

# Social Psychology

SIXTH EDITION

A painting by J.M.W. Turner titled 'Rain, Steam, and Great Railway Bridge', showing a group of people walking along a beach at sunset. The figures are silhouetted against the warm, orange glow of the sky and reflected in the wet sand.



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# Preface

**W**e authors used to think of social psychology as a discipline that is stable and slow to change. As in other sciences, we thought, knowledge accumulates in small increments, one step at a time. There are, after all, no “critical” experiments, and no single study can literally “prove” a theory or hypothesis. While all this remains true, and while future social psychologists will stand firmly on the shoulders of their predecessors, for us the process of revising this textbook has put a spotlight on just how dynamic and responsive our field can be. As the world around us rapidly changes—socially, politically, and technologically—so too does social psychology.

We had two main goals for this revision. First, we wanted to accurately and impartially represent the most important recent advances in the field. We have no theoretical or political axes to grind. As such, we sought a balanced presentation of perspectives within the field as a whole—biological and sociocultural, affective and cognitive, basic and applied. Second, we wanted this textbook to serve as a good teacher outside the classroom. To us, this means speaking the student’s language while introducing a new one; making connections to current events in politics, sports, business, entertainment, and other life domains; and encouraging students to rethink their commonsense assumptions. Good teachers are dynamic, interactive, and challenging—and so, we think, is this textbook. We wanted the Sixth Edition of *Social Psychology* to be a better teacher than it has been before. We hope that our readers will find that we’ve succeeded.

## What’s New in this Edition

In the fourth edition, we reorganized this text, adding a new chapter on research methods, combining two relationships chapters into one, and bringing forward the coverage of attitudes and social influence. We received such positive feedback about these changes from users, friends, and colleagues that we have retained the structure and focused instead on capturing some subtle but important shifts occurring within the field—such as the heightened interest in evolutionary perspectives, social neuroscience, unconscious or “implicit” processes, and cultural influences on social cognition. We have tried to put our finger on the pulse of social psychology *today*—so that the reader can feel that pulse in the pages of this textbook.

## The Content

**Comprehensive, Up-to-Date Scholarship** The bedrock of teaching is knowledge. Like its predecessors, the Sixth Edition offers a broad, balanced, mainstream look at social psychology. Thus, there are detailed descriptions of classic studies from the historical warehouse as well as the latest research findings, some hot off

the presses, from hundreds of new references. In particular, we draw your attention to the following topics, which are either new to this edition or have received expanded coverage:

- Careers influenced by the study of social psychology (Chapter 1)
- Uses in research of brain imaging and virtual technologies (Chapter 1)
- The challenge of survey research across cultures (Chapter 2)
- Affective forecasting (Chapter 3)
- Psychological consequences of terrorism (Chapter 3)
- Attributions as cultural constructions (Chapter 4)
- Simple heuristics that “make us smart” (Chapter 4)
- Automaticity and inhibition of stereotyping (Chapter 5)
- Entity and incremental implicit theories about groups (Chapter 5)
- Brain imaging studies of interracial perception and interaction (Chapter 5)
- Implicit Association Test of attitudes (Chapter 6)
- “Automatic” social influences (Chapter 7)
- Conformity, deviance, and ostracism over the Internet (Chapter 7)
- Milgram’s research in the twenty-first century (Chapter 7)
- Transactive memory (Chapter 8)
- Effects of diversity on group performance (Chapter 8)
- Process gain in groups (Chapter 8)
- Roots of sexual orientation (Chapter 9)
- Evolutionary influences on mate selection (Chapter 9)
- Implicit bystander effects (Chapter 10)
- Cross-cultural differences in helping (Chapter 10)
- Gender and relational aggression (Chapter 11)
- Effects of violence in TV shows, movies, music, and video games (Chapter 11)
- Justice Department applications of eyewitness research (Chapter 12)
- Police interrogations and false confessions (Chapter 12)
- Psychological effects of affirmative action (Chapter 13)
- Gender differences in reactions to stress (Chapter 14)
- HIV prevention programs (Chapter 14)
- The role of religion in health (Chapter 14)

**Connections with Current Events** To cover the world of social psychology is one thing. To use the principles to explain events in the real world is quite another. The world feels like a different place now than before 9/11. More than ever, we remain convinced that making this connection is the single best way to heighten student interest and involvement, so we do both. Over the years, teachers and students alike have told us how much they value this “newsy” feature of our book.

The Sixth Edition continues in our commitment to making social psychology *relevant*. Indeed, we invite you to flip the book open to any page and start reading. Soon, you’ll come across a passage, a figure, a table, a photo, or a cartoon that refers to people, places, events, and issues that are prominent in contemporary culture. Some of what you’ll see includes stories about 9/11 and its aftermath; terrorism, the Central Park jogger case; the Supreme Court’s 2003 affirmative action rulings; Sammy Sosa’s corked bat incident; the trials of Martha Stewart, Scott Peterson, and Kobe Bryant; flash mobs; the popular TV show, “Queer Eye for the Straight Guy;” the overthrow of Saddam Hussein; the explosion of the space shuttle *Columbia*; the corporate scandals involving Enron and WorldCom; “date rape” drugs; the violence inspired by *The Matrix*; the debates over affirmative action and gay marriage.

As in our last edition, you will also find—within the margins—various quotations, song lyrics, public opinion poll results, “factoids,” and relevant website addresses. These high-interest items are designed to further illustrate the connect-edness of social psychology to a world that extends beyond the borders of a college campus.

**The Evolutionary Perspective** In recent years, psychology in general has been influenced heavily by neuroscience, behavioral genetics, and other biological perspectives on human nature. In this regard, social psychology is no exception. At the heart of this perspective is the notion that we humans, like other species, have an evolutionary past that predisposes us to behave in ways that are adapted to promote survival and reproduction. Increasingly, evolutionary psychologists have sought to explain a wide range of social behaviors such as prejudice, helping, aggression, physical beauty, mate selection, and romantic jealousy. We realize that this theoretical perspective is often provocative and controversial. And we realize that while many of our colleagues embrace it, others are skeptical, if not cynical of, this approach. Like it or not, the pages of our most respected journals are filled with both studies and critiques of evolutionary psychology. This edition of our textbook discusses this trend, particularly in chapters pertaining to social relations.

**Sociocultural Perspectives** Social psychologists have long been fascinated by both similarities and differences—among cultural groups, racial and ethnic groups within cultures, men and women, gays and straights. Our coverage of cross-cultural research, and of studies involving race and ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, are fully incorporated in the main body of the text. This coverage is extensive. On virtually all topics—from the social self and perception of others, to attitudes, conformity and obedience, interpersonal behavior, attraction, group dynamics, leadership, and conceptions of justice—sociocultural perspectives are embedded throughout. More than ever before, social psychology itself has become a truly international discipline, which is why you’ll find many new citations to research conducted throughout Europe, Asia, Australia, and other parts of the world. We believe that the study of human diversity—from the perspectives of researchers who themselves are a diverse lot—can help students become more informed about interpersonal relations as well as about ethics and values.

**Social Psychology and Common Sense** In the fourth edition, we introduced a feature that we remain excited about. Building upon a discussion in Chapter 1 about the links between social psychology and common sense, each substantive chapter opens with *Putting Common Sense to the Test*, a set of true-false questions designed to assess the student’s intuitive beliefs about material later contained in that chapter. Some examples: “Sometimes the harder you try to control a thought, feeling, or behavior, the less likely you are to succeed,” “People often come to like what they suffer for,” “Opposites attract,” and “Groups are less likely than individuals to invest more in a project that is failing.” The answers to these questions are revealed in a marginal box after the topic is presented in the text. These answers are then more fully explained at the end of each chapter. We think that students will find this exercise engaging. It will also enable them, as they read, to check their intuitive beliefs against the findings of social psychology—and notice the discrepancies that exist. The Common Sense feature is also presented as an interactive exercise on the Student CD-ROM, to further reinforce the student’s understanding of the text material.

## The Organization

Of all the challenges faced by teachers and textbooks, perhaps the greatest is to put information together in a way that is accurate and understandable. A strong organizational framework helps in meeting this challenge. There is nothing worse for a student than having to wade through a “laundry list” of endless studies whose connection with each other remains a profound mystery. A strong structure thus facilitates the development of conceptual understanding.

But the tail should not wag the dog. Since organizational structure is a means to an end, not an end in itself, we believe that it should be kept simple and unobtrusive. Continuing in the tradition of all previous editions, we present social psychology within four major Parts, a heuristic structure that teachers and students have found sensible and easy to follow. As before, we start with an internal focus on *Social Perception* (Part One), shift outward to *Social Influence* (Part Two) and *Social Relations* (Part Three), and conclude with *Applying Social Psychology* (Part Four). We realize that some instructors prefer to reshuffle the deck to develop a chapter order that better fits their own approach. There is no problem in doing this. Each chapter stands on its own and does not require that others be read first.

## The Presentation

Even when the content of a textbook is accurate and up-to-date, and even when its organization is sound, there is still the matter of presentation. As the teacher outside the classroom, a good textbook should facilitate learning. Thus, each and every chapter comes complete with the following pedagogical features:

- A narrative preview, chapter outline, and common sense quiz (beginning with Chapter 3).
- Key terms highlighted in the text, defined in the margin, listed at the end of the chapter, and reprinted in an alphabetized glossary at the end of the book. Both the list and the glossary provide page numbers for easy location of the term.
- Numerous bar graphs, line graphs, tables, sketches, photographs, flow charts, and cartoons that not only illustrate material in the text but extend, enhance, and enliven that material. Some of these depict classic images and studies from social psychology’s past; others, new to the Sixth Edition, are contemporary, often “newsy.”
- A comprehensive bulleted review summarizing the major sections and points at the end of each chapter.

## Supplemental Materials

### For the Instructor

*The Instructor’s Resource Manual* contains learning objectives, detailed chapter outlines, discussion ideas, classroom activities, handouts, and audiovisual resource suggestions. The classroom exercises feature a unique and popular “What if This Bombs?” section that offers tips for making the most of every activity—even if it does not work.

**Test Bank** The *Test Bank*, available in print or within a testing software program, features an extensive set of multiple-choice questions and essay questions with sample answers. Three types of objective questions are provided: factual, conceptual, and applied, and all answers are keyed to learning objectives and text pages.



**PowerPoint Slides** The Sixth Edition includes a revised set of PowerPoint slides that include lecture outlines, and tables and figures from the text. The slides are available on the instructor website and the *Social Psychology*, Sixth Edition, HM ClassPrep CD-ROM (instructor CD-ROM).

**Overhead Transparencies** An extensive set of *overhead transparencies* is also available which includes images from the *Social Psychology*, Sixth Edition, text's illustration program.

**HM ClassPrep with HMTTesting CD-ROM** This combined CD includes both the Computerized Test Bank and the HM ClassPrep CD. Our HMTTesting program offers delivery of test questions in an easy-to-use interface; compatible with both MAC and WIN platforms. The HM ClassPrep instructor CD-ROM provides one location for all text-specific preparation materials that instructors might want to have available electronically. It contains PowerPoint lecture outlines and art from the textbook, as well as electronic versions of the Instructors Resource Manual and word files for the test bank.

**Textbook website** On the full-service, interactive website accompanying *Social Psychology*, Sixth Edition, instructors have access to the PowerPoint slides and most elements of the *Instructor's Resource Manual*, described above, as well as an online guide offering tips on how to use and assign the student activities available on the student side of the text-specific site. To view a sampling of instructor materials, point to <http://college.hmco.com> and select *Psychology* and then this textbook.

**Content for Course Management Software** *Blackboard* and *Web CT* course cartridges are available with *Social Psychology*, Sixth Edition, allowing instructors to use text-specific material to create an online course on their own campus course management system. The cartridges feature interactive NetLab exercises, PowerPoint slides, and other study materials all correlated to each chapter in the new edition of the text.

**Social Psychology Lecture Starter Videos** created especially for this textbook, offer approximately 60 minutes of brief video clips perfectly suited for classroom use.

**New! Houghton Mifflin Social Psych in Film DVD/VHS** with closed captioning, contains clips from popular films and classic experiments that illustrate key concepts in social psychology. Clips from films like *Apollo 13*, *Schindler's List*, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, *In the Name of the Father*, and many others are combined with overviews and discussion questions to help bring psychology alive for students and demonstrate its relevance to contemporary life and culture. The DVD works in tandem with the *Social Psychology*, Sixth Edition, *Student CD-ROM* as a unique learning system. On the *Student CD-ROM* are scenes taken from each of the video clips. These scenes are accompanied by overviews that remind students about the clips shown in class, and are followed by a set of multiple-choice and essay questions. Punctuate your lecture with engaging videos from the DVD; then have your students use the *Student CD-ROM* to further absorb key social psychology concepts.

## For the Student

**Student CD-ROM** The CD that accompanies every copy of the student text, at no extra charge, is designed to reinforce concepts presented in the textbook as well as in classroom lecture. Selected scenes from videos shown in class accompany multiple-choice practice tests and essay questions to reinforce the student's grasp of key concepts. Progress reports can be printed and/or e-mailed to instructors directly from the CD-ROM. (Note: all digital media is available for in-class instructor presentation on the **new** Houghton Mifflin *Social Psych in Film DVD/VHS*.) The student CD also includes Chapter Summaries, NetLabs interactive activities, Key Terms Recaps, and annotated links to the *Readings in Social Psychology: The Art and Science of Research*, Third Edition.



***Readings in Social Psychology: The Art and Science of Research, Third Edition***

This item comes shrink-wrapped free with the textbook and contains original articles—each with a brief introduction, and questions to stimulate critical thinking about “doing” social psychology. These articles represent some of the most creative and accessible research in the field, both classic and contemporary, of topical interest to students.

**Textbook website** The text-specific website offers students a wide range of independent study resources including interactive NetLab exercises, Thinking Critically and Evaluating Research exercises, ACE self-quizzes, Flashcards and recommended Web links, and articles on current events, books, and movies.

**Study Guide** The *Study Guide* facilitates student learning through the use of a chapter outline, learning objectives, a review of key terms and concepts, multiple-choice questions with explanations for why the correct answer is the best choice, and a new set of practice essay questions with sample answers.

## Acknowledgments

Textbooks are the product of a team effort. As always, we are grateful to Houghton Mifflin Company for its commitment to quality as the first priority. First, we want to thank Rita Lombard and Laura Hildebrand, our editors, whose common sense, energy, and persistence kept us on task and on time. We also want to express our gratitude to Marcy Kagan, our Photo Editor, whose eye for striking and thought-provoking images makes this textbook so photographically interesting. Finally, we want to thank all those whose considerable talents and countless hours of hard work can be seen on every page: Bob Greiner, Senior Project Editor; Susan Zorn, Copyeditor; and Trinity Peacock-Broyles, Editorial Assistant. We also thank Senior Sponsoring Editor Kerry Baruth, Marketing Manager Jane Potter, and Erin Lane, Marketing Assistant.

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Sharon S. Brehm  
Saul Kassin  
Steven Fein

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**Steven Fein** is Professor of Psychology at Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts. Born and raised in Bayonne, New Jersey, he received his A.B. from Princeton University and his Ph.D. in social psychology from the University of Michigan. He has been teaching at Williams College since 1991, with time spent teaching at Stanford University in 1999. His edited books include *Emotion: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, *Readings in Social Psychology: The Art and Science of Research*, *Motivated Social Perception: The Ontario Symposium*, and *Gender and Aggression: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. He recently completed a term on the executive committee of the Society of Personality and Social Psychology. His research interests concern stereotyping and prejudice, suspicion, and sociocultural and motivational influences on person perception.

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# **Social Psychology**

# 1

# Introduction

## OUTLINE

### What Is Social Psychology?

- Defining Social Psychology
- Social Psychological Questions and Applications
- The Power of the Social Context: An Example of a Social Psychology Experiment
- Social Psychology and Related Fields: Distinctions and Intersections
- Social Psychology and Common Sense

### From Past to Present: A Brief History of Social Psychology

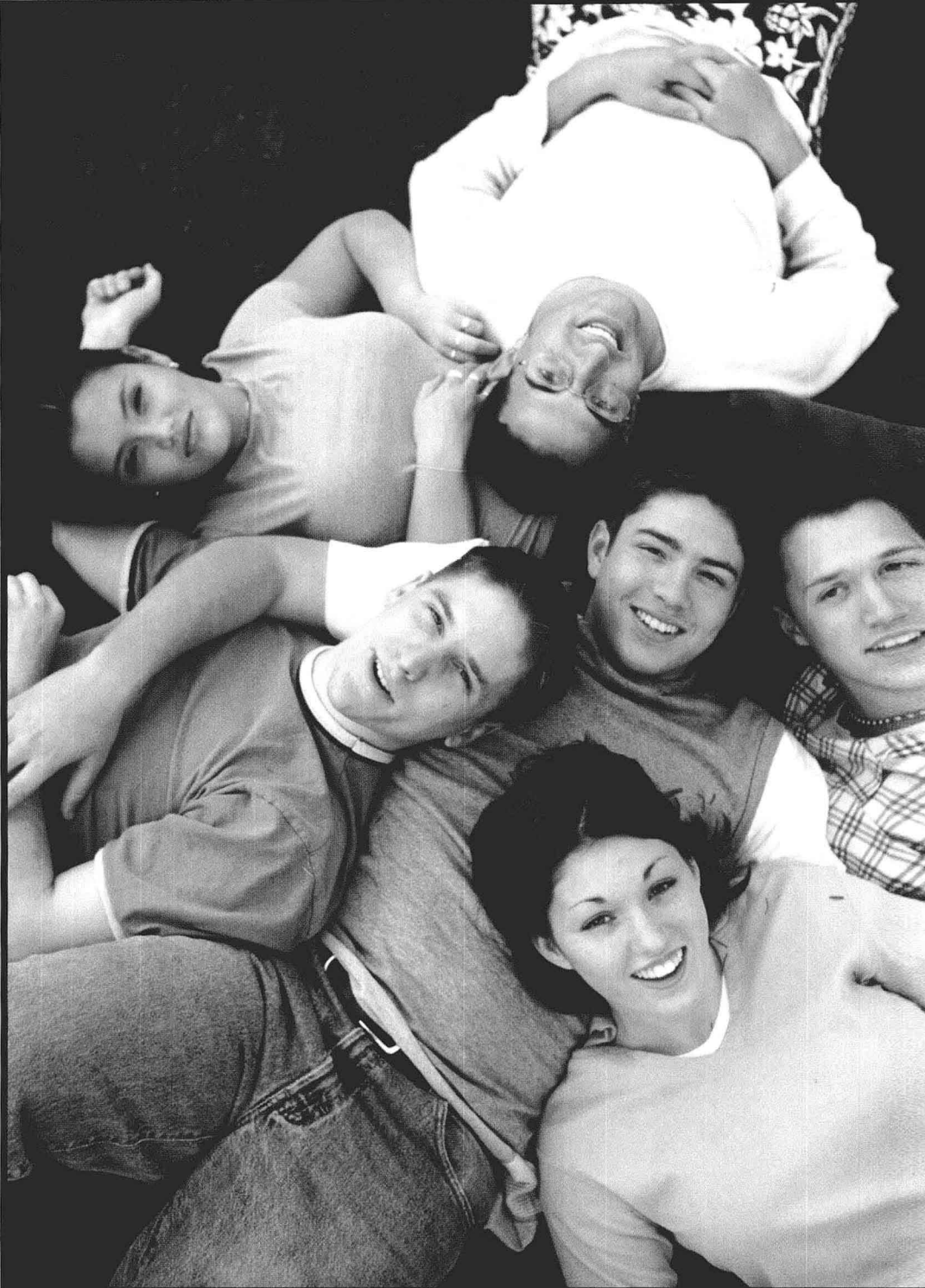
- The Birth and Infancy of Social Psychology: 1880s–1920s
- A Call to Action: 1930s–1950s
- Confidence and Crisis: 1960s–Mid-1970s
- An Era of Pluralism: Mid-1970s–1990s

### Social Psychology in a New Century

- Integration of Emotion, Motivation, and Cognition
- Biological and Evolutionary Perspectives
- Sociocultural Perspectives
- New Technologies

### Review

### Key Terms



## PREVIEW

**THIS CHAPTER** introduces you to the study of social psychology. We begin by defining social psychology and identifying how it is distinct from but related to some other areas of study, both outside and within psychology. Next, we review the history of the field. We conclude by looking forward, with a discussion of the important themes and perspectives that are propelling social psychology into a new century.

A few years from now, you may receive a letter in the mail, inviting you to a high school or college reunion. You'll probably feel a bit nostalgic, and you'll begin to think about those old school days. What thoughts will come to mind first? Will you remember the poetry you finally began to appreciate in your junior year? Will you think about the excitement you felt when you completed your first chemistry lab? Will a tear form in your eye as you remember how inspiring your social psychology class was?

Perhaps. But what will probably dominate your thoughts are the people you knew in school and the interactions you had with them—the long and intense discussions about everything imaginable; the loves you had, lost, or wanted so desperately to experience; the time you made a fool of yourself at a party; the effort of trying to be accepted by a fraternity, sorority, or clique of popular people; the day you sat in the pouring rain with your friends while watching a football game.

We focus on these social situations because we are social beings. We forge our individual identities not alone but in the context of other people. We work, play, and live together. We hurt and help each other. We define happiness and success for each other. And we don't fall passively into social interactions; we actively seek them. We visit family, make friends, give parties, build networks, play the dating game, pledge an enduring commitment, decide to have children. We watch others, speculate about them, and predict who will wind up with whom, whether in real life or on "reality" TV shows like *The Real World* and *Survivor*.

You've probably seen the movie *It's a Wonderful Life*. When the hero, George Bailey, was about to kill himself, the would-be angel Clarence didn't save him by showing him how much personal happiness he'd miss if he ended his life. Instead, he showed George how much his life had touched the lives of others and how

*Strangers quickly become celebrities as millions of people tune in to watch them relate to each other on "reality" shows, such as this cast from a recent season of MTV's The Real World. The enormous popularity of shows like these illustrates part of the appeal of social psychology—people are fascinated with how we relate to one another.*



"Man is a social animal."

—Benedict Spinoza, *Ethics*

many people would be hurt if he were not a part of their world. It was these social relationships that saved George's life, just as they define our own.

One of the exciting aspects of learning about social psychology is discovering how basic and profoundly important these social relationships are to the human animal. And research continues to find new evidence for and point to new implications of our social nature. Consider, for example, this set of headlines that appeared in media outlets around the world during the course of one month recently:

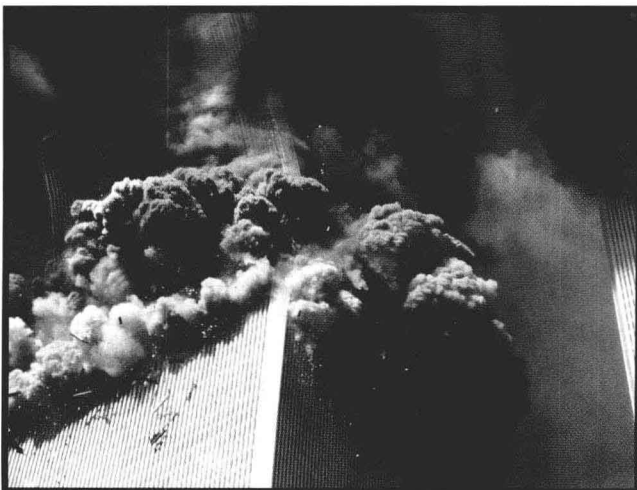
- "British Study Finds Going to the Pub Good for the Brain" (*The Times*, London, November 7, 2003)
- "Shock and Distress of Social Rejection Affects Brain in Same Way as Physical Injury, Study Says" (Associated Press, October 9, 2003)
- "Brain Hard-Wired for Empathy: Study" (Reuters Health, November 6, 2003)

Each of these headlines is based on carefully conducted research that illustrates, respectively, that engaging in social interactions, such as socializing in a pub, is associated with improved verbal and numerical ability; that seeing an expression of disgust on someone else's face activates the same part of our brain—the insula—as when we feel disgust ourselves; and that experiencing a social rejection produces activity in the same part of the brain—the anterior cingulate cortex—as when we feel physical pain (Eisenberger et al., 2003; Singh-Manoux et al., 2003; Wicker et al., 2003). Taken together, these studies use cutting-edge methodology and technology to demonstrate how basic and important is our connection to other people, and how much we benefit from social interaction and are hurt—not just metaphorically but even physically—from social isolation or rejection.

Precisely because we need and care so much about social interactions and relationships, the social contexts in which we find ourselves can influence us profoundly. You can find many examples of this kind of influence in your own life. Have you ever laughed at a joke you didn't get just because those around you were laughing? Do you present yourself in one way with one group of people and in quite a different way with another group? The power of the situation can also be much more subtle, and yet more powerful, than in these examples, as when another's unspoken expectations about you literally seem to cause you to become a different person.

The relevance of social psychology is evident in everyday life, of course, such as when two people become attracted to each other, or when a group tries to coordinate its efforts on a project. Dramatic events can heighten its significance all the more, as during and after the September 11, 2001, attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., when we witnessed some of the worst and best that human

*The relevance of social psychology is evident in everyday situations, but dramatic, life-changing events such as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, make all the more clear how important it is to better understand human relations and the kinds of questions that social psychologists study.*





relations have to offer. The world sought answers to the kinds of questions that social psychologists study—questions about hatred and violence, about intergroup conflict and suspicion, as well as about heroism, cooperation, and the capacity for understanding across cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, and geographic divides. We are reminded of the need for a better understanding of social psychological issues as we read the latest tragic news coming out of the Middle East, see footage of death and destruction in the Persian Gulf or the Congo, or are confronted with the reality of an all-too-violent world as nearby as our own neighborhoods and campuses. We also appreciate the majesty and power of social connections as we recognize the courage of a firefighter, read about the charity of a donor, or see the glow in the eyes of a new parent. These are all—the bad and the good, the mundane and the extraordinary—part of the fascinating landscape of social psychology.

You will see evidence of these points throughout this book. What's more, you will learn *how* social psychologists have discovered this evidence. It is an exciting process, and one that we are enthusiastic about sharing with you. The purpose of this first chapter is to provide you with a broad overview of the field of social psychology. By the time you finish it, you should be ready and (we hope) eager for what lies ahead.

**"From my point of view, the reason for the success of the show is social psychology."**

—Mark Burnett, creator of hit reality shows such as *Survivor*, on the huge, breakout success of his reality show starring Donald Trump, *The Apprentice*

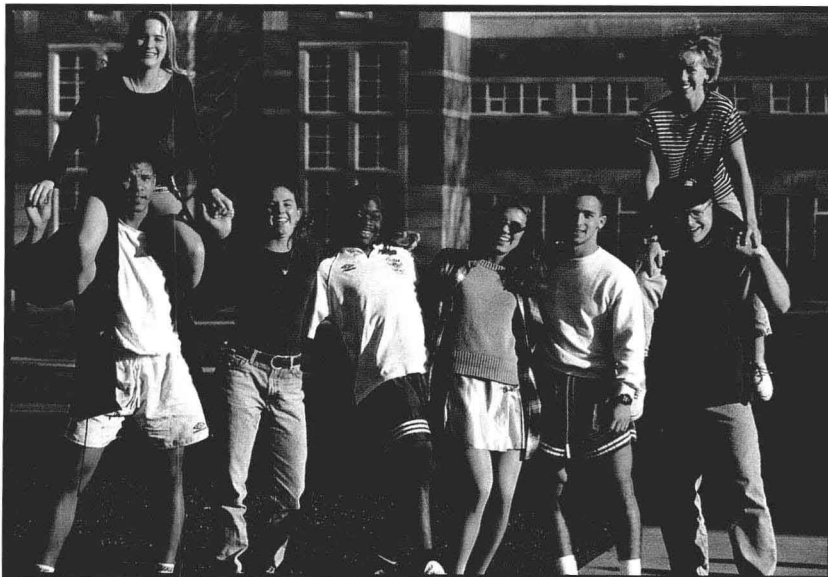
Source: Zurawik, D. (April 14, 2004). Dissecting the Donald's fame. *The Berkshire Eagle*, p. C4.

## What Is Social Psychology?

**W**e begin by previewing the new territory you're about to enter. Then we define social psychology and map out its relationship to sociology and some other disciplines within the field of psychology.

### Defining Social Psychology

**Social psychology** is the scientific study of how individuals think, feel, and behave in regard to other people and how individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are affected by other people. Let's look at each part of this definition.



*Our social relationships and interactions are extremely important to us. Most people seek out and are profoundly affected by other people. This social nature of the human animal is what social psychology is all about.*

**social psychology** The scientific study of how individuals think, feel, and behave in regard to other people and how individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are affected by other people.