

A dense, colorful illustration of a diverse crowd of people of various ages, ethnicities, and styles. The style is a flat, graphic illustration with bold outlines and a limited color palette. The people are packed closely together, filling the frame. Some are wearing hats, glasses, or unique clothing like a star-patterned shirt or a fedora. The overall mood is one of a large, inclusive community.

7th  
edition

# social psychology

David G. Myers

7th edition

# social psychology

**David G. Myers**

Hope College  
Holland, Michigan



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# Preface

When first invited to write this book, I envisioned a text that would be at once solidly scientific and warmly human, factually rigorous and intellectually provocative. It would reveal social psychology as an investigative reporter might, by providing an up-to-date summary of important social phenomena, as well as how scientists uncover and explain such phenomena. It would be reasonably comprehensive, yet would also stimulate students' *thinking*—their readiness to inquire, to analyze, to relate principles to everyday happenings.

How does one select material for inclusion in a “reasonably comprehensive” introduction to one’s discipline—one long enough to allow rich narrative (to weave a story) but crisp enough not to overwhelm? I have sought to present theories and findings that are neither too esoteric for the typical undergraduate nor better suited to other courses in sociology or psychology. I have chosen instead to emphasize material that casts social psychology in the intellectual tradition of the liberal arts. By the teaching of great literature, philosophy, and science, liberal education seeks to expand our thinking and awareness and to liberate us from the confines of the present. Social psychology can contribute to these goals. Many undergraduate social psychology students are not psychology majors; virtually all will enter other professions. By focusing on humanly significant issues, one can present the fundamental content that pre-professional psychology students need in ways that are stimulating and useful to all students.

And what a feast of ideas social psychology offers! In all of recorded history, human social behavior has been studied scientifically for barely more than one century—the one just past. Considering that we have barely begun, the results are gratifying. We have amassed significant insights into belief and illusion, love and hate, conformity and independence.

Much about human behavior remains a mystery, yet social psychology can now offer partial answers to many intriguing questions:

- Will people act differently if they first adopt new attitudes? If so, how can we best persuade them?
- What leads people sometimes to hurt and sometimes to help one another?
- What kindles social conflict, and how can we transform closed fists into helping hands?

Answering such questions—my mission in the pages that lie ahead—expands our self-understanding and sensitizes us to the social forces at work upon us.

## Organization

The book opens with a single chapter that introduces our methods of inquiry. The chapter also warns students how findings can seem obvious—once you know them—and how social psychologists’ own values permeate the



discipline. The intent is to give students just enough to prepare them for what follows.

The book then unfolds around its definition of social psychology: the scientific study of how people *think about* (Part One), *influence* (Part Two), and *relate* (Part Three) to one another.

**Part One** on *social thinking* examines how we view ourselves and others. It assesses the accuracy of our impressions, intuitions, and explanations.

**Part Two** explores *social influence*. By appreciating the cultural sources of our attitudes and by learning the nature of conformity, persuasion, and group influence, we can better recognize subtle social forces at work upon us.

**Part Three** considers the attitudinal and behavioral manifestations of both negative and positive *social relations*. It flows from prejudice to aggression, and from attraction to altruism and concludes by exploring the dynamics of conflict and peacemaking.

**Applications** of social psychology are both interwoven throughout every chapter and highlighted in the applied chapters now clustered as three concluding modules, “**Social Psychology in the Clinic**,” “**Social Psychology in Court**,” and “**Social Psychology and the Sustainable Future**.”

This edition, like its predecessors, has a multicultural emphasis that can be seen in Chapter 6’s treatment of cultural influences as well as integrated throughout the text in the inclusion of research from various cultural settings. All authors are creatures of their cultures, and I am no exception. Yet by reading the world’s social psychology literature, by corresponding with researchers worldwide, and by traveling abroad I have sought to present the *world* of social psychology to a worldwide student audience. The book’s focus remains *the fundamental principles of social thinking, social influence, and social relations as revealed by careful empirical research*. But hoping to broaden our awareness of the whole human family, I aim to illustrate these principles transnationally.

To assist readers, I again organize chapters into three or four readable-length sections. Each begins with a preview and ends with a summary that highlight the organization and key concepts.

Believing with Thoreau that “anything living is easily and naturally expressed in popular language,” I have sought, paragraph by paragraph, to craft the most engaging and effective book possible. A bright, four-color design complements the text revisions and enhances the impact of the photos and figures. As before, definitions of key terms appear both in the margins and in the end-of-book Glossary.

## Seventh edition features

This seventh edition offers

- **Current Research:** A thorough updating, with more than 500 new citations and examples, keeps the text on the cutting edge of social psychology.
- **“Taking Social Psychology to Work” and “Taking Social Psychology into Life” vignettes.** New to this edition, these vignettes feature former students of this book telling how they have used social psychology in their varied vacations and lives. To make room for these, I have woven the best parts of many of the former “Behind the Scenes” vignettes

(featuring a sample of key investigators) into the chapter narrative. Others have been retained as “The Story Behind a Classic Theory.”

- **“Social Psychology in the Sustainable Future” Applications Module:** This crisp new module presents social psychology’s potential contribution to restraining materialism in the interests of an environmentally sustainable future. Reports from various national science agencies concur that we have overshot the earth’s ecological carrying capacity. We are now spending our environmental capital, not just living off the interest. With population and consumption both increasing, we are hurtling toward an environmental holocaust. Recognizing that the problems involve human behavior—it is we who drive gas-slurping sport utility vehicles, eat grain-slurping cattle, and operate tree-slurping deforestation machines—how can social psychology help?
- **Making the Social Connection:** A CD-ROM icon appears both within and at the end of each chapter, prompting students to use the Social Connection CD-ROM that accompanies the text to view brief video clips of researchers as they discuss topics that relate to the chapter.

## Seventh edition chapter changes

### Chapter 1 Introducing Social Psychology:

- New section on social psychology and biology
- New table: “Recognizing correlations and experimental research”

### Chapter 2 The Self in a Social World:

- New examples of individualism and collectivism across and within cultures
- New research on “immune neglect” and the ability to predict emotions
- New research on “excess of freedom” in individualistic modern cultures
- New research on “dual attitudes” (implicit and explicit)
- New Focus box: “The Curse of Knowledge”
- New section: “The Dark Side of Self-Esteem”

### Chapter 3 Social Beliefs and Judgments:

- Additional international examples of false attribution error and belief perseverance
- New priming research in “Thinking Without Awareness”
- New research on incompetence and overconfidence
- New research on behavioral confirmation

### Chapter 4 Behavior and Attitudes:

- Introduces concept of and research done on “moral hypocrisy”
- Updated coverage of attitude-behavior interplay

### Chapter 5 Genes, Culture, and Gender:

- New figure: World Gallup Poll—“Culture matters”
- Updated coverage of evolutionary psychology, culture, and gender
- New figure: “Who’s doing the housework?”

### Chapter 6 Conformity:

- Introduces terms “mood linkage” and “the chameleon effect”

- New Focus box: “Mass Delusions”

### **Chapter 8 Group Influence:**

- New figure: “Social facilitation or social loafing”
- New section: “Group Polarization in Communities”
- New section: “Group Polarization on the Internet”

### **Chapter 9 Prejudice: Disliking Others:**

- Many new examples of current research on
  - stereotyping
  - racial prejudice
  - gender discrimination
  - weight discrimination
  - the self-fulfilling prophecy
  - distinctive stimuli
  - implicit prejudice
- New table: “How Self-Enhancing Social Identities Support Stereotypes”

### **Chapter 10 Aggression: Hurting Others:**

- New figure: “Arrest rate for juvenile violent crime, USA”
- New figure: “War-related deaths over the centuries”
- New research on possible neurological and biochemical abnormalities causing violent behavior
- Updated coverage of research on television’s effect on behavior
- New Focus box: “Do Violent Video Games Teach Violence?”

### **Chapter 11 Attraction and Intimacy: Liking and Loving Others:**

- New research on ostracism
- New Australian research on “Who’s attractive?”
- New Focus box: “Bad Is Stronger than Good”
- New Focus box: “Does the Internet Create Intimacy or Isolation?”

### **Chapter 12 Altruism: Helping Others**

- New Focus box: “A Child’s Unreciprocated Compassion”
- New figure: “Private and public reciprocation of a favor”

### **Module A: Social Psychology in the Clinic:**

- Coverage of new meta-analyses of clinical versus statistical prediction of human behavior
- New Focus box: “Poverty, Inequality, and Health”

### **Module B: Social Psychology in Court:**

- New Focus box: “I Was Certain—And Wrong”

### **Module C: Social Psychology and the Sustainable Future:**

- All new! (except for material on wealth, relative deprivation, and happiness formerly in the aggression chapter)

## **In appreciation**

Although only one person’s name appears on this book’s cover, the truth is that a whole community of scholars has invested itself in it. Although none of these people should be held responsible for what I have written—nor do any of them



fully agree with everything said—their suggestions made this a better book than it could otherwise have been.

This new edition still retains many of the improvements contributed by consultants and reviewers on the first six editions. To the following esteemed colleagues I therefore remain indebted:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
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led the effort to create the new “Taking Social Psychology to Work” vignettes and did the painstaking work of creating the name index and page-referencing the bibliography.

Were it not for the inspiration of Nelson Black of McGraw-Hill, it never would have occurred to me to write a textbook. Alison Meersschaert guided and encouraged the formative first edition. Senior Sponsoring Editor Rebecca Hope and Director of Development & Media Sharon Geary helped envision the plan for this seventh edition and its teaching supplements. Senior Project Manager Susan Brusch patiently guided the process of converting the manuscript into finished book assisted by copy editor Laurie Baron’s perceptive fine-tuning.

To all in this supporting cast, I am indebted. Working with all these people has made the creation of this book a stimulating, gratifying experience.

David G. Myers  
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# Supplements

*Social Psychology*, seventh edition, is accompanied by a comprehensive and fully integrated array of supplemental materials, both print and electronic, written specifically for instructors and students of social psychology.

The supplements listed here may accompany Myers, *Social Psychology*, seventh edition. Please contact your McGraw-Hill representative for details concerning policies, prices, and availability as some restrictions may apply.

## **For the instructor:**

### **Instructor's Manual**

**Revised by K. Paul Nesselroade, Simpson College**

This manual has been highly praised as an excellent and useful tool for social psychology instructors, whether they are new to teaching or veterans of the course. For each chapter, the manual contains a chapter outline, lecture and discussion ideas, demonstrations, and project ideas for the classroom and student assignments. In addition, media resources are provided, accompanied by contact information of each producer and distributor for ease of use by instructors. To facilitate classroom activities and student review, the Instructor's Manual provides the chapter outline, demonstration, and project materials on separate pages for easy duplication and hand-outs.

### **Test Bank**

**Julia Jacks, University of North Carolina, Greensboro**

The printed test bank contains over 1,500 multiple-choice questions, which test both chapter and applied module material in the text. Each item is classified as definition, factual, and conceptual for easier selection and use by the instructor. Each item is accompanied by a page reference, tying the question back to the text.

### **Computerized Test Bank CD-ROM**

This CD-ROM provides a computerized test bank containing all of the questions in the print test bank and works with both Macintosh and Windows platforms. This CD-ROM provides a fully-functioning editing feature that enables instructors to integrate their own questions, scramble items, and modify questions.

### **The McGraw-Hill Social Psychology Image Database and Overhead Transparencies**

This set of 200 full-color images was developed using the best selection of our social psychology art and tables and is available as transparencies, on the Instructor's Resource CD-ROM, and on the Online Learning Center.

## **Instructor's Resource CD-ROM**

This tool offers instructors the opportunity to customize McGraw-Hill materials to create their lecture presentations. Resources for instructors include the Instructor's Manual, PowerPoint presentation slides, computerized test bank, and the Image Database for social psychology.

## **Online Learning Center**

This extensive web site, designed specifically to accompany Myers, *Social Psychology*, seventh edition, offers an array of resources for both instructor and student. For instructors, the web site includes a full set of PowerPoint Presentations, the electronic instructor's manual, and topical web links to related social psychology web pages. Visit the OLC at [www.mhhe.com/myers7](http://www.mhhe.com/myers7)

## **The Social Connection Video Modules**

McGraw-Hill has teamed up with Frank Vattano and Colorado State University's Office of Instructional Services along with Martin Bolt of Calvin College to produce an all-new series of video modules, *The Social Connection*. These video modules feature some of today's leading researchers discussing and illustrating their research and its application to everyday life. The modules also incorporate footage from classic research studies and new re-enactments of social psychology studies. The Social Connection Video Modules are also accompanied by a Faculty Guide, prepared by Martin Bolt.

## **The Candid Camera Video**

A second videotape set, edited and produced by Philip Zimbardo and Allen Funt, offers 3- to 5-minute clips from the original *Candid Camera* shows. These too follow the text's organization and can enrich and stimulate class discussion.

## **PageOut!—Build your own course website in less than an hour**

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## **For the student:**

### **Student Study Guide Martin Bolt, Calvin College**

For many students, the most helpful supplement to this text will be Martin Bolt's *Study Guide*. This highly rated guide provides students an array of materials from which they can test their comprehension of the chapter material. Included for each chapter are chapter objectives, an interactive chapter review, matching terms, true/false questions, multiple-choice questions, and short essay questions. In addition, answers are provided at the end of the study guide so students can check their progress along the way.

## Online Learning Center

This extensive web site, designed specifically to accompany Myers, *Social Psychology*, seventh edition, offers an array of resources for both instructor and student. For students, the web site offers quizzing, topical web links to relevant social psychology web pages, psychology in the news, an Internet primer, and a careers in psychology feature.

## The *Social Connection* CD-ROM

To compliment *The Social Connection* video modules, a student CD-ROM is packaged at no additional cost with each new copy of *Social Psychology*, seventh edition. This CD-ROM includes short clips of interviews with social psychology researchers; an icon within the chapter reminds students to watch a video clip using the CD. The CD also contains multiple-choice practice test questions prepared by Robert Pred of Chestnut Hill College, and each question is accompanied by immediate feedback. The CD also contains an assortment of interactive study resources.



# A Visual Walkthrough

## chapter outline

provides an overview of the chapter's organization and topic coverage.

## chapter opening vignettes

highlights a story or situation of great relevance to students of social psychology that helps the reader make important connections with the chapter concepts.

### Human nature and cultural diversity

Evolution and behavior  
Culture and behavior  
Social roles

### Gender similarities and differences

Independence versus connectedness  
Social dominance  
Aggression  
Sexuality  
Evolution and gender: Doing what comes naturally?  
Gender and mating preferences

Gender and hormones  
Reflections on evolutionary psychology

### Culture and gender

Gender roles vary with culture  
Gender roles vary over time  
Perv-transmitted culture

### Conclusions

Biology and culture  
The great lesson of social psychology  
Personal Postscript: Should we view ourselves as products or architects of our social worlds?

## chapter 5

# Genes, Culture, and Gender

approaching earth from light-years away, alien scientists assigned to study the species *Homo sapiens* feel their excitement rising. Their plan: to observe two randomly sampled humans. Their first subject, Peter, is a verbally combative Los Angeles trial lawyer who grew up in Nashville but moved west seeking the "California lifestyle." After an affair and a divorce, Peter is enjoying a second marriage, and he wishes he had more time to spend with his two children. Friends describe him as an independent thinker who is self-confident, competitive, and somewhat domineering.

Their second subject, Tomoko, lives with her husband and daughter in a rural Japanese village, a walk from the homes of both their parents. Tomoko prides herself on being a good daughter, loyal wife, and protective mother. Friends describe her as kind, gentle, respectful, sensitive, and supportive of her extended family.

From their small sample of two people of differing genders and cultures, what might our alien scientists conclude about human nature? Would they wonder whether both are actually of the same species? Or would they be struck by deeper similarities beneath the surface differences?

Behavior and Attitudes chapter 4 149

### the story behind the theory

Following a 1934 earthquake in India, there were rumors outside the disaster zone of worse disasters to follow. It occurred to me that these rumors might be "anxiety-justifying"—cognitions that would justify their lingering fears. From that germ of an idea, I developed my theory of dissonance reduction—making your view of the world fit with how you feel or what you've done.

Leon Festinger  
1920–1989



respond, "it's really very interesting. You get good exercise while turning some knobs. I'm sure you'll enjoy it." Finally, someone else who is studying how people react to experiments has you complete a questionnaire that asks how much you actually enjoyed your knob-turning experience.

Now for the prediction: Under which condition are you most likely to believe your little lie and say the experiment was indeed interesting? When paid \$1 for doing so, as some of the subjects were? Or when paid a then-lavish \$20, as others were? Contrary to the common notion that big rewards produce big effects, Festinger and Carlsmith made an outrageous prediction: Those paid just \$1 (hardly sufficient justification for a lie) would be most likely to adjust their attitudes to their actions. Having **insufficient justification** for their actions, they would experience more discomfort (dissonance) and thus be more motivated to believe in what they had done. Those paid \$20 had sufficient justification for what they had done and hence should have experienced less dissonance. As Figure 4-2 shows, the results fit this intriguing prediction.\*

In dozens of later experiments, the attitudes-follow-behavior effect was strongest when people felt some choice and when their actions had foreseeable consequences. One experiment had people read disparaging lawyer jokes into a recorder (for example, "How can you tell when a lawyer is lying? His lips are moving!"). The reading produced more negative attitudes toward lawyers when it was a chosen rather than a coerced activity (Hodden & Olson, 1994). Other experiments have engaged people to write essays for a measly \$1.50 or so. When the essay argues something they don't believe in—say, a tuition increase—the underpaid writers begin to feel somewhat greater sympathy with the policy. Advocating a policy favorable to another race may improve your attitudes—not only toward the policy but toward the race. This is especially so if something makes you face the inconsistency or if you think important people will actually read an essay with your name on it (Leippe & Eisenstadt, 1994; Leippe & Elkin,

\* There is a seldom-reported twist aspect of this 1950s experiment. Imagine yourself finally back with the experimenter, who is truthfully explaining the whole study. Not only do you learn that you've been duped, but the experimenter asks for the \$20 back. Do you comply? Festinger and Carlsmith note that all their Stanford student subjects willingly reached into their pockets and gave back the money. This is a forerunner of some quite amazing observations on compliance and conformity discussed in Chapter 9. As we will see, when the social situation makes clear demands, people usually respond accordingly.

## "the story behind a classic theory" and "the story behind a classic study" boxes

are interviews with famous social psychology researchers discussing how they became interested in their areas of research.

## key terms

are bolded in the main text and appear in the margin directly across from the relevant discussion for easier review by students.

**insufficient justification effect**  
reduction of dissonance by internally justifying one's behavior when external justification is "insufficient."



## quotations

appear throughout the text in the margins to help promote further thought and discussion about a particular topic.

## the Social Connection CD icon

appears in the margins throughout the text, reminding you to view a short video clip that illustrates or elaborates on the topic or researcher discussed in that section. Use the Social Connection CD ROM, packaged for free with new copies of this text, to access the video clip.

"A hen is only an egg's way of making another egg."  
Samuel Butler, 1835-1901

In 1999, American men spent \$4 billion for gym memberships and home exercise equipment (Cloud, 2000).



What are some predictions for gender and mating preferences?

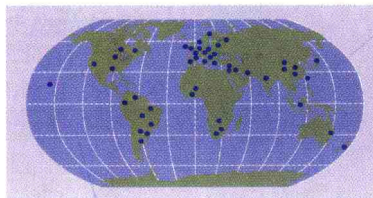
**figure 5-2**  
**Human mating preferences.**  
David Buss and 50 collaborators surveyed more than 10,000 people from all races, religions, and political systems on six continents and five islands. Everywhere, men preferred attractive physical features suggesting youth and health—and reproductive fitness. Everywhere, women preferred men with resources and status.

a confusion of ardor. But it is doubtful if the moth has an awareness of being caught in an aerosol of chemical attractant. On the contrary, he probably finds suddenly that it has become an excellent day, the weather remarkably bracing, the time appropriate for a bit of exercise of the old wings, a brisk turn upward.

"Humans are living fossils—collections of mechanisms produced by prior selections pressures," says David Buss (1995a). And that, evolutionary psychologists believe, helps explain not only male aggression but also the differing sexual attitudes and behaviors of females and males. Although a man's interpretation of a woman's smile as sexual interest usually proves wrong, occasionally being right can have reproductive payoff.

Evolutionary psychology also predicts that men will strive to offer what women will desire—external resources and physical protection. Male peacocks strut their feathers, and male humans their abs, Audis, and assets. "Male achievement is ultimately a courtship display," says Glenn Wilson (1994). Women, sometimes assisted by cosmetic surgery, strive to offer men the youthful, healthy appearance (connoting fertility) that men desire. Sure enough, note Buss (1994a) and Alan Feingold (1992), women's and men's mate preferences confirm these predictions. Consider:

- Studies in 37 cultures, from Australia to Zambia, reveal that men everywhere feel attracted to women whose physical features, such as youthful faces and forms, suggest fertility. Women everywhere feel attracted to men whose wealth, power, and ambition promise resources for protecting and nurturing offspring (Figure 5-2). Men's greater interest in physical form also makes them the consumers of most of the world's visual pornography. But there are gender similarities, too. Whether residing on an Indonesian island or in urban San Paulo, both women and men desire kindness, love, and mutual attraction.
- Men feel most jealous over their mate's having sex with someone else. Women tend to feel greater jealousy over their mate's becoming emotionally attached to someone else. Evolutionary psychologists say this gender difference reflects men's natural concern with their



Source: From Buss, 1994b.

## focus the self-fulfilling psychology of the stock market

On the evening of January 6, 1981, Joseph Granville, a popular Florida investment adviser, wired his clients: "Stock prices will nose-dive, sell tomorrow." Word of Granville's advice soon spread, and January 7 became the heaviest day of trading in the previous history of the New York Stock Exchange. All told, stock values lost \$40 billion.

Nearly a half-century ago, John Maynard Keynes likened such stock market psychology to the popular beauty contests then conducted by London newspapers. To win, one had to pick the six faces out of a hundred that were, in turn, chosen most frequently by the other newspaper contestants. Thus, as Keynes wrote, "Each competitor has to pick not those faces which he himself finds prettiest, but those which he thinks likeliest to catch the fancy of the other competitors."

Investors likewise try to pick not the stocks that touch their fancy but the stocks that other investors will favor. The name of the game is predicting others' behavior. As one Wall Street fund manager explained, "You may as well not agree with Granville's view—but that's usually beside the point." If you think his advice will

cause others to sell, then you want to sell quickly, before prices drop more. If you expect others to buy, you buy now to beat the rush.

The self-fulfilling psychology of the stock market worked to an extreme on Monday, October 19, 1987, when the Dow Jones Industrial average lost 20 percent. Part of what happens during such crashes is that the media and rumor mill focus on whatever bad news is available to explain them. Once reported, the explanatory news stories further diminish people's expectations, causing declining prices to fall still lower. The process also works in reverse by amplifying good news when stock prices are rising.

In April of 2000, the volatile technology market again demonstrated a self-fulfilling psychology, now called "momentum investing." After two years of eagerly buying stocks (because prices were rising), people started frantically selling them (because prices were falling). Such wild market swings—"irrational exuberance" followed by a crash—are mainly self-generated, noted economist Robert Schiller (2000).

accurate (Jussim, 1993). Also, people who are forewarned about another's expectation may work to overcome it (Hilton & Darley, 1985; Swann, 1987). If Chuck knows Jane thinks he's an airhead, he may strive to disprove her impression. If Jane knows that Chuck expects her to be aloof, she may actively refute his expectation.

William Swann and Robin Ely (1984) report another condition under which we are unlikely to confirm others' expectations: when their expectations clash with our clear self-concepts. For example, Swann and Ely found that when a strongly outgoing person was interviewed by someone who expected her to be introverted, the interviewer's perceptions changed, not the interviewee's behavior. In contrast, interviewees who were unsure of themselves more often lived up to the interviewer's expectations.

Our beliefs about ourselves can also be self-fulfilling. In several experiments, Steven Sherman (1980) found that people often fulfill predictions they make of their own behavior. When Bloomington, Indiana, residents were called and asked to volunteer three hours to an American Cancer Society drive, only 4 percent agreed to do so. When a comparable group of other residents were called and asked to predict how they would react if they were to receive such a request, almost half predicted they would agree to help—and most of these did indeed

## "focus" boxes

demonstrate how an important concept is used or applied in research or real life. These provide additional information to illustrate key ideas in social psychology.



## summing up

features appear at the end of each major section to help students review the major concepts before moving on to the next section of the chapter.

### Summing up

- the attitude is potent—because something reminds us of it, or because we gained it in a manner that makes it strong.

Do these conditions seem obvious? It may be tempting to think we “knew them all along.” But remember. They were not obvious to researchers in 1970. Nor were they obvious to German university students who were asked to guess the outcomes of published studies on attitude-behavior consistency (Sis & Krahe, 1984).

How do our inner attitudes relate to our external behavior? Social psychologists agree that attitudes and behavior feed each other. Popular wisdom stresses the impact of attitudes on behavior. Surprisingly, attitudes—usually assessed as feelings toward some object or person—are often poor predictors of behaviors. Moreover, changing people's attitudes typically fails to produce much change in their behavior. These findings sent social psychologists scurrying to find out why we so often fail to play the game we talk. The answer:

Our expressions of attitudes and our behaviors are each subject to many influences.

Our attitudes will predict our behavior (1) if these “other influences” are minimized, (2) if the attitude corresponds very closely to the predicted behavior (as in voting studies), and (3) if the attitude is potent (because something reminds us of it, or because we acquired it by direct experience). Thus there is, under these conditions, a connection between what we think and feel and what we do.

### Does behavior determine attitudes?

If social psychology has taught us anything during the last 25 years, it is that we are likely not only to think ourselves into a way of acting but also to act ourselves into a way of thinking. What lines of evidence support this assertion?

Now we turn to the more startling idea that behavior determines attitudes. It's true that we sometimes stand up for what we believe, but it's also true that we come to believe in what we stand up for (Figure 4-1). Social-psychological theories inspired much of the research that underlies this conclusion. Instead of beginning with these theories, however, let's first see what there is to explain. As we engage the wide-ranging evidence that behavior affects attitudes, play theorist. Speculate why actions affect attitudes and then compare your ideas with the explanations proposed by social psychologists.

Consider the following incidents:

- Sarah is hypnotized and told to take off her shoes when a book drops on the floor. Fifteen minutes later a book drops, and Sarah quietly slips out of her loafers. “Sarah,” asks the hypnotist, “why did you take off your shoes?” “Well . . . my feet are hot and tired,” Sarah replies. “It has been a long day.” The act produces the idea.
- George has electrodes temporarily implanted in the brain region that controls his head movements. When neurosurgeon José Delgado (1973) stimulates the electrode by remote control, George always turns his head. Unaware of the remote stimulation, he offers a reasonable explanation

“Thought is the child of Action.”  
Benjamin Disraeli, *Vivian Grey*, 1826

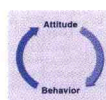


figure 4-1  
Attitudes and behaviors generate one another, like chickens and egg.

## “taking social psychology to work/taking social psychology into life”

boxes feature short essays by former student users of Myers' *Social Psychology* text. The social psychology alums write about how social psychology relates to their jobs and their lives.

## personal postscripts

from the author conclude every chapter and reflect on social psychology's human significance.

## making the Social Connection

This section, found at the end of each chapter, prompts you to view a brief video clip of a researcher highlighting how he or she first became interested in a particular area of social psychology.

### taking social psychology into life

I desperately wanted to consider myself a low self-monitor, as someone who is consistently genuine across varying social situations. But the truth was that large gatherings of my various friends, such as a birthday party, proved stressful. I had high school friends, friends from college, friends from my semester abroad, and former co-workers. I've always felt different expectations from each group. It's not that I become a completely different person when interacting with each group. Rather, I enjoy the comfort of knowing and following the “script” that accompanies each encounter. Self-monitoring helps me feel in sync with the friends I'm with.

Kara Wilson  
Mills College, '01



### Personal Postscript: Twin truths—The perils of pride, the power of positive thinking

The truth concerning self-efficacy encourages us not to resign ourselves to bad situations, to persist despite initial failures, to exert effort without being overly distracted by self-doubts. High self-esteem is likewise adaptive. When we believe in our positive possibilities, we are less vulnerable to depression and we increase our chances for success.

The truth concerning illusory optimism and other forms of self-serving bias reminds us that self-efficacy is not the whole story of the self in a social world. If positive thinking can accomplish anything, then if we are unhappily married, poor, or depressed, we have only ourselves to blame. For shame! If only we had tried harder, been more disciplined, less stupid. Failing to appreciate that difficulties sometimes reflect the oppressive power of social situations can tempt us to blame people for their problems and failures, or even to blame ourselves too harshly for our own. Life's greatest achievements, but also its greatest disappointments, are born of the highest expectations.

These twin truths—self-efficacy and self-serving bias—remind me of what Pascal taught 300 years ago: No single truth is ever sufficient, because the world is complex. Any truth, separated from its complementary truth, is a half-truth.



### Making the Social Connection

This chapter's discussion of self and culture explored research on individualism and collectivism by Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama, and we will consider their work again in future chapters. Use the Social Connection CD-ROM to view Markus recounting how the events of her life led her into this research and into their work together.