SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT*

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Abstract

This module covers the lives and social learning theories of Albert Bandura, Julian Rotter, and Walter Mischel and how those theories apply to personality development. The references cited in this module can be found in the accompanying module entitled "References for Personality."

The social learning theorists observed that the complexity of human behavior cannot easily be explained by traditional behavioral theories. Bandura recognized that people learn a great deal from watching other people and seeing the rewards and/or punishments that other people receive. Social learning theorists do not deny the influence of reinforcement and punishment, but rather, they suggest that it can be experienced through observation and does not require direct, personal experience as Skinner would argue. In addition, observational learning requires cognition, something that radical behaviorists consider outside the realm of psychological research, since cognition cannot be observed. Bandura took a broad theoretical perspective on social learning, whereas Rotter and Mischel focused more closely on specific cognitive aspects of social learning and behavior.

It is also important to point out an artificial distinction that is difficult to avoid in the chapters of this section. Chapters 10, 11, and 12 are roughly set up as chapters on radical behaviorism and formal learning theory, followed by social learning, and then concluding with cognitive theories on personality development. However, as will be evident, the chapters overlap a great deal. For example, Dollard and Miller’s attempt to find a middle ground between Freud and Skinner led to their initial descriptions of social learning, which provided a prelude to this chapter. Bandura, Rotter, and Mischel address a number of aspects of cognition in their theories, but they are not as completely focused on cognition as are Kelly, Beck, and Ellis, hence the separation of this chapter from the following one. In Social Learning Theory, Bandura had this to say:

A valid criticism of extreme behaviorism is that, in a vigorous effort to avoid spurious inner causes, it has neglected determinants of behavior arising from cognitive functioning... Because some of the inner causes invoked by theorists over the years have been ill-founded does not justify excluding all internal determinants from scientific inquiry... such studies reveal that people learn and retain behavior much better by using cognitive aids that they generate than by reinforced repetitive performance... A theory that denies that thoughts can regulate actions does not lend itself readily to the explanation of complex human behavior. (pg. 10; Bandura, 1977).

Albert Bandura and Social Learning Theory

Bandura is the most widely recognized individual in the field of social learning theory, despite the facts that Dollard and Miller established the field and Rotter was beginning to examine cognitive social
learning a few years before Bandura. Nonetheless, Bandura's research has had the most significant impact, and the effects of modeling on aggressive behavior continue to be studied today (see “Personality Theory in Real Life” at the end of the chapter). Therefore, we will begin this chapter by examining the basics of Bandura's social learning perspective.

Brief Biography of Albert Bandura

Albert Bandura was born in 1925, in the small town of Mundare, in northern Alberta, Canada. His parents had emigrated from Eastern Europe (his father from Poland, his mother from the Ukraine), and eventually saved enough money to buy a farm. Farming in northern Canada was not easy. One of Bandura's sisters died during a flu pandemic, one of his brothers died in a hunting accident, and part of the family farm was lost during the Great Depression. Nonetheless, the Bandura family persevered, and maintained a lively and happy home.

Although Bandura's parents lacked any formal education, they stressed its value. Despite having only one small school in town, which lacked both teachers and academic resources, the town's children developed a love of learning and most of them attended universities around the world. Following the encouragement of his parents, Bandura also sought a wide variety of other experiences while he was young. He worked in a furniture manufacturing plant, and performed maintenance on the Trans-Alaska highway. The latter experience, in particular, introduced Bandura to a variety of unusual individuals, and offered a unique perspective on psychopathology in everyday life.

When Bandura went to the University of British Columbia, he intended to major in biology. However, he had joined a carpool with engineering and pre-med students who attended classes early in the morning. Bandura looked for a class to fit this schedule, and happened to notice that an introductory psychology course was offered at that time. Bandura enjoyed the class so much that he changed his major to psychology, receiving his bachelor's degree in 1949. Bandura then attended graduate school at the University of Iowa, in a psychology department strongly influenced by Kenneth Spence, a former student of Clark Hull. Thus, the psychology program at the University of Iowa was strongly behavioral in its orientation, and they were well versed in the behavioral research conducted in the psychology department at Yale University.

As we saw in the previous chapter, John Dollard and Neal Miller had established the field of social learning at Yale in the 1930s, but they had done so within the conceptual guidelines of Hullian learning theory. Bandura was not particularly interested in Hull's approach to learning, but he was impressed by Dollard and Miller's concepts of modeling and imitation. Bandura received his Ph.D. in clinical psychology in 1952, and then began a postdoctoral position at the Wichita Guidance Center. Bandura was attracted to this position, in part, because the psychologist in charge was not heavily immersed in the Freudian psychodynamic approach that was still so prevalent in clinical psychology.

Following his postdoctoral training, Bandura became a member of the faculty at Stanford University, where he spent the rest of his career. The chairman of Bandura's department had been studying frustration and aggression, and this influenced Bandura to begin his own studies on social learning and aggression. This research revealed the critical role that modeling plays in social learning, and soon resulted in the publication of Adolescent Aggression (co-authored by Richard Walters, Bandura's first graduate student; Bandura & Walters, 1959). This line of research also led to the famous “Bobo” doll studies, which helped to demonstrate that even young children can learn aggressive behavior by observing models. Bandura then became interested in self-regulatory behavior in children, and one of the colleagues he collaborated with was Walter Mischel, whose work we will address later in this chapter. During his long and productive career, Bandura became more and more interested in the role played by cognition in social learning, eventually renaming his theory to reflect his social cognitive perspective on human learning. He also examined the role of the individual in influencing the nature of the environment in which they experience life, and how their own expectations of self-efficacy affect their willingness to participate in aspects of that life.

Bandura has received numerous honors during his career. Included among them, he has served as president of the American Psychological Association and received a Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award from APA. He received the William James Award from the American Psychological Society (known today as the Association for Psychological Science), a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Distinguished Contribution Award from the International Society for Research in Aggression, and a Distinguished Scientist Award from the Soc-
ciety of Behavioral Medicine. Bandura has also been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, and he has received numerous honorary degrees from universities around the world. The list goes on, not the least of which is his *Outstanding Lifetime Contribution to Psychology Award*, received from APA in 2004.

**Placing Bandura in Context: Social Learning Theory Establishes Its Independence**

Although social learning theory has its foundation in the work of Dollard and Miller, they addressed social learning in the context of Hullian learning theory (complete with mathematical formulae). Bandura shifted the focus of social learning away from traditional behavioral perspectives, and established social learning as a theory on its own. Bandura also freely acknowledged cognition in the learning process, something that earlier behaviorists had actively avoided. By acknowledging both the external processes of reinforcement and punishment and the internal cognitive processes that make humans so complex, Bandura provided a comprehensive theory of personality that has been very influential.

Although Bandura criticized both operant conditioning and Pavlovian conditioning as being too radical, he relied on a procedure that came from Pavlovian conditioning research for one of his most influential concepts: the use of modeling. The modeling procedure was developed by Mary Cover Jones, a student of John B. Watson, in her attempts to counter-condition learned phobias. Subsequent to the infamous “Little Albert” studies conducted by Watson, Jones used models to interact in a pleasant manner with a rabbit that test subjects had been conditioned to fear. After a few sessions, the test subjects were no longer afraid of the rabbit (see Stagner, 1988). This may have been the first use of behavior therapy, and Bandura’s use of the procedure helped to bring together different behavioral disciplines.

Perhaps one of Bandura’s most significant contributions, however, has been the application of his theory to many forms of media. Congressional committees have debated the influence of modeling aggression through violent television programs, movies, and video games. We now have ratings on each of those forms of media, and yet the debate continues because of the levels of aggression seen in our schools, in particular, and society in general. Bandura’s Bobo doll studies are certainly among of the best known studies in psychology, and they are also among the most influential in terms of practical daily applications. The long list of awards that Bandura has received is a testament to both his influence on psychology and the respect that influence has earned for him.

**Reciprocal Determinism**

One of the most important aspects of Bandura’s view on how personality is learned is that each one of us is an agent of change, fully participating in our surroundings and influencing the environmental contingencies that behaviorists believe affect our behavior. These interactions can be viewed three different ways. The first is to consider behavior as a function of the person and the environment. In this view, personal dispositions (or traits) and the consequences of our actions (reinforcement or punishment) combine to cause our behavior. This perspective is closest to the radical behaviorism of Skinner. The second view considers that personal dispositions and the environment interact, and the result of the interaction causes our behavior, a view somewhat closer to that of Dollard and Miller. In each of these perspectives, behavior is caused, or determined, by dispositional and environmental factors, the behavior itself is not a factor in how that behavior comes about. However, according to Bandura, social learning theory emphasizes that behavior, personal factors, and environmental factors are all equal, interlocking determinants of each other. This concept is referred to as *reciprocal determinism* (Bandura, 1973, 1977).
Early theories considered behavior to be a function of the person and their environment, or a function of the interaction between the person and their environment. Bandura believed that behavior itself influences both the person and the environment, each of which in turn affects behavior and each other. The result is a complex interplay of factors known as reciprocal determinism.

Reciprocal determinism can be seen in everyday observations, such as those made by Bandura and others during their studies of aggression. For example, approximately 75 percent of the time, hostile behavior results in unfriendly responses, whereas friendly acts seldom result in such consequences. With little effort, it becomes easy to recognize individuals who create negative social climates (Bandura, 1973). Thus, while it may still be true that changing environmental contingencies changes behavior, it is also true that changing behavior alters the environmental contingencies. This results in a unique perspective on freedom vs. determinism. Usually we think of determinism as something that eliminates or restricts our freedom. However, Bandura believed that individuals can intentionally act as agents of change within their environment, thus altering the factors that determine their behavior. In other words, we have the freedom to influence that which determines our behavior:

...Given the same environmental constraints, individuals who have many behavioral options and are adept at regulating their own behavior will experience greater freedom than will individuals whose personal resources are limited. (pg. 203; Bandura, 1977)

Discussion Question: According to the theory of reciprocal determinism, our behavior interacts with our environment and our personality variables to influence our life. Can you think of situations in which your actions caused a noticeable change in the people or situations around you? Remember that these changes can be either good or bad.

Observational Learning and Aggression

Social learning is also commonly referred to as observational learning, because it comes about as
a result of observing models. Bandura became interested in social aspects of learning at the beginning of his career. Trained as a clinical psychologist, he began working with juvenile delinquents, a somewhat outdated term that is essentially a socio-legal description of adolescents who engage in antisocial behavior. In the 1950s there was already research on the relationships between aggressive boys and their parents, as well as some theoretical perspectives regarding the effects of different child-rearing practices on the behavior and attitudes of adolescent boys (Bandura & Walters, 1959). Much of the research focused, however, on sociological issues involved in the environment of delinquent boys. Choosing a different approach, Bandura decided to study boys who had no obvious sociological disadvantages (such as poverty, language difficulties due to recent immigration, low IQ, etc.). Bandura and Walters restricted their sample to boys of average or above average intelligence, from intact homes, with steadily employed parents, whose families had been settled in America for at least three generations. No children from minority groups were included either. In other words, the boys were from apparently typical, White, middle-class American families. And yet, half of the boys studied were identified through the county probation service or their school guidance center as demonstrating serious, repetitive, antisocial, aggressive behavior (Bandura & Walters, 1959).

Citing the work of Dollard and Miller, as well as others who paved the way for social learning theory, Bandura and Walters began their study on adolescent aggression by examining how the parents of delinquents train their children to be socialized. Working from a general learning perspective, emphasizing cues and consequences, they found significant problems in the development of socialization among the delinquent boys. These boys developed dependency, a necessary step toward socialization, but they were not taught to conform their behavior to the expectations of society. Consequently, they began to demand immediate and unconditional gratification from their surroundings, something that seldom happens. Of course, this failure to learn proper socialization does not necessarily lead to aggression, since it can also lead to lifestyles such as the hobo, the bohemian, or the “beatnik” (Bandura & Walters, 1959). Why then do some boys become so aggressive? To briefly summarize their study, Bandura and Walters found that parents of delinquent boys were more likely to model aggressive behavior and to use coercive punishment (as opposed to reasoning with their children to help them conform to social norms). Although parental modeling of aggressive behavior teaches such behavior to children, these parents tend to be effective at suppressing their children’s aggressive behavior at home. In contrast, however, they provide subtle encouragement for aggression outside the home. As a result, these poorly socialized boys are likely to displace the aggressive impulses that develop in the home, and they are well trained in doing so. If they happen to associate with a delinquent group (such as a gang), they are provided with an opportunity to learn new and more effective ways to engage in antisocial behavior, and they are directly rewarded for engaging in such behaviors (Bandura & Walters, 1959; also see Bandura, 1973).

Having found evidence that parents of aggressive, delinquent boys had modeled aggressive behavior, Bandura and his colleagues embarked on a series of studies on the modeling of aggression (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961, 1963a,b). Initially, children were given the opportunity to play in a room containing a variety of toys, including the 5-foot tall, inflated Bobo doll (a toy clown). As part of the experiment, an adult (the model) was also invited into the room to join in the game. When the model exhibited clear aggressive behavior toward the Bobo doll, and then the children were allowed to play on their own, they children demonstrated aggressive behavior as well. The children who observed a model who was not aggressive seldom demonstrated aggressive behavior, thus confirming that the aggression in the experimental group resulted from observational learning. In the second study, children who observed the behavior of aggressive models on film also demonstrated a significant increase in aggressive behavior, suggesting that the physical presence of the model is not necessary (providing an important implication for violent aggression on TV and in movies; see “Personality in Theory in Real Life” at the end of the chapter). In addition to confirming the role of observation or social learning in the development of aggressive behavior, these studies also provided a starting point for examining what it is that makes a model influential.

One of the significant findings in this line of research on aggression is the influence of models on behavioral restraint. When children are exposed to models who are not aggressive and who inhibit their own behavior, the children also tend to inhibit their own aggressive responses and to restrict their range of behavior in general (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961). Thus, children can learn from others, in particular their parents,
how to regulate their behavior in socially appropriate ways. When the inappropriate behavior of others is punished, the children observing are also vicariously punished, and likely to experience anxiety, if not outright fear, when they consider engaging in similar inappropriate behavior. However, when models behave aggressively and their behavior is rewarded, or even just tolerated, the child’s own tendency to restrict aggressive impulses may be weakened. This weakening of restraint, which can then lead to acting out aggressive impulses, is known as disinhibition:

Modeling may produce disinhibitory effects in several ways. When people respond approvingly or even indifferently to the actions of assailants, they convey the impression that aggression is not only acceptable but expected in similar situations. By thus legitimizing aggressive conduct, observers anticipate less risk of reprimand or loss of self-respect for such action. (pg. 129; Bandura, 1973)

**Discussion Question:** The concept of disinhibition is based on the belief that we all have aggressive tendencies, and our self-control is diminished when we see models rewarded for aggressive behavior. Have you ever found yourself in situations where someone was rewarded for acting aggressively? Did you then adopt an aggressive attitude, or act out on your aggression?

**Characteristics of the Modeling Situation**

When one person matches the behavior of another, there are several perspectives on why that matching behavior occurs. Theorists who suggest that matching behavior results from simple imitation don’t allow for any significant psychological changes. Dollard and Miller discussed imitation in their attempts to combine traditional learning theory with a psychodynamic perspective, but they did not advance the theory very far. A more traditional psychodynamic approach describes matching behavior as the result of identification, the concept that an observer connects with a model in some psychological way. However, identification means different things to different theorists, and the term remains somewhat vague. In social learning, as it has been advanced by Bandura, modeling is the term that best describes and, therefore, is used to characterize the psychological processes that underlie matching behavior (Bandura, 1986).

Observational learning through modeling is not merely an alternative to Pavlovian or operant conditioning:

Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action. (pg. 22; Bandura, 1977)

Individuals differ in the degree to which they can be influenced by models, and not all models are equally effective. According to Bandura, three factors are most influential in terms of the effectiveness of modeling situations: the characteristics of the model, the attributes of the observers, and the consequences of the model’s actions. The most relevant characteristics of an influential model are high status, competence, and power. When observers are unsure about a situation, they rely on cues to indicate what they perceive as evidence of past success by the model. Such cues include general appearance, symbols of socioeconomic success (e.g., a fancy sports car), and signs of expertise (e.g., a doctor’s lab coat). Since those models appear to have been successful themselves, it seems logical that observers might want to imitate their behavior. Individuals who are low in self-esteem, dependent, and who lack confidence are not necessarily more likely to be influenced by models. Bandura proposed that when modeling is used to explicitly develop new competencies, the ones who will benefit most from the situation are those who are more talented and more venturesome (Bandura, 1977).

Despite the potential influence of models, the entire process of observational learning in a social learning environment would probably not be successful if not for four important component processes: attentional processes, retention processes, production (or reproduction) processes, and motivational processes (Bandura, 1977, 1986). The fact that an observer must pay attention to a model might seem obvious, but some models are more likely to attract attention. Individuals are more likely to pay attention to models with whom they associate, even if the association is more cognitive than personal. It is also well-known that people who are admired, such as those who are physically attractive or popular athletes, make for attention-getting models. There are also certain types of media that are very good at getting people’s attention, such as television advertisements (Bandura, 1977, 1986). It is a curious cultural phenomenon that the television

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advertisements presented during the National Football League’s Super Bowl have become almost as much of the excitement as the game itself (and even more exciting for those who are not football fans)!

The retention processes involve primarily an observer’s memory for the modeled behavior. The most important memory processes, according to Bandura, are visual imagery and verbal coding, with visual imagery being particularly important early in development when verbal skills are limited. Once modeled behavior has been transformed into visual and/or verbal codes, these memories can serve to guide the performance of the behavior at appropriate times. When the modeled behavior is produced by the observer, the so-called production process, the re-enactment can be broken down into the cognitive organization of the responses, their initiation, subsequent monitoring, and finally the refinement of the behavior based on informative feedback. Producing complex modeled behaviors is not always an easy task:

...A common problem in learning complex skills, such as golf or swimming, is that performers cannot fully observe their responses, and must therefore rely upon vague kinesthetic cues or verbal reports of onlookers. It is difficult to guide actions that are only partially observable or to identify the corrections needed to achieve a close match between representation and performance. (pg. 28; Bandura, 1977)

Finally, motivational processes determine whether the observer is inclined to match the modeled behavior in the first place. Individuals are most likely to model behaviors that result in an outcome they value, and if the behavior seems to be effective for the models who demonstrated the behavior. Given the complexity of the relationships between models, observers, the perceived effectiveness of modeled behavior, and the subjective value of rewards, even using prominent models does not guarantee that they will be able to create similar behavior in observers (Bandura, 1977, 1986).
Producing complex behaviors that cannot be readily observed by the performer can prove quite difficult. John cut behind the defender to drive the ball with his knee over the goalie’s head and into the goal (above). Samuel scores a round kick in a Taekwondo tournament (right).

A common misconception regarding modeling is that it only leads to learning the behaviors that have been modeled. However, modeling can lead to innovative behavior patterns. Observers typically see a given behavior performed by multiple models; even in early childhood one often gets to see both parents model a given behavior. When the behavior is then matched, the observer will typically select elements from the different models, relying on only certain aspects of the behavior performed by each, and then create a unique pattern that accomplishes the final behavior. Thus, partial departures from the originally modeled behavior can be a source of new directions, especially in creative endeavors (such as composing music or creating a sculpture). In contrast, however, when simple routines prove useful, modeling can actually stifle innovation. So, the most innovative individuals appear to be those who have been exposed to innovative models, provided that the models are not so innovative as to create an unreasonably difficult challenge in modeling their creativity and innovation (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963b).

**Discussion Question:** Two of the components necessary for modeling to be effective, according to Bandura, are attention and retention. What aspects of commercial advertisements are most likely to catch your attention? What do you tend to remember about advertisements? Can you think of situations in which the way an advertiser gets your attention also helps you to remember the product?

**Connections Across Cultures: Global Marketing and Advertising**

Although we are constantly surrounded by modeling situations, the most obvious and intentional use of models and modeling is in advertising. As our world becomes increasingly global, the use of advertisements that work well in one place may be entirely inappropriate in a different culture. Marieke de Mooij, the president of a cross-cultural communications consulting firm in the Netherlands, and a visiting professor at universities in the Netherlands, Spain, Finland, and Germany, has undertaken the challenging task of studying how culture affects consumer behavior and the consequences of those effects for marketing and advertising in different societies around the world (de Mooij, 2000, 2004a,b, 2005).

To some, increasing globalization suggests that markets around the world will become more similar to one another. De Mooij (2000), however, contends that as different cultures become more similar in economic terms, their more personal cultural differences will actually become more significant! Thus, it is essential for global businesses to understand those cultural differences, so that marketing and advertising can be appropriately adjusted. The challenge is in recognizing and dealing with the “global-local paradox.” People in business are taught to think global, but act local. This is because most people throughout the world tend to prefer things that are familiar. They may adopt and enjoy global products, but they remain true to their own culture (de Mooij, 2005). Thus, it is important to understand local culture and consumer behavior in general before beginning an advertising campaign in a foreign country.

In her studies on culture and consumer behavior, de Mooij (2004b, 2005) addresses a wide variety of topics, including several that are covered in this chapter. In terms of the characteristics of models, many countries do not emphasize physical attractiveness and/or fashionable clothes the way we do in America. However, the overall aesthetic appeal of advertising can be more important in many Asian markets, focusing on preferences for values such as nature and harmony. Given that America is generally an individualistic culture and most Asian cultures are collectivistic, it should be no surprise that Americans tend to focus on the appeal of the model whereas Asians tend to focus on the appeal of the overall scene and relationships amongst the various aspects depicted within it. In a similar way, cultures differ in terms of their general perspective on locus of control. In cultures that tend to believe that their lives are determined by external forces, the moral authorities (such as the church and the press) are typically trusted. People in such cultures might not be responsive to advertisements that call for individual restraint, such as efforts to reduce cigarette smoking for better health, since they rely on their doctors (external agents) to take care of their health.

There are also significant differences in how people in different cultures think and process information, and cognitive processes underlie all aspects of social learning. Involvement theory suggests differences in how individuals and cultures differ in their approach to purchasing, and how advertising must take those differ-
ences into account. For example, amongst American consumers considering a “high involvement” product (such as a car), those who are likely to buy something respond to advertising in which they learn something, develop a favorable attitude toward the product, and then buy it (learn-feel-do). For everyday products, which are considered “low involvement,” consumers respond to advertising in which they learn something, then buy the product, and perhaps afterward they tend to prefer that brand (learn-do-feel). There is now evidence that in typically more collectivist cultures such as Japan, China, and Korea, it is important to first establish a relationship between the company and the consumer. Only then does the consumer purchase the particular product, and then they become more familiar with it (feel-do-learn). Thus, the very purpose of advertising changes from culture to culture (de Mooij, 2004b). Naturally, a number of other approaches to advertising exist, based on concepts such as: persuasion, awareness, emotions, and likeability (de Mooij, 2005). Each of these techniques relies on a different psychological approach, taking into account the observers that the advertiser hopes to influence (the so-called target demographic).

One of the most important aspects of advertising, when it is being carried from one culture to another, is the translation of verbal and written information. Different languages have different symbolic references. They rely on different myths, history, humor, and art, and failing to tap into such differences is likely to result in bland advertising that does not appeal to the local audience (de Mooij, 2004a). Other languages are simply structured differently as well, perhaps requiring meaning in a name, and this sometimes makes direct translation impossible. Thus, an international advertiser must choose a different name for their product. For example, Coca-Cola is marketed in China as the homonym kekou kele, which means “tasty and happy” (de Mooij, 2004a). Visual references also have cultural meanings. A Nokia ad, shown in Finland, used a squirrel in a forest to represent good reception and free movement in a deep forest. A Chinese group, however, understood it as depicting an animal that lives far away from people. They simply did not understand the intent of the commercial. Research on interpersonal verbal communication styles suggests that certain countries can be grouped into preferred styles. Based on a comparison of multiple dimensions of preferred verbal style, some of the countries that share similar styles are: 1) the United States, the United Kingdom, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark; 2) Austria, Finland, and Germany; 3) India, China, and Singapore; and 4) Italy, Spain, Belgium, France, Argentina, Brazil, and the Arab world (de Mooij, 2004a).

As challenging as it might seem to address these issues (and the many more we have not covered), it is essential for individuals involved in global marketing and advertising:

The cultural variety of countries worldwide as well as in Europe implies that success in one country does not automatically mean success in other countries...finding the most relevant cultural values is difficult, especially because many researchers are based in Western societies that are individualistic and have universalistic values. Western marketers, advertisers, and researchers are inclined to search for similarities, whereas understanding the differences will be more profitable. There are global products and global brands, but there are no global buying motives for such brands because people are not global. Understanding people across cultures is the first and most important step in international marketing. (pg. 314; de Mooij, 2004b)

Finally, none of these approaches to international marketing and advertising is going to be successful if business relationships are not established in the first place. In The Cultural Dimension of International Business, Ferraro (2006b) offers a comprehensive guide to understanding cultural differences. In addition to the importance of being aware of such factors, which the very existence of the books and articles in this section belies, Ferraro emphasizes cultural differences in communication. For individuals working in a foreign country where English is not the first language, good communication becomes a matter of intent:

Because communication is so vitally important for conducting business at home, it should come as no surprise that it is equally important for successful business abroad. The single best way to become an effective communicator as an expatriate is to learn the local language...Besides knowing how to speak another language, expatriate candidates should demonstrate a willingness to use it. For a variety of reasons, some people lack the motivation, confidence, or willingness to throw themselves into conversational situations. [Authors note: see the section on self-efficacy below]...Thus, communication skills must be assessed in terms of language competency, motivation to learn another language, and willingness to use it in professional and personal situations. (pg. 170; Ferraro, 2006b)

Self-Regulation and Self-Efficacy
Self-regulation and self-efficacy are two elements of Bandura’s theory that rely heavily on cognitive processes. They represent an individual’s ability to control their behavior through internal rewards or punishments, in the case of self-regulation, and their beliefs in their ability to achieve desired goals as a result of their own actions, in the case of self-efficacy. Bandura never rejects the influence of external rewards or punishments, but he proposes that including internal, self-reinforcement and self-punishment expands the potential for learning:

...Theories that explain human behavior as solely the product of external rewards and punishments present a truncated image of people because they possess self-reactive capacities that enable them to exercise some control over their own feelings, thoughts, and actions. Behavior is therefore regulated by the interplay of self-generated and external sources of influence... (pg. 129; Bandura, 1977)

Self-regulation is a general term that includes both self-reinforcement and self-punishment. Self-reinforcement works primarily through its motivational effects. When an individual sets a standard of performance for themselves, they judge their behavior and determine whether or not it meets the self-determined criteria for reward. Since many activities do not have absolute measures of success, the individual often sets their standards in relative ways. For example, a weight-lifter might keep track of how much total weight they lift in each training session, and then monitor their improvement over time or as each competition arrives. Although competitions offer the potential for external reward, the individual might still set a personal standard for success, such as being satisfied only if they win at least one of the individual lifts. The standards that an individual sets for themselves can be learned through modeling. This can create problems when models are highly competent, much more so than the observer is capable of performing (such as learning the standards of a world-class athlete). Children, however, seem to be more inclined to model the standards of low-achieving or moderately competent models, setting standards that are reasonably within their own reach (Bandura, 1977). According to Bandura, the cumulative effect of setting standards and regulating one’s own performance in terms of those standards can lead to judgments about one’s self. Within a social learning context, negative self-concepts arise when one is prone to devalue oneself, whereas positive self-concepts arise from a tendency to judge oneself favorably (Bandura, 1977). Overall, the complexity of this process makes predicting the behavior of an individual rather difficult, and behavior often deviates from social norms in ways that would not ordinarily be expected. However, this appears to be the case in a variety of cultures, suggesting that it is indeed a natural process for people (Bandura & Walters, 1963).

As noted above, “perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997). The desire to control our circumstances in life seems to have been with us throughout history. In ancient times, when people knew little about the world, they prayed in the hope that benevolent gods would help them and/or protect them from evil gods. Elaborate rituals were developed in the hope or belief that the gods would respond to their efforts and dedication. As we learned more about our world and how it works, we also learned that we can have a significant impact on it. Most importantly, we can have a direct effect on our immediate personal environment, especially with regard to personal relationships. What motivates us to try influencing our environment is specific ways is the belief that we can, indeed, make a difference in a direction we want. Thus, research has focused largely on what people think about their efficacy, rather than on their actual ability to achieve their goals (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy has been a popular topic for research, and Bandura’s book Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control (1997) is some 600 pages long. We will address two key issues on this fascinating topic: the relationships between (1) efficacy beliefs and outcome expectancies and (2) self-efficacy and self-esteem. In any situation, one has beliefs about one’s ability to influence the situation, and yet those beliefs are typically balanced against realistic expectations that change can occur. Each side of the equation can have both negative and positive qualities. Suppose, as a student, you are concerned about the rising cost of a college education, and you would like to challenge those rising costs. You may believe that there is nothing you can do (negative) and tuition and fees will inevitably increase (negative). This dual negative perspective leads to resignation and apathy, certainly not a favorable situation. But what if you believe you can change the college’s direction (positive), and that the college can cut certain costs in order to offset the need for higher tuition (positive). Now you are likely to engage the college community in productive discussions, and this
may lead to personal satisfaction (Bandura, 1997). In the first scenario, you are not likely to do anything, in the second scenario you will most likely be highly motivated to act, even energized as you work toward productive changes. Of course, there are two other possible scenarios. You may believe there is nothing you can do (negative), but that change is possible (positive). In this case, you are likely to devalue yourself, perhaps feeling depressed about your own inability to accomplish good. Conversely, you may believe there is something you can do (positive), but that external forces will make change difficult or impossible (negative). This may lead some people to challenge the system in spite of their lack of expected change, resulting in protests and other forms of social activism (Bandura, 1997). Since all of these scenarios are based on beliefs and expectations, not on the unknown eventual outcome that will occur, it becomes clear that what we think about our ability to perform in various situations, as well as our actual expectations of the consequences of those actions, has both complex and profound effects on our motivation to engage in a particular behavior or course of action.

As for self-efficacy and self-esteem, these terms are often used interchangeably, and on the surface that might seem appropriate. Wouldn’t we feel good about ourselves if we believed in our abilities to achieve our goals? In fact, self-efficacy and self-esteem are entirely different:

...There is no fixed relationship between beliefs about one’s capabilities and whether one likes or dislikes oneself. Individuals may judge themselves hopelessly inept in a given activity without suffering any loss of self-esteem whatsoever, because they do not invest their self-worth in that activity. (pg. 11; Bandura, 1997)

For example, my family was active in the Korean martial art Taekwondo. Taekwondo emphasizes powerful kicks. Because I suffer from degenerative joint disease in both hips, there are certain kicks I simply can’t do, and I don’t do any of the kicks particularly well. But I accept that, and focus my attention on areas where I am successful, such as forms and helping to teach the white belt class. Likewise, Bandura notes that his complete ineffectiveness in ballroom dancing does not lead him into bouts of self-devaluation (Bandura, 1997). So, though it may improve our self-esteem to have realistic feelings of self-efficacy in challenging situations, there is not necessarily any corresponding loss of self-esteem when we acknowledge our weaknesses. And even positive self-efficacy might not lead to higher self-esteem when a task is simple or unpleasant. To cite Bandura’s example, someone might be very good at evicting people from their homes when they can’t pay their rent or mortgage, but that skill might not lead to positive feelings of self-esteem. This concept was the basis for the classic story A Christmas Carol, featuring the character Ebenezer Scrooge (Charles Dickens, 1843/1994).

The Development of Self-Efficacy

Young children have little understanding of what they can and cannot do, so the development of realistic self-efficacy is a very important process:

...Very young children lack knowledge of their own capabilities and the demands and potential hazards of different courses of action. They would repeatedly get themselves into dangerous predicaments were it not for the guidance of others. They can climb to high places, wander into rivers or deep pools, and wield sharp knives before they develop the necessary skills for managing such situations safely...Adult watchfulness and guidance see young children through this early formative period until they gain sufficient knowledge of what they can do and what different situations require in the way of skills. (pg. 414; Bandura, 1986)

During infancy, the development of perceived causal efficacy, in other words the perception that one has affected the world by one’s own actions, appears to be an important aspect of developing a sense of self. As the infant interacts with its environment, the infant is able to cause predictable events, such as the sound that accompanies shaking a rattle. The understanding that one’s own actions can influence the environment is something Bandura refers to as personal agency, the ability to act as an agent of change in one’s own world. The infant also begins to experience that certain events affect models differently than the child. For example, if a model touches a hot stove it does not hurt the infant, so the infant begins to recognize their uniqueness, their actual existence as an individual. During this period, interactions with the physical environment may be more important than social interactions, since the physical environment is more predictable, and therefore easier to learn about (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Quickly, however, social interaction becomes highly influential.
Not only does the child learn a great deal from the family, but as they grow peers become increasingly important. As the child's world expands, peers bring with them a broadening of self-efficacy experiences. This can have both positive and negative consequences. Peers who are most experienced and competent can become important models of behavior. However, if a child perceives themselves as socially ineffectual, but does develop self-efficacy in coercive, aggressive behavior, then that child is likely to become a bully. In the midst of this effort to learn socially acceptable behavior, most children also begin attending school, where the primary focus is on the development of cognitive efficacy. For many children, unfortunately, the academic environment of school is a challenge. Children quickly learn to rank themselves (grades help, both good and bad), and children who do poorly can lose the sense of self-efficacy that is necessary for continued effort at school. According to Bandura, it is important that educational practices focus not only on the content they provide, but also on what they do to children's beliefs about their abilities (Bandura, 1986, 1997).

As children continue through adolescence toward adulthood, they need to assume responsibility for themselves in all aspects of life. They must master many new skills, and a sense of confidence in working toward the future is dependent on a developing sense of self-efficacy supported by past experiences of mastery. In adulthood, a healthy and realistic sense of self-efficacy provides the motivation necessary to pursue success in one's life. Poorly equipped adults, wracked with self-doubt, often find life stressful and depressing. Even psychologically healthy adults must eventually face the realities of aging, and the inevitable decline in physical status. There is little evidence, however, for significant declines in mental states until very advanced old age. In cultures that admire youth, there may well be a tendency for the aged to lose their sense of self-efficacy and begin an inexorable decline toward death. But in societies that promote self-growth throughout life, and who admire elders for their wisdom and experience, there is potential for aged individuals to continue living productive and self-fulfilling lives (Bandura, 1986, 1997).

Discussion Question: Self-efficacy refers to our beliefs regarding our actual abilities, and self-esteem refers to how we feel about ourselves. What are you good at? Do others agree that you are good at that skill? When you find yourself trying to do something that you are NOT good at, does it disappoint you (i.e., lower your self-esteem)?

Behavior Modification

In Principles of Behavior Modification (Bandura, 1969), Bandura suggests that behavioral approaches to psychological change, whether in clinical settings or elsewhere, have a distinct advantage over many of the other theories that have arisen in psychology. Whereas psychological theories often arise first, become popular as approaches to psychotherapy, but then fail to withstand proper scientific validation, behavioral approaches have a long history of rigorous laboratory testing. Thus, behavioral techniques are often validated first, and then prove to be applicable in clinical settings. Indeed, behavioral and cognitive approaches to psychotherapy are typically well respected amongst psychotherapists (though some might consider their range somewhat limited).

Bandura made several points regarding the application of social learning theory to behaviorally-oriented psychotherapy. For example, Bandura notes that the labeling of psychological disorders, indeed the definition of what constitutes abnormal behavior, is made within a social context. While it has been demonstrated that common categories of mental illness are seen throughout a wide variety of cultures (Murphy, 1976), we still view those with psychological disorders based on sociocultural norms and, in the case of too many observers, with unreasonable prejudice. Bandura also opposed the medical model of categorizing and treating psychopathology, believing that the desire to identify and utilize medications has hindered the advancement of applying appropriate psychotherapies. The application of an appropriate therapy involves issues of ethical concern and goal-setting. Therapy cannot be successful, according to Bandura, if it does not have clear goals characterized in terms of observable behaviors. Choosing goals means that one must make value judgments. In making these decisions it is important that the client and the therapist share similar values (or at least that the therapist work with values appropriate for their client), and that the therapist does not try to impose their own values on the client (Bandura, 1969).

Overall, Bandura presents behavioral approaches to psychotherapy as non-judgmental applications of learning principles to problematic behavior, behavior that is not to be viewed as psychological “illness”:

... From a social-learning perspective, behaviors that may be detrimental to the individual or that depart
widely from accepted social and ethical norms are considered not as manifestations of an underlying pathology but as ways, which the person has learned, of coping with environmental and self-imposed demands. (pg. 62; Bandura, 1969)


Julian Rotter deserves at least as much credit as Albert Bandura for the establishment of social learning theory. Indeed, his book Social Learning & Clinical Psychology (Rotter, 1954) was published five years before Bandura's Adolescent Aggression (Bandura & Walters, 1959). In addition, Rotter always focused on cognitive aspects of social learning, something Bandura gave more consideration to only later in his career. But their careers were by no means separated from one another. Walter Mischel was Rotter's graduate student, and later joined the faculty of Stanford University where he was a colleague of Bandura. Mischel and Bandura collaborated on some of Mischel's best known research: delayed gratification.

Brief Biographies of Julian Rotter and Walter Mischel

Julian Rotter was born in 1916 in Brooklyn, NY. The son of successful Jewish immigrants, his childhood was quite comfortable. During the Great Depression, however, the family business failed, and for a few years the family struggled (as many people did). This time of struggle instilled in Rotter a profound sense of social justice, as well as an interest in the effects of situational environments.

As a child Rotter was an avid reader, and eventually he read most of the novels in the local library. He then turned to reading books on psychology, taking a particular interest in works by Freud and Adler. During his senior year in high school he was interpreting people’s dreams and he wrote a paper based on Freud's Psychopathology of Everyday Life (Freud, 1904/1995). He attended Brooklyn College, but chose to major in chemistry instead of psychology, as it seemed more likely to provide a promising career. During college, however, he learned that Adler was teaching at the Long Island College of Medicine. He began attending Adler's seminars, became Adler's friend, and was invited to meetings of the Society for Individual Psychology. Another well-known psychology professor who influenced Rotter was Solomon Asch. When he graduated from Brooklyn College, he actually had more credits in psychology than in chemistry.

Rotter attended the University of Iowa, where he earned a Master's Degree in 1938, and then took a clinical internship at the Worcester State Hospital in Massachusetts. A year later he began working on his Ph.D. at Indiana University, because a professor there, C. M Louttit, had published one of the first books advocating clinical psychology as a career. Rotter received his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology in 1941. After a short period of time at Norwich State Hospital in Connecticut, Rotter was drafted into the Army. He spent World War II working as a military psychologist. After the war he briefly returned to Norwich, but soon Rotter accepted a position at Ohio State University.

It was during his time at Ohio State University that Rotter developed his ideas on social learning theory. He and George Kelly were the two most prominent members of the psychology department, each of them having a lasting influence in the fields of social and cognitive learning theory. Rotter attracted many excellent graduate students, including Walter Mischel. Rotter was also keenly interested in the training of clinical psychologists, and he helped to outline the training model that became the basis for how doctoral level clinical psychologists are trained today.

As much as he enjoyed his time at Ohio State University, Rotter left in 1963 to direct the rebuilding of the clinical psychology training program at the University of Connecticut. He retired as professor emeritus in 1987. One year later he received an American Psychological Association's Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award, and one year after that he was recognized by the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology with their Distinguished Contribution to Clinical Training Award. He has also worked with the Peace Corps. Rotter included a brief autobiography in his self-edited compendium entitled The Development and Applications of Social Learning Theory (Rotter, 1982).

Walter Mischel was born in 1930, into a comfortable home, where he enjoyed a pleasant childhood. They lived in Vienna, a short distance from Sigmund Freud's house. However, when the Nazis invaded Austria at the beginning of World War II, the Mischel family moved to the United States, eventually settling in New York City. In college, Mischel studied to become a social worker. While working as a social worker in the

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Lower East Side slums, Mischel attended City College of New York and pursued a graduate degree in clinical psychology. He had been taught that Freud’s theory offered the best explanation of human behavior, but he did not find this to be true in his work with juvenile delinquents (the same practical conclusion occurred to Carl Rogers in his first clinical position).

He then attended Ohio State University, where he was a graduate student of both Julian Rotter and George Kelly. Rotter and Kelly helped to firmly establish Mischel as a member of the general social learning/cognitive learning camp, and later Mischel became a faculty member at Stanford University, alongside Albert Bandura (from 1962-1983). He then returned to New York as a faculty member at Columbia University, where he continued his work on delayed gratification and the effects of situations on personal behavior. Mischel has been recognized with a Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award by the American Psychological Association.

**Placing Rotter and Mischel in Context: Cognitive Social Learning Theory**

The distinction between Bandura as a social learning theorist, and Rotter and Mischel as cognitive learning theorists, is not entirely accurate. As Bandura’s career progressed, he focused more and more on cognitive factors, and Mischel collaborated with Bandura while both were at Stanford University. What distinguishes Rotter and Mischel is that cognitive factors were always the most important aspect of their learning theories. Although humans are capable of learning simply by watching a model, their expectations regarding the outcome of a situation, and the value the place on the potential reward (or punishment), determines their course of action. According to Mischel, these variables can lead to seemingly inconsistent behavior, but when examined in closer detail individuals demonstrate consistent patterns of variation, a form of consistency in itself.

Rotter and Mischel can also be seen as having encompassed Bandura’s career. Although all three men were active during the same general time frame, Rotter’s first book on social learning theory preceded Bandura’s first book by 5 years. Mischel, a student of Rotter, and then a colleague of Bandura for a while, has continued to modify his most influential theory quite recently, in the 1990s and 2000s.

Rotter and Mischel can also be considered as providing a bridge between the more traditional social learning theory of Bandura and the full-fledged cognitive theory of George Kelly. Kelly was Rotter’s colleague at Ohio State University, and Mischel studied under both men while in graduate school. Thus, social learning theory, cognitive social learning theory, and cognitive theories of personality development all occurred in close relationship to one another, and they all offered a dramatic alternative to radical behaviorism, an alternative that helped to fulfill the vision of John Dollard and Neal Miller.

**Basic Constructs in Rotter’s Social Learning Theory**

Rotter’s early research focused on the need to understand human behavior and personality so that clinical psychologists might effectively help their patients. In the preface to Social Learning & Clinical Psychology, Rotter wrote:

...the practice of clinical psychology in many instances is unsystematic and confused when viewed from logical or rigorous scientific viewpoints. This confusion, however, is not a necessary condition but the result of the failure of the clinical psychologists’ training program to translate and relate the basic knowledge of experimental and theoretical psychology into the practical situations of the clinic, the hospital, and the school... (pg. viii; Rotter, 1954)

Given his emphasis on clinical psychology, Rotter focused on the clinician’s ability to predict behavior. According to Rotter, social learning theory assumes that the unit of investigation for the study of personality is the interaction between the individual and their meaningful environment. Although personality has unity, the individual’s experiences influence each other. As a result, personality is continuously changing, since each person is always having new experiences. However, personality is also stable in some respects, since previous experiences influence new learning. Given the complexity of each individual, Rotter believed that in order to make reasonable predictions about behavior it was necessary to examine four kinds of variables: **behavior potential**, **expectancy**, **reinforcement value**, and the **psychological situation** (Rotter, 1954, 1964, 1972; Rotter & Hochreic, 1975).

Behavior potential refers to the likelihood of a certain behavior occurring in the context of specific potential reinforcement. For example, in order to earn good grades a student can rely on any number
of possible behaviors, such as studying, cheating, skipping class to avoid a bad grade, etc. Each potential behavior can only be described as more or less likely than other potential behaviors, and included as potential behaviors are psychological reactions such as thoughts, emotions, and even defense mechanisms. Expectancy is defined as the probability held by the individual that reinforcement will follow one’s chosen behavior. Although Rotter preferred to avoid the concept that expectancy is subjective, he acknowledged that an element of subjectivity is involved. Regardless, it is the individual’s point of view, their expectations in a given situation, that are more important for predicting behavior than the realistic probability of a chosen behavior resulting in an expected reinforcement. Reinforcement value, quite simply, refers to the preference for a given reinforcer. To use Rotter’s own example, most people would consistently choose to be paid $10 dollars an hour rather than $1 an hour, if it were simply their choice. Finally, there is the psychological situation. According to Rotter, it is not enough to say that to each individual a given situation might seem different. In order to address the situation in more objective terms, psychologists need to identify a variety of cues within the situation. In an objective sense, consequently, different people can be described as attending to different specific cues in the environment (Rotter, 1954, 1972; Rotter & Hochreich, 1975).

Although Rotter broke new ground in this approach to the study of social learning theory, he did not entirely abandon the use of mathematical formulae similar to those of Dollard and Miller. Rotter proposed the following basic formula for predicting goal-directed behavior:

\[
BP_{x,S1Ra} = (E_{x,RaS1} & RV_{a,S1})
\]

Although this formula appears complicated at first glance, it is relatively straightforward. The potential for behavior \( x \) (\( BP_x \)) to occur in situation 1 with potential reinforcement \( a \) (\( S1Ra \)) is a function \( (/) \) of the expectancy \( (E) \) that reinforcement \( a \) will follow behavior \( x \) in situation 1 \( (x,RaS1) \) and the reinforcement value \( (RV) \) of reinforcement \( a \) in situation 1 \( (a,S1) \) (Rotter, 1954; Rotter & Hochreich, 1975). In other words, we are most likely to choose the behavioral option that we realistically expect will result in the most favorable outcome in our current situation.

**Discussion Question:** Rotter believed that both the expectancy of reward and the perceived value of that reward were essential in determining whether an individual engaged in a particular behavior. Have you ever found yourself doing something even though you did not expect to get anything for your efforts? Have you ever had a job where you felt that you weren’t being paid what you deserved? In such situations, how long did you continue your behavior, and how did you feel about it?

**Locus of Control**

One of the most important generalized expectancies underlying behavior, and perhaps Rotter’s best known concept, is referred to as **internal versus external control of reinforcement** (commonly known as **locus of control**):

People are known to differ in their belief that what happens to them is the result of their own behaviors and attributes (internal control) versus the result of luck, fate, chance, or powerful others (external control). Clearly, persons who believe or expect that they can control their own destinies will behave differently, in many situations, than those who expect that their outcomes are controlled by other people or determined by luck (pg. 105; Rotter & Hochreich, 1975)

Rotter pointed out that almost all psychologists recognize the role that reinforcement or reward plays in determining future behavior, but that this is not a “simple stamping-in process.” For beings as complex as humans, the effects of reinforcement depend upon an individual’s perception of a causal relationship between their behavior and the potential reward (Rotter & Hochreich, 1975).

A number of scales have been developed to measure locus of control (for an early review see Lefcourt, 1976), including one developed by Rotter himself (Rotter, 1966). Rotter’s scale, simply referred to as the **I-E scale** (for internal-external), consists of 29 forced-choice statements. For example:

1.a. Children get into trouble because their parents punish them too much.
1.b. The trouble with most children nowadays is that their parents are too easy with them.

In each instance, the person taking the test must choose one or the other option. After taking all 29, the person’s score is the total number of external choices. Does it seem difficult to determine whether 1.a. or 1.b. is the external choice? Good! Question 1 is actually a filler question, designed to interfere with the test.

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taker’s ability to understand what the test is about! So, consider question 2:

2.a. Many of the unhappy things in people’s lives are partly due to bad luck.

2.b. People’s misfortunes result from the mistakes they make.

For question 2 it is quite obvious that choice a is the external choice, and if it wasn’t clear, the test has choice a marked for you! There are a total of six filler questions, leaving the test itself with 23 choices (Rotter, 1966).

Locus of control appears to arise from two primary sources: the family, and contingency awareness (Lefcourt, 1976). The role of the family in the development of locus of control is complex, and appears to be somewhat different based on the behavior of mothers and fathers. The most reliable finding appears to be that individuals with an internal locus of control had mothers who pushed them to achieve independence at an early age. This motherly push, however, must be a careful one. Children need support, guidance and nurturance, but they must not be smothered to the point of being pampered. Lefcourt (1976) cites Adler’s concern regarding two extremes in child-rearing, pampering and neglect, neither of which is conducive to the healthy psychological growth of a child. Contingency awareness refers to an understanding of instrumentality, the conception that one’s actions are indeed related to certain outcomes. In order for a child to repeat a behavior with purpose, the child must be able to recall that their prior actions resulted in a given outcome, and they must know that their actions were related to the expected outcomes. It would appear that children as young as two months old are capable of this type of social learning, and it tends to result in positive emotional reactions (Lefcourt, 1976).

Early studies on locus of control also focused on some interesting cultural questions. It is generally accepted that social class and ethnic group are important determinants of personality. Battle and Rotter (1963) found that lower class Blacks were significantly more external in their locus of control than were middle class Whites. Interestingly, middle class Blacks were closer to middle class Whites than lower class Whites to middle class Whites, suggesting that social class may have been the primary factor in these results, rather than the race or ethnicity of the subjects. Furthermore, IQ seems to have exacerbated these results in that the most external individuals were high IQ lower class Blacks (i.e., individuals aware of social injustice in American society) and the most internal individuals were low IQ middle class Whites (who may be blaming themselves for failing to live up to their expected potential; Battle & Rotter, 1963). During the civil rights movement, Gore & Rotter (1963) examined whether locus of control might be a useful measure of social action. They found that students at a southern Black college who expressed interest in attending a civil rights rally or marching on the state capitol scored significantly more internal on the I-E scale. In other words, those who believed they could personally make a difference were more willing to try making that difference. In a study that followed soon after, Strickland (1965) compared Blacks who were indeed active in the civil rights movement to those who were not (but who were matched for sex, age, education, etc.). As predicted, the individuals who were active in the civil rights movement scored significantly more internal on the I-E scale than those who were not active. Strickland did note, however, that the individuals she studied were pioneers in the civil rights movement, and had become active, in part, because others groups had failed to demonstrate an adequate degree of commitment to the civil rights movement. Strickland’s concern seems to contradict earlier results of Mischel (1958a), who found that when individuals make public commitments, they are less likely to change their expectancies (i.e., individuals publicly involved in the civil rights movement should have remained committed to the cause even when faced with initial failure). Still, as Mischel himself noted, one cannot rely entirely on inferences from research when considering the complexities of real-life (and, at the time, dangerous) behavior.

Discussion Question: Do you consider yourself to have an internal or an external locus of control? Do you feel that locus of control is an important influence on personality; might it be good or bad?

Rotter’s Emphasis on Clinical Psychology

As noted above, Rotter was actively involved in developing the model that provided the basis for how clinical psychologists are typically trained today. Accordingly, much of Rotter’s career was devoted to clinical applications of his work. In addition to writing two books that emphasized clinical psychology (Rotter, 1954, 1964) and developing the I-E scale (Rotter, 1966), Rotter and one of his research assistants published The
Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank: College Form (Rotter and Rafferty, 1950). The book was intended to formalize the sentence completion method, particularly for use with college students. The test consists of forty simple statements that require the subject to finish the sentence. For example, one beginning is simply “My father…” The subjects responses are then scored in terms of whether they demonstrate conflict (on a scale of 1-3), are neutral, or whether they are positive (also on a scale of 1-3). The manual offers examples of possible answers for both males and females. For example, conflicted responses for males include breaking promises or being a fool (level 3), or never had much of a chance or is proud (level 1). A neutral response might simply be that the father is a salesman, or is a hard worker. Positive responses for females include that the father is quite a character or is a good man (level 1), or that he has a great sense of humor or is a lot of fun (level 3). Interpreting this test requires a great deal of experience, and an understanding of personality and human nature. Fortunately, Rotter and Rafferty include a number of individual cases as examples of how the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank can be used to evaluate individuals. Both the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank and the I-E scale have proven useful in evaluating patients, as well as normal individuals, in a variety of settings and cultures, including Africa, Sri Lanka, American Indians, Brazil, Black and White college students in America, Ukrainian doctors training in Canada, and amongst military personnel (Janzen, Paterson, Reid, & Everall, 1996; Lefcourt, 1976; Logan & Waeber, 2001; Nagelschmidt & Jakob, 1977; Niles, 1981; Picano, Roland, Rollins, & Williams, 2002; Rossier, Dahourou, & McCrae, 2005; Rotter, 1960, 1966; Trimble & Richardson, 1982). In a particularly interesting study, a unique version of the Sentence Completion Test was developed by Herbert Phillips and provided the basis for a major study on the personality of Thai peasants living in the village of Bang Chan, Thailand (Phillips, 1965). The Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank, and other variations of the sentence completion method, remain very popular today (Holaday, Smith, & Sherry, 2000), ranking with the Rorschach Inkblot Test and the Thematic Apperception Test as the most popular projective tests for personality assessment.

Overall, Rotter emphasized the value of training clinical psychologists for just that responsibility, with a particular emphasis on the realities that will face the psychologist in an actual clinical setting (Rotter, 1954, 1964). In 1972, Rotter edited a volume including both original and previously published papers in which social learning theory was applied to psychopathology in general (Phares, 1972) and to such diverse topics as drinking amongst college students, excessively needy individuals, working with mentally retarded children, and electroconvulsive shock therapy (Cromwell, 1972; Dies, 1968; Jesser, Carman, & Grossman, 1968; Jesser, Liverant, & Opochinsky, 1963). A particularly important aspect of therapy also addressed in this volume is the issue of terminating therapy. Strickland & Crowne (1963) found that defensiveness and avoiding self-criticism are common signs in individuals who are likely to end therapy abruptly, whereas Piper, Wogan, & Getter (1972) found that the patient’s expectancy regarding improvement, and the value they place on improving, are useful predictors of terminating therapy. Although helping patient’s to achieve a level of psychological health that allows terminating therapy should be the goal of every therapist, premature termination might prove even more detrimental to the patient. For Rotter, the proper training of clinical psychologists is not an easy task. In the preface to Clinical Psychology, Rotter wrote:

...Yet psychology itself is a relatively new science and its areas of application are in rapid transition. Neither theory nor “facts” are always agreed upon, and in clinical psychology there is no single set of orthodox, approved skills for which a person can be certified as a trained practitioner. The goal is to gain comprehension without resorting to an oversimplification of the complex nature of man or of the problem of understanding him. (pg. xi; Rotter, 1964).

Behavioral Specificity and Consistency

In 1968, Walter Mischel challenged both state and trait theories of personality. Psychological states typically fall with the domain of psychodynamic theory, whereas trait theories are a perspective unto themselves. According to Mischel (1968), although state and trait theorists use very different language, they tend to approach personality in the same general way: they use responses to infer pervasive, underlying mental structures that exert enduring causal effects on behavior. Thus, both state and trait theorists emphasize consistency in behavior. However, there is a wealth of data that individuals do not act consistently from situation to situation. Instead, Mischel argues, behavior can best be predicted only when one takes into account the specific situation in which the behavior occurs:
Progress in the area of personality psychology and assessment has been hindered by the failure to apply relevant principles about the conditions that produce, maintain, and modify social behavior. The principles that emerge from basic research too often have not been seen as directly relevant to the understanding of the determinants of test responses in the clinic or the assessment project. It is as if we live in two independent worlds: The abstractions and artificial situations of the laboratory and the realities of life. (pg. 1; Mischel, 1968).

In order to support his argument, Mischel examined which aspects of behavior are or are not consistent. Generally, intellect is consistent, including academic ability, achievement, and cognitive style. In contrast, there is little evidence to support consistency of behavior across situations when examining personality variables such as attitudes, moral behavior, sexual identification, dependency, aggression, tolerance, conditionability, etc. (Mischel, 1968). How, then, might we predict behavior? Mischel suggests a dynamic perspective on how persons interact with their situations. If the environment has not changed much, we can expect past behavior to be a reasonable predictor of current behavior (and state and trait theories would seem to hold true as well). However, if the environment changes dramatically, the individual may act in unpredictable ways. In addition, the individual may begin to learn new social conditions, thus allowing for considerable change in behavior over time.

Global traits and states are excessively crude, gross units to encompass adequately the extraordinary complexity and subtlety of the discriminations that people constantly make. Traditional trait-state conceptions of man have depicted him as victimized by his infantile history, as possessed by unchanging rigid trait attributes, and as driven inexorably by unconscious irrational forces...A more adequate conceptualization must take full account of man's extraordinary adaptiveness and capacities for discrimination, awareness, and self-regulation...and that an understanding of how humans can constructively modify their behavior in systematic ways is the core of a truly dynamic personality psychology. (pg. 301; Mischel, 1968).

Delayed Gratification

Perhaps Mischel's most famous contribution to psychology is his research on delayed gratification. In a series of studies, begun in the late 1950s, Mischel examined the conditions under which children choose immediate gratification or whether they can delay gratification in order to obtain a larger reinforcer at a later time. The ability to delay gratification, according to Mischel, is essential for the development of self-control. From early childhood throughout the lifespan, achieving long-term goals often requires setting aside tempting distractions. Conversely, many personal and social problems result from failures of self-control, such as dropping out of school, poor job performance, and even violent and criminal behavior (Mischel & Mischel, 1980). In an amazing longitudinal study, Mischel and his colleagues offered 4-year-old children the opportunity to grab a marshmallow. But, if the child could wait until the researcher ran an errand, the child could then have two marshmallows! Some children grabbed the marshmallow as soon as the experimenter left, but others were able to wait 15-20 minutes. It was not easy, however. The children who waited demonstrated a variety of behaviors to distract themselves from the marshmallow: they would play, sing, cover their eyes so they didn't have to look at the marshmallow, etc. The most striking results from this study were actually obtained years later. Mischel and his colleagues tracked down the former 4-year-old subjects as they were graduating from high school. The individuals who had delayed gratification as 4-year-olds were significantly more personally effective and self-assertive, and they were better able to cope with life's frustrations (Mischel, Shoda, & Rodriguez, 1989; Shoda, Mischel, & Peake, 1990). In addition, the 4-year-old children who had been able to delay gratification were more successful as students in a variety of ways, including eventually earning significantly higher SAT scores (210 points higher, on the combined score), and the ability to delay gratification proved to be a better predictor of SAT scores than IQ (Peake, cited in Goleman, 1994).

Although the famous marshmallow-grabbing study was conducted at a preschool on the campus of Stanford University, Mischel began this research with very different groups: Black and East Indian children on the islands of Trinidad and Grenada (Mischel, 1958b, 1961). On these relatively poor, Caribbean islands, Mischel not only compared the Black and East Indian children, he also compared the children of Trinidad to the children of Grenada. The main purpose of the second study, however, was to examine the effect of fathers being absent from the home on the preference of children for immediate or delayed gratification. Overall, when fathers are absent from the home, both young boys and young girls (ages 8 to 9 years old) demonstrated...
a preference for immediate gratification. Mischel suggests that the inability to delay gratification amongst children who lack a father may be related to immaturity or poor psychological adjustment (Mischel, 1961).

While Mischel was at Stanford University, he also collaborated with Bandura. Blending the interests of both men, they examined whether observing models would affect children's choices regarding immediate vs. delayed gratification. They identified two groups of children (both boys and girls) as preferring either immediate gratification (a small candy bar now) or delayed gratification (a larger candy bar later). The children were then exposed to either a live model choosing the alternative strategy, a symbolic model (a description of an adult choosing the alternative), or no model. As expected, exposure to a model choosing the alternative strategy dramatically affected the behavior of the children, and a live model was more effective than the symbolic model. The effects of this modeling appeared to be quite persistent (Bandura & Mischel, 1965). Considering the importance that modeling can play in developing the ability to delay gratification, it is perhaps easy to see why children in families lacking a complete and stable family structure don't develop self-control as well as other children.

**Discussion Question:** Mischel's most famous contribution is the concept of delayed gratification. How good are you at waiting for gratification? Are some rewards easier to wait for than others? If you know anyone who is significantly different than you, either wanting immediate gratification or being able to delay it without much trouble, does the difference between you create any problems or interesting situations?

**The Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS)**

More recently, Mischel has turned his attention to solving what has been called the "personality paradox." How do we reconcile our intuition and theories that personality is relatively stable with the overwhelming evidence that personality varies across different situations? Mischel proposes a dynamic personality system that takes into account both: (1) the behavioral consistency that accounts for specific scores on trait tests and indicates what the individual is like in general; and (2) the consistency in how an individual varies across different situations. This consistency of variation is recognized by distinct patterns of if...then... relationships, which are characteristic of the individual's overall personality (Mischel, 2004).

In 1995, Mischel and Shoda first presented this dynamic approach to understanding personality, referring to it then as the cognitive-affective personality system, but now preferring the term **cognitive-affective processing system** (CAPS; Mischel, 2004; Mischel & Shoda, 1995/2000; Shoda, Leetiernan, & Mischel, 2002). Over a number of years, Mischel, his students, and his colleagues studied children extensively in a residential summer camp. They observed both behaviors and the situations in which they occurred. Over time, they were able to identify patterns of if...then... situation-behavior relations that reflected distinctive and stable characteristics of each child's behavior organization. These observations, therefore, gave rise to **situation-behavior profiles** for each child. It is essential to recognize, however, that the term "situation" in these studies does not refer to simple environmental stimuli, as they might for a behaviorist such as B. F. Skinner. Instead, these situations activate a whole set of internal reactions, including cognitive and emotional elements. They are also not limited to the external world; they can be generated in thought, fantasy, planning, etc. Accordingly, Mischel and Shoda referred to these personality variables as **cognitive-affective units** (or CAUs). These CAUs include encodings, expectancies and beliefs, affects, goals and values, and competencies and self-regulatory plans.

Mischel and Shoda (1995/2000) did not neglect the individual's development in this theory. Our ability to recognize distinct aspects of the environment are influenced by genetic/biological factors, cultural factors, and the interactions between them. These genetic/biological/cultural factors also influence the CAPS, as does our social learning history. In a sense, bringing all of these factors together begins to move us beyond the person-situation debate, since both sides of the debate are correct in the proper context. The future of personality theory may lie in an as yet undetermined synthesis of these perspectives (Fleeson, 2004). For now, according to Mischel, this dynamic approach to understanding personality has at least helped to bring together the major aspects of different schools of personality theory.

The two goals - dispositions and dynamics - that have so long been pursued separately do not require two fields from this perspective. In this theory, dispositions are conceptualized not in semantic terms but as processing structures characterized by stable cognitive affective organizations in the processing system that becomes activated when the individual encounters relevant situational features. (pg. 170; Mischel & Shoda, 2004)
The Impact of Social Learning Theory

It would be difficult to overestimate the impact of social learning theory on psychology, because the human species is so inherently social. Social life seems to come automatically, mediated via mental processes that are largely unconscious (Bargh & Williams, 2006), and our social norms appear to arise from social behavior that is adaptive within local ecologies (Kameda, Takezawa, & Hastie, 2005). It is important to note, however, that social organization is by no means unique to the human species. There are many animal species that live in social groups, some demonstrating a surprising degree of intelligence, suggesting that social living itself may have helped to foster the development of intelligence (Pennisi, 2006). Further evidence for the impact of social learning theory on psychology can be found in the simple name recognition enjoyed by Bandura, certainly one of the most famous psychologists.

There are also interesting lines of research within the field of neuroscience that provide support for Mischel and Shoda's cognitive-affective processing system. Utilizing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), Decety & Jackson (2006) have found that empathy appears to involve activation of the same brain regions involved in experiencing the situation about which one is feeling empathy toward another person. For example, there is significant activation of brain regions involved in pain when an individual views pictures of someone else in a clearly painful situation. This would seem to provide neurobiological evidence in support of Mischel and Shoda's cognitive-affective units, the functional components of the cognitive-affective processing system. Similarly, Knoblich & Sebanz (2006) have demonstrated that perceptual, cognitive, and motor processes are enhanced by social interaction, and that such interactions can be measured using event-related potentials that measure brain electrical activity. Some of the data presented in the study by Knoblich & Sebanz are essentially situation-behavior profiles for the individuals in their study.

Finally, let's address the role of expectancy in one of the most challenging social issues facing the world today: diversity. We hear more and more about the value of diversity in higher education and in the workplace, but pursuing diversity is often challenged by prejudice. Expectations of prejudice enhance attention to social cues that threaten one's social identity. In other words, when individuals expect that engaging in diversity will lead to prejudice, and perhaps then to discriminatory behavior, they are more likely to notice evidence of that very outcome (Kaiser, Vick, & Major, 2006). In addition, contact between diverse groups does less to displace feelings of prejudice among members of minority groups than it does among members of the majority group (likely due to the minority group members' recognition of the ongoing effects of prejudice and discrimination; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). These represent difficult situation-behavior circumstances, since it can obviously be very difficult for team members to predict the behavioral responses likely to follow the artificial establishment of diversity. In making recommendations to the leaders of organizational teams, Mannix & Neale (2005) suggest clearly defining the team's tasks and goals, providing bridges across diversity, and enhancing the influence of the minority. Perhaps most importantly, there is a need to provide incentives for change. Taken together, these approaches both increase the expectancy of success and raise the reinforcement value of working toward successfully diversifying the team. As such, principles that have arisen from social learning theory can clearly play a positive role in reshaping society.

The Future of Psychology: Bandura's Vision as Compared to Freud

In Toward a Psychology of Human Agency, Bandura (2006) agrees with Freud that religion played a significant role in the advancement of civilization, and that the scientific revolution that began with Darwin's Theory of Evolution shifted our focus toward natural and scientific approaches to understanding and improving human life. However, evolution emphasizes random effects on genetically determined structures and traits, and does not allow for the choices made by individuals, though sociobiologists argue that genetics can exert influences on those choices. Rather than relying on psychoanalysis in order to understand the impulses of the id that drive us to survive, as Freud proposed (1927/1961, 1930/1961), Bandura believes that people are agents of change in their own lives, and that they can choose the direction that change takes.

Being an agent involves intentionally influencing one's functioning and life circumstances, and there are four core properties of human agency. Intentionality refers to our ability to form action plans and the strategies necessary for accomplishing them. Forethought is the temporal extension of agency, in which we set goals for ourselves and anticipate likely outcomes of our actions to both guide and motivate our
behavior. Once having chosen a course of action, of course, we do not simply sit back and wait for the right things to happen. Agency also involves both self-reactiveness and self-reflectiveness, processes in which we regulate our behavior, monitor our courses of action, and examine whether we are capable of being successful in our various endeavors (Bandura, 2006). As much as human agency involves our own thoughts, goals, motivation, and expectations, however, we do not exist autonomously. All human behavior occurs within social structures, and there is a reciprocal interplay between personal, behavioral, and environmental determinants (reciprocal determinism). This means that human agency, the exercise of self-influence, is part of the causal structure of our lives. As Bandura points out, this is not “free will,” which would be a throwback to medieval theology, but rather a matter of acting as an agent, the role of an individual in making causal contributions to the course of events in their life (Bandura, 2006).

Social cognitive theory rejects a duality of human agency and a disembodied social structure. Social systems are the product of human activity, and social systems, in turn, help to organize, guide, and regulate human affairs. However, in the dynamic interplay within the societal rule structures, there is considerable personal variation in the interpretation of, adoption of, enforcement of, circumvention of, and opposition to societal prescriptions and sanctions...freedom is conceived not just passively as the absence of constraints, but also proactively as the exercise of self-influence... (pg. 165; Bandura, 2006)

**Personality Theory in Real Life: Media Violence and Its Effects on Children**

The second Bobo doll study conducted by Bandura and his colleagues presented videotapes of the models behaving aggressively toward the Bobo doll (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963a). The observation in this study that children did, indeed, imitate the aggressive behavior of models seen on film, but not in person, has become one of the most influential articles in history, both in terms of stimulating further research on the modeling of aggression and in terms of practical applications (e.g., ratings on television programs, video games, and CDs with controversial lyrics). In their introduction to an issue of Psychological Science in the Public Interest (PSPI) on media violence and its effects on children, Ceci and Bjork (2003) describe how the authors of this particular PSPI issue were a collection of experts brought together to prepare a portion of the U.S. Surgeon General’s report on youth violence. However, political concerns led the Surgeon General’s office to radically alter the report. The authors protested, and attempted to satisfy the concerns of the politicians. Ultimately, however, this portion of the report was dropped from the final version. So, the editors of PSPI chose to publish this valuable psychological information, which clearly causes political concerns for some, so that psychologists, psychiatrists, law enforcement officials, teachers and school administrators, government policy makers, parents, indeed anyone who has a vested interest in youth violence, might have the most current information available on the effects of media violence on America’s youth. I would also like to acknowledge an important point made by the authors themselves. This issue of PSPI was a collaborative project by eight experts on the effects of media violence. The authors decided that the fairest way to list their names was alphabetical order. Thus, as I refer to the article as Anderson, et al. (2003), please note that the “et al.” includes widely respected experts, chosen by the National Institute of Mental Health for this project, each of whom contributed significantly to this article.

It would be difficult to do justice to this report by summarizing it here, since the report, which is a review itself, is nearly thirty pages long and cites 245 research studies. Clearly, the attention drawn by this question, the role of media violence in affecting violent behavior among children, provides a testament to the significance of this research. Anderson, et al. (2003) provide an overview of the empirical research, offer theoretical explanations, they address moderating effects, media use and content, and they examine research on interventions.

Empirical research on media violence and aggression has covered a wide variety of media types, including dramatic television and movies, television news violence, music videos and their lyrics, video games, and the internet. The review of this extensive body of research has shown a statistically significant association between exposure to media violence and aggression and violence among youth. Exposure to media violence, and the findings are consistent across the various types of media, increases the likelihood that children have aggressive thoughts and, indeed, engage in aggressive behavior. Most importantly, longitudinal studies have consistently shown that exposure to media violence in childhood, even beginning in late adolescence, are

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predictors of increased aggression and violent behavior in adulthood. Although the effects are at best small to medium, the authors note that they are as high as other problems that are considered significant public health issues, such as cigarette smoking and exposure to asbestos.

Several theories have been put forth to explain the manner in which exposure to media violence increases aggression in children, not the least of which is Bandura’s theory of observational learning. Observational learning appears to be so important to the humans, and other primate species, that we have developed a specific neurological system to learn from watching others: the mirror-neuron system (see Rizzolatti & Craighero, 2004). Additional theories suggest that exposure to media violence prepares an individual to engage in aggressive behavior. This can occur either because the media violence primes the individual by activating aggressive thoughts and scripts or by generally arousing the individual, and that arousal then carries over into heightened aggressive behavior in situations that provoke aggressive actions. Finally, there is the widely used, and often misunderstood, term “desensitization.” Anderson et al. (2003) prefer the term emotional desensitization to refer to a reduction in distress-related reactions to observing or thinking about violence. Although emotional desensitization may result in an individual being more willing to engage in aggressive or violent behavior, there is no evidence that it stimulates aggression. Thus, although emotional desensitization may be related to the disinhibition discussed in the chapter (it may even be the same thing), its role remains unclear.

Not all children are affected by media violence in the same way, and not all examples of media violence are equally effective in enhancing aggression. Thus, there must be moderating factors that come into play in the relationship between exposure to media violence and subsequent aggressive behavior. For example, the effects of media violence decline as children grow older, media violence is less likely to affect children who are less aggressive to begin with, and, although there is not a direct effect of intelligence, children of lower intelligence are more likely to watch television and to be at risk for other factors enhancing aggressiveness. The way in which the violence is presented in the media is also important, as is portrayed justification for the violence as well as its consequences. However, all of these relationships are complex, and have not been studied in great detail. Thus, there is much more work to be done. Finally, one of the most important moderating factors is parental control. When parents discuss the content of media violence with their children, when they comment regularly on the reality of violence, children are much less likely to demonstrate aggressive tendencies.

This entire discussion would be moot, if not for the prevalence of media in our society and the content of that media. Data reported by Anderson, et al. (2003) from three national surveys provide an amazing view of media availability in America. Virtually all families with children have a television set, most have at least one VCR or DVD player, and about three quarters of those families subscribe to cable or satellite television. Approximately 70 percent of families with children have a video game system and a computer, and most American children have a television in their room (including 30 percent of children age 0 to 3 years old!). Watching television is the third most common activity for children, after sleeping and going to school. A significant number of children watch more than 40 hours of television a week, and children ages 0 to 6 years spend more time engaged in media entertainment than engaged in reading, being read to, and playing outside combined! And what’s included in that media content? Plenty of violence: 61 percent of programs contain violence, and only 4 percent of programs contain an anti-violence theme:

...put in another way, 96% of all violent television programs use aggression as a narrative, cinematic device for simply entertaining the audience...Moreover, most aggression on television is glamorized and trivialized...and nearly 75% of all violent scenes feature no immediate punishment or condemnation for violence. (pg. 101; Anderson, et al., 2003)

Similar findings have been reported for violence in video games, both in America and in Japan. Parents seldom recognize the popularity of those violent games, and only about one third of parents even knew the name of their child’s favorite video game (Anderson, et al., 2003).

Despite the wealth of information on the relationship between exposure to media violence and aggressive behavior, and a number of potential approaches for intervention, there has been little empirical research on potential interventions. In general, there are three approaches to reducing the influence of violent media: changing attitudes to counter violent messages, encouraging parental monitoring and guidance, and providing
education on the content and effects of various forms of media. But once again, none of these potential interventions has been studied in detail. It must also be remembered that this is only one of many factors that contribute to aggressive and violent behavior amongst youth, though it may be the least expensive to address, since it involves little more than making choices about the media children are exposed to:

...However, the troubling truth is that violent media are entering the home and inviting active participation of even very young children - often with little parental supervision. Although additional research to address unresolved questions is needed, it is clear that media violence is a causal risk factor that should be addressed in thoughtful ways. Parents can reduce and shape their children's consumption of violent media...from a public-health perspective, today's consumption patterns are far from optimal. And for many youths, they are clearly harmful. (pgs. 105-106; Anderson, et al., 2003)

Research on this important issue certainly did not end with the publication of the PSPI issue in 2003. In a more recent study, Carnagey and Anderson (2005) had college students play one of three versions of a race-car video game: one version rewarded all violence, one punished all violence, and one was non-violent. Overall, rewarding violent actions in the game increased hostile emotion, aggressive thinking, and aggressive behavior. In contrast, punishing violence still increased hostile emotion, but did not increase aggressive thoughts or behaviors. The authors suggest that an important mechanism through which violent media increases aggressive behavior is to first increase aggressive thoughts and states of mind. Another interesting result in this study was that the non-violent game did not result in as much violence as the game in which violence was rewarded, suggesting that the violent behavior in the game was not simply the result of competitiveness by the players. Of course, not everyone responds aggressively when aggression is modeled. It appears that individuals who score high on the trait of agreeableness (one of the “Big Five” traits, see Chapter 13) are able to short-circuit the effects of aggression-related cues and curb their aggression (Meier, Robinson, & Wilkowski, 2006). Meier, et al. go on to suggest that teaching other people to associate aggression-related cues with prosocial behavior might become a valuable intervention in continued efforts to reduce aggression and violence in our society. First, however, it might prove important to reduce the number of weapons present in American society (or at least our relationship with them). Klinesmith, Kasser, and McAndrew (2006) recently demonstrated that when male college students were exposed to a gun there was an increase in both their testosterone levels and their aggressive behavior. Media violence is clearly not the only aggression-related cue present for most people. However, as noted above, it may well be one area in which a distinct reduction in such cues can easily be accomplished without substantial financial costs (but certainly with substantial benefits) to society.

1 Review of Key Points

- Reciprocal determinism refers to the concept that behavior, personal factors, and environmental factors are equal, interlocking determinants of each other.
- Observational learning is a specific type of social learning in which observers view the behavior of models.
- Highly aggressive children appear to learn this behavior at home, having experienced their parents modeling aggressive behavior.
- When models are rewarded for aggressive behavior, the result can be the disinhibition of aggression that had previously been restrained.
- Social learning is different than either simple imitation or identification, in that social learning implies underlying psychological processes (cognition).
- In order for social learning to occur, conditions must be met that support the components of this process: attention, retention, production, and motivation.
- Since observers do not copy behavior perfectly, and since they may choose to mix and match the behavior of different models, observational learning can lead to new and different behaviors.
- Self-regulation refers to the processes of self-reinforcement and self-punishment. Self-reinforcement works primarily through its motivational effects.
- Self-efficacy is the belief in one’s capabilities to perform specific behaviors in order to accomplish

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specific outcomes.

- Self-efficacy and self-esteem are separate concepts. An individual may lack a certain ability and be well aware of it, but if one's concept of self-worth is not tied to that skill, there will be no corresponding loss of self-esteem.
- Bandura referred to the ability to act as an agent of change in one's environment as personal agency.
- Bandura believed that behavioral approaches have an advantage over other methods of therapy because of their basis in rigorous, scientific testing.
- Behavioral therapies can only be successful if they focus on goals characterized by clear and observable behaviors.
- Rotter proposed that one must understand four kinds of variables in order to make reasonable predictions about behavior: behavior potential, expectancy, reinforcement value, and the psychological situation.
- Internal versus external control of reinforcement (aka, locus of control) may be the most important generalized expectancy underlying behavior, according to Rotter.
- Rotter developed the I-E scale in order to measure locus of control.
- A key element in locus of control is contingency awareness, the knowledge that one’s behavior is capable of producing specific outcomes.
- Rotter also developed the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank, specifically designed to measure the personality and psychological adjustment of college students.
- Delayed gratification refers to the concept of working (or restraining oneself) at the present time for a reward that will be granted only at a later time.
- Working together, Mischel and Bandura showed that modeling can alter the preference of children for delayed or immediate gratification.
- Mischel addressed what is known as the personality paradox, the appearance that behavior is inconsistent, while our intuition suggests that behavior is consistent.
- Mischel and Shoda proposed the Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS) in order to address the personality paradox. By developing situation-behavior profiles, it is possible to identify patterns in the apparent inconsistency of individual behavior.
- fMRI studies have demonstrated specific brain activity that appears to correspond to the cognitive-affective units that underlie the CAPS.
- Situation-behavior characteristics have helped to address some of the problems that arise in situations in which diverse groups do not come together easily.