Unit 7: Study Guide
Social Psychology

In this section, students first learn how the structure and function of a given group may affect the behavior of the group as a unit (as in the case of group polarization) or the behavior of the individual group member (as in the case of deindividuation).

Students also learn the basic concepts of social cognition. One of these is attribution, the ways in which individuals form judgments about other individuals’ behavior and about their own. Attributions of behavior are a blend of situational and dispositional factors. The influence of stereotypes on attributions of behavior is also considered. Students learn that attitudes are relatively stable beliefs and feelings that individuals may have about controversial political issues, other social groups, or other individuals. Prejudice, for example is an unjustified attitude toward a given group or its cultural mores.

Students are also exposed to classic studies dealing with the concepts of conformity, compliance, and obedience and learn how findings in the laboratory setting can shed light on everyday behavior. For example, students discover from Stanley Milgram’s classic study on obedience that people may defer to a perceived authority figure on a decision as important as one involving life and death. Students also learn about the etiology and expression of aggressive/antisocial behavior and its impact on both the aggressor and the targets of the aggression, and ways psychologists have devised to reduce aggression or group hostility.

Finally, students are given an overview of the key concepts and theoretical perspectives of organizational behavior, that aspect of social psychology that has implications for analyzing the behavior and performance of individuals and group structures in organizations such as corporations or other business/industrial enterprises.

CR14: The course provides instruction in social psychology

Text: Chapter 18 (pp. 723 – 770)
Student Resources: Flashcards from text www.worthpublishers.com/myers8e
                      Stanford prison exp. www.prisonexp.org/
                      Social Psych Network www.socialpsychology.org
                      The Power of Conformity, Forty Studies, pp. 295 – 299
                      Obey at any cost? Forty Studies, pp. 308 – 316
Timeline: 6 days

An emphasis on
- Group dynamics
- Attribution Processes
- Interpersonal Perception
- Conformity, Compliance, Obedience
- Attitudes and Attitude Change
- Organizational Behavior
- Aggression/Antisocial Behavior
- (7 – 9 % of multiple choice)
Key Terms
Attribution Theory (Dispositional or Personal and Situation)
Fundamental Attribution Error (F.A.E.)
Illusion of Control
Foot-in-the-Door Phenomenon
Door-in-the-Face Technique
Cognitive Dissonance Theory
Normative Social Influence
Informational Social influence
Social Loafing
Group Polarization
Self-Fulfilling Prophecy
Stereotypes
Outgroup (“them”)
Scapegoat Theory
Just-World Phenomenon
Frustration-Aggression Principle
Tragedy of the Commons
Personal Space
Companionate Love
Proximity
Self-Disclosure
Bystander Effect
Diffusion of Responsibility
Social Loafing
Self-Serving Bias
Deindividuation
Group Polarization
Groupthink
Confirmation Bias*
Door-in-the-Face Technique
Conformity
Obedience
Compliance
Social Facilitation
Deindividuation
Prejudice
Agression
Conflict
Social Traps
Mere Exposure Effect
Passionate Love
Similarity
Equity
Altruism
Pluralistic Ignorance
Superordinate Goals
Social Exchange Theory (Utilitarianism)

Key People
Fritz Heider
Solomon Asch*
Stanley Milgram*
Kitty Genovese
Philip Zimbardo*

A. Are you just following the crowd or are the two lines really equal?
B. It’s all true. So many heard me. Why didn’t anyone help?
C. Sometimes we attribute someone’s behavior to their disposition.
D. You volunteered so obey me and zap him when he gets it wrong!
E. Sometimes the learning environment can be just like a prison.

Reading Objectives
Pages 723 – 741
1. What is meant by the fundamental attribution error?
2. What is the connection of attitudes from actions.
3. Distinguish normative social influence from informational social influence.
4. What is the influence of others on conformity and obedience?

Page 758 – 770
1. What is meant by the psychology of attraction?
2. Differentiate passionate from companionate love.
3. What is altruism?
Learning Outcomes (from the Myers text – Chapter 18: Social Psychology)

1. Describe the three main focuses of social psychology.
2. Contrast dispositional and situational attributions, and explain how the fundamental attribution error can affect our analyses of behavior.
3. Define attitude.
4. Describe the conditions under which attitudes can affect actions.
5. Explain how the foot-in-the-door phenomenon, role playing, and cognitive dissonance illustrate the influence of actions on attitudes.
6. Describe the chameleon effect, and give an example of it.
7. Discuss Asch’s experiments on conformity, and distinguish between normative and informational social influence.
8. Describe Milgram’s experiments on obedience, and outline the conditions in which obedience was highest.
9. Explain how the conformity and obedience studies can help us understand our susceptibility to social influence.
10. Describe the conditions in which the presence of others is likely to result in social facilitation, social loafing, or deindividuation.
11. Discuss how group interaction can facilitate group polarization and groupthink.
12. Identify the characteristic common to minority positions that sway majorities.
13. Identify the three components of prejudice.
14. Contrast overt and subtle forms of prejudice, and give examples of each.
15. Discuss the social factors that contribute to prejudice.
16. Explain how scapegoating illustrates the emotional component of prejudice.
17. Cite four ways that cognitive processes help create and maintain prejudice.
18. Explain how psychology’s definition of aggression differs from everyday usage.
19. Describe three levels of biological influences on aggression.
20. Outline four psychological triggers of aggression.
21. Discuss the effects of violent video games on social attitudes and behavior.
22. Explain how social traps and mirror-image perceptions fuel social conflict.
23. Describe the influence of proximity, physical attractiveness, and similarity on interpersonal attraction.
24. Describe the effect of physical arousal on passionate love, and identify two predictors of enduring companionate love.
25. Define altruism, and give an example.
26. Describe the steps in the decision-making process involved in bystander intervention.
27. Explain altruistic behavior from the perspective of social exchange theory and social norms.
28. Discuss effective ways of encouraging peaceful cooperation and reducing social conflict.