M. Snyder, Tanke, and Berscheid (1977) first demonstrated behavioral confirmation effects in an experimental setting. These researchers asked previously unacquainted college-age men and women to converse over the telephone. Before the conversation began, the men received a Polaroid snapshot of their telephone partner. The photographs, however, were of completely different women, some of whom were attractive and some of whom were relatively unattractive. After viewing these photographs, the men indicated what they thought their telephone partner would be like by completing a series of rating scales (e.g., How friendly, warm, and sociable do you think your partner will be?). The men then engaged in a 10-minute conversation with their telephone partner.

Stage 1 in the behavioral confirmation process occurs when one person forms an expectancy about another. Snyder and colleagues assumed that their attractiveness manipulation would lead the men to form different expectancies about their conversation partner’s personality. This proved to be the case. Consistent with the “what is beautiful is good” stereotype, men who anticipated talking to attractive women expected them to be more sociable, poised, humorous, and socially adept than men expecting to chat with relatively unattractive women.

During stage 2 of the behavioral confirmation process, people act on the basis of their expectancies. To determine whether men’s expectancies influenced their behavior, Snyder and colleagues asked participants who were unaware of the experimental conditions to listen to the males’ portion of the telephone conversation and rate each man’s behavior. As predicted, men who believed they were taking to attractive women were judged to be more outgoing, humorous, and warm on the phone than were men who believed they were talking to unattractive women. Thus, the expectancy they had formed on the basis of the false photographs guided their own behavior.

**FIGURE 3.19**
A Four-Stage Model of the Behavioral Confirmation Processes
Person A expects person B to be snobbish and aloof. Person A then acts toward person B on the basis of this expectancy. Person B reacts to person A’s behavior by responding in a similar manner. Person A then concludes that the initial expectancy was correct.

**B. Behavioral Confirmation Effects in Action**

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