

Video Guide

THE POWER OF THE SITUATION

30 minutes, color, video, 1992

Unit 19 of *Discovering Psychology* (PY 10 1 TV Course)

I. **OVERVIEW**

Most of psychology focuses on the individual. Social psychology looks at how we are influenced by others, how others help and support us, and how others can influence us to do negative things. However, although groups influence us, we also can influence our groups.

This video “reveals how social psychologists attempt to understand human behavior within its broader social context and how mental, emotional, physiological, and behavioral functioning can be influenced by other people—real, imagined, even symbolically represented. Classic experiments expose the positive and negative sides of human behavior and demonstrate the power of leaders to mold individual actions, and the power of rules, roles, and symbols to control groups and nations. . .” (from *Discovering Psychology: Preview Guide*, 1992, p. 52)

II. **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:** Put answers on another sheet of paper.

- A. Why is Kurt Lewin important to social psychology? What did he find out about different styles of leadership?
- B. What did Asch find? Why is his research important?
- C. What did Milgram discover? Why is it important?
- D. What is the fundamental attribution error? Give examples of how it affects personal judgments and social policy.
- E. What did you learn about Zimbardo’s prison study?
- F. What ethical issues are raised in this video?
- G. What did the stolen radio study show?
- H. What did Langer find out about eyesight?
- I. What is meant by “the power of the situation?”
- J. What do you think is important to learn from this video?