

# SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Eighth Edition

Michael A. Hogg  
Graham M. Vaughan



# **SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

Eighth Edition

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**Michael A. Hogg**

Claremont Graduate University

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University of Auckland



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# Preface

This is the eighth edition of our *Social Psychology*. The original idea to write a European social psychology text was born in Oxford in 1992 from meetings with Farrell Burnett, who was then psychology editor at Harvester Wheatsheaf. We decided to write the text because we felt there was a need for a comprehensive social psychology text written specifically for university students in Britain and continental Europe. Such a text, we felt, should approach social psychology from a European rather than American perspective not only in terms of topics, orientation and research interests but also in terms of the style and level of presentation of social psychology and the cultural context of the readership. However, a European text cannot ignore or gloss over American social psychology – so, unlike other European texts, we located mainstream American social psychology within the framework of the text, covered it in detail and integrated it fully with European work. We intended this to be a self-contained and comprehensive coverage of social psychology. You would not need to switch between American and European texts to understand social psychology as a truly international scientific enterprise – an enterprise in which European research now has a significant and well-established profile. The first edition was published in 1995 and was widely adopted throughout Europe.

Subsequent editions followed fast upon earlier editions – no sooner did one edition appear than, it seemed, we were hard at work preparing the next. The second edition was written while Graham Vaughan was a visiting Fellow of Churchill College at Cambridge University and Michael Hogg was a visiting Professor at Princeton University. It was published early in 1998 and launched at the 1998 conference of the Social Section of the British Psychological Society at the University of Kent. It was a relatively modest revision aimed primarily at improving layout and presentation, though the text and coverage were updated, and we raised the profile of some applied topics in social psychology.

The third edition was published in 2002. It was a major revision to accommodate significant changes in the field since the first edition. The structure and approach remained the same, but some chapters were dropped, some completely reworked, others amalgamated and some entirely new chapters written. In addition, the text was updated and the layout and presentation significantly improved. Such a large revision involved substantial input from our Advisory Editorial Board and from lecturers around Britain and Europe, and many meetings in different places (Bristol, Glasgow and Thornbury) with Pearson Education, our publishers.

The fourth edition was published in 2005. We expanded our Editorial Board to include seventeen leading European social psychologists to represent different aspects of social psychology, different levels of seniority and different nations across Europe. However, the key change was that the book was now in glorious full-colour. We also took a rather courageous step – the sleeve just showed empty chairs, no people at all; quite a departure for a social psychology text. Auckland harbour was the venue for initial planning of the fourth edition, with a series of long meetings in London, capped by a productive few days at the Grand Hotel in Brighton.

The fifth edition, published in 2008, was a very substantial revision with many chapters entirely or almost entirely rewritten. We liked the ‘empty chairs’ sleeve for the fourth edition so

decided to continue that theme but be a bit more jolly – so the sleeve showed those Victorian-style bathing booths that used to be common at British and French beach resorts. Initial planning took place at our favourite writing retreat (Noosa, just north of Brisbane in Australia) and then a string of long meetings with the Pearson team in Bristol, London, Birmingham and even Heathrow. We returned to Noosa to finalise plans and the actual writing was done in Auckland and Los Angeles.

The sixth edition, published in 2011, was again a relatively significant revision in which we thoroughly updated material to reflect changes in the field and renamed and repositioned some chapters. We also recruited members of Mike's Social Identity Lab at Claremont to meticulously check the references. The text was planned and set in motion over a week in November 2007 when Graham and Mike holed up in Mike's new home in the Santa Monica Mountains just outside Los Angeles. There were many subsequent meetings with the Pearson team in London, of which two are particularly memorable; one where we adjourned to a nearby lunch venue and did not resurface until late afternoon, and another where we ventured to the 'posh' Carluccio's in Covent Garden and our editor, Janey Webb, almost missed her flight to Stockholm. The edition was written in late 2009 and early 2010 while Mike was in Los Angeles and Graham was in Auckland.

The seventh edition, published in 2014, was intended to be a light revision but we got carried away – we ended up including over 250 new references and expanding our Advisory Editorial Board to twenty-two scholars from across Europe. The initial planning meeting with the Pearson crew (Janey Webb and Tim Parker) was in London in February 2010 during Britain's big freeze. Mike then visited Graham in Auckland in December 2011 to finalize planning and start writing – it rained torrentially and blew a gale continuously. A year later, in December 2012, Mike had a final meeting with Neha and Janey from Pearson in a pub outside Bristol – and yes, once again it was freezing cold. So, we like to consider the seventh edition as a victory over climate change. The actual writing was done in the second half of 2012 and start of 2013 while Mike was in Los Angeles and San Francisco and Graham was in Auckland.

## The eighth edition

In preparing this eighth edition we focused on significantly updating material to reflect important advances in the field (there are over 250 new references) but have not made dramatic changes. We have retained the structure and approach of previous editions, and the text is framed by the same scientific and educational philosophy as before. We have improved the narrative throughout; significantly rewritten large portions of text for greater accessibility; updated real-world examples and provided new figures, boxes and photos. Specific more significant changes include:

- Updated and expanded coverage of affect and emotion, including a new section on emotion regulation.
- Updated and expanded coverage of rumour, and new inclusion of gossip.
- Expanded discussion of societal attributions.
- More on self-awareness and identity fusion.
- The attitude-behaviour section is heavily revised and restructured, and has additional material on health and on the IAT.
- A whole new section on morality has been introduced.
- Coverage of group deviants and marginal members has been rewritten and updated.
- Discussion of trust and leadership has been updated and extended.
- Discussion of ambivalent sexism and of discrimination against sexual minorities has been updated and expanded

- Significant update and extension of radicalization, social dilemmas, intergroup emotions, intergroup anxiety and intergroup contact.
- The aggression and prosocial chapters have been heavily updated and revised for accessibility – with new material on volunteering and martyrdom.
- Discussion of relationships has been updated and expanded with new material, especial on attachment styles and intimate relationships on the web.
- There is expanded and new material on the linguistic category model, on deception, and on CMC and social media-based communication.
- There is new material on face-saving, the tightness–looseness of cultures, and a broadened discussion of multicultural societies and how to manage them.

To prepare this eighth edition we obtained feedback on the seventh edition from our Editorial Board, and as many of our colleagues and postgraduate and undergraduate students as we could find who had used the text as teacher, tutor or student. We are enormously grateful for this invaluable feedback – we see our text as a genuine partnership between us as authors and all those who use the text in different capacities. We are also indebted to our wonderful publishing team at Pearson in scenic Harlow – Neha Sharma and Natalia Jaszczuk oversaw the early planning stages and then our long-time editor Janey Webb returned to see it all through. Our post-submission team was Melanie Carter and Emma Marchant, who oversaw the final stages of production of the text. We were sustained and energised by their enthusiasm, good humour, encouragement and wisdom, and were kept on our toes by their timeline prompts, excellent editing and fearsome perceptiveness and efficiency.

To start the process, Mike met with Neha in London in December 2013 – off Trafalgar Square, just around the corner from St. Martin-in-the-Fields where Nelson Mandela’s commemoration service was being held at the time. There was another London meeting, with Natalia, in 2014, and then Natalia and Mike met again in Birmingham in March 2016, at Aston University and Browns in the Bull Ring. The final publisher meeting was particularly memorable; it was with Janey in a pub in Mike’s home village of Westbury-on-Trym in Bristol on June 23, 2016 – the day of the Brexit vote. The writing itself was done during 2016 while Graham was in Auckland and Mike bounced between his homes in Los Angeles and San Francisco and spent time in Rome as a visiting research professor at Sapienza Università di Roma.

## How to use this text

This eighth edition is an up-to-date and comprehensive coverage of social psychology as an international scientific enterprise, written from the perspective of European social psychology and located in the cultural and educational context of people living in Britain and Europe. However, in this world of cheap travel and the Internet, we are all heavily exposed to different cultural, scientific and educational milieu – the text will not seem out of place in social psychology courses in other parts of the world.

The text has a range of pedagogical features to facilitate independent study. At the end of Chapter 1 we outline important primary and review sources for finding out more about specific topics in social psychology. Within chapters some material appears in boxes – typically six or more boxes per chapter. We have designed these boxes to reflect the fact that social psychology is a dialectical basic and applied science in which the development and empirical testing of theory informs our understanding of the world around us and our own everyday life, which in turn feeds back into theory development. To do this we have labelled boxed material as: (a) *Research classic* (focuses on and describes a classic, highly cited piece of conceptual or empirical research); (b) *Research highlight* (focuses on and highlights a specific relevant piece of conceptual or empirical research); (c) *Our world* (focusses your attention on the outside world of social issues and sociopolitical and historical events – showing or hinting

at how social psychology can help understand it; and (d) *Your life* (focuses your attention on phenomena in your own everyday life – showing or hinting at how social psychology can help understand them).

Each chapter opens with a table of contents and some questions inviting you to consider your own views on topics within the chapter before you learn what the science has to say, and closes with a detailed summary of the chapter contents, a list of key terms, some guided questions, and a fully annotated list of further reading. At the end of each chapter, we also have a section called ‘Literature, film and TV’. Social psychology is part of everyday life – so, not surprisingly, social psychological themes are often creatively and vividly explored in popular media. The ‘Literature, film and TV’ section directs you to some classic and contemporary works we feel have a particular relevance to social psychological themes.

As with the earlier editions, the text has a logical structure, with earlier chapters flowing into later ones. However, it is not essential to read the text from beginning to end. The chapters are carefully cross-referenced so that chapters or groups of chapters can be read independently in almost any order.

However, some chapters are better read in sequence. For example, it is better to read Chapter 5 before tackling Chapter 6 (both deal with aspects of attitudes), Chapter 8 before Chapter 9 (both deal with group processes), and Chapter 10 before Chapter 11 (both deal with intergroup behaviour). It may also be interesting to reflect back on Chapter 4 (the self) when you read Chapter 16 (culture). Chapter 1 describes the structure of the text, why we decided to write it and how it should be read – it is worthwhile reading the last section of Chapter 1 before starting later chapters. Chapter 1 also defines social psychology, its aims, its methods and its history. Some of this material might benefit from being reread after you have studied the other chapters and have become familiar with some of the theories, topics and issues of social psychology.

The primary target of our text is the student, although we intend it to be of use also to teachers and researchers of social psychology. We will be grateful to any among you who might take the time to share your reactions with us.

Michael Hogg, Los Angeles  
Graham Vaughan, Auckland  
February 2017

## Social Psychology, Eighth Edition

### Supporting resources

- Complete, downloadable Instructor’s Manual, which presents chapter summaries, key terms and teaching ideas including essay questions, discussion topics, class exercises and a list of films that illustrate social psychological concepts.
- Downloadable PowerPoint slides with key figures from the text.

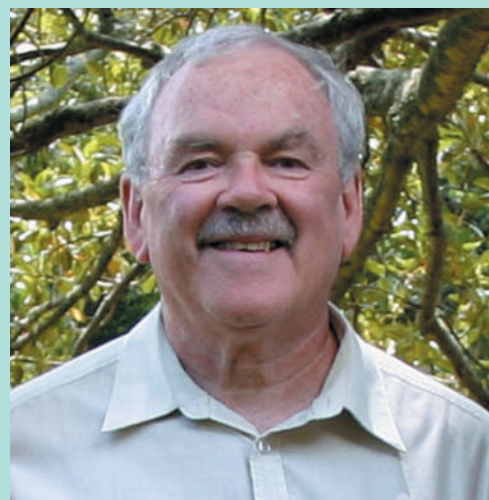
These lecturer resources can be downloaded from the lecturer web site at [www.pearsoned.co.uk/hogg](http://www.pearsoned.co.uk/hogg) by clicking on the Instructor Resource link next to the cover. All instructor-specific content is password protected.

# About the authors

**Michael Hogg** was educated at Bristol Grammar School and Birmingham University and received his PhD from Bristol University. Currently Professor of Social Psychology and Chair of the Social Psychology Program at Claremont Graduate University in Los Angeles, and an Honorary Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Kent, he is also a former President of the Society of Experimental Social Psychology. He has taught at Bristol University, Princeton University, the University of Melbourne and the University of Queensland, and is a Fellow of numerous scholarly societies including the Association for Psychological Science, the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. He was the 2010 recipient of the Carol and Ed Diener Award in Social Psychology from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology. His research interests are group behaviour, intergroup relations, and self and social identity; with a specific interest in uncertainty and extremism, and processes of influence and leadership. In addition to publishing about 350 scientific books, chapters and articles, he is foundation editor with Dominic Abrams of the journal *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, an associate editor of *The Leadership Quarterly*, and a past associate editor of the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. Two of his books are citation classics, *Rediscovering the Social Group* (1987) with John Turner and others, and *Social Identifications* (1988) with Dominic Abrams. Recent books include the *Encyclopedia of Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* (2010) with John Levine, and *Extremism and the Psychology of Uncertainty* (2012) with Danielle Blaylock.



**Graham Vaughan** has been a Fulbright Fellow and Visiting Professor at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, a Visiting Lecturer and a Ford Foundation Fellow at the University of Bristol, a Visiting Professor at Princeton University, a Visiting Directeur d'Etudes at the *Maison des Science de l'Homme*, Paris, a Visiting Senior Fellow at the National University of Singapore, a Visiting Fellow at the University of Queensland and a Visiting Fellow at Churchill College, Cambridge. As Professor of Psychology at the University of Auckland, he served twelve years as Head of Department. He is an Honorary Fellow and past President of the New Zealand Psychological Society, and a past President of the Society of Australasian Social Psychologists. Graham Vaughan's primary areas of interest in social psychology are attitudes and attitude development, group processes and intergroup relations, ethnic relations and identity, culture and the history of social psychology. He has published widely on these topics. His 1972 book, *Racial Issues in New Zealand*, was the first to deal with ethnic relations in that country. Recent books include *Essentials of Social Psychology* (2010) with Michael Hogg.



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# Guided tour

Each chapter opens with a short guide to what will be covered.

## Chapter 3 Attribution and social explanation

### Chapter contents

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### What do you think?

- Helen is angry with her husband Lewis who avoids approaching his boss for a pay rise. Lewis argues that the timing is not right. Helen says he simply fails to look up to people. How are these attributions different in kind?
- You read a newspaper report about a rape case in which the defence lawyer pointed out that the young woman who was the victim was dressed provocatively. What attributional error is involved here?
- The job market was tight and Rajna began to worry that she might be made redundant. Then she heard a rumour that the worst had come – several staff were about to be fired. She was itching to pass this on to the next colleague that she saw. Why would Rajna want to spread the rumour further?

### Box 4.2 Research classic

#### Self-discrepancy theory: the impact of using self-guides

Tory Higgins and his colleagues measured self-discrepancy by comparing the differences between attributes of the actual self with those of either the ideal self or those of the ought self (Higgins, Bond, Klein, & Strauman, 1986).

They administered questionnaires to identify students who were either high in both kinds of discrepancies or else low in both. Several weeks later, the same students participated in an experiment in which emotions that reflected dejection or agitation were measured, both before and

after a priming procedure. For their 'ideal' prime they were asked to discuss their own and their parents' hopes for them; for their 'ought' prime they discussed their own and their parents' beliefs about their duties and obligations.

It was hypothesised that an actual-ideal discrepancy would lead to feeling dejected (but not agitated), whereas an actual-ought discrepancy would lead to feeling agitated (but not dejected). These predictions were supported, as the results in Figure 4.2 show.

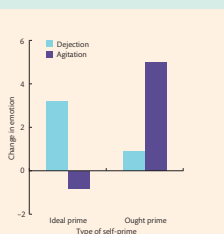


Figure 4.2 Priming the ideal self can lead to dejection, whereas priming the 'ought' self can lead to agitation

People with a high actual-ideal and actual-ought self-discrepancy experienced:

- an increase in dejection but not agitation emotions after being primed to focus on their ideal self and
- an increase in agitation but not dejection emotions after being primed to focus on their 'ought' self.

Source: Based on Higgins, Bond, Klein and Strauman (1986), Experiment 2.

Lockwood and her associates found that people who are promotion-focused look for inspiration to positive role models who emphasise strategies for achieving success (Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002). Such people also show elevated motivation and persistence on tasks that are framed in terms of gains and non-gains (Shah, Higgins, & Friedman, 1996). People who are prevention-focused behave quite differently – they recall information relating to the avoidance of failure by others, are most inspired by negative role models who highlight strategies for avoiding failure, and exhibit motivation and persistence on tasks that are framed in terms of losses and non-losses.

Regulatory focus theory has also been explored in the context of intergroup relations and how people feel about and behave towards their ingroup and relevant outgroups (e.g. Jonas, Sassenberg, & Scheepers, 2010; see Chapter 11). For example, studies have shown that in intergroup contexts, a measured or manipulated promotion focus strengthens positive emotion-related bias and behavioural tendencies towards the ingroup, while a prevention focus strengthens more negative emotion-related bias and behavioural tendencies against the outgroup (Shah, Braze, & Higgins, 2004).

Research classic boxes summarise classic research studies, highlighting their continuing relevance and discussing new developments.

**The sleeper effect**

A persuasive message should have its greatest impact just after it is presented. It is counter-intuitive to think that its power might increase with the passage of time, and yet this is precisely what the **sleeper effect** suggests (Kelman & Hovland, 1953). An early finding in the Yale attitude change programme (Hovland, Lumsdaine, & Sheffield, 1949) was that films promoting more positive attitudes among American soldiers towards their British allies in the Second World War became more effective well after they had been viewed. Kelman and Hovland reasoned that we initially associate the conclusion of a message with: (1) the quality of its argument, and (2) other cues, such as the credibility of its source. Of these, memory of the argument becomes more enduring as time goes by. Take the part played by source credibility as it interacts with our views on how much sleep we need each night, discussed earlier (see Figure 6.2). Were we to take a measure of the impact of an extreme message about a month later, the sleeper effect predicts that the less credible source would probably be as persuasive as the more credible source: the message survives, but the source does not. Although the reliability of the sleeper effect has long been questioned (e.g. Crano & Prislun, 2006; Gillig & Greenwald, 1974), the effect has been replicated under quite strict conditions (e.g. Pratkanis, Greenwald, Leippe, & Baumgardner, 1988), and a recent meta-analysis by Kumkale and Albarracín (2004) identifies the conditions under which the effect is most robust. See Box 6.2 for an experimental example that applies to the world of politics. The sleeper effect has some resemblance to the phenomena of latent influence and conversion in the minority influence literature (Moscovici, 1980; for a review see Martin & Hewstone, 2008).

**Sleeper effect**  
The impact of a persuasive message can increase over time when a discounting cue, such as an invalid source, can no longer be recalled.

◀ **Our world** boxes highlight examples of social psychology in action, putting social psychological principles into familiar, our world contexts. Clear and concise definitions of **key terms** can be found in the margins and the glossary at the end of the text.

**Box 6.2 Our world**  
Delayed impact of a negative political attack

**The curious case of the exploding lie detector**  
A context ripe for the operation of the sleeper effect is a political campaign. Parties often resort to messages that attack an opponent. These are built around specific, easily remembered content, such as Joe Black 'has been caught lying', 'is corrupt' or 'yet again has been cheating on his wife'. Campaigns of this nature are often disliked by the public and can alienate potential voters. The real-world response to an attack is to mount a defence. A direct, defensive message – typical in a political context – becomes the 'discounting cue' found in many laboratory sleeper-effect studies. A discounting cue is intended to undermine either the credibility of the source or the content of the attack message, or both, and to suppress the impact of the attack. Ruth Ann Larisay and Spencer Tinkham (1999) tested for a sleeper effect among registered voters in the American state of Georgia. A political advertisement was professionally produced in a real-world political format, including subtle humour. It featured two fictitious candidates running for the US Congress in Kentucky, with 'Pat Michael' as the sponsor of the advertisement and 'John Boorman' as his opponent. A voice-over lists Boorman's claims about his military record in Vietnam, his tax policy and his heartfelt concern

for Kentuckians. With each claim, a lie detector that is visually central in the sequences shows wild swings on a graph – lie, lie, lie! At the mention of Boorman's care for Kentucky, the detector finally explodes. Following the attack advertisement were Boorman's direct and defensive advertisements, arriving almost immediately or else after a delay. These were designed to suppress the impact of the original message by refuting Michael's attacks and discounting his credibility. Michael's credibility was designed to be at its lowest when the defensive messages were immediate. To reduce confusion with real-world candidates in their own state, the voters in Georgia were asked to assume that they were voting in Kentucky. During a telephone callback made one week after the attack advertisement and repeated six weeks later, they were asked which candidate they would endorse. When Michael's credibility was lowest, only 19.6 per cent of participants were prepared to vote for him. After a delay of six weeks, however, support for Michael had risen to an astonishing 50 per cent. Behind the sleeper effect – the exploding lie detector had done its job: 'negative advertising is not only damaging, it can wreak havoc that lasts until election day' (Larisay & Tinkham, 1999, p. 26).

Source: Larisay and Tinkham (1999).

▶ **Research highlight** sections emphasise the wider relevance of social psychology and give detailed examples of contemporary research and practice.

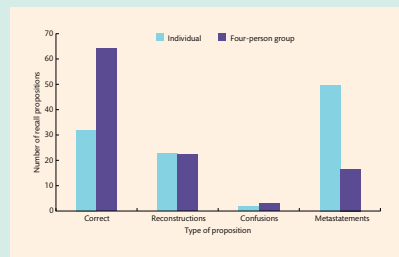
**Box 9.4 Research highlight**  
Can two heads remember better than one?

There are differences between individual and group remembering. Noel Clark, Geoffrey Stephenson and their associates conducted a series of experiments on group remembering (e.g. Clark, Stephenson, & Rutter, 1986; Stephenson, Abrams, Wagner, & Wade, 1986; Stephenson, Clark, & Wade, 1986). Clark and Stephenson (1989, 1995) give an overview of this research. Generally, students or police officers individually or collectively (in four-person groups) recalled information from a five-minute police interrogation of a woman who had allegedly been raped. The interrogation was real, or it was staged and presented as an audio recording or a visual transcript. The participants had to recall freely the interrogation and answer specific factual questions (cued recall). The way in which they recalled the information was analysed for content to investigate:

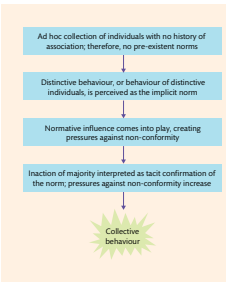
- the amount of correct information recalled;
- the number of reconstructive errors made – that is, inclusion of material that was consistent with but did not appear in the original stimulus;
- the number of confusional errors made – that is, inclusion of material that was inconsistent with the original stimulus;
- the number of metastatements made – that is, inclusion of information that attributed motives to characters or went beyond the original stimulus in other ways.

Figure 9.6 (adapted from Clark & Stephenson, 1989) shows that groups recalled significantly more correct information and made fewer metastatements than individuals, but they did not differ in the number of reconstructions or confusional errors.

Source: Based on Clark and Stephenson (1989).



**Figure 9.6 Differences between individual and collective remembering**  
There are qualitative and quantitative differences between individual and collective remembering. Isolated individuals or four-person groups recalled police testimony from the interrogation of an alleged rape victim. In comparison to individuals, groups recalled more information that was correct and made fewer metastatements (statements making motivational inferences and going beyond the information in other related ways). Source: Based on data from Clark and Stephenson (1989).



**Figure 11.15 Emergent norm theory**  
In initially normless crowds, distinctive behaviours are the basis for a relevant norm to emerge to regulate behaviour. Source: Based on Turner and Killian (1957).

**Social identity theory**

An important aspect of crowd behaviour that is usually ignored is that it is actually an intergroup phenomenon (Reicher & Potter, 1985). Many crowd confrontations are a confrontation between, for instance, police and rioters or rival gangs or team supporters. Even where there is no direct confrontation, there is symbolic confrontation in that the crowd event symbolises a confrontation between, for instance, the crowd (or the wider group it represents) and the state. For example, Cliff Stott and his colleagues' analysis of riots at football matches shows clearly how these events are intergroup confrontations between supporters and police, and that how the rioting supporters behave is significantly impacted by how the police behave.



**Emergent norm theory**  
In urban disorder a response to primitive aggressive instincts – or it is an example of normatively regulated goal-oriented action?

◀ Each chapter is richly illustrated with diagrams and photographs.

Summary

- Social psychology is the scientific investigation of how the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others. Although social psychology can also be described in terms of what it studies, it is more useful to describe it as a way of looking at human behaviour.
- Social psychology is a science. It employs the scientific method to study social behaviour. Although this involves a variety of empirical methods to collect data to test hypotheses and construct theories, experimentation is usually the preferred method as it is the best way to learn what causes what. Nevertheless, methods are matched to research questions, and methodological pluralism is highly valued.
- Social psychological data are usually transformed into numbers, which are analysed by statistical procedures. Statistics allow conclusions to be drawn about whether a research observation is a true effect or some chance event.
- Social psychology is enlivened by debate over the ethics of research methods, the appropriate research methods for an understanding of social behaviour, the validity and power of social psychology theories, and the type of theories that are properly social psychological.
- Although having origins in nineteenth-century German folk psychology and French crowd psychology, modern social psychology really began in the United States in the 1920s with the adoption of the experimental method. In the 1940s, Kurt Lewin provided significant impetus to social psychology and the discipline has grown exponentially ever since.
- Despite its European origins, social psychology was quickly dominated by the United States – a process accelerated by the rise of fascism in Europe during the 1930s. However, since the late 1960s, there has been a rapid and sustained renaissance of European social psychology, driven by distinctively European intellectual and sociocultural priorities to develop a more social social psychology with a greater emphasis on collective phenomena and group levels of analysis. European social psychology is now well established as an equal but complementary partner to the United States in social psychological research.

Key terms

Archival research	Evolutionary psychology	Neo-behaviourism
Behaviour	Evolutionary social psychology	Operational definition
Behaviourism	Experimental method	Positivism
Case study	Experimental realism	Radical behaviourist
Cognitive theories	Experimenter effects	Reductionism
Confirmation bias	External validity	Science
Confounding	fMRI	Social neuroscience
Correlation	Hypotheses	Social psychology
Data	Independent variables	Statistical significance
Demand characteristics	Internal validity	Statistics
Dependent variables	Laboratory	Subject effects
Discourse	Level of explanation	t test
Discourse analysis	Metatheory	Theory
Double-blind	Mundane realism	Völkpsychologie

At the end of each chapter the **Summary** pulls the key points together to help you consolidate your knowledge and understanding.

Examples of **literature, film and TV** offer the chance to explore key social psychological concepts through popular culture and media.

Literature, film and TV

- The Beach**  
The 1997 Alex Garland novel (also the 2000 eponymous film starring Leonardo DiCaprio). Backpackers in Thailand drop out to join a group that has set up its own normatively regimented society on a remote island. They are expected to submerge their own identity in favour of the group's identity. This dramatic book engages with many social psychological themes having to do with self and identity, close relationships, norms and conformity, influence and leadership, and conflict and cooperation. The book could be characterised as *Apocalypse Now* (Francis Ford Coppola's legendary 1979 war movie) meets *Lord of the Flies* (William Golding's classic 1954 novel about a group of boys marooned on an island).
- War and Peace**  
Leo Tolstoy's (1869) masterpiece on the impact of society and social history on people's lives. It does a wonderful job of showing how macro- and micro-levels of analysis influence one another, but cannot be resolved into one another. It is a wonderful literary work of social psychology – how people's day-to-day lives are located at the intersection of powerful interpersonal, group and intergroup processes. Other classic novels of Leo Tolstoy, Emile Zola, Charles Dickens and George Eliot accomplish much the same social psychological analysis.
- Les Misérables**  
Victor Hugo's (1862) magnum opus and classic literary masterpiece of the nineteenth century. It explores everyday life and relationships against the background of conventions, institutions and historical events in Paris over a 17-year period (1815–1832). Those of you who enjoy musicals will know that it has been adapted into an eponymous 2012 musical film directed by Tom Hooper and starring Hugh Jackman (as the central character, Jean Valjean), Russell Crowe, Anne Hathaway and Amanda Seyfried.
- Gulliver's Travels**  
Jonathan Swift's 1726 satirical commentary on the nature of human beings. This book is relevant to virtually all the themes in our text. The section on Big-Endians and Little-Endians is particularly relevant to Chapter 11 on intergroup behaviour. Swift provides a hilarious and incredibly full and insightful description of a society that is split on the basis of whether people open their boiled eggs at the big or the little end – relevant to the minimal group studies in Chapter 11 but also to the general theme of how humans can read so much into subtle features of their environment.

psychopathic adolescent who murders his father and sister and then commits a cold-blooded massacre at his school – using a bow and arrow. This is a harrowing and disturbing movie, and of course relevant to the seemingly endless litany of school and university campus massacres in the USA – for example the 2012 Sandy Hook elementary school massacre in the US of 20 six-year-olds and 6 adults, and the 2007 Virginia Tech University massacre of 32 people. The film addresses the interplay of inherited behaviour, mental health and family relationships in the emergence of cold-blooded aggression expressed through school killings most often by adolescents and young adults.

Guided questions

- 1 What is the *frustration-aggression hypothesis*? Does it help explain the origins of aggression?
- 2 Can children really learn quite quickly how to be aggressive?
- 3 Does the incidence of aggression vary in relation to gender or culture?
- 4 Does viewing television violence make people more aggressive?
- 5 In what ways can the tendency to aggress be reduced?

Learn more

Anderson, C. A., & Huesmann, L. R. (2007). Human aggression: A social-cognitive view. In M. A. Hogg & J. Cooper (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of social psychology: Concise student edition* (pp. 259–287). London: SAGE. Comprehensive and accessible overview of research on human aggression, by two of the world's leading aggression researchers.

Baron, R. A., & Richardson, D. R. (1994). *Human aggression* (2nd ed.). New York: Plenum. A heavily cited source for research on human aggression.

Berkowitz, L. (1993). *Aggression: Its causes, consequences and control*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press. Another work by an authority in the field with a good coverage of the topic.

Burford, B. (1993). *Among the thugs*. New York: Vintage. An insider's perspective on the world of English football 'hooligans' in British and other European settings. The work is compelling – one reviewer described it as 'A Clockwork Orange comes to life'.

Bushman, B. J., & Huesmann, L. R. (2010). Aggression. In S. T. Fiske, D. T. Gilbert, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (5th ed., Vol. 2, pp. 833–863). New York: Wiley. Currently the most up-to-date, detailed and comprehensive coverage of theory and research on all aspects of and perspectives on human aggression.

Campbell, A. (1993). *Men, women, and aggression*. New York: HarperCollins. A discussion of sex, gender and aggression.

Glick, R. A., & Roose, S. P. (Eds.) (1993). *Rage, power, and aggression*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. A collection of chapters reviewing research, theory and clinical perspectives on the origins, nature and development of aggression.

Goldstein, A. P. (1994). *The ecology of aggression*. New York: Plenum. As the title suggests, the focus is on how aggression can be influenced by ecological factors, which can be both physical and social.

Krahe, B. (2013). *The social psychology of aggression* (2nd ed.). New York: Psychology Press. Up-to-date and authoritative text on the social psychology of aggression by one of the world's leading aggression researchers.

Guided questions

- 1 What do social psychologists study? Can you give some examples of interdisciplinary research?
- 2 Sometimes experiments are used in social psychological research. Why?
- 3 What do you understand by levels of explanation in social psychology? What is meant by reductionism?
- 4 If you or your lecturer were to undertake research in social psychology, you would need to gain ethical approval. Why is this, and what criteria would need to be met?
- 5 If the shock level administered in Milgram's obedience study had been 150 volts instead of the maximum 450 volts, would this have made the experiment more ethical?

Guided questions present typical essay-style questions. **Learn more** sections at the end of chapters provide annotated further reading lists, guiding you towards the right resources to help you deepen your understanding and prepare for essays and assignments.

# Chapter 1

## Introducing social psychology



# Chapter contents

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## What do you think?

- 1 Would it ever be ethical to conceal the true purpose and nature of a psychology experiment from someone volunteering to take part?
- 2 How complete an explanation of social behaviour do you think evolution or neuroscience provides?
- 3 Social psychology texts often convey the impression that social psychology is primarily an American discipline. Do you have a view on this?

## What is social psychology?

### Social psychology

Scientific investigation of how people's thoughts, feelings and behaviour are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others.

### Behaviour

What people actually do that can be objectively measured.

**Social psychology** is 'the scientific investigation of how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others' (G. W. Allport, 1954a, p. 5). What does this mean? What do social psychologists actually do, how do they do it and what do they study?

Social psychologists are interested in explaining *human* behaviour and generally do not study animals. Animal research sometimes identifies processes that generalise to people (e.g. social facilitation – see Chapter 8), and certain principles of social behaviour may be general enough to apply to humans and, for instance, other primates (e.g. Hinde, 1982). But, as a rule, social psychologists believe that the study of animals does not take us very far in explaining human social behaviour, unless we are interested in evolutionary origins (e.g. Neuberg, Kenrick, & Schaller, 2010; Schaller, Simpson, & Kenrick, 2006).

Social psychologists study **behaviour** because behaviour can be observed and measured. Behaviour refers not only to obvious motor activities (such as running, kissing and driving) but also to more subtle actions such as a raised eyebrow, a quizzical smile or how we dress, and, critically important in human behaviour, what we say and what we write. In this sense, behaviour is publicly verifiable. However, behaviour serves a communicative function. What a behaviour means depends on the motives, goals, perspective and cultural background of the actor and the observer (see Chapter 15).

Social psychologists are interested not only in behaviour, but also in feelings, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, intentions and goals. These are not directly observable but can, with varying degrees of confidence, be inferred from behaviour and may influence or even determine behaviour. The relationship between these unobservable processes and overt behaviour is in itself a focus of research; for example, in research on attitude–behaviour correspondence (see Chapter 5) and research on prejudice and discrimination (see Chapter 10). Unobservable processes are also the psychological dimension of behaviour, as they occur within the human brain. However, social psychologists almost always go one step beyond relating social behaviour to underlying psychological processes – they almost always map psychological aspects of behaviour onto fundamental cognitive processes and structures in the human mind and sometimes to neuro-chemical processes in the brain (see Chapter 2).

What makes social psychology *social* is that it deals with how people are affected by other people who are physically present (e.g. an audience – see Chapter 8) or who are imagined to be present (e.g. anticipating performing in front of an audience), or even whose presence is implied. This last influence is more complex and addresses the fundamentally social nature of our experiences as humans. For instance, we tend to think with words; words derive from language and communication; and language and communication would not exist without social interaction (see Chapter 15). Thought, which is an internalised and private activity that can occur when we are alone, is thus clearly based on implied presence. As another example of implied presence, consider that most of us do not litter, even if no one is watching and even if there is no possibility of ever being caught. This happens because people, as members of a society, have constructed and internalised a social convention or norm that proscribes littering. Such a norm implies the presence of other people and influences behaviour even in their absence (see Chapters 7 and 8).

Social psychology is a **science** because it uses the scientific method to construct and test theories. Just as physics has concepts such as electrons, quarks and spin to explain physical phenomena, social psychology has concepts such as dissonance, attitude, categorization and identity to explain social psychological phenomena. The scientific method dictates that no **theory** is 'true' simply because it is logical and seems to make sense. On the contrary, the validity of a theory is based on its correspondence with fact. Social psychologists construct theories from **data** and/or previous theories and then conduct empirical research, in which data are collected to test the theory (see 'Scientific method' and Figure 1.2).

### Science

Method for studying nature that involves the collecting of data to test hypotheses.

### Theory

Set of interrelated concepts and principles that explain a phenomenon.

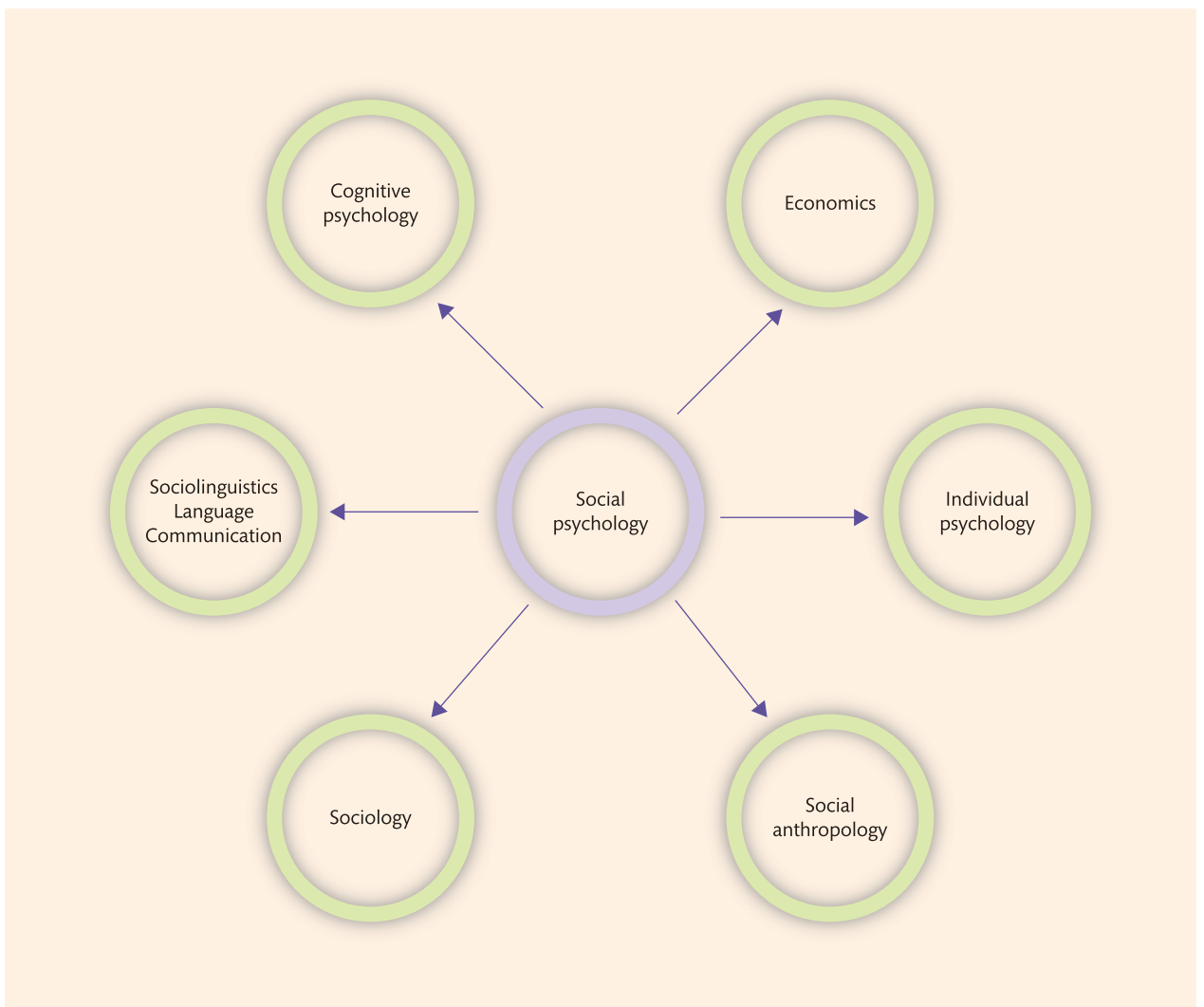
### Data

Publicly verifiable observations.



## Social psychology and its close neighbours

Social psychology sits at the crossroads of a number of related disciplines and subdisciplines (see Figure 1.1). It is a subdiscipline of general psychology and is therefore concerned with explaining human behaviour in terms of processes that occur within the human mind. It differs from individual psychology in that it explains *social* behaviour, as defined in the previous section. For example, a general psychologist might be interested in perceptual processes that are responsible for people overestimating the size of coins. However, a social psychologist might focus on the fact that coins have value (a case of implied presence, because the value of something generally depends on what others think), and that perceived value might influence the judgement of size. A great deal of social psychology is concerned with face-to-face interaction between individuals or among members of groups, whereas general psychology focuses on people's reactions to stimuli that do not have to be social (e.g. shapes, colours, sounds).



**Figure 1.1** Social psychology and some close scientific neighbours

Social psychology draws on a number of subdisciplines in general psychology and has connections with other disciplines, mostly in the social sciences.

The boundary between individual and social psychology is approached from both sides. For instance, having developed a comprehensive and hugely influential theory of the individual human mind, Sigmund Freud set out, in his 1921 essay ‘Group psychology and the analysis of the ego’, to develop a social psychology. Freudian, or psychodynamic, notions have left an enduring mark on social psychology (Billig, 1976), particularly in the explanation of prejudice (see Chapter 10). Since the late 1970s, social psychology has been strongly influenced by cognitive psychology. It has employed its methods (e.g. reaction time) and its concepts (e.g. memory) to explain a wide range of social behaviours. Indeed, this approach to social psychology, called social cognition (see Chapter 2), is the dominant approach in contemporary social psychology (Fiske & Taylor, 2013; Moskowitz, 2005; Ross, Lepper, & Ward, 2010), and it surfaces in almost all areas of the discipline (Devine, Hamilton, & Ostrom, 1994). In recent years, neuroscience (the study of brain biochemistry; Gazzaniga, Ivry, & Mangun, 2013) has also influenced social psychology (Lieberman, 2010; Todorov, Fiske, & Prentice, 2011).

Social psychology also has links with sociology and social anthropology, mostly in studying groups, social and cultural norms, social representations, and language and intergroup behaviour. Sociology focuses on how groups, organisations, social categories and societies are organised, how they function and how they change. Social anthropology is much like sociology but historically has focused on ‘exotic’ societies (i.e. non-industrial tribal societies that exist or have existed largely in developing countries). In both cases, the level of explanation (i.e. the focus of research and theory) is the group as a whole rather than the individuals who make up the group. Sociology and social anthropology are *social sciences* whereas social psychology is a *behavioural science* – a disciplinary difference with profound consequences for how one studies and explains human behaviour.

Some forms of sociology (e.g. microsociology, psychological sociology, sociological psychology) are, however, closely related to social psychology (Delamater & Ward, 2013) – there is, according to Farr (1996), a sociological form of social psychology that has its origins in the *symbolic interactionism* of G. H. Mead (1934) and Herbert Blumer (1969). Social psychology deals with many of the same phenomena as social anthropology but focuses on how individual human interaction and human cognition influence ‘culture’ and, in turn, are influenced or constructed by culture (Heine, 2016; Smith, Bond, & Kağıtçıbaşı, 2006; see Chapter 16). The level of explanation is the individual person within the group.

Just as the boundary between social and individual psychology has been approached from both sides, so has the boundary between social psychology and sociology. From the sociological side, for example, Karl Marx’s theory of cultural history and social change has been extended to incorporate a consideration of the role of individual psychology (Billig, 1976). From the social psychological side, intergroup perspectives on group and individual behaviour draw on sociological variables and concepts (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; see Chapter 11). Contemporary social psychology also abuts sociolinguistics and the study of language and communication (Gasiorek, Giles, Holtgraves, & Robbins, 2012; Holtgraves, 2010, 2014; see Chapter 15) and even literary criticism (Potter, Stringer, & Wetherell, 1984). It also overlaps with economics, where behavioural economists have ‘discovered’ that economic behaviour is not rational, because people are influenced by other people – actual, imagined or implied (Cartwright, 2014). Social psychology also draws on and is influenced by applied research in many areas, such as sports psychology, health psychology and organisational psychology.

Social psychology’s location at the intersection of different disciplines is part of its intellectual and practical appeal. But it is also a source of debate about what constitutes social psychology as a distinct scientific discipline. If we lean too far towards individual cognitive processes, then perhaps we are pursuing individual psychology or cognitive psychology. If we lean too far towards the role of language, then perhaps we are being scholars of language and communication. If we overemphasise the role of social structure in intergroup relations,

then perhaps we are being sociologists. The issue of exactly what constitutes social psychology fuels a vigorous metatheoretical debate (i.e. a debate about what sorts of theory are appropriate for social psychology), which forms the background to the business of social psychology (see the section ‘Theories in social psychology’).

## Topics of social psychology

One way to define social psychology is in terms of what social psychologists study. Because this text is a comprehensive coverage of the main phenomena that social psychologists study, and have studied, social psychology can be defined by the contents of this and other publications that present themselves as social psychology texts. A brief look at the contents of this text will give a flavour of the scope of social psychology. Social psychologists study an enormous range of topics, including conformity, persuasion, power, influence, obedience, prejudice, prejudice reduction, discrimination, stereotyping, bargaining, sexism and racism, small groups, social categories, intergroup relations, crowd behaviour, social conflict and harmony, social change, overcrowding, stress, the physical environment, decision making, the jury, leadership, communication, language, speech, attitudes, impression formation, impression management, self-presentation, identity, the self, culture, emotion, attraction, friendship, the family, love, romance, sex, violence, aggression, altruism and prosocial behaviour (acts that are valued positively by society).

One problem with defining social psychology solely in terms of what it studies is that social psychology is not properly differentiated from other disciplines. For example, ‘intergroup relations’ is a focus not only of social psychologists but also of political scientists and sociologists. The family is studied not only by social psychologists but also by clinical psychologists. What makes social psychology distinct is a combination of *what* it studies, *how* it studies it and what *level of explanation* is sought.



### Conformity

Tats and beards are now *de rigeur*.

# Research methods

## Scientific method

Social psychology employs the scientific method to study social behaviour (Figure 1.2). It is the *method* – not the people who use it, the things they study, the facts they discover or the explanations they propose – that distinguishes science from other approaches to knowledge. In this respect, the main difference between social psychology and, say, physics, chemistry or biology is that the former studies human social behaviour, while the others study non-organic phenomena and chemical and biological processes.

### Hypotheses

Empirically testable predictions about what co-occurs with what, or what causes what.

Science involves the formulation of **hypotheses** (predictions) on the basis of prior knowledge, speculation and casual or systematic observation. Hypotheses are formally stated predictions about what may cause something to occur; they are stated in such a way that they can be tested empirically to see if they are true. For example, we might hypothesise that ballet dancers perform better in front of an audience than when dancing alone. This hypothesis can be tested empirically by measuring and comparing their performance alone and in front of an audience.

Strictly speaking, empirical tests can falsify hypotheses (causing the investigator to reject the hypothesis, revise it or test it in some other way) but not prove them (Popper, 1969). If a hypothesis is supported, confidence in its veracity increases and one may generate more finely tuned hypotheses. For example, if we find that ballet dancers do indeed perform better in front of an audience, we might then hypothesise that this occurs only when the dancers are already well-rehearsed; in science-speak we have hypothesised that the effect of the presence of an audience on performance is conditional on (moderated by) amount of prior rehearsal. An important feature of the scientific method is replication: it guards against the possibility that a finding is tied to the circumstances in which a test was conducted. It also guards against fraud.

The alternative to science is dogma or rationalism. Something is true because one simply believes it to be true, or because an authority (e.g. the ancient philosophers, religious

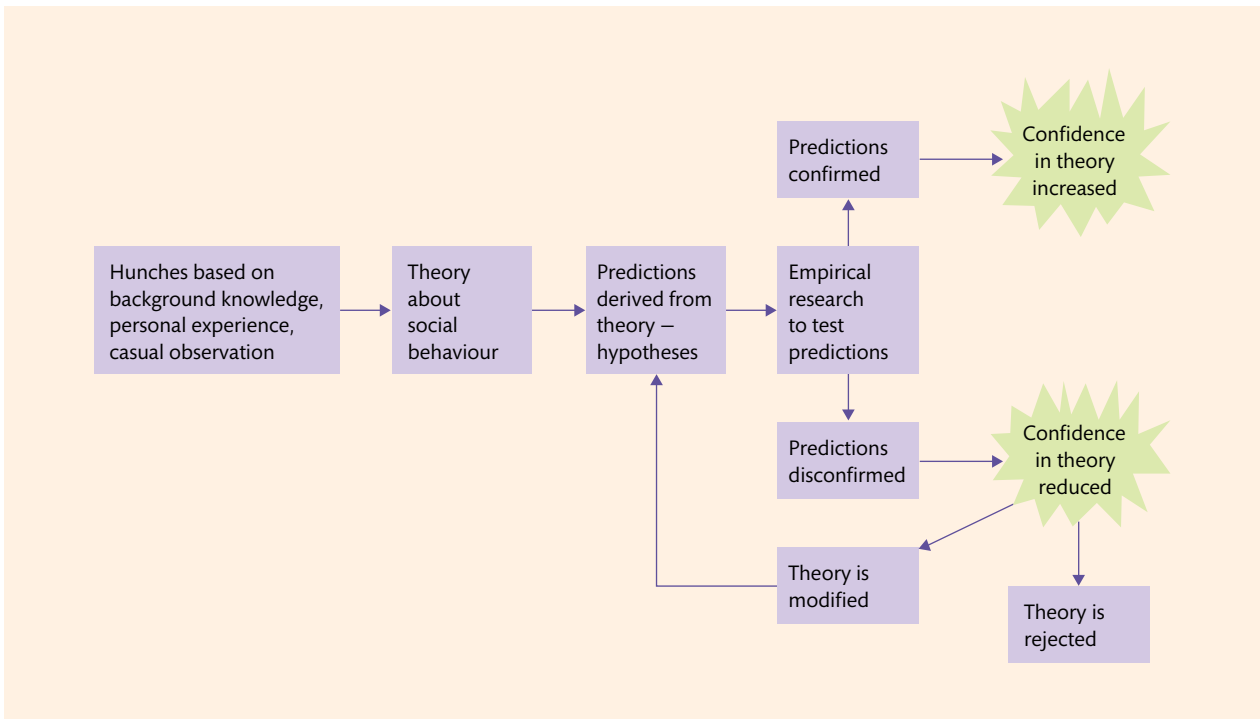


Figure 1.2 A model of the scientific method used by social psychologists

scriptures, charismatic leaders) says it is so, or because one simply believes it to be true. Valid knowledge is acquired by pure reason and grounded in faith and conviction: for example, by learning well, and uncritically accepting and trusting, the pronouncements of authorities. Even though the scientific revolution, championed by such people as Copernicus, Galileo and Newton, occurred in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, dogma and rationalism still exist as influential alternative paths to knowledge.

As a science, social psychology has at its disposal an array of different methods for conducting empirical tests of hypotheses (Crano & Brewer, 2015). There are two broad types of method, *experimental* and *non-experimental*: each has advantages and limitations. The choice of an appropriate method is determined by the nature of the hypothesis under investigation, the resources available for doing the research (e.g. time, money, research participants) and the ethics of the method. Confidence in the validity of a hypothesis is enhanced if the hypothesis has been confirmed a number of times by different research teams using different methods. Methodological pluralism helps to minimise the possibility that the finding is an artefact of a particular method, and replication by different research teams helps to avoid **confirmation bias**, which occurs when researchers become so personally involved in their own theories that they lose objectivity in interpreting data (Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1988; Johnson & Eagly, 1989).

## Experiments

An experiment is a hypothesis test in which something is done to see its effect on something else. For example, if I hypothesise that my car greedily guzzles too much petrol because the tyres are under-inflated, then I can conduct an experiment. I can note petrol consumption over an average week; then I can increase the tyre pressure and again note petrol consumption over an average week. If consumption is reduced, then my hypothesis is supported. Casual experimentation is one of the commonest and most important ways in which people learn about their world. It is an extremely powerful method because it allows us to identify the causes of events and thus gain control over our destiny.

Not surprisingly, systematic experimentation is the most important research method in science. Experimentation involves *intervention* in the form of *manipulation* of one or more **independent variables**, and then measurement of the effect of the treatment (manipulation)

### Confirmation bias

The tendency to seek, interpret and create information that verifies existing explanations for the cause of an event.

### Independent variables

Features of a situation that change of their own accord or can be manipulated by an experimenter to have effects on a dependent variable.



### Brain imaging

Social neuroscientists are using new techniques, such as fMRI, to establish correlates, consequences and causes of social behaviour.