit on the win-win solution of one having all the

juice, the other all the peel.

CONCILIATION Understanding and cooperative resolution are most needed, yet least likely, in times of anger or crisis (Bodenhausen et al., 1994; Tetlock, 1988). When conflicts intensify, images become more stereotyped, judgments more rigid, and communication more difficult, or even impossible. Each party is likely to threaten, coerce, or retaliate. In the weeks before the 1990 Gulf War, the first President George Bush threatened, in the full glare of publicity, to “kick Saddam’s ass.” Saddam Hussein communicated in kind, threatening to make Americans “swim in their own blood.”

Under such conditions, is there an alternative to war or surrender? Social psychologist Charles Osgood (1962, 1980) advocated a strategy of *Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension-Reduction*, nicknamed **GRIT**. In applying GRIT, one side first



Grant Hindsley/AP Photo

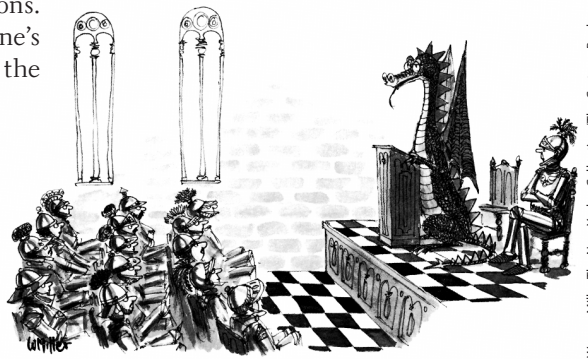
Superordinate goals override differences

Cooperative efforts to achieve shared goals are an effective way to break down social barriers.

announces its recognition of mutual interests and its intent to reduce tensions. It then initiates one or more small, conciliatory acts. Without weakening one's retaliatory capability, this modest beginning opens the door for reciprocity by the other party. Should the enemy respond with hostility, one reciprocates in kind. But so, too, with any conciliatory response.

In laboratory experiments, small conciliatory gestures—a smile, a touch, a word of apology—have allowed both parties to begin edging down the tension ladder to a safer rung where communication and mutual understanding can begin (Lindsfold, 1978; Lindsfold & Han, 1988). In a real-world international conflict, U.S. President John F. Kennedy's gesture of stopping atmospheric nuclear tests began a series of reciprocated conciliatory acts that culminated in the 1963 atmospheric test-ban treaty.

As working toward shared goals reminds us, we are more alike than different. Civilization advances not by conflict and cultural isolation, but by tapping the knowledge, the skills, and the arts that are each culture's legacy to the whole human race. Thanks to cultural sharing, our modern society has been enriched by our cultural mix (Sowell, 1991). We have China to thank for paper and printing and for the magnetic compass that opened the great explorations. We have Egypt to thank for trigonometry. We have the Islamic world and India's Hindus to thank for our Arabic numerals. While celebrating and claiming these diverse cultural legacies, we can also welcome the continuing enrichment of today's cultural diversity. We can view ourselves as instruments in a human orchestra. And we—including you, our worldwide readers—can therefore each affirm our own culture's heritage while building bridges of communication, understanding, and cooperation across our cultural traditions.



Warren Miller The New Yorker Collection/The Cartoon Bank

"To begin with, I would like to express my sincere thanks and deep appreciation for the opportunity to meet with you. While there are still profound differences between us, I think the very fact of my presence here today is a major breakthrough."

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

RP-7 What are some ways to reconcile conflicts and promote peace?

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE ANSWER

RP-7 Peacemakers should encourage equal-status contact, cooperation to achieve *superordinate goals* (shared goals that override differences), understanding through communication, and reciprocated conciliatory gestures (each side gives a little).

GRIT Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension-Reduction—a strategy designed to decrease international tensions.

MODULE
44

REVIEW

Prosocial Relations

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Test yourself by taking a moment to answer each of these Learning Objective Questions (repeated here from within this module). Then check your answers—a click away in the e-book, and in Appendix C of the printed text. Research suggests that trying to answer these questions on your own will improve your long-term retention (McDaniel et al., 2009, 2015).

LOQ 44-1 Why do we befriend or fall in love with some people but not others?

LOQ 44-2 How does romantic love typically change as time passes?

LOQ 44-3 What is *altruism*? When are people most—and least—likely to help?

LOQ 44-4 How do social exchange theory and social norms explain helping behavior?

LOQ 44-5 How do social traps and mirror-image perceptions fuel social conflict?

LOQ 44-6 What can we do to promote peace?

TERMS AND CONCEPTS TO REMEMBER

Test yourself on these terms by trying to compose the definition before checking your answers.

mere exposure effect, p. 511

passionate love, p. 515

companionate love, p. 516

equity, p. 516

self-disclosure, p. 516

altruism, p. 516

bystander effect, p. 518

social exchange theory, p. 521

reciprocity norm, p. 521

social-responsibility norm, p. 521

conflict, p. 521

social trap, p. 521

mirror-image perceptions, p. 522

self-fulfilling prophecy, p. 522

superordinate goals, p. 522

GRIT, p. 525

MASTER THE MATERIAL

Test yourself repeatedly throughout your studies. This will not only help you figure out what you know and don't know; the testing itself will help you learn and remember the information more effectively thanks to the *testing effect*.

1. The more familiar a stimulus becomes, the more we tend to like it. This exemplifies the _____ effect.
2. A happy couple celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary is likely to experience deep _____ love, even though their _____ love has probably decreased over the years.
3. After vigorous exercise, you meet an attractive person, and you are suddenly seized by romantic feelings for that person. This response supports the two-factor theory of emotion, which assumes that emotions, such as passionate love, consist of physical arousal plus
 - a. a reward.
 - b. proximity.
 - c. companionate love.
 - d. our interpretation of that arousal.
4. The bystander effect states that a particular bystander is less likely to give aid if
 - a. the victim is similar to the bystander in appearance.
 - b. no one else is present.
 - c. other people are present.
 - d. the incident occurs in a deserted or rural area.
5. Our enemies often have many of the same negative impressions of us as we have of them. This exemplifies the concept of _____-_____ perceptions.
6. One way of resolving conflicts and fostering cooperation is by giving rival groups shared goals that help them override their differences. These are called _____ goals.

Answers are a click away in the e-book, and available in Appendix D, at the back of the printed text.

Use  **LearningCurve** to create your personalized study plan, which will direct you to the Macmillan resources that will help you most.