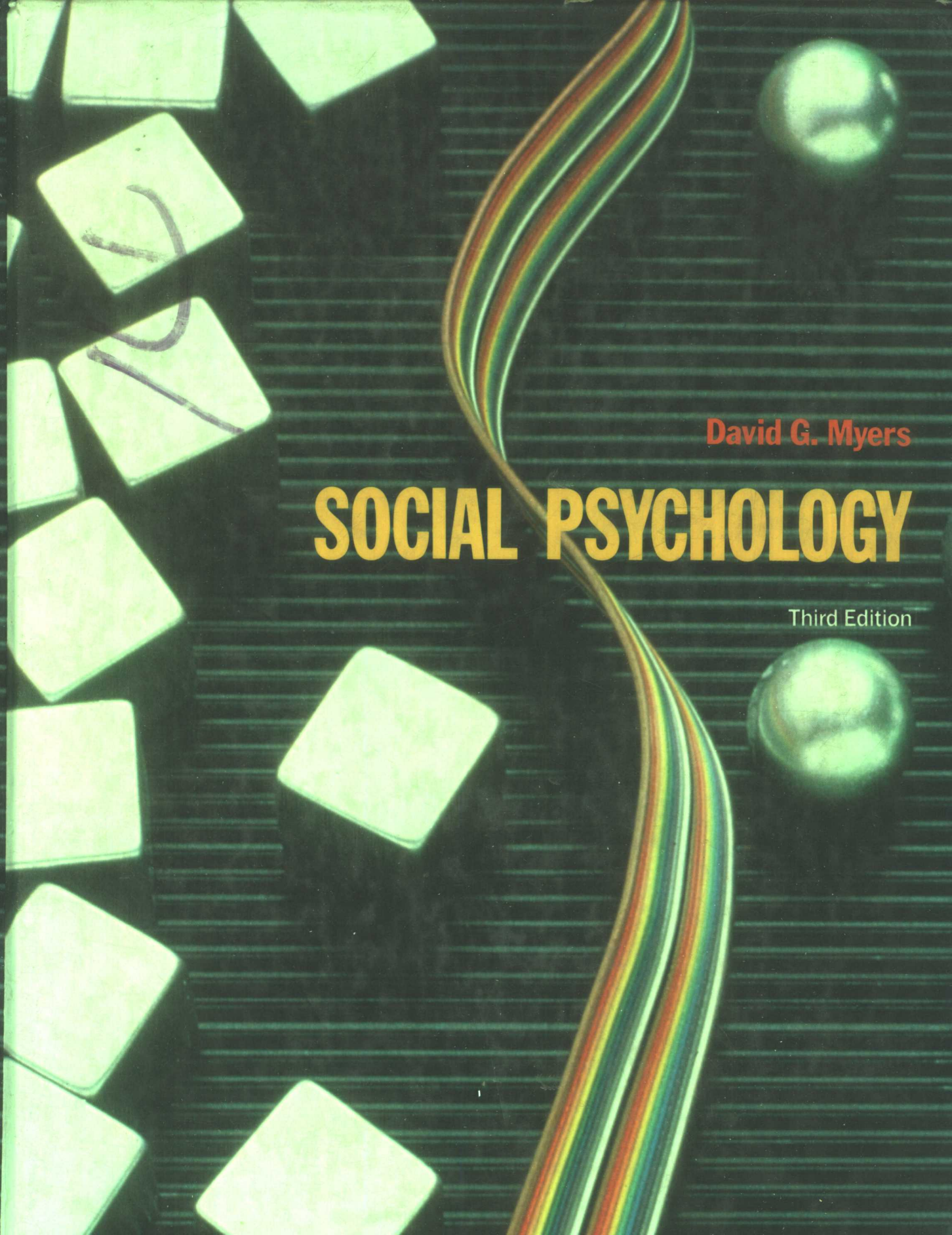
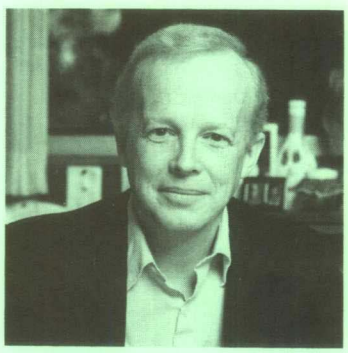

David G. Myers
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
Third Edition

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David G. Myers is the John Dirk Werkman Professor of Psychology at Hope College, where he has taught for 22 years and has been voted "Outstanding Professor" by students. Dr. Myers' love of teaching psychology is evident in his writing for the lay public. He has authored or co-authored eight books and written for many magazines, including *Saturday Review*, *Psychology Today*, and *Today's Education*.

Also an award-winning researcher, Dr. Myers received the Gordon Allport Prize from Division 9 of the American Psychological Association for his work on group polarization. Dr. Myers' scientific articles have appeared in more than two dozen journals, including *Science*, *American Scientist*, and *Psychological Bulletin*. He has served his discipline as consulting editor to the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* and the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

In his spare time he has chaired his city's Human Relations Commission, helped found a Community Action center which assists poverty-level families, and spoken to numerous collegiate and religious groups. David and Carol Myers are parents of sons ages 23 and 19 and a 12-year-old daughter.



PREFACE

In all of recorded history, human social behavior has been scientifically studied in but one century—our century. Considering that we have barely begun, the results are gratifying. Such psychologists have gleaned significant insights into belief and illusion, love and hate, conformity and independence. Much mystery remains, yet we can now offer partial answers to many intriguing questions: Will people act differently if we can first persuade them to adopt new attitudes? If so, how best to persuade? What leads people sometimes to hurt and sometimes to help another? What kindles social conflict, and how might we transform closed fists into open arms? Answering such questions expands our self-understanding and sensitizes us to social forces at work upon us.

When invited to write this book I envisioned a text that would be at once solidly scientific and warmly human, factually rigorous and intellectually provocative. It would reveal social psychology as an investigative reporter might, providing an up-to-date summary of important phenomena of social thinking and social behavior, and of how such phenomena have been uncovered and how they are being explained. It would be reasonably comprehensive in its coverage of the discipline, yet would also stimulate students' *thinking*—their propensities to inquire, to analyze, to relate principles to everyday happenings.

Presenting concepts concretely enough to enable students to gain some proficiency in working with the ideas prohibits an exhaustive catalog of theory and research. How, then, does one select material for inclusion in a "reasonably comprehensive" introduction to the discipline? I sought to present theories and findings that are neither too esoteric for the typical undergraduate nor better suited to other courses, such as developmental and personality psychology. I chose instead to emphasize material that casts social psychology in the intellectual tradition of the liberal arts. By the teaching of great literature, philosophy, and science, liberal education seeks to expand our thinking and awareness and to liberate us from the confines of our current environment.

Social psychology can contribute to these goals of liberal education. Many undergraduate social psychology students are not psychology majors; virtually all will enter professions other than social psychology. By focusing on humanly significant issues, one can present the fundamental content that preprofessional psychology students need in ways that are stimulating and useful to all students.

The book opens with a single chapter that introduces our methods of inquiry. The chapter also forewarns students of how findings can seem obvious—once you know them—and of how social psychologists' values penetrate the discipline. The intent is to give students just enough to prepare them for what follows.

The remainder of this third edition is organized around its definition of social psychology: the scientific study of how people *think about* (Part One), *influence* (Part Two), and *relate* (Part Three) to one another.

Part One on social thinking examines how we view ourselves and others. For example, Chapter 3 introduces attribution theory and then looks in greater depth at three intellectually provocative concepts: the fundamental attribution error, the self-serving bias, and the benefits of self-efficacy.

Part Two explores social influence. By appreciating the cultural sources of our attitudes, and by learning the nature of conformity, persuasion, and group influence, we can better recognize subtle social forces at work upon us.

Part Three considers the attitudinal and behavioral manifestions of both negative and positive social relations. Thus this reorganized section flows from prejudice to aggression, and from attraction to altruism, and concludes by exploring the dynamics of conflict and peacemaking.

Applications of social psychology are both interwoven throughout every chapter and highlighted with the applied chapter that concludes each section. The applications chapter, "Social Thinking in the Clinic," now includes material on social psychology's contributions to the study of health.

This new edition also features an increased multicultural emphasis. This can be seen not only in visible additions, such as the color photo essay on "Social Behavior around the World," but also throughout the book in the integration of research from various cultural settings. The book's focus remains on the fundamental principles of social thinking, social influence, and social relations as revealed by careful empirical research. But these principles are more and more illustrated transnationally, thereby broadening students' awareness of the whole human family.

In addition to the reorganization of Part Three and the enhanced multicultural emphasis, the book is thoroughly updated. More than 600 citations are new to this edition.

Finally, readers will find new pedagogical aids—added subheadings to organize the material, end-of-chapter suggestions for further reading, and a glossary to supplement the conceptual definitions appearing in the text margins. There are additional—and abbreviated—"Behind the Scenes" personal reflections by selected investigators. And there have been countless abbreviations of old material to accommodate these new features without lengthening the book.

Social Psychology, third edition, is accompanied by a comprehensive teaching-learning package. Martin Bolt's acclaimed *Teacher's Resource Manual* contains a wealth of classroom ideas, including dozens of ready-to-use demonstrations. For many students, the most helpful supplement to this text will be Bolt's *Study Guide*, which provides chapter objectives, chapter reviews, practice tests, and ideas and resources for papers. Finally, Ann Weber has again provided a carefully developed test-item file—over 1500 basic knowledge and application items.

IN APPRECIATION

Although only one person's name appears on this book's cover, the truth is that a whole community of scholars have invested themselves in it. Although none of these people should be held responsible for what I have written—nor do any of them fully agree with everything said—their suggestions made this a better book than it could otherwise have been.

This new edition still retains many of the improvements contributed by consultants and reviewers on the first two editions. To the following esteemed colleagues I there-

fore remain indebted: Robert Arkin, University of Missouri; Martin Bolt, Calvin College; Anthony Doob, University of Toronto; William Froming, University of Florida; Ranald Hansen, Oakland University; Elaine Hatfield, University of Hawaii; Bert Hodges, Gordon College; William Ickes, University of Missouri at St. Louis; Chester Insko, University of North Carolina; Edward Jones, Princeton University; Billy Van Jones, Abilene Christian College; Martin Kaplan, Northern Illinois University; Douglas Kenrick, Arizona State University; Norbert Kerr, Michigan State University; Charles Kiesler, Vanderbilt University; David McMillen, Mississippi State University; Arthur Miller, Miami University; Teru Morton, Vanderbilt University; Darren Newtson, University of Virginia; Paul Paulus, University of Texas at Arlington; Royce Singleton, Jr., College of the Holy Cross; Mark Snyder, University of Minnesota; Garold Stasser, Miami University; Homer Stavely, Keene State College; Elizabeth Tanke, University of Santa Clara; William Titus, Briarcliff College; Tom Tyler, Northwestern University; Rhoda Unger, Montclair State College; Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, Calvin College; Ann Weber, University of North Carolina at Asheville; Gary Wells, Iowa State University; and Kipling Williams, Purdue University.

This third edition gained from new cover-to-cover reviews before, during, and after its drafting. For countless constructive criticisms and for saving me from many errors, I am grateful to: Robert Arkin, University of Missouri; Susan Beers, Sweet Briar College; George Bishop, University of Texas at San Antonio; Martin Bolt, Calvin College; Dorothea Braginsky, Fairfield University; Russell Clark, Florida State University; Jack Croxton, State University of New York at Fredonia; Philip Finney, Southeast Missouri State University; Stephen Fugita, University of Illinois at Chicago; Marita Inglehart, University of Michigan; Judi Jones, Georgia Southern College; Janice Kelly, Purdue University; Arthur Miller, Miami University; Chris O'Sullivan, University of Kentucky; Nicholas Reuterman, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville; Linda Silka, University of Lowell; Stephen Slane, Cleveland State University; Ann Weber, University of North Carolina at Asheville; Bernard Whitley, Ball State University; and Midge Wilson, DePaul University.

Hope College, Michigan, and the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, have been wonderfully supportive of these successive editions. Both the people and the environment provided by these two institutions have helped make the gestation of *Social Psychology* a pleasure. At Hope College, poet-essayist Jack Ridl helped shape the voice you will hear in these pages, and Kathy Adamski has again contributed her good cheer along with her secretarial excellence.

Were it not for the inspiration of Nelson Black of McGraw-Hill, it never would have occurred to me to write a textbook. Alison Meersschaert, McGraw-Hill's director of Basic Book Development, guided and encouraged the formative first edition. Editor Alison Husting nurtured this new edition, suggesting numerous creative touches along the way. James Anker has again coordinated the teaching package. And James Belser has patiently guided the process of converting each of the editions from rough manuscript into finished book.

To all in this supporting cast, I am indebted. Working with these four dozen people has made the creation of this book a stimulating, gratifying experience.

David G. Myers

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