Schachter’s theory maintains that emotional experience is comprised of two factors: physiological arousal and a cognitive label. Participants given a placebo were not experiencing any physiological arousal, so they should not have been searching for a cognitive label and should not have been affected by the confederate’s behavior. Participants given epinephrine were experiencing arousal, but some of these participants were correctly informed that the shot they were given would make them feel excited and aroused. Since these participants already had an explanation for what they were feeling, they, too, should have been unaffected by the confederate’s behavior. The key prediction, then, was that only participants who were experiencing unexplained arousal (i.e., those in the uninformed-arousal condition) would be influenced by the confederate’s behavior.

The data shown in Figure 5.8 provide some support for these predictions. As expected, participants in the no-arousal placebo condition were unaffected by the confederate’s behavior, and those in the uninformed-arousal condition felt better when the confederate was happy than when the confederate was angry. These findings support the contention that people who experience unexplained arousal look to the situation to label their emotional experience. The data in the informed-arousal condition do not conform to the experimental predictions, however. These participants should have been unaffected by the confederate’s behavior, but they felt angry when the confederate was euphoric, and euphoric when the confederate was angry. These results indicate that factors other than self-perception processes influence emotional states (Reisenzein, 1983).

**Misattribution of Arousal.** Because people do not always know why they feel the way they do, they can be led to misattribute the true causes of their emotional states. This misattribution of arousal can have some interesting consequences. For example, one investigation found that college students were more likely to cheat on a test if they had been told a drug they had been given would produce symptoms of anxiety than if they had been told the drug would relax them (Dienstbier & Munter, 1971). Why did this occur? Most people experience anxiety and arousal when they contemplate committing an immoral act. Even though all participants had been given a