

Social Psych in Film Teaching Tips

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Clip 1: A Social Psychologist at Work

Before showing the video:

Generate a discussion about what students think psychologists, in general, do. Most will initially think of therapy and testing, the province of clinical psychologists, mainly. Talk about how there are other kinds of psychologists – educational (working in the educational field), forensic (working in the legal system), industrial (working in the field of designing products and equipment), and organizational (studying and researching how complex organizations function).

Consult Your Text: You may wish to refer to the appropriate pages in Chapter 1 to facilitate the discussion.

Ask what they think social psychologists do. Suggest that they study the impact of individuals on each other, groups, and situations and, conversely, the impact of other people, groups, and situations on individuals.

Explain that the video clip they are about to see depicts a social psychologist explaining some interesting research he engaged in, and includes footage of some actual aspects of the research.

After showing the video:

Generate a discussion about the nature of the research. Did the students find it to be useful and valuable research? What does it contribute to our knowledge of human relationships? Explain how the goal of social psychology research, like all psychological research, is to ultimately be of value and use to society, to make us better people and citizens, to improve our world, our lives, our relationships. Does this research rise to that level?

Consult Your Text: You may wish to refer to Chapter 2 in the text that deals with the nature and goals of social psychology research (e.g., basic vs. applied research).

You might involve the students in a brief “evaluating research” exercise by asking them these questions about the research shown in the clip:

1. What was the research question?
2. What were the research methods?
3. What were the conclusions?
4. What more would you like to know about this research?

Finally, ask the students what types of person-person or person-group interactions they might like to study if they were social psychologists. You might suggest some ideas yourself, such as those related to people’s behavior in settings associated with terrorism, war, and natural disasters. Then ask students how they might go about studying some discrete topic area. How would they generate a research question? A hypothesis? You might suggest one if a student does not come up with one. For instance, a broad research

question might be, “What accounted for looting in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005”? From there, help them shape a hypothesis. Then lead into a discussion of what types of research methods they might begin with, and what other methods they would use to expand their research.

Clip 3: The Interpersonal Perception Task

Before showing the video:

Explain that this clip consists of looking at three brief video segments, and that their task is to determine: (1) In segment #1: Which person in the first segment is telling a lie; (2) in segment # 2: What is the relationship is between the man and the woman, and (3) in comparing segment # 2 with segment # 3: In which scene is the woman talking with someone of higher status (i.e., the scene with the man and the woman, or the scene in which a black woman alone is shown talking).

After showing the video:

Explain that this “task” was developed by social psychologists Dane Archer and Mark Costanzo, in order to examine the role of nonverbal communication in social perception – the perception of others. Ask for their decision as to each of the above questions for each segment.

For each segment, ask what influenced their decision. Their answers are likely to be based entirely on body language, position, inflection, hand gestures, where and how the subjects were seated, how they dressed, eye contact or not, etc., all nonverbal clues. Generate a discussion about nonverbal communication in general.

Ask what NONVERBAL cues influenced their decision. Suggestions:

Segment # 1 – The man is reading from notes, the woman is talking into the camera. The man has a beard and a hat, which he might be “hiding” behind.

Segment # 2 – The man is making the list, woman is doing the talking. She is facing him and is relaxed, he is more rigid in his posture, taking down the information. The woman speaks assertively, not tentatively. The woman seems to be the “leader,” and man is doing what she tells him.

Segment # 3 - The woman is a minority and she is not looking directly into the camera (presumably the person she is speaking to), but looks down often. (And she is actually talking about the issues she has had as a minority faculty member, see below). She also shrugs or slightly grimaces a lot, as if she is tentative in her speech.

Determine if there is some consensus in the students’ decisions. Ask why there was consensus (if there was). Talk about the culturally-bound aspects of nonverbal communication. If you have a class of diverse students, you may find differences in opinion that you may wish to explore to demonstrate the cultural aspects of the social cues of nonverbal communication.

Third, ask students what factors other than nonverbal communication may influence the way in which we perceive others. For instance, in the first segment, the man was trying to get a job or position, but the woman was just talking about herself and her family—she had no reason to lie. In the second segment, the man was asking the woman about specifics of the trip and she was giving him direct answers, really directing the trip. She also corrected his pronunciation, which puts her “one-up.” In the third segment, the black woman was talking about issues related to being a minority faculty member and we perceive that she may be of lower status among the faculty. Also, compared with the woman talking with the man, she appeared to be talking to someone of higher, not lower or equal, status.

In terms of verbal and nonverbal communication, suggest how they are often hard to separate out. For instance, when you are tentative in your language—a lot of “I guess’s,” or “maybes”—your body language is likely to reflect that (a questioning look, for instance). When asking a question, you might have more of a tentative inflection (the man in # 2) than when answering a question directly (the woman in # 2), in which you appear to be assertive. When talking about a setting in which you are a minority (woman in # 3), your body language may reflect the content of your conversation, especially if you are talking to a person of higher status about a concern in which you feel of lower status.

Generate a general discussion of nonverbal cues and communication. Is it fair that we make these judgments? Are our judgments valid? Certainly not all of the time. What are the risks involved with making these snap decisions about people? How might that influence our other contacts with them if we saw these people again in another setting?

Finally, ask students how they feel knowing that they have no doubt been “misjudged” in some setting—from trivial to very important—based on nonverbal cues. How does that make them feel? What can they do about it? (Probably very little, unless we study more about the things that make people misperceive us and try to correct it. But that we should only in certain specific settings, like a job interview, learn what throws off people who are interviewing others for a job, and try to be cognizant of it.) Ultimately though, our real selves—flaws and all—come through and we can only hope that we show enough of our real selves to get the job or are understood based on the content of the communication and our character, not our nonverbal quirks.

Clip 5: Blue Eyes and Brown Eyes

Before showing the video:

Tell students that they are about to see a video clip about a very famous, and highly controversial “experiment” that elementary school teacher Jane Elliott conducted in her classroom in Iowa in 1968.

To help put the discussion into context, tell students, most of whom were not even born at the time, that this was at the height of the Civil Rights struggle in this country. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy had been assassinated, cities had been burned and

looted, reflecting mass civil unrest. President Lyndon Johnson, politically hobbled by a losing war in Vietnam (causing its own unrest at home), was still able to get through Congress massive legislation for his “Great Society” programs, designed to eliminate poverty, provide health care to the needy (Medicaid), and give early childhood education to children from impoverished homes (Head Start). Mandatory desegregation of schools was the law, after the Supreme Court’s 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, but schools in the south and Midwest (including Missouri) were fighting desegregation.

At the time Elliot conducted her experiment, the prejudice was white on black, black on white, but Elliot chose not to make skin color a factor in her “study.” Rather, she chose eye color, which, in today’s parlance, would be considered “politically correct.”

After showing the video:

Ask students the following questions to generate discussion. Suggested answers are given.

1. What was Elliot’s “study” designed to demonstrate to her students? *She wanted to show her students how they quickly conformed to the role she set for them – the brown eyed people would be “out” because they were “different.”*
2. How did her “study” work out the way she had “planned”? *As a result of students adopting the “in” and “out” group roles, all kinds of negative inferences flowed from being in the “in” group or the “out” group. Because power rested with the blue-eyed students, the brown-eyed students soon felt that and started acting powerless (angry, poor self-image, loss of self-confidence), and the blue-eyed started throwing their weight around. Stereotypes took hold.*
3. Why did her students fall into the trap she set for them?
 - a. *First, she said they were going to be “judged” according to their eye color. She said that blue-eyed people were better and smarter. She picked out a brown-eyed child and made an inference about brown eyes from a remark the child had made about his father (he had kicked him). So she set up the blue eyed people as good, and the brown eyed people as bad. Even George Washington (she said it was a fact) had blue eyes. She introduced the “racism” analogy by directing that brown-eyed children had to use a different drinking fountain (as blacks had to do at that time, in the South). And using the “collar” to distinguish brown eyes from blue eyes, she created a “uniform” that one could see from a distance, so as to aid in the stereotype.*
 - b. *Elliot’s experiment demonstrated that it is ingrained in the human condition, for even children who know nothing about the psychological processes of stereotyping and prejudice fall into their roles. As Albert Camus wrote in *The Stranger*, whenever two living organisms get together, in short order, one is dominant over the other. If there are no other people, the man or woman will exercise dominion over his or her dog, Camus suggested. Here, Elliot created the condition for them, by telling the students that there were differences between brown-eyed and blue-eyed people. But then the students themselves picked up the theme, and started making their own rules.*

4. What are some of the social psychological processes that the experiment demonstrated? Give specific examples from the clip. If you have time, you can conduct a mini-lecture of these processes, filling in where student feedback is lacking:
 - a. Stereotyping
 - b. Prejudice
 - c. Confirmation bias
 - d. Illusory Correlations
 - e. Self-fulfilling prophecy (especially in how the children performed on a learning task before and after they had been identified as brown-eyed).
5. What do you think of this type of “experiment”? Could it be done in a 5th grade class today? Why or why not? Was it unethical? Discuss how or why it might have been. Was it valuable? (Decidedly, yes. The students remember it to this day, according to articles written and a reunion of students a few years ago.) Did it make her students better people? Suggested responses:
 - a. One student picked up the racism analogy referring to the way brown-eyed people were treated as now “niggers” were treated.
 - b. Elliot debriefed her students to help her demonstrate to her students that they started being mean to brown-eyed students.
 - c. She went over with them the results of their learning task and pointed out how the difference in results was attributable to the way they were treated and thought of themselves when they were “collared” as brown-eyed.
 - d. Elliot gave a good lecture about treating people differently in terms of race. It was a powerful demonstration that students were able to see for themselves the power of stereotyping and prejudice.
 - e. She assured students that it was not an easy way to learn about prejudice and racism, but they agreed it was worth it.
 - f. She debriefed them extensively, so as to obviate some of their concerns about ethics.
6. What types of stereotypes and prejudice could be addressed today in such an experiment besides black-white racism, and why?
 - a. Muslim – September 11, Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, Muslims identified with terrorists.
 - b. Hispanic – the new underclass in America, lower socioeconomic and educational status.
 - c. Illegal aliens – immigrants with non-resident legal status.
 - d. Racism and ethnic prejudice is rampant but not as overt as it was in the 1960s. Today, we are not so much denying access to buses and drinking fountains but to equal opportunity in jobs and education (especially given the waning influence of affirmative action programs).

Clip 6: Facism: Gender Stereotypes

Before showing the video:

Tell students that this clip concerns the research of Dane Archer (remind them, if you showed it, that he was also a lead researcher in the interpersonal perception task clip (#3))

and colleagues about how media photographs of women are different from those of men. They found that photos of women in magazines emphasized their bodies, whereas photographs of men emphasized their faces. The research question was, what effect do these photographic styles have on us, the readers? The social psychology topic is “facism.”

After showing the video:

Set up the discussion by generating a brief “evaluating research” exercise by asking them:

1. What was the research question? (Is there a bias in the photographic depiction of men and women?)
2. What were the research methods? (Examining 1,750 photos from major magazines.)
3. What were the researchers’ conclusions?
4. What more would you like to know about the research?

Then move on to answering questions about how they react to photos of men and women. What do they notice in magazines and on television about the differences in depictions of men and women? How do the different photographic styles for men’s and women’s photos influence them? For instance, do they attend to the message more if a man’s vs. a woman’s photo is used? Are the answers different for men and women students?

Ask students if they think this bias is holding as men pay more attention to body image, use “beauty” products, and worry about weight. Do students see this as a trend? For instance, magazines for men put an increasing emphasis on health and appearance.

Clip 7: The 1984 Apple Computer Commercial: Use of Persuasion in TV Ads

Before showing the video:

Consider that you will likely want to show all three of these very brief clips at the same time (they are only one minute each). The first commercial focuses on appealing to the viewer’s desire to not conform, while the next two clips use fear to persuade.

Tell students that they are about to see the Apple Computer television commercial, which ran in 1984 in order to introduce the Macintosh (“Mac”) computer. This was the first competition with the major personal computer manufacturer at the time, IBM (actually, most computers that are not Macs are like the IBM prototype of the desktop). Tell them to look for visual and verbal messages that are trying to persuade the viewer to break with tradition and try something new.

After showing the video:

Ask students what visual and verbal messages they thought were meant to persuade.

Suggestions to facilitate discussion: The messages were almost entirely visual, except the movie playing on the screen, which was supposedly to be equated with George Orwell’s

“1984” (which we learn at the end with the voice-over message) and the message at the end, which suggests that with the introduction of Apple computers in 1984, Orwell’s 1984 won’t come to pass. Most students will be familiar with Orwell’s *1984*, but it is worth reviewing Orwell’s premise that by 1984 the government would exercise a tremendous degree of control over the populace, and that we would all think and act alike. The government was typified by “Big Brother,” the man speaking in the film being watched by the automatons in the theatre. In the commercial, “Big Brother” was IBM (IBM was often referred to in its heyday as “Big Blue”), and the female runner was Apple. Thus, the people looking at the movie were all the same, all gray, etc., and the marathon runner with the Olympic-like-torch was dressed in bright running clothes and was a woman (those watching the movie were men). It appears that the main thrust of the messages was encouraging the viewer to break with conformity and go with Apple. What is not shown is any reference to the competitor, but had you seen the commercial in 1984, presumably, you would have known it was IBM.

Ask students which images in the commercial impressed them and why. Ask students for consensus as to whether they were primarily persuaded by verbal or visual messages. (Although students may not have been alive in 1984, they might today associate the Big Brother image with Microsoft, rather than IBM.)

Ask students whether, knowing now that it was IBM competition the commercial was aimed at, they consider it appropriate to depict the consumer/woman as smashing and destroying IBM?

Ask students if they can think of Apple commercials or ads used today. Do they still appeal to the consumer’s desire to not conform? (The answer is very much yes.) Ask which students have a Mac computer. If they don’t have one, ask if they know of people who do. Can they make a general statement about people who have Macs? (Generally, the Macintosh is used by people in the arts, people who do graphic arts, produce movies, publish media, etc.)

Ask students if they can think of other ads today that appeal to a sense of nonconformity. If so, what kind of products are advertised and what type of conformity is being attacked? Is it more than conformity to the product that has the greatest market share? For instance, Pepsi ads tout Pepsi as different from Coke. Coke has the major market share. What other products are aimed at drawing consumers away from the market leader?

Then generate a discussion about the use of persuasion to try to change attitudes and beliefs, one of the most important areas of study of social psychology. Explain the dual process model of persuasion (Perry & Cacioppo) from Chapter 6 of the text. Ask students if they were persuaded (if at all) by means of the “central route” (being influenced by the strength and quality of the arguments) or the “peripheral route” (focusing on external cues, such as the imagery and symbolism of “Big Brother”).

Clips 8 and 9: Daisy Johnson (Lyndon Johnson/Barry Goldwater 1964 Presidential Campaign Commercials)

Before showing the videos:

If you showed Clip 7 dealing with Apple computers, tell students that these clips are attempting to persuade voters through the use of fear. Since virtually none of your students are old enough to remember the time, you need to set the stage.

Consult Your Text: These ads are discussed in Chapter 6 of the text.

Lyndon Johnson, who had been John F. Kennedy's vice-president, was now running for President in his own right. Johnson, though embroiled in the Vietnam War that he inherited from Kennedy, was campaigning on a platform of social reform, the last of our Presidents to do so. Many of the benefits we know today that benefit the poor come from his presidency (Head Start and Medicaid, for instance).

Barry Goldwater, on the other hand, was campaigning on a platform of anti-communism and national security. The Cold War was raging (you might compare it to the "War on Terrorism," which seems to be the 21st century equivalent of the Cold War) and Goldwater wanted to convince the country that Johnson's platform would lead to our destruction. Johnson, on the other hand, wanted to instill in the voters the fear that Goldwater would lead the country to nuclear war.

After showing the videos:

Dealing with each clip separately or both together, however you choose, ask:

What images and messages did both ads share? *Both used children. Johnson's showed a girl engaged in a child-like, playful act of counting daisy petals, while Goldwater's showed children engaged in a patriot activity, reciting the pledge of allegiance over the voice of a Soviet Russian leader, Nikita Khrushchev. In Johnson's ad, his voice appeals to life vs. destruction, and he also includes an appeal to religion/spirituality ("God's children"). Goldwater's message is more direct in asking for his vote.*

What verbal messages were effective? Did the student find Johnson's message ("we must love each other or die, the stakes are too high for you to stay home") more appealing, or did they respond to Goldwater's less emotional message? Also, ask if Goldwater's statement, "I want kids to grow up as Americans and they will..." was a bit "over the top."

What visual messages were effective? *Probably the Johnson ad, as the Goldwater ad with the older students and teacher in a dated setting were not appealing. Neither was the image of Goldwater speaking very appealing.*

How did the visual messages enhance the verbal message? *Students may find the Johnson-ad messages more appealing.*

Ask students if, putting themselves in the shoes of a voter today, watching the ads if they were shown today, they were persuaded. Students may find that Goldwater’s statement was a bit of a stretch, suggesting that the US would be taken over by the Soviets. If they were persuaded, ask if fear was a part of the process. Can they specify how the fear worked on them? Help students identify which verbal and visual messages were to them (or could be to others at the time) fear-inducing.

Of course, Johnson won by a huge margin. Ask students to put the Johnson win in the context of these ads. Assuming, for the sake of argument, that these ads and those like them were a major part of the candidates’ campaigns, get them to suggest how the Goldwater ad worked against his chances, and how Johnson’s ad was more effective. In this context, you can talk about the use of fear and what social psychologists show about how and when fear can be effective and when it can be counterproductive. The fear-based messages need to let the viewer know how they can avoid the dread result. In this case, the message is simple: Vote for Johnson and avoid war; vote for Goldwater and live in a Soviet-occupied United States. Also, fear only works when the viewer feels vulnerable to the advertised threat. The more vulnerable people feel about the threatened outcome, the more they are influenced by the recommendations contained within the fear appeal.

Consult Your Text: See Chapter 6 of the text for a further discussion of fear as a component of persuasion.

Ask students if they can recall ads from the most recent Presidential campaign. In the 2004 campaign, President Bush hammered away at the threat of terrorism and suggested that John Kerry would be “soft” on terrorism. Ask if they think in the context of campaign commercials if arousing fear of foreign attack is more powerful than arousing fear say, of Americans without health care, or problems in our schools. Likely they will say yes, but it is worth remembering that Johnson did beat Goldwater.

Also, in terms of political advertising, you could discuss how most political advertisements today—for local and national office—seem to be negative. While the public says it does not like negative advertising, it seems to be effective. Ask students why they think that is the case.

Ask students if they can identify other television or print ads today that use fear to persuade. For example, public service ads use fear routinely to warn youths about the dangers of smoking, drinking, and sexual behaviors. How about product ads? What products are sold using fear?

Clip 10: The Asch Conformity Study

Before showing the video:

Set up the video by describing that this is actual footage from research based on the classic studies by Sherif and Asch. Stanley Milgram conducted the experiment that is

depicted in the clip, which tested Sherif and Asch's theory on conforming to group norms.

The students will see two trials of the same experiment.

Tell them that the men seated fifth in line (man in a white shirt with trim) are the research subjects. Everyone else is a confederate. Advise the students to look for the reactions of the subjects to the confederates' answers about which line matches the length of another line. The narrator tells us the research conclusion about why the subjects conformed—and they do so for different reasons (we “hear” them thinking). Ask students to watch for this difference.

After showing the video:

Tell the students that the researchers conducted post-experiment interviews to determine why the various subjects went along with the group's wrong answer. Two different reasons were demonstrated.

The first man actually believed that the confederates were right and he was wrong, so he changed his answer—he denied the evidence of his own eyes and genuinely believed the others were correct. His conformity was based on distortion of his judgment—he genuinely believed the others were correct. The second subject did not want to disagree with the others, though he knew they were wrong. He knew he was right but went along with the group so as to avoid the discomfort of disagreeing with the group and not to make “waves.” So his distortion was at the level of his response.

The research showed that people conformed and gave the wrong answer 37 percent of the time. Ask students if they have ever said something they did not believe in order to conform to others. Get them to describe these situations.

Clip 11: The Milgram Obedience Study

Before showing the video:

If you showed clip # 10, you might introduce this one by describing that this clip will demonstrate the dark side of conformity—obedience to an “order” that ostensibly does harm to a human subject. This is actual footage from what may be the most famous psychological experiment ever conducted, the Milgram obedience study. Participants are told to administer electric shocks to subjects when they get an answer to a question wrong. However, the “learners” were not “learners,” but confederates in the research, and the “shocks” are not electric shocks at all, just a buzzer without any electric current. However, the research subjects, referred to as “teachers,” are real, and they believe that they are actually administering higher and higher voltages of electric shocks to “learners” when they get the wrong answers. When the subjects balk, the experimenter tells them to continue. And continue they do, even though the subjects (as the one shown here) showed visible anxiety at administering the electric shocks to “learners” who were crying out in pain.

After showing the video:

Ask the students how many of them think they would administer the shocks to the point of pain. Ask them what percentage of subjects they think would actually administer shocks sufficient to cause pain?

Tell the students that the research showed that 65 percent of the subjects administered “shocks” at the maximum level of 450 volts. Also tell them that Milgram followed up his study by asking people the maximum they or other people would administer, and that on average they said 135 volts. They thought that only one out of one thousand people would administer shocks sufficient to inflict pain. Indeed, after his famous study, Milgram himself expressed “shock” that so many of the subjects administered the maximum level of voltage when the confederate “learners” were crying out in pain.

Tell students that this research was conducted during the conduct of the Nazi war crimes trials as an effort to test whether “good” people would do “bad” things when ordered by their superiors. The most burning questions that arose out of the Nazi’s treatment of the Jews, and that arose in the Nazi war crimes, was why so many common people did what Hitler’s men told them to do. Would everyday people hurt others when ordered to do so? Sadly, Milgram’s study suggests that a desire to obey authority may override one’s empathy and morals.

Consult Your Text: If you have the time to discuss the source of people’s propensity to obey authority, see the discussion in Chapter 7. Factors contributing to obedience include the traits of the participant, the physical presence of the authority figure, the participant’s belief in the authority figure’s legitimacy, and the physical proximity to the authority figure.

Tell students that Milgram’s research was then and still is considered to be of questionable ethics. Do they feel the research was unethical? Why or why not? Ask if they had been participants, and had performed as 65 percent of the participants did, how would they feel upon debriefing—after being told that the shocks were not real and the learners were confederates, and upon learning of the research question.

Clip 16: Groupthink

Before showing the video:

Tell students that this clip discusses the phenomenon of groupthink and the processes that can lead to it. References to several historical events are used as illustrations.

After showing the video:

Review the social psychology concept of “groupthink” —a mode of thinking in which group members’ premature striving for agreement overrides their ability to appraise alternative courses of action. Ask where they think groupthink comes from. Explain that the research suggests that it stems from group cohesiveness, consisting of a strong esprit de corps, sense of solidarity, and desire to live up to the rules of the group. One of the consequences of high cohesiveness is the desire to strive for agreement.

Use the following to engage in a discussion about the factors that can predispose members to engage in groupthink, based on the incidents shown in clip:

1. Isolation from outside ideas
2. Stressful decision-making context brought on by budgetary restraints or history of failure (these drove the fateful decision to launch the Challenger space shuttle)
3. Illusion of invulnerability
 - a. Examples:
 - i. Challenger Space Explosion
 - ii. Invasion of Pearl Harbor – Admiral Kimmel and his advisors ignored repeated warnings from Washington that Japan may attack. The result? The entire American fleet was lost.
4. Belief in the inherent morality of the group, or the belief that whatever they decide is the right choice (Challenger). This leads people to ignore ethical and right choices, ironically. Unquestioned faith in our own morality is engaged in to protect our self-esteem and in so doing we self-censor our thoughts.

The narrator asks whether groups preordained to engage in groupthink. The answer is, “No.” The leader can initiate and lead groups in a way that will foster good decision-making. Example: When the Soviet buildup of ships near Cuba occurred, President Kennedy took steps to avoid groupthink among his advisers as he sought direction for how the U.S. should respond. Kennedy (1) encouraged openness in the discussions, (2) brought in outsiders so as to “break-up” group cohesion, (3) tasked each individual member of group with role of critical evaluator of the ideas expressed and (4) avoided being too directive so as not to exert undue influence on the group (and sometimes was absent from the meetings). If cooler heads had not prevailed, some say the invasion could have been the beginning of a war with the Soviet Union.

Ask students if they can think of any recent historical or current examples of groupthink. The Iraq war might be a good example. The Bush administration admittedly failed to prepare for how tough it would be after it deposed Saddam Hussein. News reports have described President Bush’s close advisors as afraid to tell him bad news (Time Magazine, September 12, 2005).

Ask students if they have ever participated in groupthink. Ask them if they think they could be strong enough to deviate from the prevailing view.

Remind students of Clip # 10, the Asch conformity study (if you have not shown it, you might show it now, as it is only two minutes long—see above Teaching Tips). When everyone around the subject was giving the wrong answer, the subjects gave the wrong answer too, either because they doubted their own reality because they were not part of the group, or because they did not want to violate the social norm of agreeing with others.

Clip 17: Beauty and Attraction: Attraction and Close Personal Relationships

Before showing the video:

As students if they can explain the process by which they are attracted to someone. Get them to talk about being “blown away” or “knocked off their feet” by a particularly beautiful woman or handsome man. Who can explain “love at first sight”? The second segment in the clip discusses the research to explain why physical attraction plays such an important role in mate selection.

After showing the video:

Explain that the perspective of the research discussed in the clip is the evolutionary perspective, which explains human behavior in terms of natural selection. The face is described as that portion of ourselves that “we display in the great dance of life.” The narrator says that facial symmetry is being evaluated as a result of the process of natural selection. Define natural selection (a characteristic that is likely to survive in an organism and be passed on to its offspring because it has value for the survival of the species).

One of the researchers says that clearly across cultures human beings see facial attractiveness in the same way. He argued from an evolutionary psychological standpoint that it is believed that a person with facial symmetry has overcome the “bad genes” that would throw off facial symmetry. People with facial symmetry also have other body symmetry. Researchers look at the relationship to facial symmetry and sexual behaviors. More symmetrical men have more partners and engage in more infidelity, a fact attributed to the symmetric man’s greater attractiveness. Ask students if they agree with this statement. Does it sound like a rationalization to them? Explain that it is just one theory or one explanation for infidelity.

The researcher says that the reason we have this obsession with looks and symmetry is that throughout evolutionary history individuals who prefer healthy and symmetric others would have obtained mates who themselves were symmetric and better providers and together they had “better” symmetric offspring (hence, illustrating the process of natural selection).

The researchers also note that facial symmetry is not all we look for in a mate. Further, our static facial features say who we are, but our changing features show how we weather life. But facial expressions are hugely important due to the need to exchange social information quickly.

Explain to students that facial interaction between mother and child begins within hours after birth. Mothers scrutinize babies’ facial expressions, express their own, and then babies respond. There is a synchronicity. Developmental psychology researchers believe that baby’s smiles are a bonding behavior that lets mother know that baby knows them and is responding to them. There seems to be a basic repertoire of facial expressions that are similar among cultures and racial groups, suggesting that this bonding behavior is found in all human beings.

A lively discussion could evolve from examining the researcher’s discussion about the male and female roles in reproduction—from this evolutionary perspective. According to the researchers, males and females need each other to reproduce but they are in competition for resources—for the best male and female so that they can match up and produce the best child, with the strongest genes. The theory is that whether we know it or not, we are seeking out mates who will pass on the best genes to our offspring. But men and women have different interests in reproduction—females have to carry the offspring to term, and should be more discriminating in their partner. Men, on the other hand, can pass on their sperm to many women.

The theory is that males and females are thus psychologically different. Darwin said the brain is a part of natural selection and men and women cannot have identical brains because they have different reproductive functions, opportunities, and constraints.

This clip could open to the door to many lively discussions. Students may reject the research as not applicable to them, but challenge them to entertain the notions presented.

Some points that may come up, or that you may want to toss out for discussion:

We are not actively aware that we are scanning face and body for the perfect gene pool potential to make a baby. Are there not other explanations for facial preference than the one explained from this evolutionary approach? This is just one way, is it not, to explain attractiveness? Another approach to understanding facial symmetry, you might suggest, is cognitive schemas, and operant conditioning (when someone we are attracted to likes us, we, in turn, continue to like them). See what other perspectives students can come up with the help explain this concept of facial expressions and features as attractive.

Students may have a quarrel with the statement that the male and female brains are different, but discuss how it is definitely different in terms of the sexual organizing features of the man female brain and endocrine system. Sexual determination, development, and behavior is primarily the result of hormonal functioning that begins in the hypothalamus, which signals the pituitary gland to make/release endogenous sex hormones. If you have time, you might review how sex is determined at conception and the important prenatal stages of sexual development. You might mention that brain research does suggest that there are some differences in male and female brains besides the sexual organizing features, but these are considered to be small and not significant for other than sexual behaviors.

Clip 18: *Babe: Pig in the City*: Helping Others

Before showing the video:

Tell students that this clip from *Babe* demonstrates what research shows about human beings—that many people will pass up the opportunity to help people in need. This is known as the “bystander effect.” The anthropomorphized animals in the clip demonstrate this trait by not helping the pit bull who is chained and can’t get loose but who lands in a

pool of water, and is threatened with drowning. With other dogs and the monkey looking on, Babe dives into the water to save the dog from drowning. Only one chimp helps when Babe asks for it by ferrying the boat to safety so that the dog can get to safe ground.

After showing the video:

Ask students if they have ever passed by someone that was obviously in need of assistance. If they didn't offer assistance, ask them why.

Go over the research into the bystander effect by Latane and Darley. Discuss the five steps in the process of deciding to help or not:

1. Noticing that something is happening.
2. Interpreting the event as an emergency that requires assistance.
3. Taking responsibility for providing help.
4. Deciding how to help.
5. Providing help.

Discuss how the threshold barrier to helping is the feeling of "diffusion of responsibility" that takes place before step 3. This is the feeling that someone else is already preparing to help.

Ask students to identify the points in the clip in which Babe passed through these stages. You might want to show the clip again, for the process is shown in a nicely concrete manner. Identify the situational and personal factors that led Babe to help the dog and that led the chimp to help in the end.

When Babe saw that no one would help, he felt a sense of individual responsibility. Babe also may have a "helping" or altruistic personality and be prone to help anyway.

Clip 19: The Bobo Doll Study: Aggression and Modeling

Before showing the video:

Tell students that they are going to see a clip from a very famous study about the role of social cognition in modeling behavior, that of Albert Bandura and the "Bobo" doll. Bandura discusses his research and narrates the clip.

After showing the video:

What types of research methods did Bandura use in order to test the subjects' aggression after they viewed the model kicking and beating the doll? The students were given a punching bag, along with other materials to play with. Some chose to attack the punching bag.

How did the results challenge the belief that seeing others engage in aggression has a cathartic effect? Children acted out aggressively, indicating that watching aggression had not "cleansed" them of their desire to aggress. Indeed, watching aggression seemed to prime them to act aggressively.

Did students simply mimic the behavior of the model? No. Students picked up a gun when they had not normally played with guns and used hostile language that they were not otherwise known to use. Students did not have to play aggressively after they saw the model. The model did not use a weapon or hostile language. Students also used forms of aggression that the model did not use.

Discuss how this research was used to caution against violence in television to which children are exposed. Does this experiment seem dated given the extreme and explicit violence on television and in movies today?

Ask students for examples of aggressive, even violent, modeling that they see on television and in movies today. Also generate a discussion about violent interactive video games and violent music lyrics. Ask students how they feel after consuming media violence. Most will say that it does not affect them at all. Some may say that they look upon the violence as harmless, even funny.

Tell them that the general consensus is that, at a minimum, exposure to media violence on a day-to-day basis desensitizes the viewer to violence, even though it may not outright lead to violence (except those who are already predisposed to violence or already mentally unstable). If students indicated that they thought violent media was either funny or innocuous, ask if they have not proved the point about desensitization. Ask if they think a population unmoved by violence is a healthy trait.

Clip 23: *In the Name of the Father*: Police Interrogation and False Confessions

Before showing the video:

Ask students if they have ever told someone who was questioning them what they thought the questioner wanted to hear even if it was not the truth. If so, ask for reasons they did so. You are likely to get different responses, such as a desire to merely conform and say what others are saying (refer to the Asch experiment clip), to get something they want, to achieve status, etc.

Then ask students if they have read or heard about people being falsely convicted of crimes based on their own false confessions. Get a general sense of why students feel that people would confess to something they did not do.

Tell them that the video illustrates police interrogation techniques and how they can lead to false confessions. The film from which the clip is taken is based on a true story of Gerry Conlon, who was falsely accused of a bombing attributed to the Irish Republican Army. His false confession was eventually achieved through psychological coercion and Gerry and his father both went to prison. Gerry's father died in prison.

Consult Your Text: Tell students that in the scene they are going to see, the police are shown using many of the nine steps of interrogation presented in the text (chapter 12), as well as the “Good Cop, Bad Cop” routine.

After showing the video:

What techniques do the interrogators use? First, for several seconds, there is silence. Then the cop whispers something about killing Gerry's father. Gerry "freaks out" and the bad cop leaves, mocking Gerry while holding a gun to his own head, supposedly mimicking shooting Gerry's father. The "good cops" take over and say they are not going to hurt his father. They call him "son." They then use his outburst to accuse him of hatred of those on the other side of his politics. He says he does not hate anyone. They give him something to sign, apparently a confession. He signs in order to save his father. He signs his name, saying they can write whatever they like.

What is the clear message of Gerry's response to the threat to kill his father? The answer is that he will sign his name to anything in order to save his father. He does not even hesitate to do that. Ask students if they would do the same if police threatened to kill one of their loved ones if they did not say what the police wanted to hear.

Go over the research on false confessions as set out in the text in order to answer the question, "Why did Gerry sign the false confession?" What do psychologists tell us are the psychological processes involved in confessing to something one did not do?

Talk about this issue as a significant problem in the legal system in the United States. Talk about the inherent flaw of questioning a suspect when you have the answer in mind that you want, instead of looking for the truth, which might lie elsewhere. Interrogators engaging in techniques like that in the video are looking for their own version of what the truth is, and they do not want their beliefs challenged. Ask students if they think the danger of misinformation in exchange for torture is worth the risk. Also, what is the value of putting an innocent person behind bars while the real culprit is free?

Ask them if they were a juror who heard read a defendant's false confession, would they even consider that the person was not telling the truth?

Ask them what kind of evidence they would want to override their belief (if they have it) that no one would admit to a crime they did not commit because the consequences are so huge.

You might, if you have time, refer to how this issue of false confessions has arisen in the cases of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. There have been dozens of documented reports of men being physically tortured in order to gain intelligence information. Of course there was psychological coercion as well (such as promises of access to the Koran, better food, and breaks from solitary confinement) if they would provide the information that the interrogators wanted.

Ask students if, given the research, they think torture would lead to the truth. Would they, if they were being beaten, say anything to stop the torture? Or would they hold fast, if innocent, and perhaps be killed or maimed as a result of torture techniques?

Clip 24: Apollo 13: Leadership; Clip 25: U571: Leadership

Before showing the video:

Ask students to jot down a list of traits that they associate with leadership in general, traits they associate with military leadership, and traits they associate with leadership in any crisis.

Tell students that these two clips demonstrate leadership issues in two crisis settings, the Apollo 13 space mission (a real event most students will have heard about) and the setting on the fictional submarine, U-571, from a movie of the same name. Ask students to look for behaviors that demonstrate desirable and undesirable factors relating to leading others.

After showing the video:

Set up the different situations and issues from the clips so as to engage in a comparison and contrast of issues:

Apollo 13 – Mission Commander Lovell (Tom Hanks) deflects blame and distress from Swigert (Kevin Bacon) and tries to bring the group back to the imminent task at hand—staying alive. Lovell directs them to stay on task—he said we have hundreds of steps to accomplish. Lovell says we are not going to engage in the “blame game.”

U-571 – Lt. Tyler is the submarine captain. Other officers on the sub counsel him on the character aspect of leadership. Both officers let him know how his submates look up to him, but he is told he has to focus on the task—make hard decisions and get the men to follow. The first officer tells him he has to make hard decisions with perhaps imperfect information that means life or death. He says if you cannot make those kinds of decisions without pause or reflection, you have no business being a submarine captain. The other officer reminds him of the weight of being a commanding officer of a ship. He said don't ever say to the men, “I don't know.” He said the skipper always knows what to do, whether he does or not.

Students should notice that Lovell is task-oriented and that Tyler appears to be more person-oriented but he is receiving training in taking charge of the task at hand. Of course, Lovell demonstrates the traits that the officers are reminding Tyler that he must show: decisiveness, establishing order out of chaos. While Lovell does not know the solution that will save the mission, he indicates that they will do all they can to get there, one meaningful step at a time. He won't allow them to waste precious minutes dealing with issues not relevant to saving themselves and the mission.

Tyler, on the other hand, appears to be tentative, he has already said “I don't know” in response to some subordinates' questions, and the officers tell him he must demonstrate a sense of being in control and knowing even if he does not. Otherwise the ship and all of them will be lost.

Engage in a discussion about leadership research and the different types of leaders and leadership, for example, the classic trait approach, contingency models of leaderships (task vs. person oriented), transactional leadership (e.g., gains support from followers by setting clear goals for them, providing assistance and fulfilling psychological needs for them when they follow), and transformational leadership (e.g., motivate followers to transcend their personal needs in the interest of the common good, especially in a time of growth, change, and crisis). Ask them:

1. What kind of leader is Lovell?
2. What kind of leader is Tyler?
3. Does Lovell have all the traits a leader needs to do his best to save the mission?
4. What leadership traits does Tyler seem to be lacking?

Students may find several components of these different leadership models in Lovell and Tyler.