Social Influence
Social Cognition
Social Relations
Part One: Social Influence

Social psychology can be defined as the effects of the presence of others, whether real or imagined, on thoughts, feelings, and behavior. It emphasizes the role of situational (rather than personal) factors.

- **Conformity**
  - Asch (1956)
  - Prentice & Miller (1993)
  - Schroeder & Prentice (1998)
  - Chartrand & Bargh (1999)

- **Obedience**
  - Milgram (1963) and replications

- **Group Dynamics**
  - Diener & Wallbom (1976)
  - Gaertner & Dovidio (1977)
Conformity is the aligning of behavior or attitudes to those of others.

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<th>Situation</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informational Social Influence</td>
<td>conforming to others in situations of uncertainty</td>
<td>Anya stays calm in an emergency situation because those around her are calm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative Social Influence</td>
<td>conforming to observed social norms</td>
<td>Brett starts eating because he sees that others at the table have started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pluralistic Ignorance</td>
<td>conformity to imagined norms on a wide enough scale that they become actual social norms</td>
<td>No one understands the new concept in class, but no one asks questions because everyone believes everyone else understands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chameleon Effect</td>
<td>unconscious mimicry of body language</td>
<td>On their date, Steven and Valerie are sitting as mirror images.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Asch (1956)

**Participants:** 160 white male college students age 17 to 25 (37 in control group)

**Procedure:** For 18 trials, a large card with a line on it was shown next to a similar card with three lines. One at a time, between five and nine people were asked which of the three lines was the same length as the line on the first card. Everyone was a confederate except one participant, who always answered second to last. For trials #1, 2, 5, 10, 11, and 14, the confederates all gave the correct answer, and for the others they all gave the same incorrect answer (except in the control group). The lengths used in the actual experiment were proportional to, or more extreme than, those shown below.

**Independent Variable:** accuracy of confederates

**Dependent Variable:** incorrect responses

**Results:** Due to normative social influence, participants frequently followed the crowd and gave responses that were clearly incorrect.
Prentice & Miller (1993)

Participants: 242 Princeton undergraduates

Procedure: Participants answered a questionnaire that included three questions to estimate how comfortable people were about drinking habits among Princeton undergraduates.

Independent Variable: whom the question asked about—“you,” “your friends,” or “the average Princeton undergraduate”

Dependent Variable: comfort level, from 1 to 11

Results: On average, everyone thought everyone else was more comfortable with alcohol use than they were themselves, thus creating an imagined social norm of alcohol acceptance.
Schroeder & Prentice (1998)

**Participants:** 143 Princeton dorm residents in their first month of college

**Procedure:** Participants engaged in a 20-minute discussion about college drinking. The following semester, they responded to a survey that included questions about personal drinking habits (without realizing it was part of the same study).

**Independent Variable:** inclusion of pluralistic ignorance in discussion—none, or summary of Prentice & Miller (1993)

**Dependent Variable:** average drinks per week

**Results:** Compared to those in the control group, students who had learned about pluralistic ignorance consumed 40% less alcohol five months later.
Chartrand & Bargh (1999)

Participants: 39 New York University introductory psychology students

Procedure: With a confederate, each participant took turns testing the use of photos as thematic apperception tests.

Independent Variables: behaviors of the confederate—smiling, shaking foot, rubbing face

Dependent Variable: participant mimicry of confederate behavior

Results: Without realizing it, participants tended to mimic the behaviors of the confederates.
Participants: 72 New York University introductory psychology students

Procedure: The procedure above was repeated, but without the added behaviors, and followed by a survey.

Independent Variable: mimicry of the participant—none, or mimicry of posture, mannerisms, and movements

Dependent Variable: survey item “How likeable was the other participant?”

Results: Although none of the participants realized they were being mimicked, those that were gave higher ratings of likability of the other person, indicating that our natural tendency to mimic others may have adaptive significance.
Obedience is complying with direct commands. In general, obedience is a good thing to keep order, be it to parents, teachers, supervisors, law enforcement, military officers, or others. However, in some contexts blind obedience to authority is immoral, such as during the Holocaust. After World War II, research was done to try to learn what type of person could be capable of such atrocities. The results were shocking.
Milgram (1963) and replications

Stanley Milgram wondered if Asch’s surprising conformity results could be replicated in situations in which going along with the majority would not be harmless. He designed an Asch-like paradigm in which confederates would obey experimenter requests to administer harmful shocks to another confederate. However, in collecting his control data he found that people tended to obey experimenter requests even without social influence. He therefore changed his research to try to find what would decrease, rather than increase, unethical obedience to authority. Below are some variations by Milgram and others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Conditions with decreased obedience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to victim</td>
<td>people closer to victim, especially touching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimenter presence</td>
<td>no experimenter present, nonscientist experimenter, or contradictory experimenters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>neither</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>trailer not associated with Yale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissent</td>
<td>confederate teacher refusing to continue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Group Dynamics**

A group is a collection of interdependent individuals. Groups often behave in ways that the people within those groups would not otherwise behave.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deindividuation</strong></td>
<td>loss of sense of self and personal responsibility</td>
<td>Militaries and prisons create deindividuation through uniforms, number identifications, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group Polarization</strong></td>
<td>group attitudes shifting to extreme positions</td>
<td>Teachers agreed that a second dress-code offense should result in a three-day suspension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groupthink</strong></td>
<td>individuals accepting group decisions uncritically</td>
<td>NASA and Thikol Corp. went against recommendations of designers and engineers and launched the Challenger in below freezing temperatures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bystander Effect</strong></td>
<td>reduced likelihood for an individual to engage in helping behavior in emergency situations in which others are present</td>
<td>Kitty Genovese was raped and murdered in the middle of a New York City apartment complex.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diener & Wallbom (1976)

Participants: 28 University of Washington undergraduates

Procedure: Participants were left alone in a room to try a new version of an intelligence test. They were instructed that they should stop working after five minutes, at which point a bell would sound. To simulate common distractions, there was a mirror in the room, and they listened to headphones looping “My name is Lizzie Torrez. My eyes are brown. My hair is brown, and I am a student at the University of Washington.”

Independent Variable: Self awareness—mirror at an angle and random name and voice, or mirror directly in front and own name and voice

Dependent Variable: whether or not participants cheated by continuing after time was up

Results: People who could see and hear themselves were much less likely to cheat.

![Bar chart showing proportion of cheaters]

- 100%
- 75%
- 50%
- 25%
- 0%

yes made self-aware

no
Gaertner & Dovidio (1977)

**Participants:** 75 White female University of Delaware undergraduates

**Procedure:** Participants were placed alone in a “receiving room” and engaged in a test of ESP. Midway through, the sender says she is going to fix a precarious stack of chairs behind her, and then the chairs are heard crashing down as she screams.

**Independent Variable I:** presence of bystanders—zero or two additional people hearing sender in their own receiving rooms

**Independent Variable II:** race of victim—White or Black

**Dependent Variable:** whether or not the participant left the receiving room to get help

**Results:** The bystander effect—a much lower rate of helping when others were present—occurred only when the victim was believed to be Black.
Part Two: Social Cognition

Much of the effects of the presence of others on behavior is moderated by cognitive factors.

- **Attributions**
  - Gilbert, Pellham, & Krull (1988)

- **Attitudes**
  - Aronson & Mills (1959)

- **Compliance**
  - Guéguen, Meineri, Martin, & Grandjean (2010)
  - Cialdini et al. (1975)
  - Cialdini, Cacioppo, Bassett, & Miller (1978)
## Attributions

Attributions are assumed reasons for behaviors and events.

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<tr>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Serving Bias</strong></td>
<td>personal attributions for positive events and situational attributions for negative events</td>
<td>Kate believes that the reason she did well on her psychology test is that she studied a lot, and that the reason she did poorly on her English test is that the test didn’t cover what was on the study guide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fundamental Attribution Error</strong></td>
<td>dispositional attributions for others’ behaviors</td>
<td>Others assume the reason Kate did poorly on her English test is because she is a bad student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defensive Attribution</strong></td>
<td>dispositional attributions for others’ misfortunes as a defense mechanism to avoid anxiety that the same misfortune could happen to oneself</td>
<td>Sarah hears that Steve was mugged in Santa Cruz, but feels it wouldn’t happen to her because she doesn’t go to the seedier parts of Santa Cruz.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gilbert, Pellham, & Krull (1988)

**Participants:** 47 female University of Texas at Austin undergraduates

**Procedure:** Participants watched seven 20-second clips of a woman showing anxiety in a getting-to-know-you conversation. The clips had no sound, but the screen displayed the topic of each one. They were asked to rate the woman on dispositional anxiety.

**Independent Variable I:** anxiety levels of the topics—all mundane, such as favorite hobbies, or most of them anxiety-eliciting, such as public humiliation

**Independent Variable II:** cognitive load—low (only rating anxiety), or high (rating anxiety and also memorizing the seven topics)

**Dependent Variable:** rating of the woman’s dispositional anxiety from 0 to 12

**Results:** Participants with high cognitive load did not take situational factors into account.
## Attitudes

Attitudes both determine and are determined by behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of Attitude</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Perception</strong></td>
<td>people infer attitudes from their own behavior</td>
<td>I haven’t eaten meat in a long time, so I guess I don’t like it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive Dissonance</strong></td>
<td>anxiety resulting when one’s behaviors and beliefs don’t match, which can lead to changing of beliefs to match actions and thus reduce anxiety</td>
<td>Participants in Festinger &amp; Carlsmith’s 1959 study who were paid a small amount to say they enjoyed the incredibly monotonous task changed their attitudes to actually like it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aronson & Mills (1959)

Participants: 63 female Stanford undergraduates

Procedure: Participants listened in on a discussion on the psychology of sex. Beforehand, they were asked if they could handle such an awkward topic, and were told each person would be in a separate room with a microphone so she would feel less inhibited. The discussion turned out to be a boring and disorganized talk about sex among lower animals.

Independent Variable: “embarrassment test”: none, reading five mildly suggestive words aloud, or reading twelve explicitly vulgar words aloud

Dependent Variable I: enjoyment ratings, based on nine self-report 0-15 scales

Dependent Variable II: ratings of the others in the group, based on eight self-report scales

Results: Participants who completed the extreme embarrassment test gave higher ratings.
Compliance

Compliance is a change in behavior due to the request or desire of another. The compliance techniques below are commonly used by salespeople, solicitors, and others.

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<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foot-in-the-Door</td>
<td>first being granted a small request</td>
<td>“Now that you are sending in the petition, will you also donate?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door-in-the-Face</td>
<td>first being denied a very large request</td>
<td>“Since you don’t want to buy a ticket, would you at least buy a candy bar?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowballing</td>
<td>worsening the terms after the person is already ready to commit</td>
<td>“I was wrong: That one is actually $4800. Do you still want it?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s-Not-All</td>
<td>improving the terms before giving a chance to decline</td>
<td>“Plus you’ll get this travel mug absolutely free with your subscription!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>first performing a favor</td>
<td>“Free calendar enclosed! Please help us save the animals.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingratiation</td>
<td>flattery, agreement, etc.</td>
<td>“You’re right, your design is the most eye-catching. Would you be able to finish making the poster?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Guéguen, Meineri, Martin, & Grandjean (2010)**

**Participants:** 194 homeowners in Vannes, France

**Procedure:** Participants were asked if they would be willing to keep a record of their quantity of glass, plastic, and paper recycling for a month.

**Independent Variable I:** immediately prior smaller request—none, or being asked to respond to a four-question survey about recycling habits.

**Independent Variable II:** freedom to decline request—explicitly stated (“of course you are free to accept or refuse”) or not explicitly stated

**Dependent Variable:** compliance with request to keep records

**Results:** Establishing a foot in the door and emphasizing the freedom to decline both increased compliance.
Cialdini et al. (1975)

Participants: 72 Arizona State University students

Procedure: Participants walking by were stopped and asked if they would be willing to chaperone juvenile hall kids on a two-hour trip to the zoo or commit to two volunteer hours a week for two years as a counselor for juvenile hall kids.

Independent Variable: timing of small request (zoo chaperone)—alone without large request, simultaneous with large request as another option, or after large request was denied

Dependent Variable: compliance with request to chaperone zoo trip

Results: Participants who had previously been given (and declined) the major request were much more likely to comply with the small request.
Cialdini, Cacioppo, Bassett, & Miller (1978)

**Participants:** 63 Arizona State University undergraduates

**Procedure:** Participants were called and told about a 7:00 a.m. psychology experiment for which they could receive credit.

**Independent Variable:** when they were informed that the experiment was at 7:00 a.m.—before or after they were asked if they were interested in participating

**Dependent Variable:** whether or not they came to the experiment

**Results:**
Participants who learned of the early time after they already said they were interested were more likely to agree to participate, and were much more likely to actually show up.

![Proportion showing up](chart.png)
Part Three: Social Relations

Many factors in social psychology affect the way people interact with each other, in both positive and negative ways.

- **Ingroups and Outgroups**
  Sherif et al. (1954)
  implicit association tests
  Schug, Shusterman, Barth, & Patalano (2013)

- **Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination**
  Risen, Gilovich, & Dunning (2007)
  Word, Zanna, & Cooper (1974)
  Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner (2002)
Ingroups and Outgroups

An **ingroup** is a group to which a person belongs, and an **outgroup** is a group to which a person does not belong. This simple distinction, even when artificial, can significantly influence behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outgroup Homogeneity Bias</strong></td>
<td>tendency to assume that members of an outgroup are similar to each other</td>
<td>Many Americans believe that Muslims dress alike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Identity Theory</strong></td>
<td>idea that people derive self-identity and possibly self-esteem from the ingroups to which they belong</td>
<td>Jake is proud to be an American, a Cal student, and a 49ers fan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ingroup Bias</strong></td>
<td>tendency to favor ingroup members over outgroup members</td>
<td>Jake likes Robbie better than Mike because Robbie is a 49ers fan and Mike is a Raiders fan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimal Group Paradigm</strong></td>
<td>setup in which the ingroup is randomly assigned, inconsequential, or untrue</td>
<td>People told they are Rolth prefer other people who are Rolth despite not knowing what Rolth is.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sherif et al. (1954)

Participants: 22 homogeneous fifth-grade boys from Oklahoma City

Procedure: The boys were randomly split into two teams (without knowing of the other team’s existence) and went to a summer camp at Robbers Cave State Park. After a few days of team bonding, the teams were introduced to each other so they could compete in a five-day tournament with a big prize. In later days, they were brought together for noncompetitive events. Near the end, major problems happened to the camp, such as a water pipe breaking and a food truck breaking down.

Results: The two groups quickly hated each other during the tournament, and this animosity escalated to raiding cabins, burning flags, physical threats, and more. It did not decrease afterward when they were in noncompetitive situations. However, when problems happened that required the help of both teams to solve (e.g., to carry a huge new water pipe or to pull the food truck with a rope), the shared superordinate goals turned them into close friends.
Implicit Association Tests

Attitudes that people explicitly claim to have do not always match what they implicitly feel. For example, someone may claim to have no prejudicial feelings toward any race yet give preference to Whites without realizing it.

In the 1990’s, Anthony Greenwald and Mahzarin Banaji developed the concept of an implicit association test (IAT) to measure implicit attitudes. One variant of the IAT is as follows: The participant pushes one key every time a White face or something good is shown, and a different key each time a Black face or something bad is shown. After several trials, the keys for White and Black (but not for good and bad) switch. Having shorter response times for good things being paired with one race than with the other indicates and implicit preference for that race.

The example at right is from the gender-science IAT.
Schug, Shusterman, Barth, & Patalano (2013)

Participants: 80 children, ages 5 and 6

Procedure: Children were told of the “balloon” group and the “kite” group and were randomly assigned to a group and asked to select and wear a badge representing it. They then watched a series of 12 video clips in which a puppet was asked by another puppet to share some of its 20 pieces of candy. Five of the six puppets in one group shared half their candy, and the other shared only two; this was reversed for the other group.

Independent Variable: stingy group—ingroup or outgroup

Independent Variable II: puppet being rated—in-group or outgroup

Dependent Variable: change in liking of puppet

Results: Stingy behavior did not affect liking of the ingroup, but it did make the outgroup less likable—despite the fact that group membership was completely arbitrary and meaningless.
**Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination**

Stereotypes about a group of people, often formed through illusory correlation, can lead to prejudging individual people within the group, and, consequently, discriminatory action against the individuals even if they don’t fit the stereotype.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example after 9/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illusory Correlation</td>
<td>overestimation of a relationship, especially one between a rare event and a specific outgroup</td>
<td>A mental connection is formed between terrorism (a rare act) and Muslims (uncommon in America).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotype</td>
<td>a schema about a type of person, especially one that is negative, exaggerated, and resistant to change</td>
<td>Americans start thinking of Muslims as terrorists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prejudice</td>
<td>assumptions about individuals based on correct or incorrect information about groups containing the individuals</td>
<td>Steve hears about some Muslims that moved to Scotts Valley and is concerned they may be terrorists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>differential treatment, especially due to prejudice</td>
<td>Steve avoids being near the new Muslim residents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Risen, Gilovich, & Dunning (2007)

Participants: 133 Cornell undergraduates (81 Caucasian, 36 East Asian, 9 African American, and 7 Hispanic)

Procedure: Participants watched a video about an amateur film crew. The director of the film crew was uncommonly pushy. Later they watched a man hold up a series of 20 words with missing letters (e.g., D E ___ N D) and were told to make an impression of the man while completing the words. Finally, they interviewed a man online with their choice of 10 questions out of 20 provided.

Independent Variable I: race of the film crew director—South Asian or Caucasian

Independent Variable II: race of the men holding the word cards and being interviewed—South Asian or Caucasian

Dependent Variable I: proportion of words filled in as pushy (e.g., “demand” rather than “depend”)

Dependent Variable II: proportion of “pushy” questions (e.g., “Do you respect or resent salespeople who won’t take no for an answer?”) selected for interview
Results: Participants who experienced the combination of the uncommon behavior (pushiness) and uncommon race (South Asian) later had more pushy thoughts if they were interviewing a South Asian but not if they were interviewing a Caucasian. Watching a pushy Caucasian had no effect.
Word, Zanna, & Cooper (1974)

Participants: 14 White male Princeton students

Procedure I: Participants interviewed three high school students (confederates).

Independent Variable: race of interviewee—White or Black

Dependent Variable I: distance from interviewee

Dependent Variable II: shortness of interview

Dependent Variable III: speech error rate

Results: Blacks got a less favorable job interview.
Participants: 30 White male Princeton juniors and seniors

Procedure II: Participants were given a mock interview for a job.

Independent Variable: which behaviors the interviewers replicated from Procedure I—those observed in Black or in White interviews

Dependent Variable: interviewee performance, as judged by independent raters watching interview video

Results: The participants who were interviewed as if they were Black gave less impressive interviews, showing a self-fulfilling prophecy.
Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner (2002)

**Participants:** 40 White undergraduates

**Procedure I:** Participants were shown a P or an H, immediately followed by an adjective for them to quickly decide whether or not it could describe a person or house, respectively. Before each P or H, a subliminal facial prime was flashed for 22.5 milliseconds.

**Independent Variable I:** race of facial prime—Black or White

**Independent Variable II:** adjective affect—positive or negative

**Dependent Variable:** response latencies

**Results:** Latencies were significantly greater for positive adjectives after Black primes and negative adjectives after White primes than for negative adjectives after Black primes and positive adjectives after White primes. This difference was used as an independent variable measuring implicit racism for Procedure II.
Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner (2002), continued

**Procedure II:** Participants engaged in two three-minute conversations about modern dating. One of the conversations was with a White person and one was with a Black person.

**Independent Variable I:** explicit racism score, based on “Attitudes Towards Blacks” survey taken at start of semester

**Independent Variable II:** implicit racism score from Procedure I

**Dependent Variable I:** difference in friendliness between conversation with White and conversation with Black, based on verbal behavior (audio only)

**Dependent Variable II:** difference in friendliness between conversation with White and conversation with Black, based on nonverbal behavior (video only)

**Results:** Explicit racism scores only predicted verbal racist behavior. Implicit racism scores only predicted nonverbal racist behavior.