

PSYCHOLOGY

MARGARET W. MATLIN

1999
MITCHELL COLLEGE
BOOKSTORE
\$50.50



Psychology

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State University of New York, Geneseo

Harcourt Brace College Publishers

Fort Worth Philadelphia San Diego
New York Orlando Austin San Antonio
Toronto Montreal London Sydney Tokyo

Publisher	<i>Ted Buchholz</i>
Acquisitions Editor	<i>Eve Howard</i>
Developmental Editor	<i>John Haley</i>
Project Editor	<i>Catherine Townsend</i>
Production Manager	<i>Kathleen Ferguson</i>
Art & Design Supervisor	<i>John Ritland</i>
Cover Design	<i>Nancy Turner</i>
Text Design	<i>DUO Design Group</i>
Compositor	<i>Syntax International</i>

Cover Photo: Negley Paint Company, Shertz, Texas

Interior Design by: Chumney Associates

Photo: Bob Shimer, Hedrich-Blessing

Chapter 16 Opener: The William Nathaniel Banks garden from "Gardens of Georgia",
Richard Moore photographer

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Matlin, Margaret W.

Psychology/Margaret W. Matlin.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-03-029508-4

1. Psychology.

I. Title.

BF121.M415 1992

150—dc20

91-27211

CIP

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Address for Editorial Correspondence

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 301 Commerce Street, Suite 3700, Fort Worth, TX 76102

Address for Orders

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 6277 Sea Harbor Drive, Orlando, FL 32887
1-800-782-4479, or 1-800-433-0001 (in Florida)

Printed in the United States of America

3 4 5 063 9 8 7 6 5 4 3

*To Beth and Sally Matlin
and all other college students who care about people
and want to learn more about them.*

Preface

Psychology is a supremely fascinating discipline that spans topics as diverse as a single cortical neuron and international peacemaking. Its research methods range from highly controlled laboratory studies to lengthy, unstructured interviews. Some psychological phenomena are well understood, but many remain mysterious or paradoxical. Psychology attempts to explain why some people risk their lives for the welfare of complete strangers, yet others murder their own family members. Even our theoretical approaches emphasize diversity in how psychologists view human beings.

The challenge for an author of an introductory psychology textbook is to synthesize this variety, to present the material in a clear, interesting fashion that is guided by the principles of human memory, to encourage students to appreciate scientific methods, and to capture the diversity of human experience in the 1990s.

Goals

As I prepared to write this textbook, I clarified several important goals. I had used five different textbooks in teaching several thousand students. Each book had its strengths, but no book fulfilled all the requirements that seemed essential in an ideal textbook for the 1990s. Accordingly, I wrote this book with four major objectives in mind.

1. *To synthesize the broad range of knowledge about psychology.* I have written four other textbooks: *Human Experimental Psychology*, *Sensation and Perception*, *Cognition*, and *Psychology of Women*. My background in such disparate areas provides an unusually broad perspective about the discipline of psychology. This perspective enables me to point out relationships between topics that might initially seem unrelated. Students can benefit from a textbook that clarifies how certain phenomena covered within a chapter are interrelated.

In addition, *Psychology* emphasizes consistent patterns in psychological processes. For example, in the social psychology of stereotypes, people are guided by heuristics similar to those used in visual perception and in cognitive tasks. The text also synthesizes both classic and extremely current resources. Finally, I have stressed three important themes that weave through the 19 chapters of the book, providing even further cohesiveness.

2. *To present complex topics in an interesting, clear, and well-organized fashion.* Research in human memory demonstrates that material is more memorable when it is high in imagery, so I have included numerous examples supplied by my students and from my own experience. (Student reviewers responded especially enthusiastically to the use of examples.) Both professors and students have praised the clarity of my previous textbooks, and I have made every effort to maintain that standard.

In addition, research in human memory emphasizes the importance of organization. Accordingly, every chapter is organized into two to five sections, each followed by a section summary to encourage integration before beginning

the next section. Within each section, I often review what we have discussed and preview what we will cover next. The textbook also features numerous pedagogical aids (see pages 16–17). Some authors assume that these student-oriented features are important only for lower level students. I would argue that *all* students profit from these features. The clear majority of my students at SUNY Geneseo ranked in the top 10% of their high school classes. Nevertheless, they confirm that they appreciate such features as section summaries, mnemonic tips, and pronunciation guides.

Finally, research on the self-reference effect in memory has demonstrated that people retain material better if they relate it to their own experience. An important objective in writing *Psychology* was to encourage students to think about their own psychological processes—from saccadic eye movements to the fundamental attribution error. Typically, they have taken these processes for granted prior to a course in psychology. In many cases, I include a demonstration to make the phenomenon more memorable; other times, I urge students to recall relevant experiences.

3. *To emphasize research methodology.* The excitement of psychological research lured me away from a biology major when I was a college freshman, and I later received my PhD in experimental psychology. Furthermore, I wrote my first textbook in experimental psychology. A separate chapter on research methods seems especially important in the 1990s. Chapter 2 discusses methodological issues, which are also emphasized throughout the book. The specific facts of psychology may be substantially different 20 years from now. However, students who have developed the ability to analyze a study critically will be able to evaluate new research and to question studies that were not appropriately conducted. Furthermore, this textbook should encourage students to apply the principles of research methods to their own experiences. Students need to learn that critical thinking skills need not be confined to formal research.
4. *To convey the variety and diversity of human experience.* My expertise in the psychology of women has sensitized me to the invisibility of many groups of people in current textbooks. In contrast, the biological drawings in this textbook do not depict only White male skulls, issues of gender are integrated throughout, elderly people are described in substantial detail, and the experiences of people of color are frequently addressed. In the 1990s, a psychology textbook especially benefits from a multicultural approach that admires and respects diversity.

Features

Consistent with my goals, I have developed some important features that students and professors have appreciated in my other textbooks:

1. Three straightforward themes are emphasized throughout the book:
 - Humans are extremely competent; their performance is generally rapid and accurate, and most errors can be traced to strategies that are typically adaptive.
 - Humans differ widely from one another; as a consequence, people often respond differently to the same stimulus situation.
 - Human behavior is complex; most psychological phenomena are caused by multiple factors.
2. Section summaries occur at frequent intervals throughout the chapters, encouraging integration of material before proceeding to a new topic.

3. Demonstrations or informal experiments encourage students to illustrate a well-known study or important principle, making the material more memorable.
4. New terms are shown in boldface type, with a definition included in the same sentence; these terms also appear at the end of each chapter so that students can test themselves, and they also are listed with definitions in the glossary at the end of the book.
5. An in-depth section examining recent research on a selected topic is featured in chapters 2 through 19. This feature is an important mechanism for achieving depth as well as breadth in an introductory psychology textbook. In addition, it provides an opportunity to emphasize research methodology.
6. A set of review questions encourages students to consolidate their knowledge, apply the information to real-life events, and test the adequacy of their learning.
7. A list of recommended readings, appropriate for introductory psychology students, provides resources for students who want additional information on topics related to the chapter material.

Supplementary Materials

My editors and I agreed that ancillary material developed for other introductory psychology textbooks is often written hastily, with little or no opportunity to coordinate the separate volumes. Therefore, we began to work on these projects almost two years before the textbook was scheduled to be published. The authors have exchanged material with each other so that some questions from the Study Guide could be included in the Test-Item File, so that the same learning objectives could be emphasized in the Instructor's Manual and the Study Guide, and so forth. I thoroughly admire the three ancillary authors who worked on these projects!

Instructor's Manual (by Lori R. Van Wallendael and Margaret W. Matlin)

The co-author of the Instructor's Manual is an enthusiastic and well-read faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Dr. Van Wallendael drew from her experience in teaching both classic and highly current topics in introductory psychology to produce an exceptional set of lecture ideas. I supplied her with additional current articles and material that was omitted from the text because of space limitations. She also developed some wonderful classroom demonstrations that she found helpful in her own introductory psychology classes. Finally, we both previewed dozens of psychology films, because we were convinced that instructors would find our own evaluative summaries more helpful than the capsule summaries supplied by the film companies.

Study Guide (by Drew C. Appleby and Margaret W. Matlin)

Drew Appleby teaches at Marian College in Indiana, and he is well known for numerous activities focusing on the teaching of psychology. Dr. Appleby's sensitivity to students and his mastery of the subject matter pervade the Study Guide. We decided to organize the exercises in the Study Guide so that in each section, students attempt the easiest task first (matching), next a related task (fill-in-the-blank), and then the task most similar to the one that would appear on their in-class examinations (multiple choice). Each section ends with thought projects that encourage students to contemplate and answer more broad-ranging questions.

We emphasized an organization by sections so that students could read a section in the textbook and then immediately work on that same material in the Study Guide. Each chapter in the Study Guide ends with a crossword puzzle, a feature that has been demonstrated to help students master course material.

Test-Item File (by Susan D. Lonborg and Margaret W. Matlin)

Susan Lonborg, the West Coast member of our writing team, teaches courses such as counseling psychology and human sexuality at Central Washington University. She had provided such exceptionally thoughtful critiques of my book when she served as a reviewer that we knew we wanted her to write one of the ancillaries. The Test-Item File includes approximately 150 items for each chapter, and it emphasizes conceptual questions and applied questions that require synthesis and application. It also includes factual questions that test the acquisition of basic information.

Other Teaching Aids

The *ExaMaster* Computerized Test Bank is available in IBM or Macintosh format.

EasyTest lets you create a test from a single screen. It will construct a test using the questions you have chosen from the database, or it will randomly select questions according to your specifications.

FullTest allows you to select questions as you preview them on screen; edit existing questions; add your own questions; add or edit graphics (IBM version only); link related questions, instructions, and graphics; randomly select questions from a wide range of criteria; create your own criteria on two open keys; block specific questions from random selection; print up to 99 different versions of the same test and answer sheet.

RequesTest lets you order tests that conform to your criteria. Call 1-800-447-9457, and HBJ will compile the tests and either mail or fax them to you within 48 hours.

Our gradebook program, *ExamRecord*, is free with *ExaMaster* software. *ExamRecord* lets you record, curve, graph, and print your students' grades.

The HBJ *Video Library* offers six video sources to supplement Margaret Matlin's *Psychology: The Discovering Psychology* Telecourse; the teaching video modules from the *Discovering Psychology* Telecourse; modules from PBS' "The Brain" series; CBS' "60 Minutes" segments; PBS' "The Mind" series; PBS' "The Seasons of Life;" and an additional video featuring five broad areas of research.

The *Whole Psychology Catalog* contains valuable experimental exercises, questionnaires, lecture outlines, and visual aids.

Acknowledgments

One of the pleasures of writing a preface is the opportunity to praise and thank the dozens of people who have helped create and refine a textbook. Holt, Rinehart and Winston (now Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) had been my publisher for three previous textbooks, and I knew they would continue to do well with this larger-scale project. Even so, I was pleasantly surprised at the impressive skill of these team members. My gratitude goes to Eve Howard, psychology editor, for her

superb help in clarifying the goals of the book and providing feedback throughout many months of writing; I admire her expertise and good judgment. John Haley stepped into the job of developmental editor and excelled in the art of tactful suggestions, mastery of writing style, and coordinating the complexities of professional reviews, photo packages, and ancillaries. I really appreciate his intelligence and appropriate attention to detail. Thanks are also due to Cathy Townsend and Kathleen Ferguson for their efficient orchestration of the production process; they were wonderful about making certain that proofs and art work could be sent to me at the earliest possible dates, which facilitated the timely production of the book. In addition, John Ritland deserves a special thank you for his exceptional work on the textbook's design; he managed to translate pedagogical goals into a clear and beautifully functional layout. Linda Webster did a superbly efficient and professional job on the glossary and the indexes. Other people who merit my thanks include Susan Arellano, Susan Driscoll, and Anne Heller, who worked with me in the early stages of the book, Marty Levick for his photo research, and Carol Donner for her superb biological artwork. Finally, Page Sanders and Michael Alread deserve my compliments for their hard work on the brochures and numerous other components of marketing.

Numerous psychologists deserve praise for their suggestions, comments on style and content, and lists of additional references. These reviewers and consultants helped me write a much more accurate and clearly written textbook than I could have managed on my own.

I am deeply indebted to

Lauren Alloy, *Temple University*

Donna Alexander-Redmayne, *Antelope Valley College*

Anne Anastasi, *Fordham University*

Joel Aronoff, *Michigan State University*

Frank Bagrash, *California State University at Fullerton*

Johnston Beach, *United States Military Academy*

Kayla Bernheim, *Livingston County Mental Health Center*

Galen Bodenhausen, *Michigan State University*

John Bonvillian, *University of Virginia*

Scott Borelli, *Boston University*

Robert Bornstein, *Miami (Ohio) University*

Charles Brewer, *Furman University*

William Calhoun, *University of Tennessee at Knoxville*

John Caruso, *Southeast Massachusetts University*

Patricia Chavez y Marquez, *Antelope Valley College*

Eve Clark, *Stanford University*

Francis Coletti, *United States Military Academy*

Kim Dolgin, *Ohio Wesleyan University*

Michael Domjan, *University of Texas at Austin*

Claire Etaugh, *Bradley University*

Leslie Fisher, *Cleveland State University*

Morton Friedman, *University of California at Los Angeles*

Laurel Furumoto, *Wellesley College*

Betty Gaines, *Midland College*

Richard Gibbons, *Iowa State University*

Jean Giebenhain, *College of St. Thomas*

Margaret Gittis, *Youngstown State University*

Robert Guttentag, *University of North Carolina at Greensboro*

Richard Griggs, *University of Florida*

Maury Haraway, *Northeast Louisiana University*

Lewis Harvey, *University of Colorado at Boulder*

Douglas Herrmann, *National Institute of Mental Health*

Winfred Hill, *Northwestern University*

Lyllian Hix, *Houston Community College System*

Margaret Intons-Peterson, *Indiana University at Bloomington*

Alice M. Isen, *Cornell University*

W. Jake Jacobs, *University of Arizona*

Valerie James-Aldridge, *University of Texas, Pan American*

James Jones, *University of Delaware*

Rick Kasschau, *University of Houston*
Daniel Kimble, *University of Oregon*
Alfred Kornfeld, *Eastern Connecticut State University*
John Kounias, *Tufts University*
Terry Knapp, *University of Nevada at Las Vegas*
James Knight, *Humboldt State University*
Michael Knight, *Central State University*
Robert Levy, *Indiana State University*
Susan Lonborg, *Central Washington University*
Kurt Mahoney, *Mesa Community College*
Barton Mann, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*
Deborah McDonald, *New Mexico State University*
Elizabeth McDonel, *University of Alabama*
Linda Musun-Miller, *University of Central Arkansas*
Tibor Palfai, *Syracuse University*
Harold Pashler, *University of California at San Diego*
David Payne, *State University of New York at Binghamton*

James Pennebaker, *Southern Methodist University*
E. Jerry Phares, *Kansas State University*
Edward Rinalducci, *University of Central Florida*
Laurie Rotando, *Westchester County Community College*
Kenneth Rusiniak, *Eastern Michigan University*
James Ryan, *University of Wisconsin at La Crosse*
Edward Sadalla, *Arizona State University*
David Sanders, *Oregon State University*
Warren Street, *Central Washington University*
Ross Thompson, *University of Nebraska at Lincoln*
Lori Van Wallendael, *University of North Carolina at Charlotte*
Michael Vitiello, *University of Washington*
Mary Roth Walsh, *University of Lowell*
Wilse Webb, *University of Florida*
Susan Krauss Whitbourne, *University of Massachusetts at Amherst*

My thanks also go to my superb student reviewers, who conscientiously read the manuscript, commenting on the clarity of the text, noting inconsistencies, and providing additional examples. I was truly impressed with their expertise, their diligence, and their honesty.

Amy Bolger
Jonathan Blumenthal
Sheryl Mileo
Claudia Militello

Matthew Prichard
Heather Wallach
Martin Williams

In addition, many colleagues, students, and friends supplied examples, ideas, information, and references. I thank Charles Brewer, Ganie DeHart, Karen Duffy, Lisa Elliot, Frederick Fidura, Tina Folmsbee, John Fox, Lori Gardinier, Becky Glass, Walter Harding, Amy Holm, Eve Howard, Patricia Keith-Spiegel, Maria Kountz, Mary Kroll, Peter Muzzonigro, Barbara Nodine, Lynn Offerman, Paul Olczak, Robert Owens, Catherine Perna, Cathleen Quinn, George Rebok, Ramon Rocha, Lanna Ruddy, Donna Shapiro, M. Shelton Smith, John Sparrow, Maura Thompson, Leonore Tiefer, Gail Walker, Helen S. White, Edward Whitson, Rodney Williams, and Melvyn Yessenow. Thanks also to Drew Appleby for all the useful suggestions he offered while reading the manuscript in preparing the study guide. Mary Roth Walsh deserves my deep gratitude for providing references, suggestions, and interesting points of view on numerous issues throughout the textbook.

Many other people have helped in various phases of the preparation of this book. Mary Lou Perry, Shirley Thompson, and Constance Ellis provided countless services that allowed me to devote more time to writing. Several students—Karen Marie Gibson, Andrea Iwanowski, Angela Jause, Leslie Lauer, and Eileen

Stepien—were exemplary in tracking down references, photocopying material, and checking the accuracy of my bibliography. In addition, three members of the Milne Library staff at the State University of New York at Geneseo provided superb expertise and assistance: Judith Bushnell, Paula Henry, and Harriet Sleggs. Ron Pretzer provided the majority of the setup photos, demonstrating his professional competence in photographing students, sparklers, classrooms, and a wide assortment of bizarre objects. Louise Wadsworth also deserves praise for her wonderful photographs of children.

My last, most enthusiastic acknowledgment goes to the members of my family. Thanks to my daughters, Beth and Sally, for providing examples, posing for photographs, acting as guinea pigs in the development of some demonstrations, and also for being wonderful human beings who inspire me to write for students like themselves. To my husband, Arnie, I give my deepest thanks for his technical expertise and suggestions, but more importantly for his love, his committed encouragement, and his spectacular sense of humor. My parents deserve my final note of appreciation: Thanks to Helen White for encouraging my enthusiasm for learning and my love of language, and to Donald White for encouraging my enjoyment of science and for providing a model of a professional who is truly excited about his work.

Margaret W. Matlin

About the Author

Margaret W. Matlin received her BA in psychology from Stanford University and her MA and PhD in experimental psychology from the University of Michigan. She holds the title of Distinguished Teaching Professor at State University of New York at Geneseo, where she has taught courses since 1971 in general psychology, experimental psychology, statistics, sensation and perception, cognitive psychology, human memory, human development, conflict resolution, and the psychology of women. In 1977, she received the State University of New York's Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, and in 1985 she was awarded the American Psychological Association Teaching of Psychology Award in the 4-year college and university division. Her previous books include *The Pollyanna Principle: Selectivity in Language, Memory, and Thought*; *Human Experimental Psychology*; *Sensation and Perception* (currently in its third edition); *Cognition* (currently in its second edition); and *Psychology of Women* (second edition in preparation). Her husband, Arnie, is a pediatrician, and her daughters, Beth and Sally, attend Wheelock College and Stanford University.

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