CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

What Is Social Psychology?

What Are Social Psychology’s Big Ideas?

We Construct Our Social Reality

Our Social Intuitions Are Often Powerful but Sometimes Perilous

Social Influences Shape Our Behavior

Personal Attitudes and Dispositions Also Shape Behavior

Social Behavior Is Biologically Rooted

Social Psychology’s Principles Are Applicable in Everyday Life

**How Do Human Values Influence Social Psychology?**

Obvious Ways Values Enter Psychology

Not-So-Obvious Ways Values Enter Psychology

*The Subjective Aspects of Science*

*Psychological Concepts Contain Hidden Values*

I Knew It All Along: Is Social Psychology Simply Common Sense?

Research Methods: How Do We Do Social Psychology?

Forming and Testing Hypotheses

Correlational Research: Detecting Natural Associations

*Correlation and Causation*

*Survey Research*

Experimental Research: Searching for Cause and Effect

*Control: Manipulating Variables*

*Random Assignment: The Great Equalizer*

*The Ethics of Experimentation*

Generalizing from Laboratory to Life

Postscript: Why I Wrote This Book

**LECTURE AND DISCUSSION IDEAS**

* **What Is Social Psychology?**

## 1. Introducing Social Psychology’s Content Through Questions

Chapter 1 begins with three specific questions that illustrate the focus in social psychology on how people *think about, influence, and relate to* one another. When introducing the discipline, you may want to supplement these questions with additional examples from the research literature and current events.

To highlight the concern with social thinking, you may want to cite Rosenthal’s studies on the self-fulfilling prophecy, particularly the effects of teachers’ expectations (Chapter 3), or Rosenhan’s controversial demonstration of the biasing power of diagnostic labels (Chapter 14). You may also want to note some common misconceptions such as those identified by Gilovich in *How We Know What Isn’t So.* Some examples are: the mistaken notion that infertile couples who adopt a child are more likely to conceive than couples who don’t; admission committees’ false assumption that they can make better decisions if they see candidates in brief, personal interviews; and basketball fans’ misconception of the “hot hand.” Why do people hold firmly to these beliefs in the absence of supporting evidence? Social psychology is concerned with understanding the errors that contaminate our thought processes. For example, ask your students what they would think if they looked out the window and saw someone trip on the sidewalk. Now, ask them what they would think if *they* tripped while walking on the sidewalk. Why the different explanations (attributions)?

For social influence you might complement the explanation of groupthink in the Bay of Pigs fiasco (<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bay_of_Pigs_Invasion>), by noting the flaws in the group decision-making process that led to the *Challenger* explosion (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_Shuttle_Challenger_disaster>) (Chapter 8). You may also want to discuss the Jonestown massacre (<http://jonestown.sdsu.edu/>) (Chapter 7), noting how it raises questions about the dynamics of human persuasion. The felony conviction of former East German border guards for shooting those who were fleeing toward freedom in West Berlin raises the question of obedience to authority and our capacity to resist (Chapter 6).

For social relations, citing examples of the bystander phenomenon, such as the now-classic Kitty Genovese case (Chapter 12), may stimulate students’ interest in the study of altruism. Contrast Kitty’s case with that of 18-month-old Jessica McClure (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jessica_McClure>) who, in 1988, fell 22 feet into an abandoned mine shaft. The people of Midland, Texas, worked nonstop for almost three days to free her. What accounts for this difference? When do people help?

* **What Are Social Psychology’s Big Ideas?**

## 2. Introducing the Idea of “Ah-Ha!” Moments

The author of the text tries to further highlight the relevancy of social psychology by including a series of “Taking Social Psychology into Life” vignettes. To further increase students’ awareness of the near ubiquitous applicability of social psychological principles, periodically ask students to report instances in their daily lives that remind them of principles and concepts learned in their social psychology class—so called “ah-ha!” moments. Students enjoy the opportunity to share with the class their personal stories, and it is a good opening exercise that can be used repeatedly throughout the semester. (See Assignment Ideas for examples of how students can collect such examples throughout the course in journals or portfolios.)

**3. Encouraging Class Participation**

Randolph Smith presented a technique for encouraging classroom participation that has the added benefit of allowing you to monitor class attendance efficiently. At your first class session, explain to students that each day, as they enter the class, they will receive a small slip of paper on which they are to sign their name. They may also write down any question(s) they have that they did not wish to raise in class. On the way out, they should leave the paper on your desk. You can then devote the first part of the next lesson to a discussion of the issues raised. Not only does this give you time to prepare your responses to students’ questions and concerns, it also gives you a chance to review the highlights of the previous lesson. Equally important, you will have a good idea of how well students comprehend your lecture. Smith reports that this technique increases both the quantity and quality of questions, and raises the general level of classroom discussion.

## 4. Encouraging Voluntary Participation (http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/2005/november-05/asking-questions-promoting-student-faculty-interchange-in-the-classroom.html)

## “Asking Questions: Promoting Student-Faculty Interchange in the Classroom,” by Judith Larkin and Harvey Pines, is an interesting article describing strategies to encourage even reluctant contributors to voluntarily participate in the classroom.

**5. Complementary Levels of Explanation**

Myers notes that there are different disciplines that study human functioning, and each can provide a different level of explanation that is complementary rather than contradictory to the others. This notion can be further developed in class with a simple illustration suggested by Stephen Evans. Have students imagine a poem that has been handwritten with a pen. It is possible to describe the poem in purely physical terms as a set of ink marks on the paper. This description could be made even more basic by providing a chemical analysis of the ink and paper. Such a description could be very useful if someone wished to know whether the poem is likely to fade and become illegible over time. A third level of explanation would be to view the poem as a collection of letters of the English alphabet. Still a fourth would be to view the poem as a collection of English words. Finally, someone might describe the poem as a literary creation. In analyzing these different perspectives, should we ask, “Which one is true?” Certainly not. While they state very different things, they are complementary perspectives. Each account is accurate and potentially useful. They are simply different ways of looking at the same event.

William Doise (1986) suggested that even within social psychology there are complementary levels of explanation. The *intrapersonal* level deals with individuals’ traits and their ways of perceiving and thinking about their social world. The *interpersonal* level deals with how individuals influence and relate to one another. The *intergroup* level deals with how our group identifications influence our behavior. The *societal* level deals with the impact of shared cultural norms and ideas.

Applying this analysis to prejudice, we can see how prejudice is influenced by how we individually organize information about our social worlds, how we absorb the ideas of our peers, how our division into social groups fuels dislike for “outgroups,” and how the assumptions and ideology of our culture feed our stereotypes. (Note that Doise’s definition of social psychology is more inclusive than the definition presented in the text. Doise’s definition emphasizes the first two levels of explanation as the unique province of social psychology.)

* **How Do Human Values Influence Social Psychology?**

**6. Give Your Own “Behind the Scenes” Story**

Chapter 1 stresses that social psychologists view human nature from a particular perspective, and that their personal values can influence their work in subtle ways. You might, therefore, begin by telling the story of your own involvement in social psychology. How did your interest begin? How was it developed? What are your special interests? What are your own presuppositions and commitments, and how do they influence your teaching and research? Revealing such information will introduce you to your students, and will embody the main point of the section on “How Do Human Values Influence Social Psychology?”

* **I Knew It All Along: Is Social Psychology Simply Common Sense?**

**7. The Hindsight Bias (The I-Knew-It-All-Along Phenomenon)**

See Demonstrations 1–1, 1–2, and 1–3 in this chapter.

We tend to exaggerate our ability to have foreseen how something would turn out, *after* learning the outcome. For example, before the 1985 Super Bowl, Brigham (1986) asked students to predict its outcome. An overwhelming majority (81 percent) predicted that the Miami Dolphins would win and 40 percent said by more than 10 points. A week after the San Francisco 49er’s decisive victory, Brigham asked another group to remember their pregame predictions. No one remembered thinking Miami would win by at least 10 points. Demakis (1997) reported the Hindsight Bias in connection with pre- and post-verdict predictions of the outcome of the O. J. Simpson criminal trial. Students who made post-verdict ratings were more likely to say that they expected a not guilty verdict and less likely to have expected a hung jury than those who made pre-verdict predictions. You may want to replicate the Hindsight Bias by having some of your students predict the outcome of some sporting event or election (local or national) and having other students remember their predictions after the outcome is known (this is most easily done if you have more than one psychology class). As the text notes, we did this with the Clarence Thomas case, and, like Brigham and Demakis, found dramatic evidence for the Hindsight Bias.

Fischhoff and Beyth (1975) demonstrated how the Hindsight Bias strengthens over time. Prior to President Nixon’s trips to China and Russia in 1972, they asked students to estimate the probability of a number of events (e.g., that the United States would establish a permanent diplomatic mission in Peking, that President Nixon would meet Mao Tse-tung at least once, and that Nixon would see Soviet demonstrators). After the trip, students were asked in hindsight to remember their original estimates. When the interval between the two tests was just two weeks, 67 percent thought their original estimates were closer to the truth than they actually were. When a four-to-eight-month interval had elapsed, 84 percent showed the Hindsight Bias.

Russo and Schoemaker (1989) suggested that we see more reasons for an event when it *has already happened* than when we simply ask why it *might occur*. They asked managers and MBA students who had been given a brief description of a new employee why he *might* quit six months from now. They generated a mean of 3.5 reasons per person. However, when told that the new employee had already quit, the hindsight group generated 25 percent more reasons on average (4.4 reasons). Moreover, the reasons were more specific and more closely tied to the description of the employee. The researchers further suggested that merely pretending that an event had occurred can lead us to see more reasons for its occurrence and ultimately assigning it a higher probability of becoming reality. For example, people who imagined that a woman had been elected president of the United States in 2000 came up with more reasons why this occurred than those who were simply asked why a woman might be elected in 2000. Moreover, when finally asked to estimate the probability of the hypothetical event becoming reality, the former gives a higher estimate than the latter. Russo and Schoemaker concluded that although hindsight usually obstructs learning, sometimes “prospective hindsight” can be advantageous when contemplating the future. If you doubt whether people have sufficient insight into the myriad of causes that could produce success or failure for an important project, it may be useful to have them engage in some “mental time travel.”

Finally, Don Forsyth provides an excellent analysis of our response to Hurricane Katrina (<https://facultystaff.richmond.edu/~dforsyth/katrina/kn1.htm>). It seemed so obvious, after the fact, that local, state, and federal officials should have responded more quickly to the disaster.

**8.** **“The Study of the Obvious”**

Social psychology has sometimes been characterized as “the study of the obvious” because after the fact the findings seem like common sense. To illustrate how well our minds generate explanations after the fact but often fail to make accurate predictions beforehand, describe three studies to your students. Before the first study, tell them that they will probably find the results rather surprising and not so obvious, as is often claimed. Then, proceed to describe results that are actually in direct opposition to the real findings. For example, briefly describe the Gergen, Gergen, and Barton (1973) study in which subjects entered a dark room with strangers. Report that subjects stayed to themselves, rarely communicated, and made limited physical contact. Ask students if they find this surprising and, if not, how they could possibly explain the results. There are always a few students who offer plausible explanations. Then, state that perhaps they will find the next study surprising. Again, after describing the study and providing results opposite to what was actually found, solicit explanations from those who do not find it surprising. Repeat this with a third study. Finally, after receiving very plausible after-the-fact explanations for each study, confess to the class that somehow the results were mixed up. The results presented were actually the complete opposite of what was actually found. Most (but not all!) quickly see what you have done. Be sure to remind them that they generated very plausible explanations for results that were not actually true. It is easy for our mind to make anything look plausible in hindsight. This demonstration helps set the tone for the course by having students realize that they should avoid jumping to quick conclusions. Of course, you can use any number of studies for this exercise; the more surprising the actual results of a study the better it will work.

* **Research Methods: How Do We Do Social Psychology?**

**9. Testing Facilitated Communication**

Chapter 6 of this manual describes the use of facilitated communication with autistic children. It has been proposed that children with autism can communicate using a keyboard if someone simply steadies their arms. Simple experiments in which the facilitator and the child with autism saw the same or different pictures demonstrated that the facilitator, rather than child, authored the communications. You can use this case early in the course to introduce social influence as one of the chief topics of social psychology, as well as to highlight the value of the experiment in helping to evaluate everyday claims.

The PBS production *Prisoners of Silence* provides an excellent review of facilitated communication including the use of controlled experiments to test its validity. You may choose to show all of it (56 minutes) or just the eight-minute segment showing the experiments. After showing it, ask students to analyze the experimental design including both independent and dependent variables. The video is no longer available for purchase. However, it is currently available online on YouTube at (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXw8Ksvyt5Y>).

**10.** **Survey Research**

Given the glut of popular books reporting survey results of Americans’ attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Harris’s *Inside America,* Patterson and Kim’s *The Day America Told the Truth,* Poretz and Sinrod’s *The First Really Important Survey of American Habits* as well as their *Do You Do It with the Lights On?*), you may want to highlight the potentially biasing influences cited in the text.

For example, Poretz and Sinrod’s survey asked respondents about their eating, sleeping, and dressing habits, as well as information about their special abilities and eccentricities. They found that 68 percent rolled toilet paper over the spool, 79 percent squeezed toothpaste from the top, 7 percent looked behind the shower curtain when using someone else’s bathroom, and 80 percent ate corn on the cob in circles rather than from side to side. How did the authors reach these conclusions? They sent surveys to 25,000 people and a total of 7,000 returned them. It is unlikely that they collected a representative sample of all Americans.

Pratkanis and his colleagues (1989) provided a delightful example of how response options can influence results. Some students were asked to select a Nutri-burger (a tofu burger that is rated very good on nutrition but only average on taste), or a Tasti-burger (a hamburger that is rated very good on taste but only average on nutrition). Other students were asked to select from these two choices, plus a third choice—the Bummer-burger (a hamburger that is rated only good on taste and only average on nutrition). As predicted, virtually no one selected the inferior Bummer-Burger over the first two choices. But the addition of the third choice significantly increased the choice of the Tasti-burger over the Nutri-burger. Why? It is very likely that the third option made the very good tasting Tasti-burger appear to be even better tasting, and the average tasting Nutri-burger appear to be even poorer tasting.

Demonstration 1–10 illustrates anchoring effects. Russo and Schoemaker (1989) showed how even random and thus clearly irrelevant anchors can influence responses in a survey. In one hilarious demonstration they even had respondents provide their own anchor. They asked: “What are the last three digits of your home phone number?” If the last three digits for a particular person were XYZ, they then said, “I’m going to add 400 to your answer.” Subjects were then asked, “Do you think Attila the Hun was defeated in Europe before or after A.D. (XYZ + 400)?” After respondents answered (and without telling them whether they were right), the researchers inquired, “In what year would you guess Attila the Hun was actually defeated?” Few knew (A.D. 451). However, the telephone-number anchor dramatically affected their answers. For example, if the range of the initial anchor (last three digits plus 400) was 400 to 599, the average estimate of Attila’s defeat was 629. When the anchor range was 1200 to 1399, the average estimate was 988.

**11. Framing Survey Questions**

A humorous video clip available online from the British TV show *Yes, Prime Minister* can be found listed among the videos at the end of this chapter. The clip effectively (and humorously) illustrates how the wording and order of questions can significantly affect survey responses.

**12.** **Challenge Students with Case Examples of Correlational vs. Experimental Research**

Chapter 1 emphasizes the distinction between correlational and experimental research, and the problems with drawing cause-effect conclusions from the former. Emphasize the importance of making this distinction when evaluating conclusions drawn by researchers and journalists. Facilitate students’ ability to make this distinction by challenging them with case examples, such as the following:

A. Researchers have consistently found that heavy cigarette smoking is associated with lung cancer. The more one smokes, the more likely one is to get cancer and to die early. *If* this smoking-cancer relationship is indeed reliable, may we conclude that smoking increases one’s chances of getting lung cancer? [Answer: The correlation does not prove cause and effect. In *The Causes and Effects of Smoking,* Sage, 1981, Hans Eysenck argued that the correlation may occur simply because some people have a genetic personality disposition, such as a reactive temperament, that: a) inclines them to heavy smoking; and, b) makes them more vulnerable to lung cancer.] How could one study determine whether smoking actually does increase one’s vulnerability to cancer? (Possible answers: by training animals to inhale smoke with or without nicotine; by experimentally studying the health benefits of an antismoking treatment program; and, by statistically extracting the influence of plausible “third factors,” such as personality.)

B. If researchers were to discover that joggers live longer, what would this tell us about the effects of jogging on longevity? (Answer: Nothing. The text suggests three types of explanations are possible for any correlation.)

C. *Hippocrates’ Good News Survey* (Tierney, 1987) found that people who often ate Frosted Flakes as children had half the cancer rate of those who never ate the cereal. Conversely, those who frequently ate oatmeal as children were four times more likely to develop cancer than those who did not. Does this mean that eating Frosted Flakes prevents cancer while eating oatmeal causes it? Ask your students to explain these correlations. The answer? Cancer tends to be an illness of later life. Those who ate Frosted Flakes are younger. In fact, the cereal was not around when older respondents were children; they were much more likely to have eaten oatmeal.

D. Keith Stanovich (2004) correctly noted that the *nature* of the relationship between two variables influences the likelihood of our interpreting a correlation in causal terms. Several years ago a research team in Taiwan found the best predictor of the adoption of birth-control methods was the number of electric appliances in the home. Stanovich asked, “Does this finding suggest that the teenage pregnancy problem should be dealt with by passing out free toasters in the schools?” Obviously not. With this example, students will quickly recognize that a correlation does not necessarily imply causation. It may exist because of a mediating variable. What would it be in this case? Education is one likely candidate. Education is related to contraceptive use as well as to socioeconomic status. Since families at higher socioeconomic levels tend to have more electric appliances in their homes, the linkage is complete.

E. Third Variable Problem

(sciencenetlinks.com/student-teacher-sheets/nearsightedness-**children)**

One reason we commonly jump to a causal conclusion from correlational evidence is because we forget about or do not consider the possibility of third variables that might have a causal influence on the first two variables. An excellent example is a study where researchers found that infants who had night lights in their bedrooms were more likely to become myopic when they got older. However, the presence of the night lights apparently did not cause the myopia. Can your students figure out the likely third variable? Read the above article to find out.

F. Many more such examples presented in the popular press have been collected by Jon Mueller and can be found at <http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/100/correlation_or_causation.htm>.

## 13. Identifying “Good” and “Bad” Evidence

Jon Mueller assigns a paper (available online) (<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/100/paper2.htm>) in introductory psychology to assess his students’ ability to evaluate the quality and sufficiency of evidence addressing a research question. He uses this same assignment as an in-class review activity for his social psychology students. It works well to compare and contrast a variety of types of evidence.

**14. PowerPoint Database** (<http://www.posbase.uib.no/posbase/index.php>)

POSbase is an exciting new resource which contains brief PowerPoint presentations on influential papers in experimental psychology, including quite a few in social psychology, such as:

Tversky and Kahneman’s paper on Anchoring and Adjustment (<http://www.posbase.uib.no/posbase/presentation_ex.php?Result_id=25>)

Festinger and Carlsmith’s paper on Induced Compliance and Cognitive Dissonance (<http://www.posbase.uib.no/posbase/presentation_ex.php?Result_id=246>)

Permission is granted for faculty to imbed these brief presentations in their lectures or to direct students to view the slides.

**15. More Online Lecture Slides** (<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/crow/lecture.htm>)

Numerous other lecture presentations, in slide or outline form, can be found here.

**16. Active Learning with PowerPoint** (<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tutorials/powerpoint/>)

Want to design effective slides for your presentation or lecture? Here is a very informative site about appropriate and inappropriate uses of PowerPoint.

**GET CONNECTED!**

Take advantage of all the teaching tools available for this chapter.

**Concept Clips**

* Independent and Dependent Variables
* Correlation

**NewsFlash**

* Social Exclusion- Is It Human Nature?

**Interactive Activity**

* Designing an Experiment: Dependent and Independent Variables

## Popular Sources for Additional Classroom Material

Aron, A., & Aron, E. (1990). *The heart of social psychology* (2nd ed.). Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath.

* A brief and popular account of some of the major findings in social psychology. Based on interviews with researchers active in the field.

Baumeister, R. F., Vohs, K. D., & Funder, D. C. (2007). [Psychology as the science of self-reports and finger movements: Whatever happened to actual behavior?](http://www.csom.umn.edu/assets/95164.pdf) *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 2*, 396–403. (rap.ucr.edu/baumeisteretal2007.pdf)

Brannigan, C. G., & Merrens, M. R. (Eds.). (1995). *The social psychologists: Research adventures.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

* A collection of first-person accounts of research by leading social psychologists including Susan Fiske, Mark Snyder, Robert Cialdini, and Leonard Berkowitz. Topics cover all of the major research areas in social psychology.

Coats, E. J., & Feldman, R. S. (Eds.). (1998). *Classic and contemporary readings in social psychology* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

* Provides a unique set of 30 paired classic and contemporary selections from articles and books covering all the major topics in social psychology.

Dane, F. C. (1988). *The common and uncommon sense of social behavior.* Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

* A very brief overview of social psychology. Includes a blend of research findings and everyday examples.

Davis, M. H. (Ed.). (2000). *Annual editions: Social psychology 01/02.* Guilford, CT: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.

* Updated annually, this volume provides convenient access to a wide range of current articles on social psychology that have appeared in magazines, newspapers, and journals.

Dean, J. (2007, November). Why we do dumb or irrational things: Ten brilliant social psychology studies. Retrieved June 8, 2009 from <http://www.spring.org.uk/2007/11/10-piercing-insights-into-human-nature.php>

Ellyson, S. J., & Halberstadt, A. G. (Eds.) (1995). *Explorations in social psychology: Readings and research.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

* A collection of 30 classic and contemporary articles from all areas of social psychological research organized under social thought, influence, and relations. Each reading is accompanied by a short introduction.

Fein, S., & Spencer, S. (Eds.). (1996). *Readings in social psychology: The art and science of research* (3rd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

* A collection of 16 short readings on various topics dealing with social perception, social interaction, social influence, and applying social psychology. Each entry includes a brief introduction by the editor and a set of critical thinking questions.

Gilbert, D. T., Fiske, S. T., & Lindzey, G. (Eds.) (1997). *Handbook of social psychology* (4th ed.). Cary, NC: Oxford University Press.

* An authoritative overview of the methods and findings of social psychology. Two volumes and nearly 2,000 pages have been contributed by leading researchers.

Hendricks, B., Marvel, M. K., & Barrington, B. L. (1990). The dimensions of psychological research. *Teaching of Psychology 17,* 76–82.

* Presents a methodological cube that classifies studies along three dimensions: research design (descriptive, correlational, or experimental), data-collection method (self-report or observational), and research setting (laboratory or field). Examples are drawn from the aggression literature.

Higgins, E. T., & Kruglanski, A. W. (Eds.) (1996). *Social psychology: Handbook of basic principles.* New York: Guilford.

* Provides an overview of the central principles that guide social psychological investigations. Each chapter describes alternative conceptualizations of a particular principle and reviews relevant research.

Kohn, A. (1990). *You know what they say.* New York: HarperCollins.

* Analyzes the truth of familiar proverbs, many of them relating to social behavior. Some are true, others are not. Demonstrates the value of careful, systematic research.

Jordan, C. H., & Zanna, M. P. (1999). How to read a journal article in social psychology. In R. F. Baumeister (Ed.), *The self in social psychology* (pp. 461–470). Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

(arts.uwaterloo.ca/~sspencer/psych253/**read**art.html)

* A wonderfully informative introduction for students who are new to reading journal articles. It breaks the article down into its main parts and helps the student understand the logic behind article construction. This is a great resource to use early in the semester if you are planning on asking students to do a research project.

Lesko, W. A. (Ed.). (2000). *Readings in social psychology; General, classic and contemporary selections* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

* A collection of 42 articles covering all of the major subdisciplines in social psychology. Each entry includes a brief introduction by the editor and a set of critical thinking questions at the end.

Pacanowsky, M. (1978). Salt passage research: The state of the art. *Change 10* (8), 41–43.

* A very funny application of popular social psychological theories and methods to predicting reactions for the request, “Please pass the salt.”

Pettijohn, T. F. (Ed.). (1998). *Sources: Notable selections in social psychology* (2nd ed.). Guilford, CT: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill Publishing.

* A collection of 42 classic articles, book excerpts, and research studies that have shaped the discipline of social psychology. The selections are organized around the major areas of study within social psychology.

Sapsford, R., Still, A., Wetherell, M., Miell, D., & Stevens, R. (Eds.). (1998). *Theory and social psychology.* London: Sage.

* A collection of 11 short essays on topics pertaining to nature and origins, making sense of diversity, and applying social psychology. Excellent supplemental material for creating lectures. The reading, however, may be somewhat difficult for average undergraduate students.

Stanovich, K. E. (2004). *How to think straight about psychology* (7th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

* Teaches students to critically examine the claims that are made about human behavior in the popular media.

Tesser, A. (Ed.). (1995). *Advanced social psychology.* Boston: McGraw-Hill.

* This book has 12 chapters covering many of the topics addressed in the text. Noted authors include Cialdini, Fiske, and Batson. It is an excellent resource for instructors who want to take their students beyond the text but need to get back up to speed with what is going on in social psychology.

Zimbardo, P. (1985, June). Laugh where we must, be candid where we can. *Psychology Today*, 43–47.

* A conversation with Allen Funt, creator of *Candid Camera.* Funt describes the potential educational value of the show and also responds to concerns about his use of deception and the potential for harm to his subjects. Good background for the use of McGraw-Hill’s *Candid Camera Classics for Social Psychology.*

**ASSIGNMENT IDEAS**

## 1. Social Psychology Essays

If you want student involvement to move beyond text-reading and note-taking, Ann Weber (1984) suggested assigning brief, one-page essays. Each essay should include: (1) a short description of a personal experience or an observation, which illustrates or exemplifies *one* of the social psychological phenomena covered in class lecture or the text; (2) a brief explanation of the theory or research dealing with the phenomenon or process, complete with references; and (3) an application of the research or theory in 2 to the observation described in 1, together with an evaluation of the “fit” of the theory to the life experience. If each essay is evaluated on a 4- or 5-point scale, the grading proves simple and fast. A package of 5 to 10 essays can tell much about a student’s level of interest and comprehension.

## 2. A Social Psychology Portfolio

Rider’s (1992) suggestion for having students create a portfolio of news clippings that illustrate psychological concepts is particularly applicable to social psychology courses. To encourage students to apply what they have learned to everyday life, have them, in the course of the term, collect newspaper and magazine clippings and write an explanation of each using course material. They can use articles, editorials, advertisements, advice columns, photographs, and cartoons. You might suggest that students find at least one item for each chapter in the text. Rider found that for her introductory students the median number of portfolio entries was 20 with students’ accompanying explanations ranging from two sentences to two paragraphs.

**3*.*** **Research Summaries** (<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/240/paper_assignment_1.htm>)

Jon Mueller requires his students to locate a journal article and summarize it by answering six questions. Additional research summary assignments can be found at (http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/).

**4. Brief Paper: Evaluating Evidence**

(<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/100/paper2.htm>)

Students are asked to rank seven pieces of evidence in terms of how well they address a research question. This assignment very effectively reviews and assesses students’ ability to distinguish good evidence from bad evidence.

**5. Play Mismatched Headlines: Correlation or Causation?**

(<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/100/correlation_or_causation.htm>)

Jon Mueller has collected a large number of links to articles on the Web that make correlational or causal claims. Unfortunately, often the claim made in the headline (e.g., A causes B) does not match the type of research (e.g., correlational) reported in the article. Can your students identify which headlines accurately match the research reported and which do not? A variety of assignments can be developed from this task. (If you find more such examples of articles online, please send them to jfmueller@noctrl.edu.)

## 6. Exploring Social Psychology on the Web

## If you intend to use the Internet in your course, you may want to get students started early. Students may complete Demonstration 1–13 as an out-of-class project. It will introduce them to the Social Psychology Network (<http://www.socialpsychology.org>http://www.socialpsychology.org/), a comprehensive source of information for exploring virtually every major topic in the textbook. It is maintained by Scott Plous of Wesleyan University.

**7. Research for Community Action** (http://lori.rosenthal.socialpsychology.org/research)

Lori Rosenthal teaches her students “about research methodology through research projects that make an important difference to the local community.” This project assignment was selected as the winner of the Social Psychology Network’s inaugural (2006) Action Teaching Award.

**8. Merging Art and Social Psychology** (<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/crow/project1long.pdf>)

Nick Schweitzer asks his students to demonstrate/comment on any of the social psychological phenomena discussed by using any artistic medium. He includes samples of acceptable and unacceptable (!) projects.

**9. Demonstrate a Phenomenon** (<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/crow/coondemonstrations.doc>)

Heather Coon gives her students a fun, hands-on taste of social psychology by asking them to try out a phenomenon on 3–6 people and report the results back to class.

**10. Develop Scientific Thinking Skills (**<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/crow/criticalthinkingproject.htm>**)**

Would you like your students to read more primary research and develop critical thinking skills about research at the same time? Read how Heather Coon and Jon Mueller have incorporated this approach into their social psychology courses.

**11. Authentic Assessment Toolbox** (<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/>)

To learn more about constructing good tests, creating scoring rubrics, developing portfolios and more, visit this thorough site on assessment from Jon Mueller.

**12. More Assignment Ideas**

Hundreds of additional assignment ideas for social psychology and related courses can be found at:

* Resources for the Teaching of Social Psychology. (http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/)
* Social Psychology Network. (<http://www.socialpsychology.org/teaching.htm#assignments>)

**DEMONSTRATIONS**

* **What Is Social Psychology?**

## 1. Reenacting Social Psychological Experiments

Wann (1993) reported having success in helping students comprehend social psychological research and methodology. Wann put students in small groups, and had each group select a different experiment and develop a dramatic script to describe the research. Each group of four to six individuals was responsible for obtaining a copy of the relevant article (e.g., Milgram’s study of obedience), using the article to write a script, and developing the props necessary to perform the play. Students played the roles of experimenters, confederates, and subjects with each play lasting approximately 10 minutes. Students were instructed to pay attention to detail in an effort to reenact the study as accurately as possible. Poetic license was allowed where authors were not explicit.

* **How Do Human Values Influence Social Psychology?**

**2. Assessing Human Values**

Chapter 1 contends that one’s values are important; they affect one’s thinking. Milton Rokeach’s (1973) research on values documented this point, and also illustrated both *correlational* and *experimental* methodology. **Demonstration 1–1** is Form E of Rokeach’s survey of “terminal values.” Form G of the Value Survey, the alternate form most widely used, presents each value printed on a removable gummed label and is commercially produced by Consulting Psychologists Press, P.O. Box 10096, Palo Alto, CA 94303. Rokeach reported that value rankings *correlate* with various social attitudes and behaviors. For example, higher rankings of equality are associated with more favorable attitudes and actions toward the poor and minority groups. More recently, Rokeach and Ball-Rokeach (1989) reported that from 1968–1981, the ranking of equality decreased more than any other value. He also reported that *experimentally* identifying inconsistencies—“you put freedom high and equality low, which means you care more about your own freedom than others”—promotes both value change (equality ranked higher) and behavior change (greater willingness to contribute to NAACP solicitation, to sign up for race relations course, etc). In a recent field experiment Ball-Rokeach, Rokeach, and Grube (1984) showed how a single 30-minute exposure to TV can significantly alter basic beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of large numbers of people for at least several months. Here are rankings from a national sample of Americans (Ball-Rokeach, Rokeach, & Grube, 1984):

8 A COMFORTABLE LIFE 11 INNER HARMONY

17 AN EXCITING LIFE 14 MATURE LOVE

7 A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT 13 NATIONAL SECURITY

2 A WORLD AT PEACE 16 PLEASURE

15 A WORLD OF BEAUTY 10 SALVATION

12 EQUALITY 4 SELF-RESPECT

1 FAMILY SECURITY 18 SOCIAL RECOGNITION

3 FREEDOM 9 TRUE FRIENDSHIP

5 HAPPINESS 6 WISDOM

* **I Knew It All Along: Is Social Psychology Simply Common Sense?**

**3.** **The Hindsight Bias (The I-Knew-It-All-Along Phenomenon)**

The following exercise powerfully demonstrates the Hindsight Bias. BEFORE students read Chapter 1, duplicate copies of **Demonstration 1–2** and **Demonstration 1–3**. Cut the sheets in half and alternate the two versions, so that after the questions are distributed and completed, each person can compare with an adjacent person to confirm the contradictory versions. The procedure is simple. After everyone has answered the questions, explain the phenomenon and then demonstrate it by asking, “How many of you found the findings ‘surprising’?” Most likely few students will raise their hands. Then ask, “How many of you found the findings ‘not surprising’?” Many students will now probably raise their hands. Then let them know the secret that half of them were given a finding *opposite* to the other half.

The Hindsight Bias may also be illustrated with **Demonstration 1–4**, which is adapted from Fischhoff (1977). Give half the class the first version of this questionnaire; this tells them the answers to factual questions and asks them, in essence, whether they knew it all along. Give the other half of the class the second version, which does not inform them that the answer they are rating is, in fact, the correct answer. Then have all students average their probability estimates, and do a quick tally to see whether the answers seem more obvious to those who have been told them.

R. E. Goranson’s experiment cited by Gordon Wood (1984) provided the basis for another quick yet dramatic illustration. Write the following anagrams with their solutions in parentheses on the chalkboard: WREAT (WATER), ETRYN (ENTRY), OCHSA (CHAOS), GRABE (BARGE). Ask students to write down an estimate of how long it would have taken them to correctly solve each anagram if they had not been given the solution. Then ask students to raise their hands if their estimates were lower than the actual solution times. Those reported by Goranson were 158, 182, 224, and 173 seconds, respectively. Knowing the outcome, the answer seems so obvious and students will grossly underestimate solution times.

As Gordon Wood (1984) suggested, throughout the course it is probably wise to have students predict the results of a study before presenting the findings. Very likely they will become less vulnerable to the Hindsight Bias.

**4. Social Psychology and Common Sense**

Although the chapter does *not* maintain that most social psychological findings are counterintuitive, it can be demonstrated that some are. Students often incorrectly answer most of the questions in **Demonstration 1–5**. Do yours? These questions can also serve to introduce the range of topics studied by social psychologists.

Here is the answer key for **Demonstration 1–5**; evidence supporting each answer will be encountered in the text chapters indicated.

1. F (Chapter 2) 10. F (Chapter 6) 19. F (Chapter 11)

2. F (Chapter 2) 11. F (Chapter 7) 20. F (Chapter 11)

3. F (Chapter 3) 12. F (Chapter 7) 21. T (Chapter 11)

4. F (Chapter 3) 13. F (Chapter 8) 22. T (Chapter 12)

5. F (Chapter 4) 14. F (Chapter 8) 23. T (Chapter 13)

6. T (Chapter 4) 15. F (Chapter 9) 24. F (Chapter 14)

7. F (Chapter 4) 16. T (Chapter 9) 25. T (Chapter 14)

8. T (Chapter 5) 17. F (Chapter 10) 26. F (Chapter 15)

9. T (Chapter 5) 18. T (Chapter 11) 27. F (Chapter 16)

A similar set of questions (with accompanying answers) can be found at <http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/crow/commonsenseno.htm>.

## 5. Social Psychology and Classic Wisdom

**Demonstration 1–6** contrasts the wisdom of various sages on topics pertinent to social psychology. Stress to students that the point is *not* to undermine the sages, but to point out that no matter what answers research might reveal on these issues, there will already be people who anticipated the findings. Completing this demonstration should sensitize students to this point. It will also introduce them to the 15 chapter topics. Finally, it should prevent the students from misinterpreting the quotes appearing in the margins of the text.

* **Research Methods: How Do We Do Social Psychology?**

## 6. The Framing of Survey Questions and Life Decisions

Tversky and Kahneman (1981) demonstrated how trivial changes in the formulations of questions can dramatically affect people’s choices. The two versions of **Demonstration 1–7** allow you to replicate their findings. Make copies, cut the sheets in half, and randomly distribute them to your class, making sure each student receives only one form of the question. The authors found that those given the choices in the top half favored Program A by about 3 to 1. Those given the same choices but expressed in a different way preferred Program B by 3 to 1. **Demonstration 1–8** provides another pair of questions; again, each question is to be distributed to half the class. When the odds were given in terms of mortality, more than 40 percent chose radiation. But when the odds were given in terms of survival, the number choosing radiation was cut in half. **Demonstration 1–9** presents yet another pair. Despite the fact that both cases involve the loss of $40, most people will buy a ticket after losing cash but not after losing the ticket.

The range of alternatives on a survey question can also distort responses. When people have no well-formed opinion, they may gravitate towards a seemingly moderate answer. However, what is moderate may depend on the “end anchors” provided in the question. **Demonstration 1–10** provides two forms of the same question for distribution to separate groups. Tally responses by a show of hands for each group. Inevitably the group that received the question with the “small fine” option will advise lighter sentences.

Group with Group with Sentence recommended

“small fine” “life imprison”

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ Six months *or less*

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ Two years

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ Five years *or more*

You may accompany this exercise with results from some national surveys. For example, in a recent survey of more than 1,200 American adults, New York’s American Museum of Natural History and Louis Harris found that 77 percent were interested in plants and trees but only 39 percent expressed interest in botany. Similarly, 48 percent were interested in fossils but only 39 percent were interested in paleontology. Of the total sample, only 42 percent were interested in rocks and minerals, but 53 percent were interested in geology. Sometimes respondents simply lie. In 1996, exit polls in New Hampshire showed Democrat Dick Sivett leading Republican Senator Bob Smith 52 to 47 percent. The actual vote was the other way around. Some speculate that this was voters’ reaction to the fact that mainline media coverage of public life is to the left of where many citizens’ sympathies lie. Respondents may tell pollsters what they think they want to hear.

H. Ross Perot’s 1992 mail-in survey results may have been contaminated by both wording and a biased sample. His questionnaire was published in *TV Guide,* and the magazine’s readers were asked to reply. A total of 97 percent answered “yes” to the question, “Do you believe that for every dollar of tax increase there should be $2 in spending cuts with the savings earmarked for deficit reduction?” Using the same wording with a random sample, Yankelovich found 67 percent agreed. And the more neutrally worded “Would you favor or oppose a proposal to cut spending by $2 for every dollar in new taxes, with the savings earmarked for deficit reduction, even if that meant cuts in domestic programs like Medicare and education?” elicited approval from only 33 percent. Perot’s question “Should laws be passed to eliminate all possibilities of special interests giving huge sums of money to candidates?” elicited a whopping 99 percent from *TV Guide* readers but only 80 percent from Yankelovich’s random sample. The latter’s more neutral “Should laws be passed to prohibit interest groups from contributing to campaigns or do groups have a right to contribute to the candidate they support?” elicited 40 percent wanting to prohibit and 55 percent believing groups had the right to contribute.

Polls taken at the same time produce different results depending on how the question is phrased. *Time* magazine (April 5, 1993) reported that approval ratings for “Hillary Clinton” were 56.8 percent while those for “Hillary Rodham Clinton” were only 49.4 percent. Similarly, 8 in 10 Americans believe that “Women with young children should be able to work outside the home.” But 7 in 10 also believe that “Women should stay home if they have young preschool children.” Twenty-nine percent favored a constitutional amendment “prohibiting abortions” but 50 percent favored a constitutional amendment “protecting the life of the unborn.” Sixty-one percent believed we are spending too little on “assistance to the poor” but only 22 percent believed we are spending too little on “welfare.”

**7. The Wording of Survey Questions**

**Demonstration 1–11** further illustrates the importance of question wording on surveys. Laura Madson (2005) developed the two versions of an eight-item survey found in **Demonstration 1–11**. Her students collected data from five friends using one of the two versions. Madson then combined the students’ data with survey results she collected earlier to increase the sample size. Her in-class discussion then focused on the following four issues:

1) Will participants agree on the meaning of a term?

2) Does the item make implicit assumptions about participants?

3) Does each question measure the concept of interest?

4) Will you be able to accurately interpret the data?

When using this demonstration, the survey data can be collected outside of class, as Madson employed it, or the two versions can be handed out in class. Data can be collected through the raising of hands or other means, and then the class can discuss questions like those above.

## 8. Demonstrating the Anchoring Bias

**Demonstration 1–12** illustrates anchoring effects. Make copies, cut the sheets in half, and randomly distribute them to your class making sure each student receives only one form of the question. When compared to those provided with an anchor of 500 miles, those given a 3,000-mile anchor will most likely give a higher estimate. You can collect the responses and tabulate the mean estimates for each group or, more simply, by a show of hands ask each group whether their own estimate was greater than 1,500 miles. A majority of those given 3,000 miles will raise their hands but a minority of those given 500 miles will do so. (The actual length of the Mississippi is 2,348 miles.)

Replication of Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman’s (1973) experiment will help students appreciate the significance of the “anchoring bias.” Have them give friends the following problem: “Estimate quickly the product of 1 × 2 × 3 × 4 × 5 × 6 × 7 × 8.” They should instruct an equal number of respondents: “Estimate quickly the product of 8 × 7 × 6 × 5 × 4 × 3 × 2 × 1.” In each case, they should ask for an answer after only a few seconds. Tversky and Kahneman found the median estimates to be 512 and 2,250, respectively. The first group’s estimates were anchored to “1 × 2 × 3 . . .”; the second group’s responses were anchored to “8 × 7 × 6. . . .”

## 9. Conducting a National Survey—In Class

One way to show that a true random sample of 1,500 people can estimate the responses of 200 million people is to prove it mathematically. A more vivid and memorable way to make this point is to demonstrate it with an in-class simulation of a national survey.

1. Obtain a wide-mouth gallon glass jug (perhaps from your campus food service).
2. Purchase a large supply of small white beans and of identically sized colored beans.

(Alternatively, stain half of the white beans in a solution of water and food coloring.)

1. Place a large *known* quantity (more than 5,000) of each color in the jug. This will be the population, which, numbering more than 10,000, will be essentially infinite. If the beans are indeed of identical size (e.g., both colors have been soaked and dried identically, one with coloring added), then you need only measure a known proportion of each (e.g., 53 percent white, 47 percent green).
2. Now simulate the survey by having each student act as survey taker as he or she takes a *small* number from the jug (a small handful tends to have more than the student imagines). You might say: “We’re surveying voter preferences for the next presidential election. The white beans represent Obama supporters and the green beans Romney supporters. Our first survey taker is sampling neighborhoods in western Washington,” etc. If there are 30 people in the class, have each person drop 50 beans from a closed hand, counting the two colors.
3. Once the counting is completed, it is time to tabulate the results. Tallying 15 groups of 100 will demonstrate a 95 percent confidence interval of about +/– 10 percent about the true population mean. Clustering those into three groups of 500 should demonstrate that the margin of error is reduced to about +/– 5 percent. Chances are 95 percent that the population estimate based on the total sample of 1,500 will be within +/– 3 percent.
4. Emphasize that the sampling principles demonstrated are identical to those involved in large national surveys (assuming true random sampling), and that it makes little difference whether the population is 10,000+ or 200 million.

## 10. Demonstrating Nonrepresentative Sampling in Class

Chapter 1 suggests surveys are only helpful if the sampling procedure used is representative of the population from which it comes. The importance of representative samples can be demonstrated in class by having students answer the series of personal preference questions presented in **Demonstration 1–13**. While they are completing the questions, suggest that this data may be used by the school’s radio station and/or the student activities committee as an indication of the student body’s interests in popular culture events on campus. Before gathering up the forms, suggest that you really don’t need a very big sample and that maybe you’ll only need a subset of the class responses. Then attempt to gather up the forms from only those in the back rows or maybe only a small pack of students sitting off to one side. (You might try to defend this action by suggesting the analysis is long and difficult.) At this point, the students will begin to object and the value of sample representativeness can be made. You may also wish to ask students how fair it would be if the radio station or student activities committee only sampled their class. You may also choose this opportunity to introduce the concept of “response bias” and the problems that arise when people who are asked to complete surveys fail to do so.

**11. Exploring the Field of Social Psychology**

**Demonstration 1–14** sends students to the Social Psychology Network to explore people, topics, and organizations in the field.

**12. The Social Connection Video Series**

One of the entries in the video instructional supplement (The Social Connection Video Series), entitled “Role Playing: The Power of the Situation,” addresses some questions raised in Chapter 1 regarding the ethics of social research. See the Faculty Guide accompanying the video series for a program summary, pause points, and a classroom activity.

**Demonstration 1–1**

## Rokeach Value Survey

Below is a list of 18 values arranged in alphabetical order. We are interested in finding out the relative importance of these values to *you*.

Study the list carefully. Then place a 1 next to the value, which is most important to *you,* place a 2 next to the value which is second most important to you, etc. The value, which is least important, relative to the others, should be ranked 18.

When you have completed ranking all of the values, go back and check over your list. Please take all the time you need to think about this, so that the end result is a true representation of *your* values.

A COMFORTABLE LIFE (a prosperous life)

AN EXCITING LIFE (a stimulating, active life)

A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT (lasting contribution)

A WORLD AT PEACE (free of war and conflict)

A WORLD OF BEAUTY (beauty of nature and the arts)

EQUALITY (brotherhood, equal opportunity for all)

FAMILY SECURITY (taking care of loved ones)

FREEDOM (independence, free choice)

HAPPINESS (contentedness)

INNER HARMONY (freedom from inner conflicts)

MATURE LOVE (sexual and spiritual intimacy)

NATIONAL SECURITY (protection from attack)

PLEASURE (an enjoyable, leisurely life)

SALVATION (saved, eternal life)

SELF-RESPECT (self-esteem)

SOCIAL RECOGNITION (respect, admiration)

TRUE FRIENDSHIP (close companionship)

WISDOM (a mature understanding of life)

©1967 by Milton Rokeach. Reproduced with the permission of the publisher, Halgren Tests, NW 1145 Clifford, Pullman, WA 99163.

## Demonstration 1–2

## Bolt & Myers

## © McGraw-Hill, 1999

Research suggests that the more romantically in love two people are, the more attractive they find all others of the opposite sex.

In a sentence or two, why do you suppose this is?

Does this finding strike you as surprising or not surprising?

\_\_\_ surprising

\_\_\_ not surprising

## Demonstration 1–2

## Bolt & Myers

## © McGraw-Hill, 1999

Research suggests that the more romantically in love two people are, the less attractive they find all others of the opposite sex.

In a sentence or two, why do you suppose this is?

Does this finding strike you as surprising or not surprising?

\_\_\_ surprising

\_\_\_ not surprising

## Demonstration 1–3

Research suggests that people with high self-esteem are more susceptible to flattery than those with low self-esteem.

In a sentence or two, why do you suppose this is?

Does this finding strike you as surprising or not surprising?

\_\_\_\_\_ surprising

\_\_\_\_\_ not surprising

## Demonstration 1–3

Research suggests that people with low self-esteem are more susceptible to flattery than those with high self-esteem.

In a sentence or two, why do you suppose this is?

Does this finding strike you as surprising or not surprising?

\_\_\_\_\_ surprising

\_\_\_\_\_ not surprising

## Demonstration 1–4

## (with permission from B. Fischhoff)

Below are a number of factual questions, each of which has two possible answers. We are interested in studying the perceived difficulty of these items. *The correct answer has a blank beside it.* Pretend you hadn’t been told the right answer. What probability would you have assigned to the answer with the blank beside it?

Here is a sample question:

Absinthe is

a. a precious stone

% b. a liqueur

Your task on this would be to pretend we hadn’t told you that absinthe is a liqueur and to indicate the probability (from 0 to 100 percent) you would have believed that absinthe is indeed a liqueur. If you would have been pretty sure that absinthe is a liqueur, you might mark, say, 85 percent. If you would have felt equally sure that absinthe is *not* a liqueur, you might put 15 percent. If you felt it 50–50 (you would have had no idea), you might put 50 percent. In summary, your task is simply to estimate what odds you would have given to the answer with the blank if we hadn’t told you the right answer.

1. About how many known active volcanoes exist in the world?

% a. 445

b. 45

1. Which magazine had the highest circulation in 1970?

a. *Time*

% b. *Playboy*

3. Aesop, the fabulist, lived in

% a. The sixth century B.C.

b. The sixth century A.D.

4. Potatoes are native to

% a. Peru

b. Ireland

5. The first air raid in history took place in

% a. 1849

b. 1937

6. Aladdin’s nationality was

a. Persian

% b. Chinese

7. Aardvarks eat mostly

a. Ants

% b. Termites

8. 3/4ths of the world’s cacao (used in chocolate) comes from

% a. Africa

b. South America

## Demonstration 1–4

## (with permission from B. Fischhoff)

Below are a number of factual questions, each of which has two possible answers. We are interested in studying the perceived difficulty of these items. In each case, one answer has a blank beside it, *which may or may not be the correct answer.* In the blank, assign a probability that it is in fact the right answer.

Here is a sample question:

Absinthe is

a. a precious stone

% b. a liqueur

Your task on this would be to indicate what probability (from 1 to 100 percent) you believe that absinthe is indeed a liqueur. If you are pretty sure that absinthe is a liqueur, you might mark, say, 85 percent. If you felt equally sure that absinthe is *not* a liqueur, you might put 15 percent. If you felt it 50–50 (you have no idea), you might put 50 percent. In summary, your task is simply to estimate what odds you would have given to the answer with the blank.

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8. 3/4ths of the world’s cacao (used in chocolate) comes from

% a. Africa

b. South America

## Demonstration 1–5

## Bolt & Myers

## © McGraw-Hill, 1999

**True or False**

T F 1. Most of us have quite accurate insight into the factors that influence our moods.

T F 2. Most people rate themselves as worse-than-average in rating themselves on socially desirable characteristics.

T F 3. Memory is like a storage chest in the brain, into which we deposit material and from which we can withdraw it later if needed. Occasionally, something gets lost from the “chest” and then we say we have forgotten.

T F 4. People’s behavior is best predicted in terms of their personalities or inner dispositions.

T F 5. To alter the way people act, one needs first to change their hearts and minds.

T F 6. People who are made self-conscious by looking into a mirror act more in line with their attitudes.

T F 7. The greater the reward promised for an activity, the more one will come to enjoy the activity.

T F 8. In overall vocabulary, happiness and intelligence, males and females are not noticeably different.

T F 9. In countries everywhere, girls spend more time helping with housework and child care, while boys spend more time in unsupervised play.

T F 10. Most people would disobey an authority who orders them to hurt a stranger.

T F 11. Persuaders will always be more effective if they acknowledge opposing arguments.

T F 12. In a formal debate, it is always to your advantage to be the last speaker.

T F 13. People pull harder in a tug-of-war when they are part of a team than when they are pulling by themselves.

T F 14. The greater the cohesiveness or “we feeling” in a group, the more likely the group will make a good decision.

T F 15. When white and black students are shown faces of a few white and black individuals and then asked to pick these individuals out of a photographic lineup, both white and black students more accurately recognize the white faces than the black.

T F 16. In a recent national survey, only a minority of Americans indicated that they would be willing to see a homosexual doctor.

T F 17. To be mentally healthy, people need an opportunity to act out, and thus to vent, their aggression.

T F 18. The more often we see something—even if we don’t like it at first—the more we grow to like it.

T F 19. As suggested by the dumb-blonde idea, physically attractive men and women tend to be looked on by others as colder, dumber, and less moral than the plainer people.

T F 20. Opposites attract.

T F 21. One of the best predictors of whether any two people are friends is their sheer proximity, or geographical nearness, to one another.

T F 22. When we feel guilty, we are more likely to help those around us.

T F 23. If you want to buy a new car at the best price, it is best to adopt a tough bargaining stance by opening with a very low offer rather than with a sincere, “good faith” offer.

T F 24. Depressed persons tend to be unrealistic in their perceptions of themselves.

T F 25. People who favor the death penalty are also more prone to vote a defendant guilty.

T F 26. Eyewitnesses’ *certainty* about their own accuracy in viewing a crime is highly related to their actual *accuracy.*

T F 27. Research clearly shows a strong positive relationship between material wealth and life satisfaction.

## Demonstration 1–6

## Bolt & Myers

## © McGraw-Hill, 1999

**The Wisdom of the Past: Who Is Right?**

The following 15 questions will be discussed in the textbook (Chapter 1 will speak to question 1, Chapter 2 to question 2, etc…). Indicate your own hunches, prior to reading the text.

1. What is the relationship between science and common sense? Shall we agree with

a. Thomas H. Huxley, who said, “science is nothing but trained and organized common sense?”

or with

b. E. B. Titchener, who said, “common sense is the very opposite of science?”

2. Do people more commonly have deflated or inflated self-images? Shall we agree more with

\_\_\_a. Carl Rogers, who said, “the central core of difficulty in people . . . is that in the great majority of cases they despise themselves, and regard themselves as worthless and unlovable?”

or shall we agree more with

\_\_\_b. Henry Ward Beecher, who said, “conceit is the most incurable disease that is known to the human soul?”

3. Concerning the rationality of our social thinking, who is closer to the truth?

\_\_\_a. Shakespeare’s Hamlet: “What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! . . . in apprehension how like a god!”

or

\_\_\_b. Madeline L’Engle’s Mr. Murry: “The naked intellect is an extraordinarily inaccurate instrument?”

4. Consider the relationship between our actions and our convictions. Is it more true that

\_\_\_a. “the ancestor of every action is a thought” (Ralph Waldo Emerson)?

or that

\_\_\_b. “thought is the child of action” (Benjamin Disraeli)?

5. Which sex exerts more social power? Is it more often true

\_\_\_a. as Alfred Lord Tennyson declared: “Man to command, and woman to obey?”

or is it more often true

\_\_\_b. as Thomas Moore believed: “Disguise our bondage as we will, Tis woman, woman rules us still?”

6. Are most evil acts willfully performed by evil individuals, or by ordinary people who have been corrupted by an evil influence? Whose experience is more typical, that of

\_\_\_a. Euripides: “I know indeed what evil I intend to do?”

or that of

\_\_\_b. St. Paul: “The evil which I would not, that I do?”

7. Are people more persuaded by reason or emotion? Was

\_\_\_a. Shakespeare’s Lysander correct in saying, “The will of man is by his reason sway’d?”

or was

\_\_\_b. Lord Chesterfield correct when he said, “Address yourself generally to the senses, to the heart, and to the weaknesses of mankind, but rarely to their reason?”

8. Who makes better decisions—individuals (“too many cooks spoil the broth”) or groups (“two heads are better than one”)? Is it more true that

\_\_\_a. “The mass never comes up to the standard of its best member, but on the contrary degrades itself to a level with the lowest” (Henry David Thoreau)?

or that

\_\_\_b. “About things on which the public thinks long, it commonly attains to think right” (Samuel Johnson)?

9. How do people evaluate innocent victims of oppression? Was

\_\_\_a. Juvenal, the Roman satirist, correct in saying that people “hate those who have been condemned?”

or is it more often true that

\_\_\_b. “the martyr cannot be dishonored” (Ralph Waldo Emerson)?

10. Is aggression instinctive? Was

\_\_\_a. George Santayana correct in saying, “To fight is a radical instinct. . . . To knock a thing down is a deep delight to the blood?”

or was

\_\_\_b. Bronislaw Malinowski closer to the truth when he said: “Is war a biological necessity? As regards the earliest cultures the answer is emphatically negative. . . . Nor is head-hunting, body snatching, or killing for food instinctive or natural?”

11. How does repeated contact with another usually affect our liking for the person? Does

\_\_\_a. “familiarity breed contempt” while “absence makes the heart grow fonder?”

or is it more true that

\_\_\_b. “love depends on frequent meetings” (Leo Tolstoy)?

12. What motivates helpfulness? Is it more true that

\_\_\_a. “Men do not value a good deed unless it brings a reward” (Ovid)?

or that

\_\_\_b. “True goodness springs from man’s own heart. All men are good” (Confucius)?

13. Is another’s being of equal status more likely to trigger friendship, or rivalry and conflict? Who is more right?

\_\_\_a. Samuel Johnson: “Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals?”

or

\_\_\_b. Francis Bacon: “There is little friendship in the world, and least of all between equals?”

14. What shapes our beliefs? Was

\_\_\_a. Julius Caesar correct in saying, “Men freely believe that which they desire?”

or was

\_\_\_b. Sophocles correct when he said, “The truth is always the strongest argument?”

15. Are juries more influenced by the evidence or by their personal biases and sympathies? Can a jury be impartial? Which assumption is more accurate, that of

\_\_\_a. the Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: “The accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury?”

or that of

\_\_\_b. Clarence Darrow: “Jurymen seldom convict a person they like, or acquit one they dislike. . . . Facts regarding the crime are relatively unimportant?”

## Demonstration 1–7

Imagine that the United States is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimate of the consequences of the programs is as follows:

If Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved.

If Program B is adopted, there is a 1/3 probability that 600 people will be saved, and a 2/3 probability that no people will be saved.

Which of the two programs would you favor?

From Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. The framing of decisions and the psychology of choice. *Science,* 1981, *211,* 453–458. Copyright 1981 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

## Demonstration 1–7

Imagine that the United States is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimate for the consequences of the programs is as follows:

If Program A is adopted, 400 people will die.

If Program B is adopted, there is a 1/3 probability that 600 people will be saved, and a 2/3 probability that 600 people will die.

Which of the two programs would you favor?

From Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. The framing of decisions and the psychology of choice. *Science,* 1981, *211,* 453–458. Copyright 1981 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

## Demonstration 1–8

## (with permission from A. Tversky)

Imagine you have operable lung cancer and must choose between two treatments—surgery and radiation therapy. Of 100 people having surgery, 10 die during the operation, 32 (including those original 10) are dead after one year, and 66 after five years. Of 100 people having radiation therapy, none die during treatment, 22 are dead after one year and 78 after five years. Which treatment would you prefer?

\_\_\_ Surgery

\_\_\_ Radiation therapy

## Demonstration 1–8

## (with permission from A. Tversky)

Imagine you have operable lung cancer and must choose between two treatments—surgery and radiation therapy. Of 100 people having surgery, 90 survive the operation, 68 are alive after one year, and 34 after five years. Of 100 people having radiation therapy, all survive the treatment, 78 are alive after one year, and 22 after five years. What treatment would you prefer?

\_\_\_ Surgery

\_\_\_ Radiation therapy

## Demonstration 1–9

## (with permission from A. Tversky)

You’ve decided to see a Broadway play for which the ticket price is $40. As you enter the theater to buy your ticket, you discover you’ve lost $40 from your pocket. Would you still buy the ticket? (Assume you have enough cash left to do so.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

## Demonstration 1–9

## (with permission from A. Tversky)

You’ve decided to see a Broadway play and have bought a $40 ticket. As you enter the theater, you realize you’ve lost your ticket. You can’t remember the seat number, so you can’t prove to the management that you bought a ticket. Would you spend $40 for a new ticket?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

## Demonstration 1–10

## Bolt & Myers

## © McGraw-Hill, 1999

George is a 19-year-old male who has been arrested for assault and battery with intent to commit murder. George is pleading guilty to the charge. It is his first offense. On the basis of this limited information what sentence would you recommend?

A small fine

A brief probationary period

One-month jail sentence

Six-month sentence

Two-year sentence

Five-year sentence

## Demonstration 1–10

## Bolt & Myers

## © McGraw-Hill, 1999

George is a 19-year-old male who has been arrested for assault and battery with intent to commit murder. George is pleading guilty to the charge. It is his first offense. On the basis of this limited information what sentence would you recommend?

Six-month sentence

Two-year sentence

Five-year sentence

Ten-year sentence

Twenty-five-year sentence

Life imprisonment

## Demonstration 1–11

**(with permission from L. Madson)**

1. I oppose raising taxes.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. The primary task of the government should be to keep citizens safe from terrorism and crime.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. I regularly perform routine maintenance on my car.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. I make it a practice to never lie.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. Monogamy is important to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. People should wait to have sex until they are in a committed relationship.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. My partner and I always use protection.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. How often do you exercise?

1 2 3

Infrequently Occasionally Often

## Demonstration 1–11

1. I would be willing to pay a few extra dollars in taxes to provide high-quality education to all children.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. The primary task of the government should be to preserve citizens’ rights and civil liberties.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. Sometimes I don’t change the oil in my car on time.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. Like all human beings, I occasionally tell a white lie.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. Sexual freedom is important to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. Sex can strengthen a new relationship.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. Although I know it is important, sometimes I don’t practice safe sex.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Strongly

Agree Disagree

1. In the last six months, how often have you engaged in at least 20 min of aerobic activity?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Almost Less than Once/week 2 times/week 3 times/week 4 times/week More than 4

Never Once/week times/week

## Demonstration 1–12

Is the Mississippi River longer or shorter than 500 miles? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How long is it? miles

## Demonstration 1–12

Is the Mississippi River longer or shorter than 3,000 miles? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How long is it? miles

## Demonstration 1–13

**Student Preferences Survey**

Please identify your favorite style of music. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please identify three of your favorite current music groups. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the time of day when you are most likely to listen to the radio.

Early morning Middle of the day Afternoon Evening

Please circle the time in the semester when you are most likely to attend a musical concert.

First few weeks Middle of the semester Near the end Anytime

## Demonstration 1–14

## Bolt & Myers

## © McGraw-Hill, 1999

Visit the Social Psychology Network at <http://www.socialpsychology.org> to answer the following questions:

1. Identify three specific topics in social psychology and give the address of a Web site providing information on each:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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2. Identify three journals that publish research in social psychology:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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3. Identify one important research group studying social psychology in the United States and one outside the United States. Briefly describe the primary interests of each:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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4. What are the primary research interests of David G. Myers, the author of your text?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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# FILMS/VIDEOS

*McGraw-Hill Videodisk/Videotape in Social Psychology* (MGH, 30–60 min., 1994).

* The disk and tape both contain 10 motion clips ranging from 2 to 5 minutes covering classic research studies as well as news events of particular interest to social psychologists. Accompanied by a viewer’s guide.

*Candid Camera Classics in Social Psychology* (MCG, 58 min., 1994).

* A total of 15 clips selected and edited by Philip Zimbardo and Allen Funt from the original *Candid Camera* series to illustrate basic social psychological concepts.

*Social Psychology* (Insight, 30 min., 1990).

* Introduces social psychology and the attempt to understand the social forces that influence our attitudes and actions. Covers many of the primary issues found in social psychology including attribution theory, stereotyping and prejudice, and the power of social roles.

*Constructing Social Reality* (ANN, 26 min., 1990).

* From the *Discovering Psychology* series, this video examines how our perceptions and interpretations shape all our social relationships and behaviors. Covers Rosenthal’s self-fulfilling prophecy, Cialdini’s persuasion principles, and Aronson’s jigsaw classroom.

*The Power of the Situation* (ANN, 26 min., 1990).

* From the *Discovering Psychology* series, this program shows how social context shapes our behavior. Portrays Lewin’s work on leadership, Milgram’s obedience studies, and Zimbardo’s prison simulation.

*Inferential Statistics: Hypothesis Testing—Rats, Robots, and Roller Skates* (WIL, 28 min., 1976).

* Hypotheses testing, control groups, random assignment, and statistical inference are highlighted through four humorous sketches.

*Methodology: The Psychologist and the Experiment* (CRM, 31 min., 1975).

* Introduces research methods and emphasizes experimental design. Schachter’s fear and affiliation experiment and Riesen’s experiment on the development of visual motor coordination are given extensive treatment.

*Two Research Styles* (Insight, 28 min., 1991).

* Examines the observational method using Dr. Jenny Hewison’s research on how patients decide when to go the doctor, and the experimental method using Dr. Chris Alford’s studies on the effects of alcohol on daily activities.

*Understanding Research* (ANN, 30 min., 1990).

* From the *Discovering Psychology* series, this program introduces the scientific method and the different ways that data can be collected and analyzed. Includes examples from social psychology and emphasizes the development of critical thinking.

**Available Online**

*Psych Exchange* (<http://www.psychexchange.co.uk/videos/>)

* A resource site that has collected hundreds of video clips for psychology

*Against All Odds: Inside Statistics* (<http://www.learner.org/resources/series65.html>)

* A collection of 26 professional, 30-minute videos on statistics available after free registration

*Framing Survey Questions* (<http://www.mindhacks.com/blog/2009/02/sir_humphrey_teaches.html>)

* View an amusing video clip from a TV comedy show (*Yes, Prime Minister*) that illustrates well how survey results can be manipulated. 2 minutes.