



2024-25 FALL

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Faculty of Arts & Sciences

WEEK 2

HOW MUCH OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY IS TRUE?

- Because research builds on older research, science is **self-correcting**.
- **Some** psychological facts and principles are true for people everywhere.
- But there are also cultural differences, and **some** of them are quite **substantial** and **important**.

«You are a member of a social world on a planet containing about 7 billion people. This social world is filled with paradox, mystery, suspense, and outright absurdity.»

Social psychology can help us **make sense of** the bizarre and baffling diversity of **human behavior.**

Is it possible for human beings to live in peace?

- In 2004, a rally for **world peace** was held in California. Sixteen thousand people came together from nine different countries to support the worthy cause of **reducing violence and promoting harmony** among all human beings. Many stayed up all night holding hands in a giant circle and **praying for peace**.
- On the first day of the conference, several of the **delegates got into an argument** in the parking lot, and one **beat another** badly with a shovel. Why would people attending a rally for world peace start fighting each other?



<https://www.facebook.com/pg/pray.peace.love.world/photos/>

Why do people behave that way?

- A woman who was charged in the **drunk-driving death of her son** was sent to prison. The judge allowed her a leave for 24 hours to attend **her son's funeral**. Instead of attending the funeral, however, she went to a bar that was about **a mile away from the church** where the funeral was held.

Why do people call their children unusual names?

- A judge removed a 9-year old girl from her mother's home because he did **not approve** of the name the mother had given her child: "Talulah Does the Hula."
- He said such names **humiliated** children and should not be used. Other names were also rejected, such as Sex Fruit and, for twins, Fish and Chips.
- Still, not all weird names could be disallowed, and some children were named Number 16 Bus Shelter, Violence, and Midnight Chardonnay.

'Embarrassed' girl, 9, gets court protection in New Zealand to change her name from 'Talula Does The Hula From Hawaii'

By DAILY MAIL REPORTER

Last updated at 9:33 PM on 24th July 2008

[Comments \(0\)](#) | [Share](#)

What's in a name? Quite a lot if you're called Talula Does The Hula From Hawaii.

That's the unfortunate appellation a girl was given by her parents - but now a New Zealand judge has ordered that the nine-year-old, who is at the centre of a custody battle, should become a ward of court until she can choose a name she really likes.

The girl's lawyer said she told people her name was 'K' because she feared being mocked and teased.

Family Court Judge Rob Murfitt said: The court is profoundly concerned about the very poor judgment which this child's parents have shown in choosing this name. It makes a fool of the child and sets her up with a social disability and handicap, unnecessarily.'



Namesake: A Hawaiian hula girl

Why do people call their children unusual names?

- Tesla's founder and CEO Elon Musk named his newborn babies 'X Æ A-12'. Musk had cited the idea that "traditional languages will become obsolete with the development of technology" as the reason why they called the difficult to pronounce 'X Æ A-12'.
- Musk said the 'A-12' was inspired by the CIA's spy plane 'Archangel-12 (Archangel)'. Musk added that this plane is 'the coolest plane ever'.



<https://t24.com.tr/haber/>

Why did they have the buttons if they didn't work?

- A minor furor in 2004 concerned the **traffic signals** in New York City. Many intersections had buttons for **pedestrians to press** in order to change the signals—to halt car traffic and activate the signal that it was safe to walk across the street.
- City officials admitted that many of these buttons were not even connected properly and did **not work at all**.



<http://spacing.ca/toronto/2014/12/10/>

Is it possible to make a new start?

- Consider the man who **auctioned his “entire life”** on eBay. He had recently divorced and wanted to make a new start. So he put up for bid his house in Australia and everything in it, his Mazda car, motorcycle, jet ski, parachuting gear, a trial run at his sales assistant job at a rug shop, and an introduction to his friends.
- The winning bid was 399,300 Australian dollars (about \$389,000). He said, “I am relatively pleased but I thought it would **go a bit higher**, if I’m honest.”

How do people get by even for the simplest decisions?

- The Starbucks chain of coffee shops has advertised that they offer **19,000 beverage** options, if you count all the different coffees, teas, cold drinks, and all the things you could add to them.
- The recent addition of an “**extra hot**” option, in which the temperature of your chosen beverage is boosted by 30 degrees Fahrenheit, probably increases the number of choices to more than **25,000**.
- In a sense, therefore, the customer who walks into a Starbucks shop for a morning drink is confronted with more than 25,000 decisions to make. Isn't that just a way to torture people?



<https://www.comunicaffe.com/>

How Do Social Psychologists Design Studies?

WHAT DO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGISTS DO?

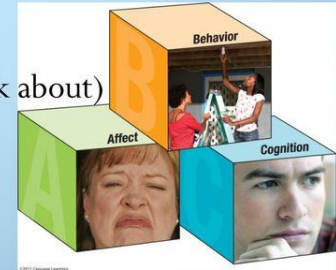
- Social psychology features **experiments** and the **scientific method**. It studies **inner states** and processes as well as **behavior**.
- Social psychology is concerned with the **effect of other people** on (mainly **adult**) human beings' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

WHAT DO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGISTS DO?

- The **ABC triad** in social psychology stands for
- **Affect**, or how people feel inside (including emotion)
- **Behavior**, or what people do, their actions
- **Cognition**, or what people think about
- Social psychology focuses especially on the **power of situations**.

Affect, Behavior, & Cognition

- Social Psychologists seek to understand how human beings think, act, and feel
- ABC Triad
 - Affect (How people feel inside)
 - Behavior (What people do)
 - Cognition (What people think about)

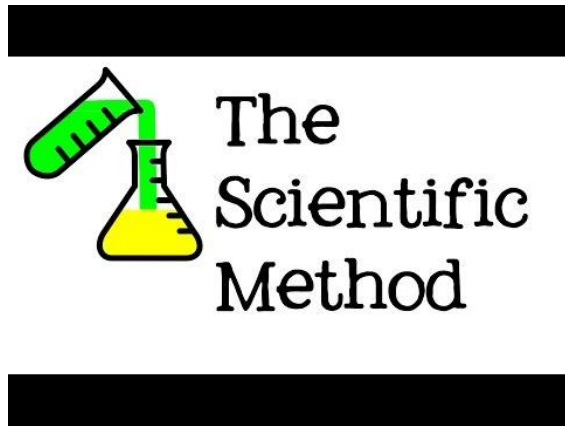


WHAT DO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGISTS DO?

- Social psychology emphasizes **how people react** to the world around them and **how small changes** in their immediate circumstances can **produce substantial changes in behavior**.
- Social psychologists study the **influence of situational factors** that people may not even be aware of.

HOW DO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGISTS ANSWER THEIR OWN QUESTIONS?

- The scientific method involves **five basic steps**:
 - 1) State a **problem** for study.
 - 2) Formulate a **testable hypothesis** (educated guess) as a tentative solution to the problem.
 - 3) **Design a study** to test the hypothesis and collect data.
 - 4) Test the hypothesis by **confronting** it with the **data**.
 - 5) **Communicate** the study's **results**.



To analyze the results of any study, researchers use **statistics**, which are mathematical tests that reveal patterns.

four common types of research in social psychology

- **Archival research:** data are analyzed that were originally created or gathered for a different purpose (such as newspapers or police records).
- **Naturalistic observation:** carefully watching people behave in their natural environments.
- **Surveys:** include self-report scales, in which participants are explicitly asked to report their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.
- **Experimental design:** A research design where scientists randomly assign participants to groups and systematically compare changes in behavior.

Case studies

- A type of research where scientists conduct an **in-depth study on a single example** of an event or a **single person** to test a hypothesis.
- In a case study, **nearly every aspect** of the subject's life and history **is analyzed** to seek patterns and causes of behavior.
- The hope is that learning gained from studying one case can be **generalized** to many others. Unfortunately, case studies tend to be highly **subjective** and it is sometimes **difficult to generalize** results to a larger population.

great examples of case studies

- **Anna O.** was the pseudonym given to one of the patients of physician Josef Breuer. Her case was described in the book that Breuer wrote with Sigmund Freud, *Studies on Hysteria*.
- **Bertha Pappenheim** was her real name, and she had initially sought Breuer's help with a series of symptoms that included visual disturbances, hallucinations, partial paralysis, and speech problems. Breuer diagnosed the young woman with **hysteria** and later discussed her case with Freud, who developed his own ideas of what lay at the root of Anna O.'s condition.
- Her treatment played an important role in the establishment and development of **psychoanalysis**.
- She coined the phrase "**talking cure**"
- Made significant contributions to **social work** in Germany.



<https://twitter.com/didikdidikfreud/status/665988772429996032>

great examples of case studies

- There have been a number of cases of **feral children raised in social isolation with little or no human contact**. Few have captured public and scientific attention like that of a young girl called **Genie**. She spent almost her entire childhood **locked** in a bedroom, **isolated and abused** for over a decade.
- Genie's case was one of the first to put the **critical period** theory to the test. Could a child reared in utter deprivation and isolation **develop language**? Could a nurturing environment make up for a horrifying past?



<https://www.verywellmind.com/genie-the-story-of-the-wild-child-2795241>

great examples of case studies

- **Phineas Gage** is often referred to as one of the most famous patients in **neuroscience**. He suffered a traumatic brain injury when an iron rod was driven through his entire skull, destroying much of his **frontal lobe**.
- Gage miraculously survived the accident but was so changed as a result that many of his friends described him as an almost different man entirely.



<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Phineas-Gage>