

**PowerPoint  
Presentations for  
PSYCHOLOGY  
CORE CONCEPTS  
Sixth Edition**  
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# Chapter 11



## Social Psychology

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## Social Psychology

Social psychologists try to understand behavior within its social context

*Social context* includes:

- real, imagined, or symbolic presence of other people
- Activities and interactions among people
- setting in which behavior occurs
- expectations and social norms governing behavior in a given setting

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## How Does the Social Situation Affect our Behavior?

### Situationism –

- Assumes that the external environment, or the behavioral context, can have both subtle and forceful effects on people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors

vs.

### Dispositionism-

- Attributes behavior to internal factors, such as genes, personality traits, and character qualities

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## Social Standards of Behavior

### Social role –

One of several socially defined patterns of behavior that are expected of persons in a given setting or group

### Social norms –

A group's expectations regarding what is appropriate and acceptable for its members' attitudes and behavior



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## Social Standards of Behavior

### Schemas

- Cognitive structure
- Cluster of related concepts
- Provides general conceptual framework for thinking about a topic, event, object, person, and situation
- Enables us to make predictions about what to expect in various settings



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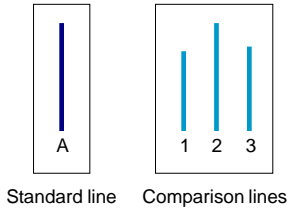
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## Conformity: The Asch studies

What would you say if you were in a room full of people who all picked line number three?



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## Conformity: The Asch studies



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## Group Characteristics That Produce Conformity

- When judgment task is difficult or ambiguous
- When group members are seen as competent
- When responses are given publicly
- When group majority is unanimous

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## The Brain and Social Conformity

### Social neuroscience

- uses methodologies from brain sciences to investigate social behaviors
- brain scanning technology (fMRI)
- different brain regions involved in independent judgments vs. conformity

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## Groupthink

In “groupthink,” members of the group attempt to conform their opinions to what each believes to be the consensus of the group

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## Conditions Likely to Promote Groupthink

Conditions likely to promote groupthink include:

- Directive leadership
- High group cohesiveness
- Isolation of the group
- Lack of norms requiring methodical procedures
- Homogeneity of members' social background and ideology
- High stress from external threats with low hope of a better solution than that of the group leader

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## Obedience to Authority

Imagine if an experimenter studying “the effects of punishment on memory” asked you to deliver painful electric shocks to a middle-aged man who had been treated for a heart condition

Each time the man missed an answer, you would be instructed to deliver an increasingly powerful shock



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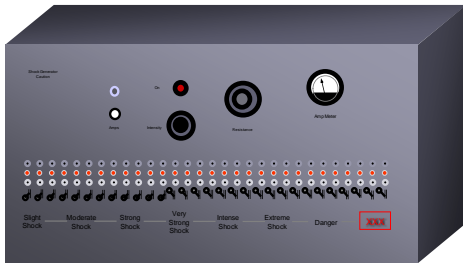
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## Milgram's Shock Generator



Two thirds of participants delivered the maximum 450 volts to the learner

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## Obedience to Authority

In Milgram's experiment

The victim was an actor

The victim received no actual shocks

Controversial experiment demonstrated powerful effects of obedience to authority

Situational factors, and not dispositional factors, appeared to effect people's levels of obedience

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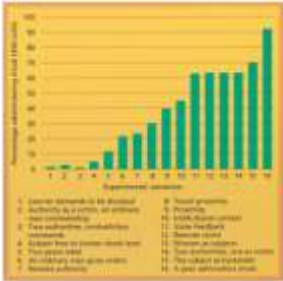
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## Obedience in Milgram's Experiments



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## When Do We Obey Authority?

- When a peer modeled obedience
- When the victim could not be seen or heard-anonymous
- When under direct surveillance
- When the authority had higher relative status

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## The Bystander Problem

### **Diffusion of responsibility-**

Dilution or weakening of each group member's obligation to act when responsibility is perceived to be shared with all group members



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## The Bystander Problem

- Experiment: A student was led to believe that the he or she was taking part in an experiment with between one and five other students (over an intercom)
- The student then heard what sounded like another student having a seizure and gasping for help
- The researchers timed how long it would take the students to ask for help

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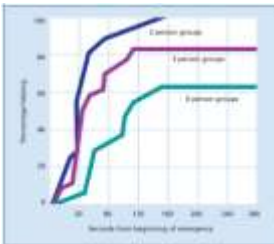
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## Bystander Intervention in an Emergency



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## Interpersonal Attraction

*Reward theory of attraction –*

- social learning view
- We like best those who give us maximum rewards at minimum cost

Proximity

Similarity

Self-Disclosure

Physical Attractiveness

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## Expectations and the Influence of Self-Esteem

### **Expectancy-value theory –**

People decide whether or not to pursue a relationship by weighing the potential value of the relationship against their expectations of success in establishing the relationship

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## Attraction and Dissonance

### **Cognitive dissonance theory–**

- When people's cognitions and actions are in conflict they often reduce the conflict by changing their thinking to fit their behavior.



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## Making Cognitive Attributions



### **Fundamental attribution error –**

Tendency to emphasize personal traits and minimizing situational influences

### **Self-serving bias –**

Attributional pattern in which one takes credit for success but denies responsibility for failure

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## Loving Relationships

- *Liking and loving are essential for happiness*
- *Love appears to be part of the circuit and chemistry of our brains*
- *Different types of love*
  - *Parent, friend, romantic*



### Romantic love –

A temporary and highly emotional condition based on infatuation and sexual desire



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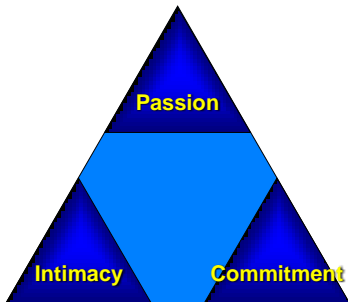
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## Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love



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## Prejudice and Discrimination

### Prejudice –

A negative **attitude** toward an individual based solely on his or her membership in a particular group

### Discrimination –

A negative **action** taken against an individual as a result of his or her group membership



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## Prejudice and Discrimination

### *In-group* –

The group with which an individual identifies

### *Out-group* –

Those outside the group with which an individual identifies

### *Social distance* –

The perceived difference or similarity between oneself and another person



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## Causes of Prejudice

Dissimilarity and Social Distance

Economic Competition

Scapegoating

Conformity to Social Norms

Media Stereotypes

Dehumanization

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## Combating Prejudice

Research suggests possible tools for combating prejudice:

- New role models
- Equal status contact
- Legislation

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## The Stanford Prison Experiment

- Participants randomly assigned to be prisoners or guards
  - Chosen from large pool of volunteers
  - No systematic differences between groups before experiment
  - Dramatic differences during the experiment
- Guards-behaved aggressively
- Prisoners-behaved pathologically passive
- A new social reality was created
- Forced the experiment to end



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## Terrorism

### *Terrorism –*

The use of violent, unpredictable acts by a small group against a larger group for political, economic, or religious goals

Taking multiple perspectives can provide important insights on the problems of aggression, violence, and terrorism

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## What induces aggressive behavior?



- Situations that create prejudice
- Frustration
- Threat
- Wounded pride

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