



SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

FOURTH EDITION

David G. Myers

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David G. Myers

Hope College
Holland, Michigan

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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DAVID G. MYERS is the John Dirk Werkman Professor of Psychology at Michigan's Hope College, where he has taught for 25 years and been voted "Outstanding Professor" by students. Myers' love of teaching psychology is evident in his writing for the lay public. He has written for many magazines, including *Saturday Review*, *Psychology Today*, and *Today's Education*, and has authored or co-authored nine books, most recently, *The Pursuit of Happiness:*

Who Is Happy—and Why (William Morrow, 1992).

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. His 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 26 and 22 and a 15-year-old daughter.

PREFACE

In all of recorded history, human social behavior has been scientifically studied for just one century—our century. Considering that we have barely begun, the results are gratifying. We have amassed significant insights into belief and illusion, love and hate, conformity and independence. Much about human behavior remains a mystery, yet social psychology 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 can we best persuade them? What leads people sometimes to hurt and sometimes to help one another? What kindles social conflict, and how can we transform closed fists into helping hands? Answering such questions expands our self-understanding and sensitizes us to the social forces at work upon us.

When first 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, by providing an up-to-date summary of important social phenomena, and of how scientists uncover and explain such phenomena. It would be reasonably comprehensive, yet would also stimulate students' *thinking*—their readiness to inquire, to analyze, to relate principles to everyday happenings.

How does one select material for inclusion in a "reasonably comprehensive" introduction to the discipline? I have 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 have chosen 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 the present. Social psychology can contribute to these goals. Many undergraduate social psychology students are not psychology majors; virtually all will enter other professions. 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 warns students how findings can seem obvious—once you know them—and how social psychologists' own values permeate the discipline. The intent is to give students just enough to prepare them for what follows.

The book then unfolds 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 manifestations of both negative and positive *social relations*. It 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. For example, one such chapter, "Social Cognition and Human Well-Being," includes material on social psychology's contribution to the study of health.

This edition, like its predecessors, has a multicultural emphasis that can be seen in the thoroughly revised treatment of cultural influences in Chapter 6 and throughout the book in the inclusion of research from various cultural settings. The focus remains the same: 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 our awareness of the whole human family.

The book is again thoroughly updated, with 600 new citations. There are fresh "Behind the Scenes" personal reflections by selected investigators. And there have been countless abbreviations of old material to accommodate these new features.

This edition is also the most painstaking revision to date. From cover to cover, the writing has been strengthened with crisper narrative and a more consistent use of the active voice. Believing with Thoreau that "Anything living is easily and naturally expressed in popular language," I have sought, paragraph by paragraph, to craft the most engaging and effective book possible. A bright new four-color design complements the text revisions and enhances the impact of the photos and figures. As before, definitions of key terms appear both in the margins and in the end-of-book Glossary.

Social Psychology, fourth 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. Ann Weber has again provided a carefully developed test-item file of over 1500 basic knowledge and application items. Computerized versions of the Test Item File are available for IBM-

compatible (5.25" and 3.5" disk sizes) and for Macintosh PCs. New to this edition is a set of overhead transparencies, many in full color. These acetates are taken from a number of sources, including the text.

In collaboration with Allen Funt and Philip Zimbardo, McGraw-Hill has developed *Candid Camera Classics in Social Psychology*, a videodisk (also available on videotape) that contains fifteen 3- to 5-minute clips from the original "Candid Camera" shows. Arranged to complement the text's organization, the videodisk is accompanied by an Instructor's Manual/Viewer's Guide and can enrich and stimulate classroom discussion. For more information about any of these supplements, contact your local McGraw-Hill representative.

■ IN APPRECIATION

Although only one person's name appears on this book's cover, the truth is that a whole community of scholars has invested itself 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 three editions. To the following esteemed colleagues I therefore remain indebted: Robert Arkin, Ohio State University; 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; Anthony Doob, University of Toronto; Philip Finney, Southeast Missouri State University; William Froming, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology; Stephen Fugita, Santa Clara University; Ranald Hansen, Oakland University; Elaine Hatfield, University of Hawaii; Bert Hodges, Gordon College; William Ickes, University of Missouri at St. Louis; Marita Inglehart, University of Michigan; Chester Insko, University of North Carolina; Edward Jones, Princeton University; Judi Jones, Georgia Southern College; Martin Kaplan, Northern Illinois University; Janice Kelly, Purdue 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; Chris O'Sullivan, Bucknell University; Paul Paulus, University of Texas at Arlington; Nicholas Reuterman, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville; Linda Silka, University of Lowell; Royce Singleton, Jr., College of the Holy Cross; Stephen Slane, Cleveland State University; 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; Billy Van Jones, Abilene Christian College; Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, Calvin College; Ann Weber, University of North Carolina at Asheville; Gary Wells, Iowa State University; Bernard Whitley, Ball State University; Kipling Williams, University of Toledo; and Midge Wilson, DePaul University.

This fourth edition additionally benefitted from cover-to-cover reviews, offering countless constructive suggestions by David A. Gershaw, Arizona Western College; Mary Alice Gordon, Southern Methodist University; James L. Hilton, University of Michigan; Robert Millard, Vassar College; Scott Plous, Wesleyan University; and Ann L. Weber, University of North Carolina at Asheville. I am indebted to each of these colleagues.

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. Phyllis and Rick Vandervelde assisted the extensive recrafting of this new edition by preparing each of the successive drafts with their usual skill and efficiency. Michelle Nainys provided excellent editorial assistance and prepared the name index.

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 guided and encouraged the formative first edition. Editor Jeannine Ciliotta nurtured this new edition, suggesting numerous revisions and offering thousands of editorial touches along the way. And James Belser has patiently guided the process of converting each of the editions from manuscript into finished book.

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

DAVID G. MYERS

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