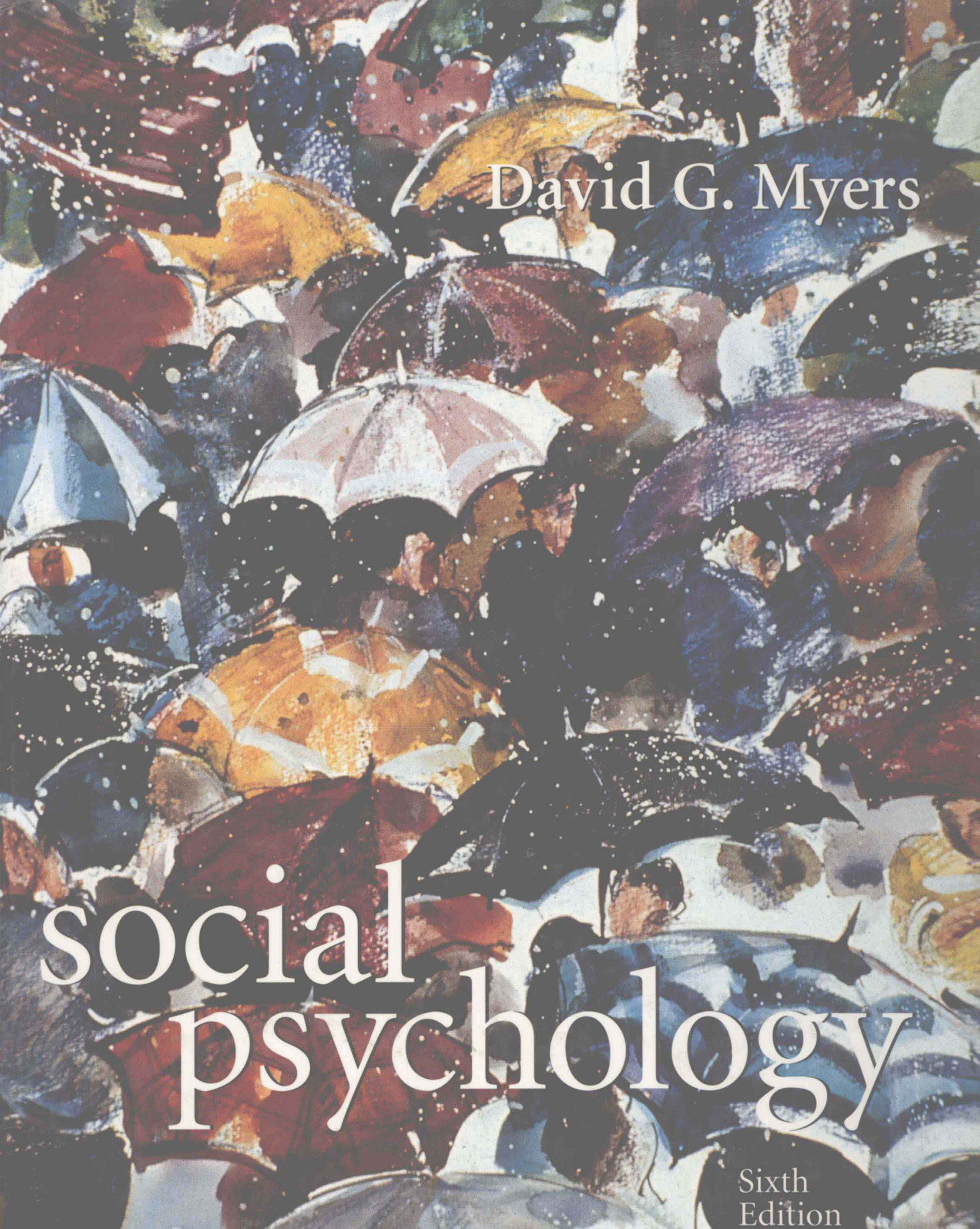
David G. Myers
social psychology
Sixth Edition

social psychology

David G. Myers
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Holland, Michigan

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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 significnt 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. It assesses the accuracy of our impressions, intuitions, and explanations.

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 in the applied chapters now clustered as modules, "Social Psychology in the Clinic" and "Social Psychology in Court."

This edition, like its predecessors, has a multicultural emphasis that can be seen in the treatment of cultural influences in chapter 6 and throughout the book in the inclusion of research from various cultural settings. The book's focus remains the fundamental principles of social thinking, social influence, and social relations as revealed by careful empirical research. But these principles are illustrated transnationally, thereby broadening our awareness of the whole human family.

This sixth edition offers thorough updating, with 550 new citations and dozens of fresh examples. Each chapter now concludes with a "personal postscript" in which I reflect on social psychology's human significance. There are also fresh and revised "Behind the Scenes" personal reflections by selected investigators worldwide. The pedagogical strategy breaks chapters into digestible modules: Typically three or four major sections begin with previews and end with section summaries that highlight the organization and key concepts.

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 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, sixth 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. For this edition, Julia R. Jacks has prepared an extensive new test-item file of basic knowledge and application items. This test-item file is available in print form as well as on disk for Windows and Macintosh via the *MicroTest* computerized testing program.

McGraw-Hill offers a variety of multimedia supplements to accompany *Social Psychology*, sixth edition. The powerpoint slide presentation software contains approximately 100 slides that follow the chapter organization of the text. The overhead transparency package for the Social Psychology course offers a conprehensive set of four-color images that have been formatted for enhanced classroom presentation. McGraw-Hill's *Presentation Manager* CD-ROM is also available to faculty to help organize and custom design their lectures. This product offers a variety of supplementary materials to choose from including videos, instructor manual materials, powerpoint slides, and images. The *Social Psychology* Web site offers both text specific and general resources, including an outline of the text features, available supplements, and student and instructor resource areas complete with exercises and links. Finally, instructors can take advantage of the *McGraw-Hill Learning*

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In collaboration with Martin Bolt, McGraw-Hill also now offers a videodisc of classic social psychology experiments. These 4- to 8-minute clips (also available on videotape) are drawn from social psychology archives and arranged to complement the text. A second videodisc (or videotape), edited and produced by Philip Zimbardo and Allen Funt, offers 3- to 5-minute clips from the original Candid Camera show. These too follow the text organization and can enrich and stimulate class discussion.

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 five editions. To the following esteemed colleagues I therefore remain indebted:

Robert Arkin, Ohio State University

Susan Beers, Sweet Briar College

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I have additionally benefited from reviews of the previous edition that helped guide the creation of this new sixth edition. My sincere thanks to the following:

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Finally, a number of teacher-scholars reviewed these new chapters, rescuing me from occasional mistakes and offering constructive suggestions (and encouragement):

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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 Jack Ridl helped shape the voice you will hear in these pages, and Kathy Adamski has again contributed her good cheer and secretarial support. Phyllis and Rick Vandervelde prepared each of the successive drafts with remarkable skill and efficiency. Gretchen Rumohr-Voskuil contributed library research, proofreading, and paperwork management. She also painstakingly created the name index and page-referenced bibliography.

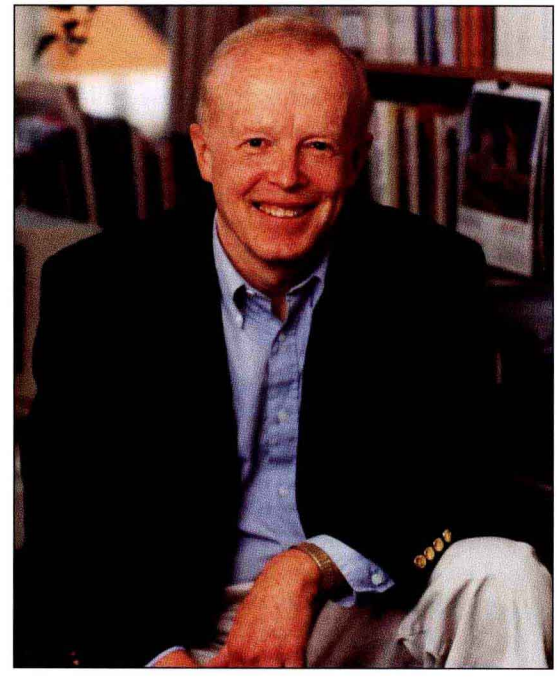
Were it not for the inspiration of Nelson Black of McGraw-Hill, it never would have occurred to me to write a textbook. Alison Meersschaert guided and encouraged the formative first edition. Psychology editor Mickey Cox helped envision the plan for this sixth edition and its teaching supplements. Developmental editor Jeannine Ciliotta gently nurtured this new edition, suggesting numerous revisions and offering countless ideas and editorial touches along the way. As editorial coordinator, Stephanie Cappiello has overseen the development of both the manuscript and the teaching supplements. And Marilyn Rothenberger has patiently guided the process of converting the 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
Hope College
Holland, MI 49422-9000
USA
e-mail: myers@hope.edu

About the author

David G. Myers is the John Dirk Werkman Professor of Psychology at Michigan's Hope College, where he has 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 *Scientific American* and *Today's Education*. His ten books include texts for Introductory and Social Psychology, and *The Pursuit of Happiness: Who Is Happy—and Why.*



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, Psychological Bulletin,* and *Psychological Science.* 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 that assists poverty-level families, and spoken to numerous collegiate and religious groups. David and Carol Myers are parents of two sons and a daughter.

Brief contents

Preface

chapter 1 Introducing Social Psychology

Part One Social Thinking

chapter 2 The Self in a Social World
chapter 3 Social Beliefs and Judgments
chapter 4 Behavior and Attitudes

Part Two Social Influence

chapter 5 Genes, Culture, and Gender
chapter 6 Conformity
chapter 7 Persuasion
chapter 8 Group Influence

Part Three Social Relations

chapter 9 Prejudice: Disliking Others
chapter 10 Aggression: Hurting Others
chapter 11 Attraction and Intimacy: Liking and Loving Others
chapter 12 Altruism: Helping Others
chapter 13 Conflict and Peacemaking

Modules Social Psychology Applied

module A Social Psychology in the Clinic
module B Social Psychology in Court

Glossary
References
Acknowledgments
Indexes

List of books

McGraw-Hill Series in Social Psychology

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Table of contents

Preface ix

chapter 1
Introducing Social Psychology 3

Social Psychology and Related Disciplines 6
Social Psychology and Sociology 6
Social Psychology and Personality Psychology 7
Levels of Explanation 7

Social Psychology and Human Values 9
Obvious Ways in Which Values Enter 9
Not-So-Obvious Ways in Which Values Enter 10
Social Psychology in Three Worlds 13

Knew It All Along: Is Social Psychology Simply Common Sense? 15

How We Do Social Psychology 19
Forming and Testing 20
Correlational Research: Detecting Natural Associations 21
Experimental Research: Searching for Cause and Effect 27
Generalizing From Laboratory to Life 31

Personal Postscript: Why I Wrote This Book 33

Part One Social Thinking

chapter 2
The Self in a Social World 37

Self-Concept: Who Am I? 38
Development of the Social Self 40
Self-Knowledge 45

Perceived Self-Control 50
Self-Efficacy 50
Locus of Control 51
Learned Helplessness Versus Self-Determination 52

Self-Serving Bias 55
Explanations for Positive and Negative Events 55
Can We All Be Better Than Average? 57
Unrealistic Optimism 59
False Consensus and Uniqueness 61
Other Self-Serving Tendencies 62
Self-Esteem Motivation 64
Reflections on Self-Efficacy and Self-Serving Bias 65

Self-Presentation 70
False Modesty 70
Self-Handicapping 71
Impression Management 72

Personal Postscript: Twin Truths—The Perils of Pride, the Power of Positive Thinking 74

chapter 3
Social Beliefs and Judgments 77

Explaining Others 78
Attributing Causality: To the Person or the Situation? 78
The Fundamental Attribution Error 83
Why Do We Make the Attribution Error? 87
How Fundamental Is the Fundamental Attribution Error? 90
Why We Study Attribution Errors 92

Constructing Interpretations and Memories 93
Perceiving and Interpreting Events 94
Belief Perseverance 96
Constructing Memories 99

Judging Others 103
Intuition: Our Potential for Inner Knowing 104
Judgmental Overconfidence 106
Heuristics 109
Illusory Thinking 113
Mood and Judgment 117

Self-Fulfilling Beliefs 119
Teacher Expectations and Student Performance 120
Getting From Others What We Expect 121

Conclusions 124

Personal Postscript: Reflecting on Intuition's Powers and Limits 127

chapter 4
Behavior and Attitudes 129

Do Attitudes Determine Behavior? 131
Are We All Hypocrites? 131
When Do Attitudes Predict Behavior? 133

Does Behavior Determine Attitudes? 137
Role Playing 137
Saying Becomes Believing 140
The Foot-in-the-Door Phenomenon 142
Evil Acts and Attitudes 145
Interracial Behavior and Racial Attitudes 147
Social Movements 148

Why Do Actions Affect Attitudes? 150
Self-Presentation: Impression Management 151
Self-Justification: Cognitive Dissonance 152
Self-Perception 157
Comparing the Theories 161

Personal Postscript: Changing Ourselves Through Action 167

Part Two Social Influence

chapter 5
Genes, Culture, and Gender **171**

Human Nature and Cultural Diversity 172
Evolution and Behavior 173
Culture and Behavior 173
Social Roles 179

Gender Similarities and Differences 182
Independence Versus Connectedness 184
Social Dominance 186
Aggression 188
Sexuality 189

Evolution and Gender: Doing What Comes Naturally? 190
Gender and Mating Preferences 191
Gender and Hormones 194
Reflections on Evolutionary Psychology 195

Culture and Gender 197
Gender Roles Vary With Culture 198
Gender Roles Vary Over Time 199
Peer-Transmitted Culture 200

Conclusions 203
Biology and Culture 203
The Great Lesson of Social Psychology 204

Personal Postscript: Should We View Ourselves as Products or Architects of Our Social Worlds? 206

chapter 6
Conformity **209**

Classic Studies 211
Sherif's Studies of Norm Formation 211
Asch's Studies of Group Pressure 214
Milgram's Obedience Experiments 214
What Breeds Obedience? 216
Reflections on the Classic Studies 220

When Do People Conform? 230
Group Size 230
Unanimity 231
Cohesion 232
Status 233
Public Response 234
No Prior Commitment 235

Why Conform? 237

Who Conforms? 238
Gender 239
Personality 240
Culture 242

Resisting Social Pressure 243
Reactance 243
Asserting Uniqueness 245

Personal Postscript: On Being an Individual Within Community 247

chapter 7
Persuasion **251**

Two Routes to Persuasion 254

The Elements of Persuasion 255
Who Says? The Communicator 255
What Is Said? The Message Content 260
How Is It Said? The Channel of Communication 267
To Whom Is It Said? The Audience 272

Case Studies in Persuasion: Cult Indoctrination 277
Attitudes Follow Behavior 279
Persuasive Elements 280
Group Effects 282

Resisting Persuasion: Attitude Inoculation 284
Strengthening Personal Commitment 284
Case Studies: Large-Scale Inoculation Programs 285
Implications 288

Personal Postscript: Being Open But Not Naive 289

chapter 8
Group Influence **291**

What Is a Group? 292

Social Facilitation 292
The Presence of Others 293
Crowding: The Presence of Many Others 295
Why Are We Aroused in the Presence of Others? 297

Social Loafing 299
Many Hands Make Light Work 300
Social Loafing in Everyday Life 302

Deindividuation 304
Doing Together What We Would Not Do Alone 304
Diminished Self-Awareness 308

Group Polarization 309
The Case of the "Risky Shift" 309
Do Groups Intensify Opinions? 311
Explaining Polarization 313

Groupthink 316
Symptoms of Groupthink 317
Critiquing Groupthink 320
Preventing Groupthink 321
Groupthink and Group Influence 324

Minority Influence 325
Consistency 326
Self-Confidence 327
Defections from the Majority 327
Is Leadership Minority Influence? 328

Personal Postscript: Are Groups Bad for Us? 330

Part Three Social Relations

chapter 9
Prejudice: Disliking Others 335

The Nature and Power of Prejudice 336
What Is Prejudice? 336
How Pervasive Is Prejudice? 338

Social Sources of Prejudice 348
Social Inequalities 349
Social Identity 353
Conformity 356
Institutional Supports 357

Emotional Sources of Prejudice 359
Frustration and Aggression: The Scapegoat Theory 359
Personality Dynamics 360

Cognitive Sources of Prejudice 363
Categorization 364
Distinctive Stimuli 367
Attribution: Is It a Just World? 371
Cognitive Consequences of Stereotypes 375

Personal Postscript: Can We Reduce Prejudice? 380

chapter 10
Aggression: Hurting Others 383

What Is Aggression? 384

Theories of Aggression 385
Is Aggression Inborn? 385
Is Aggression a Response to Frustration? 389
Is Aggression Learned Social Behavior? 396

Influences on Aggression 399
Aversive Incidents 399
Arousal 403
Media Influences: Pornography and Sexual Violence 405
Media Influences: Television 411
Group Influences 418

Reducing Aggression 421
Catharsis? 421
A Social Learning Approach 423

Personal Postscript: Reforming a Violent Culture 424

chapter 11
Attraction and Intimacy: Liking and Loving Others 427

Friendships 428
Proximity 429
Physical Attractiveness 431
Similarity Versus Complementarity 442
Liking Those Who Like Us 446
Relationship Rewards 449

Love 451
Passionate Love 452
Companionate Love 456

Maintaining Close Relationships 459
Attachment 459
Equity 461
Self-Disclosure 463

Ending Relationships 466
Who Divorces? 467
The Detachment Process 468

Personal Postscript: Making Love 470

chapter 12
Altruism: Helping Others 473

Why Do We Help? 474
Social Exchange 474
Social Norms 481
Evolutionary Psychology 483
Comparing and Evaluating Theories of Altruism 484

When Will We Help? 486
Situational Influences: Number of Bystanders 486
Situational Influences: Helping When Someone Else Does 493
Situational Influences: Time Pressures 494
Personal Influences: Feelings 495
Personal Influences: Personality Traits 498
Personal Influences: Religiosity 500

Whom Do We Help? 502
Gender 503
Similarity 504

How Can We Increase Helping? 505
Undoing the Restraints on Helping 505
Socializing Altruism 508

Personal Postscript: Wealth, Well-Being, and Generosity 512

chapter 13
Conflict and Peacemaking **515**

Conflict 516
Social Dilemmas 517
Competition 525
Perceived Injustice 527
Misperception 529

Peacemaking 535
Contact 535
Cooperation 537
Communication 546
Conciliation 553

Personal Postscript: Communitarianism 556

Modules: Social Psychology Applied

module A
Social Psychology in the Clinic **561**

Making Clinical Judgments 562
Illusory Correlations 562
Hindsight and Overconfidence 563
Self-Confirming Diagnoses 564
Clinical Versus Statistical Prediction 566
Implications 568

Social Cognition in Problem Behaviors 570
Social Cognition and Depression 570
Social Cognition and Loneliness 575
Social Cognition and Anxiety 577
Social Cognition and Illness 579

Social-Psychological Approaches to Treatment 585
Inducing Internal Change Through External Behavior 585
Breaking Vicious Cycles 586
Maintaining Change through Internal Attributions for Success 588

Social Support and Well-Being 590
Close Relationships and Health 591
Close Relationships and Happiness 592

Personal Postscript: Enhancing Happiness 595

module B
Social Psychology in Court **599**

Eyewitness Testimony 601
How Persuasive Is Eyewitness Testimony? 602
How Accurate Are Eyewitnesses? 602
The Misinformation Effect 604
Retelling 606
Feedback to Witnesses 608
Reducing Error 609

Other Influences on Judgments 613
The Defendant's Characteristics 613
The Judge's Instructions 616
Other Issues 619

The Jurors as Individuals 620
Juror Comprehension 620
Jury Selection 622
"Death-Qualified" Jurors 623

The Jury as a Group 625
Minority Influence 625
Group Polarization 626
Leniency 626
Are 12 Heads Better than 1? 627
Are 6 Heads as Good as 12? 627

From Lab to Life: Simulated and Real Juries 628

Personal Postscript: A Final Word 630

Glossary 631

References 638

Acknowledgments 711

Indexes 715
Name 715
Subject 732

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