CHAPTER 1

Introducing Social Psychology

FOCUS Questions

1. What do social psychologists study?
2. How old is the discipline of social psychology?
3. Why was World War II so important in the development of social psychology in the United States?
4. What are the most important organizing concepts and perspectives in social psychology?

CHAPTER Outline

Introduction

1.1 What Is Social Psychology?

- 1.1a Social psychologists study how we are influenced by others.
- 1.1b Social psychology is more than common sense.
- 1.1c Social psychologists study how social reality is created (and re-created).
- 1.1d Social psychology is studied in both psychology and sociology.
- 1.1e Social psychology has both European and American roots.

1.2 Organizing Concepts and Perspectives in Social Psychology

- 1.2a The self is shaped by—and shapes—the social environment.
- 1.2b Our social thinking can be automatic or deliberate.
- 1.2c Culture shapes social behavior.
- 1.2d Evolution shapes universal patterns of social behavior.
- 1.2e Brain activity affects and is affected by social behavior.
- 1.2f Positive psychology is an emerging perspective in social psychology.

Key Terms

Websites

Introduction

It was a pleasant Saturday morning as Shazia, Catherine, and Leroy were ushered into a conference room at a local Milwaukee TV station. These three teenagers had been invited to audition for a reality news show on teenage life. The reporter for this upcoming show asked everyone to sit around a table and complete necessary paperwork before being interviewed on camera. One student in this audition session, Sam, arrived a bit later and—like the others—sat down to complete his paperwork.

When the reporter left the room to check on the next step in the audition process, the teens began conversing. Flashing a big smile, Sam announced that today was his birthday! Following a round of congratulations from the three others, Sam disclosed that he and his friends had been out all night long, drinking and celebrating, and that was why he was late. Sam then chuckled and said, "I was so hungover this morning that I had a couple shots of alcohol before my friends dropped me off at the TV station. I'm still messed up!" Sam's self-disclosure led the assembled group into a spirited discussion regarding similar incidents in their past, but they abruptly ceased talking when the news editor for the show walked into the room. The editor informed the four teens that they were now all going to travel across town to a different location to complete some of the audition tapes. The editor, reporter, and camera crew were going to ride in one van, while the teens followed in another vehicle. Then, producing a set of car keys, the editor announced, "I've been informed that it is Sam's birthday today, so Sam, you have the honor of driving Shazia, Catherine, and Leroy to the location where we will film!" After tossing the keys to Sam, the editor walked out, saying she would return shortly to escort them to their car.

How do you think Shazia, Catherine, and Leroy responded to the news that Sam was going to drive them across town? Would they voice the concerns they probably had about Sam's intoxicated state, or would they remain silent? What would you do if placed in such a situation?

In reality, Sam was not intoxicated; he was an actor playing the role of a drunken teen. The reporter and editor had set up this scenario, along with my guidance, to discover how the other three teens would respond. This entire event was being secretly filmed, with the permission of the teens' parents. I was in an adjacent room, watching the scene unfold on a video screen. As a social psychologist at nearby Marquette University, I had been asked by the reporter and editor to offer my input on what might happen. Can you guess how the teens responded? Did the three teens confront Sam while the editor was out of the room? Did the three teens inform the editor about Sam's condition when she returned to escort them to their car? Did the three teens actually get into the car with Sam behind the wheel, despite believing that he was not fit to drive?

1.1 WHAT IS SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY?

The reason I love social psychology is that it attempts to understand the social dynamics of everyday living—including our willingness to speak up and express our concerns when faced with a potentially dangerous situation. Here, perhaps more than in any other area of psychology, answers are sought to questions that we have all pondered at different times in our lives. Thus you, the new student of social psychology, will likely feel a natural affinity to this subject matter because it directly addresses aspects of your daily experience in the social world.

Social psychology can provide some insight into why none of the teens at the TV station voiced any concerns about Sam's competence to drive—not when they were alone with Sam, not when the editor returned, and not even when Sam was about to drive the car with them sitting inside.

1.1a Social Psychologists Study How We Are Influenced by Others.

Gordon Allport, (1897–1967) one of the influential figures in social psychology, provided a definition of the field that captures its essence. He stated that **social psychology** is a discipline that uses scientific methods in "an attempt to understand and explain how the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others" (Allport, 1985, p. 3).

To better understand this definition, let us consider a few examples. First, how might the actual presence of others influence someone's thoughts, feelings, and behavior? Consider how the presence of others influenced the teens' actions at the TV station. When the reporter asked Shazia, Catherine, and Leroy why they remained silent and put their lives in the hands of someone they thought was intoxicated, each stated that they were worried how the others might react to their speaking up. Instead of protecting their safety, they protected their social position in relation to their peers. Another example of the influence of others on an individual occurs when a basketball player prepares to shoot a free throw in a game. Fans from the opposing team often try to rattle the player by making loud noises and gesturing wildly in the hope of diverting the player's attention from the task at hand.

Why do people often fail to voice concerns when placed in a life-threatening situation, such as allowing an intoxicated person to drive? Pictured above is the Jackass *star Ryan Dunn, who was killed in a drunk-driving accident on June 20, 2011. Social psychology studies why people often fail to raise safety concerns during such life events.* (Shutterstock)

The imagined presence of others might also influence thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Think about past incidents when you were considering doing something that ran counter to your parents' wishes. Although they may not have been present, did their imagined presence influence your behavior? Imaginal figures can guide our actions by shaping our interpretation of events just as surely as do figures who are physically present (Honeycutt, 2003; Shaw, 2003). Despite the fact that Shazia did not voice her concerns about Sam driving the car at the time, in a debriefing session held immediately after halting the staged event, Shazia disclosed that, faced with a similar situation, she would now act differently. Smiling sheepishly, Shazia explained, "The next time, I will listen better to the voice of my mother inside my head, telling me to be smart and not get in the car!" With this statement, Shazia was articulating an important insight that social psychologists have documented in their research: In stressful situations, imagining the presence of others can lower your anxiety and provide you with an emotional security blanket (Andersen & Glassman, 1996; McGowan, 2002).

Finally, how can the implied presence of others influence an individual? Have you ever had the experience of driving on the freeway, going well beyond the speed limit, only to pass a sign with a little helicopter painted on it with the words "We're watching you" printed below? Did the implied presence of a police helicopter circling overhead influence your thoughts and feelings, as well as your pressure on the gas pedal? Similarly, fresh footprints on a deserted snowy path imply that others may be nearby, which might set in motion a series of thoughts: Who might this person be? Should I continue on my way or turn around, just to be safe?

Based on this discussion, you should better understand the kinds of topics we will analyze in this book. Although social psychology was once a relatively small field of scholars talking primarily to each other, there are now many opportunities for social psychologists to collaborate with the other sciences. Today, social psychology draws

social psychology
The scientific discipline that attempts to understand and explain how the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others

BVT Lab

Flashcards are available for this chapter at www.BVTLab.com.

on the insights of sociology, anthropology, neurology, political science, economics, and biology to gain a better understanding of how the individual fits into the larger social system. Capitalizing on this movement toward an "integrative science," in this text we will periodically analyze how sociologists, neuroscientists, anthropologists, ethologists, and biologists explain various aspects of social behavior.

1.1b Social Psychology Is More Than Common Sense.

Occasionally when I meet new people and tell them that I am paid a salary to study how people interact with one another, a few brave souls will press the point and ask, "Isn't social psychology just warmed-over common sense?" One reason people think social psychology simply rephrases what we already know is that its subject matter is so personal and familiar: We all informally think about our own thoughts, feelings, and actions, as well as those of others. Why would such naturally gained knowledge be any different from what social psychologists achieve through scientific observations? In many ways, this is true. For example, consider the following findings from social psychology that confirm what many of us already know:

- Attending to people's faces leads to the greatest success in detecting their lies. (Chapter 4)
- People who are paid a great deal of money to perform a boring task enjoy it more than those who are paid very little. (Chapter 5)
- Men express more hostile attitudes toward women than women do toward men. (Chapter 6)
- People think that physically attractive individuals are less intelligent than those who are physically unattractive. (Chapter 9)
- Playing violent video games or engaging in contact sports allows people to "blow off steam," making them less likely to behave aggressively in other areas of their lives. (Chapter 11)
- Accident victims are most likely to be helped when there are many bystanders nearby. (Chapter 12)

All these findings make sense, and you can probably think of examples from your own life that confirm them in your own mind. However, the problem is that I lied: Social psychological research actually informs us that all these statements are generally false—and the exact opposite is true. Of course, social psychology often confirms many commonsense notions about social behavior, but you will find many instances in this text where the scientific findings challenge your current social beliefs. You will also discover that by learning about the theories and research findings in social psychology, you will have a greater ability to make intelligent life choices. In this case, knowledge really is power.

"Not everyone's life is what they make it. Some people's life is what other people make it."

—Alice Walker, American author, born 1944

1.1c Social Psychologists Study How Social Reality Is Created (and Re-created).

Do you realize that you play a vital role in creating your own social world? If you'd like to personally experience your power to actively shape your social reality, spend a few

hours interacting with others while consciously smiling (making sure it's not a noticeably forced smile) and then spend another few hours wearing a frown or a scowl. I'm betting that the reactions of those around you—and your own mood—will be appreciably altered by these two different facial expressions (Frank et al., 2005).

The simple fact is that your social reality is not fixed and unchanging, but rather it is malleable and in a constant state of flux. In 1948, sociologist Robert Merton (1910–2003) introduced the concept of the **self-fulfilling prophecy** to describe how others' expectations about a person, group, or situation can actually lead to the fulfillment of those expectations. As Merton described it:

> "Imaginations which people have of one another are the solid facts of society."
>
> —Charles Horton Cooley, American sociologist, 1864–1929

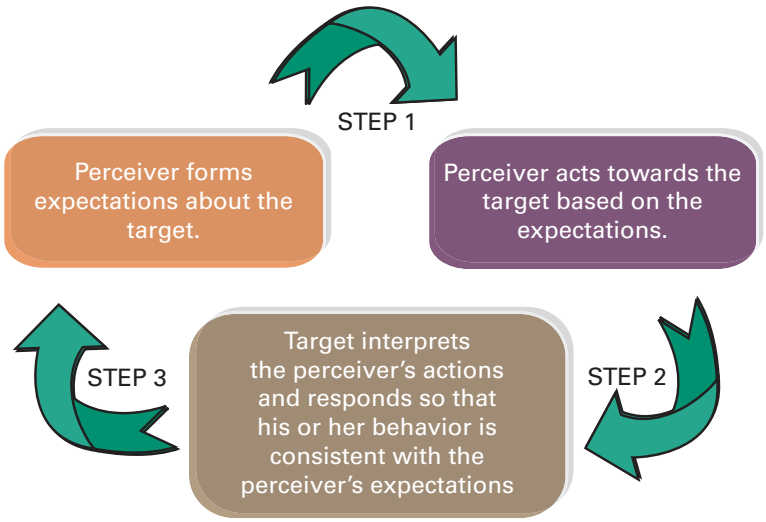
> The self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a *false* definition of the situation evoking a new behavior, which makes the originally false conception come *true*. The specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuates a reign of error. For the prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning. (Merton, 1948, p. 195)

The self-fulfilling prophecy involves a three-step process (refer to Figure 1.1). First, the perceiver (the "prophet") forms an impression of the target person. Second, the perceiver acts toward the target person in a manner consistent with this first impression. In response, the target person's behavior changes to correspond to the perceiver's actions (Diekmann et al., 2003; Madon et al., 2013). The more interactions the target has with the perceiver, and the more this three-step process is repeated, the more likely it is that the target will internalize the perceiver's expectations into his or her own self-concept.

self-fulfilling prophecy
The process by which someone's expectations about a person or group lead to the fulfillment of those expectations

Figure 1.1 The Development of a Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

Self-fulfilling prophecies involve three steps. In step 1, the perceiver forms expectations about the target. In step 2, the perceiver behaves in a manner consistent with those expectations. In step 3, the target responds to the perceiver's actions in a manner that unwittingly confirms the perceiver's initial beliefs. What personal qualities in a perceiver and in a target would make a self-fulfilling prophecy more or less likely?



Research indicates that behavioral changes brought about by self-fulfilling prophecies can be remarkably long lasting (Smith, A. E., et al., 1999).

The most famous empirical demonstration of the self-fulfilling prophecy was a study conducted by Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson (1968) in a South San Francisco elementary school. In this study, the researchers first gave IQ tests to children and then met with their teachers to share the results. At these information sessions, teachers were told that the tests identified certain students in their classroom as potential "late bloomers" who should experience substantial IQ gains during the remaining school year. In reality, this information was false. The children identified as potential late bloomers had been randomly selected by the researchers and did not differ from their classmates. Although the "potential late bloomer" label was fabricated for these children (approximately 20% of the class), Rosenthal and Jacobson hypothesized that the teachers' subsequent expectations would be sufficient to enhance the academic performance of these students. Eight months later, when the students were again tested, this hypothesis was confirmed. The potential late bloomers not only exhibited improved schoolwork but also showed gains in their IQ scores that were not found among the nonlabeled students (see Figure 1.2).

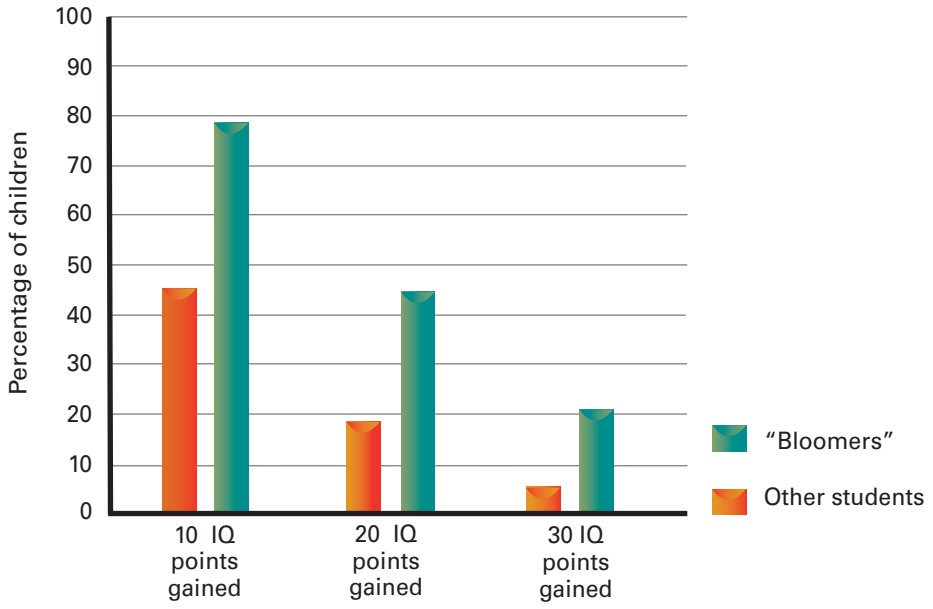
"If three people say you are an ass, put on a bridle."

—Spanish proverb

Follow-up studies indicated that teachers treat differently students who are positively labeled in this manner (Jussim et al., 2009). First, teachers create a warmer *socioemotional climate* for these students than for those who are perceived less

Figure 1.2 Improvement in Schoolchildren's IQ Scores Due to the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

First- and second-grade students identified as "potential late bloomers" showed a significant improvement in their IQ test scores during the course of the school year. These findings suggest that teachers' expectations about students, regardless of the validity of those findings, can profoundly shape those students' subsequent academic achievements. Self-fulfilling prophecies can also operate in reverse, causing normally capable children to believe that they are intellectually inferior to others. What types of schoolchildren are most likely to be labeled in this negative manner?



positively. Second, they provide these gifted students with more *feedback* on their academic performance than they do their average students. Third, they *challenge* these positively labeled students with more difficult material than the rest of the class. Finally, they provide these students with *greater opportunity* to respond to presented material in class. These positively labeled students are likely to assume the teacher especially likes them and has good judgment or that the teacher is a likable person. Whichever attribution is made, it is likely that the positively labeled students will work harder and begin thinking about themselves as high achievers. Through this behavioral and self-concept change, the prophecy is fulfilled.

When a student is labeled as "troubled" his teachers and peers often treat him/her negatively. This reinforces the "troubled" label and may cause the student to act out more often, fulfilling the prophecy. (iStock)

Unfortunately, not all self-fulfilling prophecies are positive. Teachers and fellow students often treat children who are negatively labeled "troubled" or "disruptive" in a way that reinforces the negative label so that it is more likely to be internalized (Rosenthal, 2003). To better understand this sort of negative self-concept change, Monica Harris and her colleagues (1992) studied the impact of *negative expectancies* on children's social interactions. In the research, 68 pairs of unacquainted boys in third through sixth grade played together on two different tasks. The researchers designated one of the boys in the pairing as the *perceiver* and the other as the *target.* Half of the target boys had been previously diagnosed as being hyperactive, and the rest of the participants—the remaining targets and all the perceivers—had no history of behavioral problems. Prior to playing together, some perceivers were told (independently of their partner's actual behavior) that their partner had a special problem and may give them a hard time: He disrupted class a lot, talked when he shouldn't, didn't sit in his chair, and often acted silly. In contrast, other perceivers were not given this information. One of the activities the two boys mutually engaged in was an unstructured, cooperative task in which they planned and built a design with plastic blocks; the other task was more structured and competitive—separately coloring a dinosaur as quickly as possible, using the same set of crayons. The boys' behavior on both tasks was videotaped and later rated by judges on a number of dimensions, such as friendliness, giving commands, and offering plans or suggestions. The boys also reported their own feelings and reactions to the tasks.

How do you think these different expectations shaped social reality? Consistent with the self-fulfilling prophecy, the target boys with partners who believed they had a behavioral problem enjoyed the tasks less, rated their own performances as poorer, and took less credit for success than did boys with partners who were not expecting such problems. Likewise, boys who held negative expectancies about their partners enjoyed the tasks less, worked less hard on them, talked less, liked their partners less, and were less friendly to them than did perceivers who were not provided with negative expectancies. These findings indicate that when people have negative expectations about others, they are more likely to treat those individuals in a negative manner; targets of such negative treatment react in kind, thus confirming the initial negative expectations. For half of the boys in this study, the negative expectations were groundless; however, this did not alter the outcome of the interaction. Unfortunately, this form of self-fulfilling prophecy is all too common, and over time it leads to negative self-beliefs and low self-esteem. Additional research indicates that these educationally based self-fulfilling prophecies

THINKING CRITICAL

Do you think that a judge's beliefs about the guilt or innocence of a defendant in a criminal trial could create a self-fulfilling prophecy among the jury, even if the judge does not voice her opinions?

have a stronger impact on elementary school students from lower-income families than on students from more affluent homes (Sorhagen, 2013). This latter finding points to the possibility that teachers' underestimation of poor children's academic abilities may be one factor that contributes to the persistent and worrisome gap in achievement between children from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

How might these findings apply to your own life? Think of instances in your life when the negative expectations of others may have created undesirable self-fulfilling prophecies. If you can identify someone whom you've viewed and treated in a negative fashion, try a little exercise to reverse this process. The next time you interact with that person, put aside your negative expectations and instead treat him as if he were your friend. Based on the research we have reviewed here, by redefining that person in your own eyes, you may create a new definition of social reality in his as well. People you thought were unfriendly, and even hostile, may respond to your redefinition by acting warm and friendly. If you are successful in redefining a particular social reality, you will have fulfilled one of my own prophecies about the readers of this text—namely, that those who learn about social psychological principles will use this knowledge to improve the quality of their social relationships.

To encourage you to apply social psychological knowledge to your daily life, included in this text are opportunities for you to learn how specific topics relate to yourself. Each of these *Self/Social Connection* exercises consists of a self-report questionnaire or technique used by social psychologists in studying a particular area of social behavior. By completing and scoring each measure for yourself, you will gain insight into how this topic relates to your own life. By personally applying social psychological knowledge in this manner, you are not only much more likely to absorb the content of this text (and thereby perform better in this course), but you are also more likely to apply this knowledge outside the classroom.

"Self-knowledge is best learned, not by contemplation, but action."

—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, German author, 1749–1832

1.1d Social Psychology Is Studied in Both Psychology and Sociology.

You might be surprised to learn that there actually are two scientific disciplines known as social psychology, one in psychology and the other in sociology, with the larger of the two being the psychological branch. Both disciplines study social behavior, but they do so from different perspectives (Fiske & Molm, 2010; Gergen, 2012).

The central focus of *psychological social psychology* tends to be individuals and how they respond to social stimuli. Variations in behavior are believed to stem from people's interpretations of social stimuli and differences in their personalities and temperaments. Even when psychological social psychologists study group dynamics, they generally emphasize the processes that occur at the individual level. This text reflects the psychological perspective of social psychology.

In contrast, *sociological social psychology* downplays the importance of individual differences and the effects of immediate social stimuli on behavior. Instead, the focus is on larger group or societal variables—such as people's socioeconomic status, their social roles, and cultural norms. The role these larger group variables play in determining social behavior is of more interest to this discipline than to its psychological "cousin." Therefore, sociological social psychologists are more interested in providing explanations for such societal problems as poverty, crime, and deviance.

Although there have been calls to merge the two branches into a single field—and even a joint psychology–sociology doctoral program at the University of Michigan from

1946 to 1967—their different orientations make it doubtful that this will transpire in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, the two disciplines will continue to provide important, yet differing, perspectives on social behavior.

1.1e Social Psychology Has Both European and American Roots.

As a scientific discipline, social psychology is only 150 years old, with most of the growth occurring during the past 70 years. By most standards, social psychology is a relatively young science (Franzoi, 2007; Morawski & Bayer, 2013).

Dawning of a Scientific Discipline: 1862–1894

German psychologist Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920), who is widely regarded as the founder of psychology, had a hand in the early development of social psychology. Early in Wundt's career (1862), he predicted that there would be two branches of psychology: physiological psychology and social or folk psychology *(Völkerpsychologie).* In dividing psychology into two branches, his reasoning was that the type of individual psychology studied in the laboratory by physiological psychologists could not account for the more complex cognitive processes required for social interaction. Although social behavior involves distinct individuals, Wundt argued that the product of this social interaction is more than the sum of the individuals' mental activities. Because of this distinction, Wundt asserted that while physiological psychology was part of the natural sciences and aligned with biology, social psychology was a "social science," with its parent discipline being philosophy. He further argued that while physiological psychologists should conduct experiments in studying their phenomena, social psychologists should employ nonexperimental methods because such an approach best captures the complexity of social interaction.

German psychologist Wilhelm Wundt, founder of psychology, provided some of the earliest scholarly work that inspired the development of social psychology. (Wikimedia Commons)

Although Wundt's 10 volumes on social psychology influenced scholars in Europe, his work remained largely unknown to American social scientists because it was not translated into English. These young American scientists were also much more interested in being identified with the natural sciences than with continuing an alliance with philosophy, further hindering Wundt's ability to shape their ideas. Although Wundt's notion that social psychology was a social science was compatible with the nineteenth-century conception of psychology as the "science of the mind" and was embraced by a number of European scholars, it was incompatible with the new behaviorist perspective in the United States that emerged during the early years of the twentieth century.

Underlying behaviorism was a philosophy known as *logical positivism,* which contended that knowledge should be expressed in terms that could be verified empirically or through direct observation. This new "science of behavior" had little use for Wundt's conception of social psychology and its reliance on nonexperimental methodology. An emerging American brand of social psychology defined itself in terms of behaviorist principles, using the experiment as its chosen research method. This was especially true for psychological social psychology in America, which would become the intellectual core of

the discipline and which developed outside the influence of Wundt's writings. In contrast, Wundt's writings indirectly affected American sociological social psychology because one of its founders, George Herbert Mead (1863–1931), paid serious attention to the German scholar's work. Today Mead's symbolic interactionist perspective remains an active area of theory and research in American sociology.

In 1924 Floyd Allport (1890–1978) published Social Psychology, *a book that demonstrates how carefully conducted research can provide valuable insights into a wide range of social behaviors.* (University of Syracuse)

Early Years: 1895–1935

Norman Triplett (1861–1931), an American psychologist at Indiana University, is credited with conducting the first social psychology experiment in 1895. In order to investigate how a person's performance of a task changes when other people are present, Triplett asked children to quickly wind line on a fishing reel, either alone or in the presence of other children performing the same task. As predicted, the children wound the line faster when in the presence of other children. Published in 1897, this study formally introduced the experimental method into the social sciences. Eleven years later, in 1908, English psychologist William McDougall (1871–1938) and American sociologist Edward Ross (1866–1951) separately published the first two textbooks in social psychology. Consistent with contemporary psychological social psychology, McDougall's text identified the individual as the principal unit of analysis; Ross's text, true to contemporary sociological social psychology, instead highlighted groups and the structure of society.

Despite the inauguration of this new subfield within psychology and sociology, social psychology still lacked a distinct identity. How was it different from the other subdisciplines? What were its methods of inquiry? In 1924 a third social psychology text, published by Floyd Allport (older brother of Gordon Allport), went a long way in answering these questions for psychological social psychology. Reading his words today, you can see the emerging perspective of psychological social psychology:

> I believe that only within the individual can we find the behavior mechanisms and consciousness which are fundamental in the interactions between individuals. … There is no psychology of groups which is not essentially and entirely a psychology of individuals. … Psychology in all its branches is a science of the individual. (Allport, 1924, p. 4)

Allport's conception of social psychology was proposed 11 years after John Watson (1878–1958) had ushered in the behaviorist era in American psychology. Allport's brand of social psychology emphasized how the person responds to stimuli in the social environment, with the group merely being one of many such stimuli. Allport shaped the identity of American social psychology by emphasizing the experimental method in studying such topics as conformity, nonverbal communication, and social facilitation. His call for the pursuit of social psychological knowledge through carefully controlled experimental procedures contrasted with the more philosophical approach that both Ross and McDougall had taken 16 years earlier.

Overseas, German social psychology was being shaped by *Gestalt* psychology, which emphasized that the mind actively organizes stimuli into meaningful wholes. Gestalt social psychologists contended that the social environment is made up not only of individuals but also of relations between individuals, and these relationships have important psychological implications. Thus, Gestalt social psychologists promoted an understanding of groups as real social entities, which directly led to the tradition of group processes and group dynamics that still exists today. These two independently developing schools of thought within psychological social psychology—one in America and the other in Germany—would soon be thrust together due to events on the world scene.

Coming of Age: 1936–1945

BVT Lab

Visit www.BVTLab.com to explore the student resources available for this chapter.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, Allport's conception of social psychology emphasized basic research, with little consideration given to addressing social problems. However, by the mid-1930s, the discipline was poised for further growth and expansion. The events that had the greatest impact on social psychology at this critical juncture in its history were the Great Depression in the United States and the social and political upheavals in Europe generated by the First and Second World Wars.

Following the stock market crash of 1929, many young psychologists were unable to find or hold jobs. Experiencing firsthand the impact of societal forces, many of them adopted the liberal ideals of Franklin Roosevelt's "New Dealers"—or even the more radical left-wing political views of the Socialist and Communist parties. In 1936 these social scientists formed an organization dedicated to scientifically studying important social issues and supporting progressive social action. This organization, the *Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues* (SPSSI), contained many social psychologists who were interested in applying both their theories and political activism to real-world problems. One of the important contributions the SPSSI made to social psychology was, and continues to be, the infusion of ethics and values into the discussion of social life.

At the same time, the rise of fascism in Germany, Spain, and Italy created a strong anti-intellectual and anti-Semitic atmosphere in many of Europe's universities. To escape this persecution, many of Europe's leading social scientists—such as Fritz Heider, Gustav Ichheiser, Kurt Lewin, and Theodor Adorno—immigrated to America. When the United States entered the war, many social psychologists (both American and European) applied their knowledge of human behavior to wartime programs, including the selection of officers for the Office of Strategic Services (the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency) and the undermining of enemy morale (de Miguel et al., 2011; Hoffman, 1992). The constructive work resulting from this collaboration demonstrated the practical applications of social psychology.

During this time of global strife, one of the most influential social psychologists was Kurt Lewin (1890–1947), a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany. Lewin was instrumental in founding the SPSSI and served as its president in 1941. He firmly believed that social psychology did not have to choose between being either a pure science or an applied science. His oft-repeated maxim, "No research without action, and no action without research," continues to influence social psychologists interested in applying their knowledge to current social problems (Ash, 1992). By the time of his death at the age of 57, Lewin had provided social psychology with many of its defining characteristics and had trained many of the young American scholars who would become the leaders of contemporary social psychology (Pettigrew, 2010).

With the end of the war, prospects were bright for social psychology in North America. Based on their heightened scientific stature, social psychologists established new research facilities, secured government grants, and, most important, trained graduate students. Yet while social psychology was flourishing in America, the devastating effects of the world war seriously hampered the discipline overseas—especially in Germany. In this postwar period, the United States emerged as a world power, and just as it exported its material goods to other countries, it exported its social psychology as well. Beyond the influence exerted by the liberal leanings of its members, this brand of social psychology also reflected the political ideology of American society and the social problems encountered within its boundaries (Farr, 1996).

Rapid Expansion: 1946–1969

With its infusion of European intellectuals and the recently trained young American social psychologists, the maturing science of social psychology expanded its theoretical and

research base. To understand how a civilized society like Germany could fall under the influence of a ruthless dictator like Adolf Hitler, Theodor Adorno (1903–1969) and his colleagues studied the *authoritarian personality*—analyzing how personality factors emerging during childhood shape later adult obedience and intolerance of minorities. Some years later, Stanley Milgram (1933–1984) extended this line of research in his now-famous obedience experiments, which examined the situational factors that make people more likely to obey destructive authority figures. Social psychologists also focused their attention on the influence of the group on the individual (Asch, 1956) and on the power of persuasive communication (Hovland et al., 1949). Arguably the most significant line of research and theorizing during this period was Leon Festinger's (1910–1989) theory of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957), which asserted that people's thoughts and actions were motivated by a desire to maintain cognitive consistency. The simplicity of the theory and its often-surprising findings generated interest and enthusiasm both inside and outside of social psychology for many years.

Kenneth and Mamie Phipps Clark conducted groundbreaking research on the self-concepts of black children. In 1971, Kenneth Clark became the first African American to be elected president of the American Psychological Association. (iStock)

Social psychology's concern with societal prejudice continued to assert itself during the 1950s. For example, the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision to end the practice of racially segregated education was partly based on Kenneth Clark (1914–2005) and Mamie Phipps Clark's (1917–1983) research indicating that segregation negatively affected the self-concepts of black children. In that same year, Gordon Allport provided a theoretical outline for how desegregation might reduce racial prejudice: the contact hypothesis.

The 1960s were a time of social turmoil in the United States, with the country caught in the grip of political assassinations, urban violence, social protests, and the Vietnam War. People were searching for constructive ways to change society for the better. Following this lead, social psychologists devoted more research to such topics as aggression, helping, attraction, and love. As the federal government expanded its attempts to cure societal ills with the guidance of social scientists, the number of social psychologists rose dramatically. Among these new social scientists were an increasing number of women and, to a lesser degree, minority members. Whole new lines of inquiry into social behavior commenced, with an increasing interest in the interaction between social situations and personality factors.

Crisis and Reassessment: 1970–1984

The explosion of research in the 1960s played a part in another explosion of sorts in the area of research ethics because a few controversial studies appeared to put participants at risk for psychological harm. The most controversial of these studies was the previously mentioned obedience experiments conducted by Milgram, in which volunteers were ordered to deliver seemingly painful electric shocks to another person as part of a "learning experiment." In reality, no shocks were ever delivered—the victim was a confederate and only pretended to be in pain—but the stress experienced by the participants was indeed real. Although this study and others of its kind asked important questions about social behavior, serious concerns were raised about whether the significance of the research justified exposing participants to potentially harmful psychological consequences. Spurred by the debate surrounding these issues, in 1974 the U.S. government developed regulations requiring all institutions seeking federal funding to establish institutional review boards that would ensure the health and safety of human participants.

While concerns were being raised about the ethical treatment of human research participants, social psychologists were simultaneously questioning the validity of their scientific methods and asking themselves whether their discipline was a relevant and useful science to begin with. When social psychology first emerged from World War II and embarked on its rapid expansion, expectations were high that social psychologists could work hand-in-hand with various organizations to solve many social problems. By the 1970s, with these problems still unsolved, a "crisis of confidence" emerged (Elms, 1975). This disappointment and criticism of social psychology was followed by accusations from women and minorities that past research and theory reflected the biases of a white, male-dominated view of reality, and many began to reassess the field's basic premises. Fortunately, out of this crisis emerged a more vital and inclusive field of social psychology—one employing more diverse scientific methods while also having more diversity within its membership.

One final important development during this period was the importation of ideas from cognitive psychology in explaining social behavior. This "cognitive revolution" (see p. 18) greatly enhanced theory and research in all areas of social psychology, and its impact persists today.

Expanding Global and Interdisciplinary View: 1985 to the Present

By the 1970s, both European and Latin American social psychological associations had been founded, and in 1995 the Asian Association of Social Psychology was formed. This overseas social psychology placed more emphasis on intergroup and societal variables than did its American cousin. By the mid-1980s the growing influence of social psychology beyond the borders of the United States was well on its way in reshaping the discipline, as scholars throughout the world actively exchanged ideas and collaborated on multinational studies. One of the principal questions generated by this exchange of information was: Which aspects of human behavior are *culture specific* (i.e., due to conditions existing within a particular culture), and which ones are due to our shared *evolutionary* heritage? Although social psychology's "professional center of gravity" still resides in the United States, social psychology in other world regions offers the entire field opportunities to escape what some consider the limitations of this "gravitational pull" and to perceive new worlds of social reality (Ross et al., 2010). This multicultural perspective will continue to guide research in the coming years.

Contemporary social psychologists have also continued the legacy of Kurt Lewin and the SPSSI by applying their knowledge to the wide array of phenomena that make up everyday life—such as law, health, education, politics, sports, and business. In commenting on the goals of a social psychology graduate program, social psychologist Morton Deutsch captures what many in the discipline still see as its ideal: "I wanted to create tough-minded but tender-hearted students. Science is very important. But science without a heart can be destructive. And a heart without a mind is not very valuable." This interest in applying the principles and findings of social psychology is a natural outgrowth of the search for understanding.

If the life of a science is similar to a person's life, then contemporary social psychology is best thought of as a "young adult" among the social sciences; compared to the more established sciences, social psychology is "barely dry behind the ears." Yet it is a discipline where new and innovative ideas are unusually welcome and where new theoretical approaches and scientific methods (often from other scientific disciplines) are regularly incorporated. Some social psychology milestones are listed in the timeline on pp. 31–32. Let us now examine some of the organizing concepts and perspectives in this discipline.

Section Summary

- Social psychology uses scientific methods to study how the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others.
- Social reality is changeable, with people's expectations about a person, group, or situation often leading to the fulfillment of those expectations.
- Social psychology has both psychological and sociological branches.
- Although social psychology has a distinct American imprint, its focus is becoming increasingly international.

1.2 ORGANIZING CONCEPTS AND PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

If you surveyed social psychologists, you would discover that there is no agreement on a single theoretical perspective that unifies the field. Despite the fact that social psychology has no grand theory that explains all aspects of social behavior, there are some important organizing concepts and perspectives.

1.2a The Self Is Shaped by—and Shapes—the Social Environment.

Throughout most of the past century, the behaviorist perspective in psychology—with its focus on studying only observable actions—prevented the concept of the self from becoming a focus of research in social psychology. During that time, most social psychologists explained people's behavior simply by examining the social cues in the situation, without considering how each person's life experiences and self-evaluations might also shape their responses. Fortunately, some social psychologists argued against such a narrow focus. For example, Gordon Allport's 1943 presidential address to the American Psychological Association presented the following appeal:

> One of the oddest events in the history of modern psychology is the manner in which the self became sidetracked and lost to view. I say it is odd, because the existence of one's self is the one fact of which every mortal person—every psychologist included—is perfectly convinced. An onlooker might say, "Psychologists are funny fellows. They have before them, at the heart of their science, a fact of perfect certainty, and yet they pay no attention to it. Why don't they begin with their own ego, or with our egos—with something we all know about? If they did so we might understand them better. And what is more, they might understand us better." (Allport, 1943, p. 451)

Despite Allport's call to action, it wasn't until the early 1970s that an increasing number of social psychologists (led by their empirical studies and a growing interest in human cognition) backed into a focus on the self (Greenwald & Ronis, 1978). Today in contemporary social psychology, the self and self-related concepts are important explanatory tools of the discipline. But first we must ask: What is the self?

self
A symbol-using social being who can reflect on his or her own behavior

The **self** is both a simple and a complex concept. It is not something located inside your head—it is you, a social being with the ability to engage in symbolic communication and self-awareness. The reason I use *social being* to define the self is because selves

do not develop in isolation, but do so only within a social context. Likewise, the reason the cognitive processes of *symbol usage* and *self-awareness* are so important in this definition is that both are essential for us to engage in planned, coordinated activities in which we can regulate our behavior and anticipate the actions of others (Bandura, 2005; Heatherton, 2011). For example, suppose Jack has been working long hours at the office and, as a result, has ignored his wife and children. One day, it dawns on Jack that if he continues in this pattern of "all work and no play," he will be not only dull but also divorced and depressed. Based on this anticipation, he revises his work schedule to enjoy the company of his family. In other words, Jack consciously changes his behavior to avoid what he perceives to be a host of unpleasant future consequences. This ability to analyze surroundings, our possible future realities, and ourselves allows us to actively create and re-create our social world and ourselves.

Self-awareness and symbol usage—and thus, the self—may have evolved in our ancestors as a means to better deal with an increasingly complex social environment (Oda, 2001). For instance, self-awareness not only provided our ancestors with knowledge about their own behavior, but they could also use this inner experience to anticipate how rivals might behave in the future—perhaps in war or in social bargaining—thus giving them an advantage in these activities. Similarly, the development of language allowed our ancestors to not only better coordinate group activities but also use this symbolic communication to discuss things not physically present, such as a herd of antelope or a band of hostile warriors (Shaffer, 2005). These two defining features of the self became the means by which our ancestors developed an adaptive advantage in their environment, thus increasing their chances of surviving and reproducing.

"The Self is the honey of all beings, and all beings are the honey of this Self."

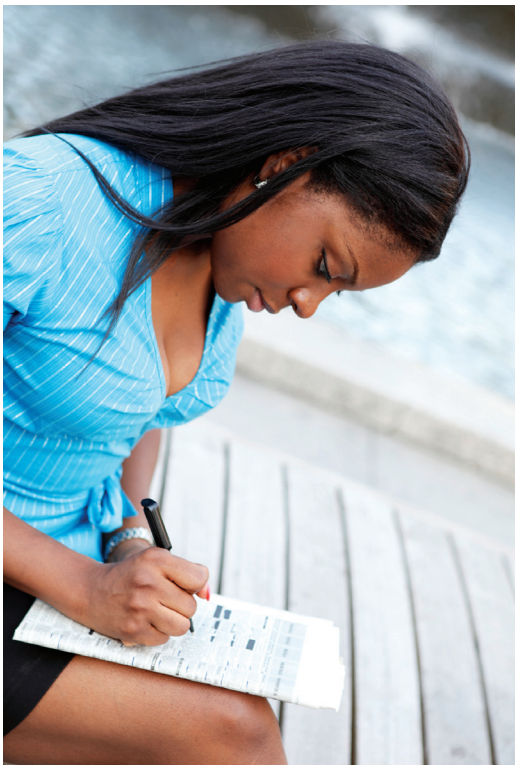
—The Upanishads, sacred texts of Hinduism, 800–500 BC

Selfhood also allowed our ancestors to ponder their existence and mortality: Why are we here? What happens when we die? The artwork and elaborate burial sites created by our ancestors during the Upper Paleolithic period (40,000 years ago) provide compelling evidence that the modern human mind—the self—was emerging during that time (Rossano, 2003). M. Brewster Smith (2002) was one of the social psychologists who contended that this new search for ultimate meaning led to the development of myth, ritual, and religion, which affirmed for each social group its value as "The People." As you will discover throughout this text, this kind of group search for meaning and value profoundly shapes social interactions.

Beyond seeking meaning and value in group life, our ancestors also used self-awareness to size up and understand themselves. The way we think of ourselves (our *self-concept*) influences our social behavior and how we respond to social events. This influence is often dramatically illustrated in situations in which our own performance results in either success or failure. In such situations, many people tend to take credit for positive behaviors or outcomes—but to blame negative behaviors or outcomes on external causes (Campbell & Sedikides, 1999; McCall & Nattrass, 2001). For example, when students receive a good grade on an exam, they are likely to attribute it to their intelligence, their strong work ethic, or a combination of the two. However, if they receive a poor grade on the exam, they tend to believe their failure is due to an unreasonable professor or pure bad luck. This tendency to take credit for positive outcomes but deny responsibility for negative outcomes is known as the **self-serving bias**.

self-serving bias
The tendency to take credit for positive outcomes but deny responsibility for negative outcomes in our lives

The most agreed-upon explanation for the self-serving bias is that it allows us to enhance and protect our self-worth. If we feel personally responsible for successes or positive events in our lives but do not feel blameworthy for failures or other negative events, our self-worth is likely to be bolstered. This self-enhancement explanation emphasizes the role of motivation in our self-serving biases. Although the self-serving bias may provide us with a less-than-accurate view of ourselves, it may be "functionally efficient"



How might a self-serving explanation for a personal setback benefit a person's self-confidence and future success? (iStock)

because it often boosts our self-confidence (Williams et al., 2012). Explaining any current successes as being caused by enduring personality characteristics creates a personal expectation of future success in related tasks, increasing the likelihood that we will attempt new challenges (Taylor & Brown, 1988). Similarly, attributing repeated failures to bad luck or unfortunate situations may well serve to maintain an optimistic belief in the possibility of future success, resulting in our not giving up. Wilmar Schaufeli (1988), for instance, has found that unemployed workers seeking reemployment have more success if they exhibit the self-serving bias in their job search (that is, if they convince themselves that not being hired for a particular job is due to external factors and not to internal ones such as incompetence).

Although there appear to be tangible benefits to explaining away negative events, the self-serving bias can create problems if it leads us to repeatedly overlook our own shortcomings in situations where a more realistic appraisal would generate useful corrective steps (Kruger & Dunning, 1999; Robins & Beer, 2001). Further, in group settings, the tendency to take credit for success and deny blame for failure can quickly lead to conflict and dissension among members. For example, the more the members of groups overestimate their individual contributions to group accomplishments, the less they will want to work with each other in the future (Banaji et al., 2003; Caruso et al., 2004).

As you can see, the self plays an important role in how we think and behave as social creatures. Social psychology's emphasis on the self represents an affirmation of Kurt Lewin's belief that both person and situational factors influence social behavior. Lewin's perspective, later dubbed **interactionism** (Pettigrew & Cherry, 2012), combines personality psychology (which stresses differences among people) with traditional social psychology (which stresses differences among situations). In keeping with Lewin's legacy, throughout this text we will examine how these two factors contribute to the social interaction equation, and we will use the self as the primary "person" variable. The previously mentioned *Self/Social Connection* exercises will further reinforce the idea that social behavior is best understood as resulting from the interaction of a person with situational factors.

> "General laws and individual differences are merely two aspects of one problem; they are mutually dependent on each other and the study of the one cannot proceed without the study of the other."
>
> —Kurt Lewin, German-born social psychologist, 1890–1947

1.2b Our Social Thinking Can Be Automatic or Deliberate.

Throughout the history of social psychology there has been a running debate concerning the nature of human behavior. One perspective was that people are moved to act by their needs, desires, and emotions (also known as their *affect*). Social psychologists subscribing to this "hot" approach argued that heated, impulsive action that fulfills desires is more influential than cool, calculated planning of behavior (Zajonc, 1984). The alternative viewpoint was that people's actions are principally influenced by the rational analysis of choices facing them in particular situations. Followers of this "cold" approach asserted that how people think will ultimately determine what they want and how they feel (Lazarus, 1984).

interactionism
An important perspective in social psychology that emphasizes the combined effects of both the person and the situation on human behavior

In the 1950s and 1960s, the hot perspective was most influential, but by the 1980s the cold perspective dominated the thinking within social psychology. One reason for this shift was the advent of the computer age, which resulted in people's everyday lives being saturated with the terminology and thinking of this new "technoscience." Reflecting this new view of reality, many social psychologists borrowed concepts from cognitive psychology and developed theories of **social cognition** that provided numerous insights into how we interpret, analyze, remember, and use information about our social world (Rendell et al., 2011). These theories often describe people methodically processing information in a fixed sequence, or *serially* working on only one stream of data at a time—like a computer. The sequential computer model of thinking is useful in explaining many aspects of human cognition, especially how we execute certain mental operations or follow certain rules of logic when making some decisions. For instance, if a normally sociable person acts irritable just before taking his midterms, you may logically consider the available information and conclude that his irritability is caused by situational factors.

Despite its usefulness, the computer model is less helpful in explaining other ways of thinking because the human brain is more complex than any existing computer and performs many mental operations simultaneously, "in parallel" (Gabrieli, 1999). For example, why might a former soldier experience a panic attack while at a fireworks display? In this situation, a more useful model of cognition might conceive of memory as a weblike network of connections among thousands of interacting "processing units"—all active at once. For the former soldier, memories of war and loud explosions are stored in a neural network; activating one part of the network simultaneously activates the rest of the network.

Many social psychologists embraced the social cognitive perspective, but others argued that it dehumanizes social psychology to think of motives and affect as merely the end products of a central processing system. In response to such criticism, cognitively oriented social psychologists established a more balanced view of human nature by blending the traditional hot and cold perspectives into what some termed the *warm look* (Sorrentino, 2003).

Reflecting this warm perspective, most contemporary social cognitive theories discuss how people use multiple cognitive strategies based on their current goals, motives, and needs (Dunning, 1999; Strack & Deutsch, 2012). In such discussions, theorists typically propose **dual-process theories** of social cognition, meaning that our social thinking and behavior are determined by two different ways of understanding and responding to social stimuli (Kliemann et al., 2013; Petty, 2004). One mode of information processing—the legacy of the cold perspective—is based on effortful, reflective thinking, in which no action is taken until its potential consequences are properly weighed and evaluated. The alternative mode of processing information—the legacy of the hot perspective—is based on minimal cognitive effort, in which behavior is often impulsively and automatically activated by emotions, habits, or biological drives. Which of the two avenues of information processing people take at any given time is the subject of ongoing research that we will examine throughout this text. The essential assumption to keep in mind regarding dual-process theories is that many aspects of human behavior result from automatic processes that may occur spontaneously and outside our conscious awareness (Moors & De Houwer, 2006).

Some dual-process theories still rely on the computer model of serial information processing, which assumes that people can engage in only one form of thinking at a time. According to this perspective, in human cognition there often is a conflict between an initial, automatic evaluation and a more deliberate, rational assessment. The only way you can resolve this conflict is by engaging in either effortful thinking or relatively effortless thinking. You can switch back and forth between the two forms of thinking, but you cannot do both simultaneously. In contrast to this sequential "either/or" way of describing human thought, other dual-process theories rely on the neural network model of parallel information processing and describe two mental systems that operate simultaneously, or parallel to one another.

social cognition
The ways in which we interpret, analyze, remember, and use information about our social world

dual-process theories
Theories of social cognition that describe two basic ways of thinking about social stimuli: one involving automatic, effortless thinking and the other involving more deliberate, effortful thinking

Social scientists who assume parallel-processing systems often make a distinction between *explicit cognition* and *implicit cognition.* **Explicit cognition** involves deliberate judgments or decisions of which we are consciously aware. Although this type of cognition is intentional, it can sometimes be relatively effortless when the task is easy. However a good deal of explicit thinking consumes considerable cognitive resources. The upside is that it is flexible and can deal with new problems. Trying to understand the definition of explicit cognition is literally an example of said thought process. In contrast, **implicit cognition** involves judgments or decisions that are under the control of automatically activated evaluations occurring without our awareness. This type of thinking is unintentional, it uses few cognitive resources, and it operates quickly—however it is inflexible and often cannot deal with new problems. The unintentional and automatic qualities of implicit cognition are demonstrated by the fact that you cannot stop yourself from reading the words on this page when you see them. Your reading skills are automatically and effortlessly activated.

How might implicit cognition affect social interaction? Feeling uneasy and irritable around a new acquaintance because she unconsciously reminds you of a disagreeable person from your past is an example of how unconscious, automatically activated evaluations can shape your social judgments. For many years, social psychologists primarily studied and discussed the conscious decision making that shapes social interaction, but currently there is a great deal of interest in how thinking "below the radar" of conscious awareness can influence social judgments and behavior. Throughout the text, we will discuss how both explicit and implicit cognitive processes shape our social world.

"In fact, I cannot totally grasp all that I am. Thus, the mind is not large enough to contain itself; but where can that part of it be which it does not contain?"

—St. Augustine, Christian theologian, AD 354–430

1.2c Culture Shapes Social Behavior.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

I think I am a unique person.

I enjoy being the center of attention.

I should be able to live my life anyway I want to.

If I could make the laws, the world would be a better place.

Over the past 30 years, surveys of 16,000 American college students indicate that if you were born after 1980, you are more likely to agree with these statements than if you were born before that year. Why might this be so?

explicit cognition
Deliberate judgments or decisions of which we are consciously aware

implicit cognition
Judgments or decisions that are under the control of automatically activated evaluations occurring without our awareness

culture
The total lifestyle of a people, including all the ideas, symbols, preferences, and material objects that they share

The answer is cultural experience. In trying to understand how people interpret and respond to social reality, we must remember that people view the world through cultural lenses. By **culture**, I mean the total lifestyle of a people, including all the ideas, symbols, preferences, and material objects that they share. This cultural experience shapes people's view of reality and of themselves and, thus, significantly influences their social behavior (Sieck et al., 2011).

The Social World of "Generation Next"

Most of you reading these words are members of what social commentators are calling "Generation Y" or "Generation Next"—young adults born between the 1980s and the 1990s. The "Y" and "Next" labels are meant to distinguish you from the somewhat older "Generation X" (adults born between 1966 and 1980). Lumped together, these two age groups are the children of the "Baby Boom" generation that was born after World War II. Your cultural upbringing is very different from that of your parents. You grew up with

personal computers, the Internet, and cell phones. For many of you, your childhood was chronicled by your parents' video cameras, and it is quite possible that you were treated like a "shining star" and told, "You can be anything you want to be."

A national survey conducted by the Pew Research Center (2007) found that more than two-thirds of GenNexters see their generation as unique and distinct. Illustrating this generational self-view, today many young adults publicly proclaim their individuality by posting personal profiles on social networking sites such as Facebook (Toma & Hancock, 2013). GenNexters' desire for individual expression is also demonstrated by the fact that about half of them either have a tattoo a body piercing, or have dyed their hair a nontraditional color. Indeed, a recent analysis of 766,513 American books published between 1960 and 2008 found a significant increase in self-focused pronouns over the past half century (Twenge et al., 2013). This cultural shift to heightened literary self-focus is further evidence of the increased valuing of individuality among Americans.

The value GenNexters place on their own individuality also extends to accepting differences in others. GenNexters are the most tolerant of any generation in stating that homosexuality and interracial dating should be accepted and not discouraged. Although more socially tolerant than previous generations, most GenNexters believe that their generation is more interested in focusing on themselves than in helping others. When asked to identify important life goals of those in their age group, most GenNexters named fortune and fame (Pew Research Center, 2007). About 80% stated that "getting rich" is either the most important or second most important life goal for their peers, with half stating that "becoming famous" is also highly valued. In contrast, less than one-third of young adults identified "helping people who need help" as an important goal of their generation.

If there is some truth to young Americans' perception of their generation, you might be wondering how your generation became so self-focused in comparison to your parents' generation. Actually, the difference between the two generations is simply a matter of degree. Americans are generally a self-focused people; GenNexters are simply the best current example of the particular way in which our culture shapes people's thoughts, feelings, and actions.

"Generation Next's" desire for self-expression has led many of them to get tattoos or body piercings. (Shutterstock)

The Cultural Belief Systems of Individualism and Collectivism.

Our understanding of these survey findings and social behavior in general relies on two cultural belief systems concerning how individuals relate to their group,—namely, individualism and collectivism (David et al., 2014). **Individualism** is a preference for a loosely knit social framework in which individuals are supposed to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. This belief system asserts that society is a collection of unique individuals who pursue their own goals and interests and strive to be relatively free from the influence of others.

individualism

A philosophy of life stressing the priority of individual needs over group needs, a preference for loosely knit social relationships, and a desire to be relatively autonomous of others' influence

As a philosophy of life, traces of individualism can be seen in early Greek and Roman writings and in the values and ideas of the medieval Anglo-Saxon poets of England (Harbus, 2002). However, individualism did not make a significant appearance on the world stage until the sixteenth century, when people became more geographically mobile and, thus, more regularly interacted with radically different cultures. Exposed to different social norms and practices, people began entertaining the possibility of having goals separate

from those of their group (Kashima & Foddy, 2002). In the arts, characters in novels and plays were increasingly portrayed as having individual emotional states and as experiencing conflict between their true selves and the social roles assigned to them by their family and community. During the late 1800s and early 1900s—the age of industrialization and urbanization in Western societies—social roles became increasingly complex and compartmentalized. It became common practice to "find" or "create" one's own personal identity rather than being given an identity by one's group. This belief also holds true today in our contemporary society. Self-discipline, self-sufficiency, personal accountability, and autonomy are now highly valued characteristics in a person (Kagitçibasi, 1994; Oishi et al., 2007).

Many observers of American culture contend that the history of voluntary settlement in the frontier greatly contributed to the development of individualism in the United States (de Tocqueville, 1862/1969; Turner, 1920). Examples of this individualist orientation can be seen throughout U.S. history. In the 1700s, Thomas Jefferson's penning of the Declaration of Independence was essentially a bold assertion that individual rights were more important than group rights. In the 1800s, poet/philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson believed that individualism was the route that—if truly traveled—would result in a spontaneous social order of self-determined, self-reliant, and fully developed citizens. In contemporary America, one can see the influence of individualism in everyday activities. For example, beyond the previously mentioned increased use of self-focused words in American books over the past half century, an analysis of popular American songs finds many more self-focused words compared to other-focused words in the lyrics—significantly more than even a generation ago (DeWall et al., 2011). Similarly, American parents' tendency over the past 20 years to increasingly give their children unusual names reflects the individualist desire to "stand out" from others and be unique (Twenge & Campbell, 2010).

"The union is only perfect when all the individuals are isolated."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, U.S. philosopher/poet, 1803–1882

In contrast to individualism, there is an alternative perspective known as **collectivism**, which represents a preference for a tightly knit social framework in which individuals can expect relatives or other members of their social group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. This cultural belief system asserts that people become human only when they are integrated into a group—not isolated from it. Whereas individualists give priority to personal goals, collectivists often make no distinctions between personal and group goals. When they do make such distinctions, collectivists subordinate their personal goals to the collective good (Abrams et al., 1998; Oyserman et al., 2002). Due to the greater importance given to group aspirations over individual desires, collectivist cultures tend to value similarity and conformity, rather than uniqueness and independence. (See Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion.)

"Human beings draw close to one another by their common nature, but habits and customs keep them apart."

—Confucius, Chinese sage, 551–479 BC

How do different perspectives on the relationship between the individual and the group influence thought and behavior? Consider a modern, industrialized society with a collectivist orientation: Japan. The Japanese, like other people living in collectivist societies, view group inclusion and allegiance as primary goals in life. Indeed, in Japan the expression for individualist—*kojin-shugi*—refers to a socially undesirable characteristic, suggesting selfishness rather than personal responsibility (Ishii-Kuntz, 1989). Those who defy the group's wishes, often considered heroes in an individualist culture, bring shame upon themselves, their families, and their ancestors in Japan. In North American society, to stand above the crowd and be recognized as unique and special is highly valued. In Japan, such attention detracts from the group. These different perspectives are illustrated in contrasting proverbs or mottos. In North America, "The squeaky wheel gets the grease" and "Do your own thing" are commonly heard phrases, while the Japanese credo is "The nail that sticks up shall be hammered down."

collectivism

A philosophy of life stressing the priority of group needs over individual needs, a preference for tight,it social relationships, and a willingness to submit to the influence of one's group

It may surprise you to know that approximately 70% of the world's population lives in cultures with a collectivist orientation (Singelis et al., 1995). Indeed, the collectivist perspective is much older than is the individualist orientation. For most of human history, the group—not the individual—was the basic unit of society. Whether you were born into a clan or a tribe, you would generally live in one geographic region your entire life and would, upon maturing, assume the same social role as your parents. You did not have to "search" for your identity; your group gave it to you. Many social scientists contend that collectivism is the older of the two philosophies because it focuses on the type of thinking and behavior that affords the most protection for people who live in threatening environments, where survival needs are extremely salient (Inglehart & Oyserman, 2004). This is exactly the type of environment that has historically confronted all human groups until fairly recently. In contrast, individualism is a much more recent philosophy of life because it develops among people who inhabit relatively safe environments, where their survival is less dependent on maintaining strong group ties. This liberation from immediate physical threats reduces the importance of survival-focused values and gives higher priority to freedom of choice (Imada & Yussen, 2012).

Table 1.1 lists some of the differences between these two cultural ideologies. The majority of cross-cultural researchers currently consider individualism and collectivism to be two ends of a continuum, with the United States, Canada, Australia, and Western European societies located more toward the individualist end and Asian, African, and Latin and South American cultures situated near the collectivist end. Within all cultures, individualist tendencies tend to be stronger in large urban or remote frontier settings (where people are less dependent on group ties), while collectivist tendencies are more pronounced in small regional cities and rural settings (where social relationships are more interdependent) (Conway et al., 2014; Kitayama, 2007).

Table 1.1 Differences Between Collectivist and Individualist Cultures

Collectivist	Individualist
Identity is based in the social system and given by one's group.	Identity is based in the individual and achieved by one's own striving.
People are socialized to be emotionally dependent on organizations and institutions.	People are socialized to be emotionally independent of organizations and institutions.
Personal and group goals are generally consistent, and when inconsistent, group goals get priority.	Personal and group goals are often inconsistent, and when inconsistent, personal goals get priority.
People explain others' social behavior as being more determined by social norms and roles than by personal attitudes.	People explain others' social behavior as being more determined by personal attitudes than by social norms and roles.
Emphasis is on belonging to organizations, and memberships is the ideal.	Emphasis is on individual initiative and achievement, and leadership is the ideal.
Trust is placed in group decisions.	Trust is placed in individual decisions.

Which perspective is better? Your answer depends on what values you have internalized. As previously mentioned, although individualism and collectivism are seen by many theorists as two ends of a continuum, this doesn't mean that individualist tendencies do not influence people living in collectivist cultures or that collectivist yearnings do not shape individualists (Göregenli, 1997). Indeed, social scientists commonly think of these differing ideologies as reflecting two seemingly universal and common human needs:

"The American cultural ideal of the self-made man, of everyone standing on his own feet, is as tragic a picture as the initiative-destroying dependence on a benevolent despot. We all need each other. This type of interdependence is the greatest challenge to the maturity of individual and group functioning."

—Kurt Lewin, German-born social psychologist, 1890–1947

the need for autonomy and the need for communion (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004; Schwartz, 2003). Thus, although all humans have a need for both autonomy and communion, individualist cultures place greater value on autonomy, while collectivist cultures place greater value on communion. One of the goals of social psychology is to understand how the past experiences and present conditions of others influence their interpretation of social reality; therefore these two contrasting cultural perspectives will regularly figure into our chapter discussions. Spend a few minutes completing *Self/Social Connection Exercise 1.1* to better understand the relative importance of these two cultural orientations in your own life.

To What Degree Do You Value Individualist and Collectivist Strivings?

Individualist–Collectivist Values Hierarchy

Directions

Listed below are 12 values. Please rank them in their order of importance to you, with "1" being the "most important" and "12" being the "least important."

Pleasure (Gratification of Desires)
Honor of Parents and Elders (Showing Respect)
Creativity (Uniqueness, Imagination)
Social Order (Stability of Society)
A Varied Life (Filled with Challenge, Novelty, and Change)
National Security (Protection of My Nation from Enemies)
Being Daring (Seeking Adventure, Risk)
Self-discipline (Self-restraint, Resistance to Temptation)
Freedom (Freedom of Action and Thought)
Politeness (Courtesy, Good Manners)
Independence (Self-reliance, Choice of Own Goals)
Obedience (Fulfilling Duties, Meeting Obligations)

Directions for Scoring

The individualist and collectivist values are listed in alternating order, with the first (Pleasure) being an individualist value and the second (Honor of Parents and Elders) being a collectivist value. People from individualist cultures, such as the United States, Canada, England, or Australia, tend to have more individualist values than collectivist values in the upper half of their values hierarchy. This order tends to be reversed for those from collectivist cultures, such as Mexico, Japan, Korea, or China. Which of the two cultural belief systems is predominant in your own values hierarchy? If you know people from another culture, how do they rank these values?

A few additional points bear mentioning regarding these two cultural orientations. As already suggested, individualism and collectivism are not permanent, unchanging characteristics of given societies. Individualism is closely linked with socioeconomic development (Welzel et al., 2003). When collectivist cultures become industrialized and experience economic development, they often also develop some of the thinking associated with individualism (Hamamura, 2012). This is at least partly due to the fact that the increased prosperity brought on by economic development minimizes the types of concerns for survival that prompt people to strongly identify with—and unquestioningly submit to—their social group (Oyserman et al., 2002). When economic conditions shift in this manner, many collectivists begin developing an interest in individual, freedom-focused rights and privileges. The transition to democracy, which stresses individual rights over the rights of the state, is currently taking place in such collectivist countries as Egypt, China, Jordan, Turkey, the Philippines, South Africa, Taiwan, and Slovenia.

Individualist and collectivist strivings can and do coexist within a person and are often depicted in popular movies. In the 1946 classic Christmas movie, It's a Wonderful Life, *Jimmy Stewart's character, George Bailey, is continually faced with life decisions that pit his own personal desires against his feelings of community obligation. This movie has a clear collectivist message: The self is affirmed by fulfilling the needs of the group. Why do you think this movie's message is so warmly received in North America's individualist culture? Do all societies need their share of George Baileys in order to thrive and prosper? (Wikimedia Commons)*

1.2d Evolution Shapes Universal Patterns of Social Behavior.

One of the added benefits of cross-cultural research is that it not only allows us to identify those aspects of social behavior that vary from one culture to the next but also allows us to identify social behaviors that are common to all cultures. When a universal social behavior is identified, discussion naturally turns to how this pattern of behavior may have evolved. **Evolutionary psychology** may provide useful insights here (Gangestad, 2012).

> "An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity."
>
> —Martin Luther King Jr., U.S. civil rights leader, 1929–1968

The evolutionary perspective is partly based on the writings of biologist Charles Darwin (1809–1882), who theorized that genetic changes in the population of a species occur over many generations due to the interaction of environmental and biological variables. **Genes** are the biochemical units of inheritance for all living organisms, and the human species has about 30,000 different genes. According to Darwin (1859, 1871), all living organisms struggle for survival, and within each species a great deal of competition and genetic variation occurs between individuals. Those members of a species with genetic traits best adapted for survival in their present environment will produce more offspring, and, as a result, their numbers will increase in the population. As the environment changes, however, other members within the species possessing traits better suited to the new conditions will flourish—a process called **natural selection**. In this way, the environment selects which genes of a species will be passed on to future generations. As this process of natural selection continues, and as the features best suited for survival change, the result is **evolution**, a term that refers to the gradual genetic changes that occur in a species over generations. *Reproduction* is central to the natural selection process, and the essence of natural selection is that the characteristics of some individuals allow them to produce more offspring than others.

An example of social behavior from another species that may be the product of natural selection is water splashing by male gorillas. Males regularly create massive water plumes by leaping into pools or by slapping the water with their powerful hands. Why is it that female gorillas do not engage in this behavior nearly to the same degree, and what precipitates male splashing? Evolutionary theorists hypothesized that male gorillas

evolutionary psychology
An approach to psychology based on the principle of natural selection

genes
The biochemical units of inheritance for all living organisms

natural selection
The process by which organisms with inherited traits best suited to the environment reproduce more successfully than less well-adapted organisms over a number of generations, which leads to evolutionary changes

evolution
The genetic changes that occur in a species over generations due to natural selection

BVT Lab

Improve your test scores. Practice quizzes are available at www.BVTLab.com.

engage in water splashing to intimidate other males and keep them away from their females. To test this hypothesis, researchers observed the splashing displays of lowland gorillas in the Congo over a 3-year period (Parnell & Buchanan-Smith, 2001). They found that more than 70% of the splashing was carried out by dominant males in the presence of males not from their social group, with more than half the displays occurring when no females were present. These findings suggested to the researchers that the splashing was being directed at strange males who might challenge the dominant male's control of his group. They speculated that over the course of gorilla evolution, males who engaged in intimidating behavior like water splashing were more successful in preventing strange males from stealing females from their group than those who did not water splash. Thus, acting tough by literally making a big splash when other males were present resulted in greater reproductive success, and that is why this social behavior persists in the male gorilla population today.

Social psychologists who adopt the evolutionary approach apply a similar type of logic to understanding humans. Many social behaviors extensively studied by social psychologists—such as aggression, helping, interpersonal attraction, romantic love, and stereotyping—are thought to be shaped by inherited traits (Gangestad, 2012). If this is true, then attempts to understand human social behavior should consider how these inherited traits might have given our ancestors a reproductive advantage in their environment, thus maximizing their ability to survive and reproduce.

There are two important points to keep in mind when considering the process of evolution. First, individual organisms don't evolve—populations evolve. The role that individuals play in evolution consists of interacting with the environment, so that their genes can be screened by natural selection. Thus, individuals contribute to a change in their species' population by their own successes or failures in reproducing. Over many generations, the accumulated effects of literally thousands or even millions of individuals' reproductive successes and failures lead to the evolution of the species. The second point to remember is that evolution does not necessarily result in species being transformed into more complex forms of life. Instead, the key feature of the evolutionary process is the degree to which an organism's inborn genetic traits help it adapt to its current environment. Thus, just as a trait that was once highly adaptive can become maladaptive if the environmental conditions change, the reverse is also true: a maladaptive trait can become extremely adaptive.

> "It may metaphorically be said that natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing … the slightest variations; rejecting those that are bad, preserving and adding up all that are good. … We see nothing of these slow changes in progress, … we see only that the forms of life are now different from what they formerly were."
>
> —From Darwin (1859)

Use Caution in Applying Evolutionary Principles to Human Social Behavior.

Despite the importance of adding the evolutionary perspective to our explanation of social behavior, many social scientists are cautious about applying these principles to contemporary human behavior (Scher & Rauscher, 2003). The grounds for such caution rest on the fact that when biologists study an animal, they tend to examine it in terms of how it has adapted to its environment so that it can reproduce and pass on its genes. However, when a species changes environments—or when its environment changes—an unavoidable period of time exists in which its biological makeup is not in tune with its surroundings. All species are probably slightly "behind" their environment, but this is especially so for human beings. We are the youngest primate species on earth; our brains and bodies are biologically no different than they were 150,000 years ago, when our ancestors lived on the Pleistocene plains of East Africa. How we behave today in the modern world of city congestion and

space-age technology may bear some relation to the roles for which our brains and bodies were originally selected, but the connection is probably weaker than we might think and needs to be interpreted with a great deal of care. In this text, we will approach evolutionary explanations with this sort of justifiable caution—that is, acknowledging that ancient evolutionary forces may have left us with capacities (such as the capacity to behave helpfully), while still recognizing that current social and environmental forces encourage or discourage the actual development and use of those capacities (Tomasello, 2011).

What Is the Difference Between Sex and Gender?

Throughout this text, when comparisons are made between women's and men's decision-making and social behavior, contrasting interpretations regarding any group-based differences will be offered from both the evolutionary and the sociocultural perspectives. In these analyses, it is important to understand the difference between the terms *sex* and *gender* (Lippa, 2005). **Sex** refers to the biological status of being female or male, while **gender** refers to the meanings that societies and individuals attach to being female and male. Put simply, sex is a matter of genetic construction, and gender is a matter of cultural construction. Sex is something we are, whereas gender is something we do with the help and encouragement of others.

People are often confused by the distinction between sex and gender because the two concepts are generally thought of as going together—that is, female = feminine, and male = masculine. Yet behaviors or interests considered masculine in one culture may be defined as feminine in others. For instance, in certain North African societies decorating and beautifying the face and body is a sign of masculinity—not femininity. Similarly, within cultures, beliefs about gender transform over time. For instance, in contemporary North American culture it is now acceptable—even encouraged—for girls to participate in sports that were previously designated only for boys. Among adults, women are now much more actively involved in careers outside the household (a previously masculine domain), and men are more involved in child care (a feminine domain). Gender is not fixed—it is constantly changing and being redefined.

Because sex is biologically based and gender is culturally based, when research finds that men and women behave differently, we often ask whether this difference is due to sex (biology) or to gender (culture). This is not an idle question. If someone labels the behavior in question a sex difference, the implication is that the cause of the difference is rooted in human biology rather than in social or cultural factors. In contrast, when people talk about gender differences, the implication is that these differences do not stem from biology but, rather, that they develop in the course of socialization as boys and girls learn about appropriate gender-based attitudes, roles, and behaviors (Rudman & Glick, 2008).

Men and women differ biologically in a number of ways. The most basic sex difference is that males carry the chromosomal pattern XY, and females carry the pattern XX. This important difference at the chromosomal level produces differences in female and male anatomy and physical appearance. For instance, a newborn male has a penis and testicles, while a newborn female has a vagina and ovaries. At puberty, a male develops a prominent Adam's apple, while a female's breasts enlarge. Although the changes associated with puberty occur well after birth, no one would seriously argue that boys have been taught how to grow an Adam's apple or that girls learn how to grow breasts. These particular differences are due to biological factors—that is, they are a sex difference and are not due to cultural experience.

sex
The biological status of being female or male

gender
The meanings that societies and individuals attach to being female and male

Beyond these identifiable biological differences in chromosome patterns and anatomy, it is extremely difficult—if not impossible—to presently conclude that differences in the way women and men think, feel, and act are clearly due to either sex or gender (Wood & Eagly, 2010). Social psychologists with a biological or evolutionary orientation emphasize biological factors in explaining such differences, whereas those

with a sociocultural orientation weigh in with cultural explanations. And as already mentioned, when discussing genetics—even in those instances when genes influence behavioral differences between two groups, such as men and women—these biologically based differences can be greatly increased or decreased due to social forces.

How great are the differences between women and men in their psychological functioning? This is an issue we will address throughout this text. As a preliminary answer, I can tell you that research conducted over the past 20 years indicates there are many more similarities than differences (Hyde, 2005). Across a wide variety of cognitive skills, psychological motives, and social behaviors, men and women do not differ from one another. Thus, despite cultural stereotypes to the contrary, women and men are remarkably alike in much of their psychological functioning. Reflecting these scientific findings, in this text I do not use the misleading term *opposite sex* when comparing one sex with the other but instead use the more appropriate term *other sex*.

1.2e Brain Activity Affects and Is Affected by Social Behavior.

Beyond the organizing principles currently shaping theory and research, social psychologists are constantly exploring new connections with other disciplines—both within and outside the social and behavioral sciences. Like the evolutionary perspective, one new connection that comes from the field of biology is the subfield of **social neuroscience**, which studies the relationship between neural processes in the brain and social processes (Cacioppo & Cacioppo, 2013; Smith-Lovin & Winkielman, 2010). This analysis emphasizes not only how the brain influences social interaction but also how social interaction can influence the brain.

The increased collaboration between social psychology and neuroscience is largely due to the development of more accurate measures of physiological changes, especially those involving *brain-imaging techniques* that provide pictures—or scans—of this body organ. These techniques generate "maps" of the brains of living people by examining their electrical activity, structure, blood flow, and chemistry. For example, *functional magnetic resonance imaging* (fMRI) measures the brain's metabolic activity in different regions, revealing which parts of the brain are most active in such social tasks as talking or listening to others, watching social interactions, and thinking about oneself. Researchers using fMRI technology have found that when love-struck research participants look at photos of their romantic partners, specific brain regions (like the *caudate nucleus*) that play key roles in motivation and reward—including feelings of elation and passion—exhibit heightened activation (Fisher, 2004).

Similarly, neuroscientists have discovered areas in the **frontal lobe** of the **cerebral cortex** that are of particular importance in understanding self-related processes (Heatherton, 2011). As depicted in Figure 1.3, the cerebral cortex is the wrinkled-looking outer layer of brain tissue that coordinates and integrates all other brain areas into a fully functioning unit. About 90% of our cerebral cortex is of relatively recent evolution, and the frontal lobe is its largest region. The frontal lobe is involved in the coordination of movement and higher mental processes, such as planning, social skills, and abstract thinking. Recent brain-imaging studies indicate that a region in the frontal lobe of the cerebral cortex, called the *anterior cingulate cortex,* is especially active when people are self-aware (Vanhaudenhuyse et al., 2011). The anterior cingulate cortex contains a special type of brain cells or neurons, called *spindle neurons,* which are much larger than other neurons in the brain. These spindle neurons collect waves of neural signals from one region of the brain and send them on to other regions. It appears that the anterior cingulate cortex with its spindle neurons acts as an executive attention system, facilitating self-awareness (Apps & Tsakiris, 2013). Humans are one of only a few species

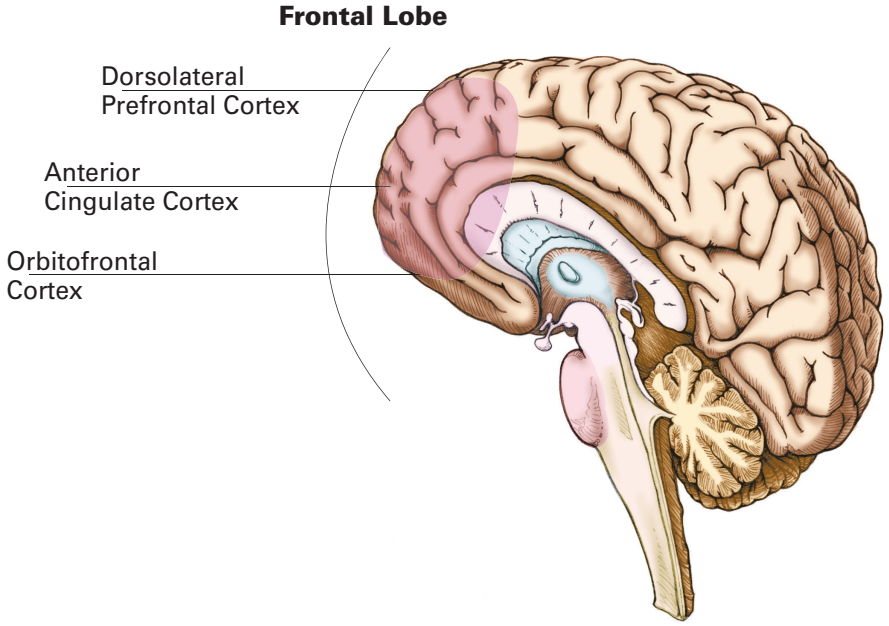
social neuroscience
The study of the relationship between neural processes of the brain and social processes

frontal lobe
The region of the cerebral cortex situated just behind the forehead that is involved in the coordination of movement and higher mental processes, such as planning, social skills, and abstract thinking; the area of the brain that is the originator of self processes.

cerebral cortex
The wrinkled-looking outer layer of the brain that coordinates and integrates all other brain areas into a fully functioning unit; the brain's "thinking" center, much larger in humans than in other animals

Figure 1.3 Brain Regions in the Frontal Lobe Associated with Self Processes

The primary neural source for self-awareness is the frontal lobe of the cerebral cortex, which is the wrinkled-looking front outer layer of the brain. The frontal lobe is involved in the coordination of movement and higher mental processes, such as planning, social skills, and abstract thinking. A region in the frontal lobe, the anterior cingulate cortex, is especially active when people are self-aware.



of animals that possess spindle neurons. Additional research indicates that when people are trying to exert self-control over their own thinking and behavior, the anterior cingulate cortex is also actively working in concert with areas in the prefrontal lobe regions (like the *dorsolateral prefrontal cortex* and *orbitofrontal cortex*).

A natural question for you to ask at this point in my discussion of social neuroscience is why such knowledge is important in gaining insight into social interaction. The importance of social neuroscience for social psychology is not that research in this area will reveal the location in the brain of the self, romantic love, or any other topic in social psychology. Instead, its potential power is that it might help social psychologists understand which cognitive processes and motivational states play a role in specific social behaviors. That sort of knowledge is vitally important because the topics in social psychology are often very complex, with competing theories trying to adequately explain the complexity. If social neuroscience's "window into the brain" can identify what type of neural activity is associated with specific types of social thinking and behavior, it will be that much easier to rule out competing explanations. In this way, the neuroscientific perspective provides another layer of knowledge in our understanding of social interaction.

In this text, we discuss some of the findings in this new area of research. For example, when discussing self-awareness and self-regulation (Chapter 3), we examine how the anterior cingulate cortex facilitates the monitoring and controlling of intentional behavior and focused problem solving. Similarly, when discussing attitude formation and change (Chapter 5), we analyze how one brain region engages in an immediate primitive "good-bad" emotional assessment that may be followed by higher-order processing conducted in the brain's cerebral cortex.

1.2f Positive Psychology Is an Emerging Perspective in Social Psychology.

Another psychological perspective that has become increasingly influential within social psychology and the larger discipline of psychology is **positive psychology**, which studies ways to enrich human experience and maximize human functioning (Peterson et al., 2013; Seligman, 2011). Social psychologists who identify themselves as proponents of positive psychology are currently studying what makes people happy and optimistic in their daily living, as well as what social conditions contribute to healthy interaction (Layous & Lyubomirsky, 2014). For example, when does an optimistic view of life help people overcome hurdles to success, and when does it cause people to overlook impending failure? Teaching people to avoid harmful self-deceptions while still maintaining a sense of realistic optimism about life is one of the goals of positive psychology.

An increasingly important area of social psychological study related to positive psychology is *morality,* which involves standards of right and wrong conduct (Haidt & Kesebir, 2010). In studying morality, social psychologists are trying to better understand how moral judgments help or hinder social living by regulating not only fair and just social relations but also personal behaviors that reflect self-interest and self-indulgence. Periodically in this text, information will be presented about topics from positive psychology—including morality—as they relate to chapter material.

positive psychology
An approach to psychology that studies ways to enrich human experience and maximize human functioning

The remaining chapters in this text will provide you with some fascinating insights into your social world and yourself. That is the beauty of social psychology. The more you learn about the psychology of social interaction, the more you will learn about how you can more effectively fit into—and actively shape—your own social surroundings. Let us now begin that inquiry.

some milestones in the field of social psychology

1862–1894: Dawning of a Scientific Discipline

1862: German psychologist Wilhelm Wundt proposes that psychology establish human or social sciences (*Geistesissenschaften*) to study the higher mental processes involving language, social practices and customs, religion, and art.

1895–1935: The Early Years

1897: Norman Triplett publishes the first scientific study of social behavior, on a topic that was later called *social facilitation*.

1900: Wundt publishes the first volume of what would become a classic 10-volume set of *Völkerpsychologie* (folk or social psychology), which analyzes a wide variety of social thought and behavior.

1908: Psychologist William McDougall and sociologist Edward Ross separately publish social psychology textbooks.

1920: Willy Hellpach founds the first institute for social psychology in Germany. Adolf Hitler's rise to power leads to the institute's demise in 1933.

1924: Floyd Allport publishes the third social psychology text, clearly identifying the focus for the psychological branch of the discipline and covering many topics that are still studied today.

1925: Emory Bogardus develops the social distance scale to measure attitudes toward ethnic groups. Soon after Louis Thurstone (1928) and Rensis Likert (1932) further advance attitude scale development.

1934: George Herbert Mead's book *Mind, Self, and Society* is published, stressing the interaction between the self and others.

1936–1945: The Coming of Age

1936: The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues is founded. Muzafir Sherif publishes *The Psychology of Social Norms*, describing research on norm formation.

1939: John Dollard and his colleagues introduce the frustration-aggression hypothesis.

1941–1945: Social psychologists are recruited by the U.S. government for the war effort.

1946–1969: Rapid Expansion

1949: Carl Hovland and his colleagues publish their first experiments on attitude change and persuasion.

1950: Theodor Adorno and his colleagues publish *The Authoritarian Personality*, which examines how extreme prejudice can be shaped by personality conflicts in childhood.

1951: Solomon Asch demonstrates conformity to false majority judgments.

1954: Gordon Allport publishes *The Nature of Prejudice*, which provides the framework for much of the future research on prejudice. Social psychologists provide key testimony in the U.S. Supreme Court desegregation case, *Brown v. Board of Education*.

1957: Leon Festinger publishes *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, emphasizing the need for consistency between cognition and behavior.

1958: Fritz Heider publishes *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*, laying the groundwork for attribution theory.

1963: Stanley Milgram publishes his obedience research, demonstrating under what conditions people are likely to obey destructive authority figures.

1965: The Society of Experimental Social Psychology is founded. Edward Jones and Keith Davis publish their ideas on social perception, stimulating attribution, and social cognition research.

1966: The European Association of Experimental Social Psychology is founded. Elaine (Walster) Hatfield and her colleagues publish the first studies of romantic attraction.

1968: John Darley and Bibb Latané present the bystander intervention model, explaining why people often do not help in emergencies.

(Continues)

some milestones in the field of social psychology

1970–1984: Crisis and Reassessment

1972: *Attribution: Perceiving the Causes of Behavior*, written by six influential attribution theorists, is published. Robert Wicklund and Shelley Duval publish *Objective Self-Awareness Theory,* describing how self-awareness influences cognition and behavior.

1974: The Society for Personality and Social Psychology is founded. Sandra Bem develops the Bem Sex Role Inventory and Janet Spence and Robert Helmreich develop the Personal Attributes Questionnaire, both of which measure gender roles.

1981: Alice Eagly and her colleagues begin conducting meta-analyses of gender comparisons in social behavior, reopening the debate on gender differences.

1984: Susan Fiske and Shelley Taylor publish *Social Cognition*, summarizing theory and research on the social cognitive perspective in social psychology.

1985–Present: Expanding Global and Interdisciplinary View

1986: Richard Petty and John Cacioppo publish *Communication and Persuasion: Central and Peripheral Routes*, describing a dual-process model of persuasion.

1989: Jennifer Crocker and Brenda Major publish their *Psychological Review* article on "Social Stigma and Self-Esteem," examining how people respond to being the targets of discrimination.

1991: Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama publish their *Psychological Review* article titled how culture shapes the self.

1995: Claude Steele and Joshua Aronson publish "Stereotype Threat and the Intellectual Test Performance of African Americans" in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* presenting their research on how negative stereotypes can shape intellectual identity and performance.

1996: David Buss and Neil Malamuth publish *Sex, Power, Conflict*, an edited text offering evolutionary and feminist perspectives on sex and gender interactions. A growing number of social psychologists attempt to integrate these previously divergent perspectives.

(Because the passage of time ultimately determines what events significantly shape a field, I will wait a few years before adding any more milestones to this list.)

(Wikimedia Commons, Thinkstock)

Section Summary

- The self is a central and organizing concept in social psychology.
- Interactionism studies the combined effects of both the situation and the person on human behavior.
- Many contemporary social cognitive theories attempt to reconcile the "hot" and the "cold" perspectives of human nature into a more inclusive "warm look."
- Social psychologists have become more attentive to cultural influences on social behavior.
- The cultural variables of individualism and collectivism are particularly helpful in understanding cultural differences.
- Evolutionary theory is increasingly used to explain social behavior.
- In explaining any male–female differences in social behavior, the evolutionary perspective emphasizes biological factors, and the sociocultural perspective emphasizes cultural factors.
- Integrating ideas from neuroscience into social psychology is becoming more a part of social psychological research and theory.
- Understanding how life can be enriched is one goal of positive psychology, an emerging perspective in social psychology.

Key Terms

Websites

Accessed Through http://www.bvtlab.com/sop7

Websites for this chapter include the largest social psychology organization and Internet database in the world, as well as national survey results for young American adults and information on the evolutionary perspective.

Social Psychology Network

This is the largest social psychology database on the Internet, with more than 5,000 links to psychology-related resources.

Society for Personality and Social Psychology Home Page

This is the website for the largest organization of social and personality psychologists in the world. This organization was founded in 1974.

Pew Research Center

This is the website for the national survey results of the 2007 report "How Young People View Their Lives, Future, and Politics: A Portrait of Generation Next."

Evolutionary Psychology for the Common Person

This website provides an introduction to evolutionary psychology and provides links to other related web resources.