Fifth Edition

a textbook of

Social Psychology

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D. W. Carment

S. W. Sadava

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PREFACE

Welcome to the fifth edition of *A Textbook of Social Psychology*, the only English-Canadian social psychology textbook in existence. We continue to be delighted by the extent to which this textbook in its various editions has been used from one end of the country to the other. We hope the changes we have made to this edition will continue to make it attractive to students and instructors alike. As in the past, we have benefitted from comments and suggestions from students and instructors, and we welcome your feedback.

As in the earlier editions of *A Textbook of Social Psychology*, we have tried to provide to Canadian students of social psychology an introduction to this exciting field that encourages them to think about the psychology of social behaviour in the context of Canadian society and culture. We have striven to show both the historical roots and the contemporary vitality of this discipline, and in so doing have integrated important classic research with what is happening on the cutting edge of research today. We have drawn on the best research available, be it from Canada, the United States, Europe or elsewhere in the world. To highlight and illuminate the material, we have provided a wide range of examples drawn, for the most part, from the Canadian social experience.

While we have been careful to cover all the material presented in the typical U.S. social psychology textbook, we also include a chapter on language and communication—including the social psychology of bilingualism—which we consider vital to an understanding of social psychology in Canada. There is also a chapter devoted to collective behaviour, an area that once figured prominently but that is now sadly neglected by most textbooks.

In this fifth edition, we have updated the text both by adding new and recent material, and by paring down some of the less-current material. For example, we have deleted some discussion of experimental game research. This at one time represented an area of considerable research interest in social psychology, but in recent years has slipped into relative obscurity. We have integrated recent research findings and added many up-to-date real-life examples, and, with the help of our copy-editor, Allyson Latta, we have worked to make the material more readable and more accessible to our students.

A Textbook of Social Psychology, 5th edition begins with an introduction to the discipline (Part 1) and a discussion of research methods (Part 2). Part 3, Understanding Your Social World, focusses on aspects of social psychology that relate primarily to the individual—how people evaluate themselves and others, and how their attitudes and values relate to their behaviour. In Part 4, Influencing Others, we look at attitude change, conformity, and language and communication.

Part 5, Friends and Enemies, is devoted to social psychological processes associated with relationships among people: Are they attracted to one another? Do they become friends? Do they fall in love? Do they experience conflict? Do they help or hurt one another, and if so, why?

Part 6, People in Groups, concerns social behaviour defined primarily in terms of groups rather than individuals. The nature of groups is explored, as is the subject of large-scale and often seemingly irrational collective behaviour. We have included the discussion of prejudice in this section—rather than in its traditional place alongside attitudes—because it is very much tied up with, and defined in terms of, groups. As unconventional as this may be, it makes sense to us, although we recognize that many instructors may choose to deal with this material subsequent to presenting the chapter on attitudes and values.

Finally, Part 7 is called Social Psychology in Action, and it's an applied social psychology section that includes chapters on justice and health.

To succeed, a textbook must interest students by dealing with matters of importance to them. The boxes throughout the text engage the student by touching on contemporary everyday life. These boxes address topical issues or emerging research interests within the discipline, and are organized by theme: Focus on Research, A Practical Question, A Case in Point, and Critical Thinking. Some topics addressed in these boxes include the following:

- how snapshots of people can be used to understand more about how they see themselves
- how the occupations we choose reflect our self-image
- the role that aging plays in attitude change

- the effects of architectural designs on human relationships
- the emerging phenomenon of intimate relationships that develop through the Internet
- why it is that some people are happy with the prospect of donating organs while others wince at the thought
- the role guns play in homicides and suicides in Canada
- the prevalence of war in the world
- the role alcohol plays in leading people away from the tenets of safe sex

Topics new to the fifth edition include:

- the core beliefs of the problem gambler
- the issues and opinions surrounding euthanasia
- the limits to what advertisers and market researchers can persuade us to do
- recent research that reveals some truths about the power of physical attractiveness
- the importance of effective physician–patient communication

The practical and applied examples have also been updated throughout the text. While all the chapter-opening vignettes have been updated, many new topics have been introduced, such as the media's coverage of the Canadian brain drain, the increase in high school violence, and troubling racial discord.

These and other topics are presented to show vividly that social psychology is not static—its focus shifts along with the society it studies—and that its subject matter is in a large part the subject matter of our day-to-day existences.

SUPPLEMENTS

TEST ITEM FILE A new and comprehensive Test Item File has been prepared for this edition. Available in both print and computerized form, the file contains approximately 120 questions per chapter. Answers are referenced to the text by page number. The Prentice Hall Custom Test is a test generator designed to allow the creation of personalized exams. It is available in both Windows and Macintosh formats.

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL An expanded Instructor's Manual will be available with this edition. New features include chapter outlines and objectives, chapter overviews (mind map), lecture suggestions, and transparency masters. The suggested experiments, readings and films will be updated for this edition.

STUDY GUIDE New features in the Study Guide for the Fifth Edition include chapter objectives, chapter overviews (mind map), expanded exercises for key terms and concepts that include questions on the application of the terms, and suggested Internet projects using Web sites included in the text.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people for us to thank. First, we want to acknowledge our two colleagues, Joan Collins and Judy Green, who have prepared the supplemental materials for this edition. Their confidence in our book has been an inspiration to us, and we greatly appreciate their excellent collaboration.

We also wish to convey our deepest thanks to Madhu Ranadive, developmental editor, as well as Avivah Wargon, production editor, and Jessica Mosher and Nicole Lukach, acquisitions editors, for the excellent jobs they have done. Thanks also to Rosa Ferraro Brew for her assistance. We are delighted by the cover art produced by Liz Harasymzcuk and the design created by Monica Kompter. We especially would like to thank our copy editor Allyson Latta, both for her excellent editorial work and for her very encouraging enthusiasm about the book.

We thank the reviewers who helped us to improve this current edition: John Berry, McMaster University; Michael T. Bradley, University of New Brunswick; Elizabeth Brimacombe, University of Victoria; Louis A. Schmidt, McMaster University.

Finally, of course, we thank once again the instructors and students across the country whose approval has made it possible for yet another edition of *A Textbook of Social Psychology* to roll off the presses.

Three computer keyboards; six hands. Not bad, eh, for two guys from Saskatchewan and the Ottawa Valley renegade, who have now done this five times.

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Mary, Vern, Bert
The McMaster Faculty Club Regulars
Kevin Sadava 1970–1998

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Psychology

Tell me what company you keep, and I'll tell you what you are.

Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote de la Mancha*

"Absence makes the heart grow fonder." "Out of sight, out of mind." "Power corrupts—absolute power corrupts absolutely." "Opposites attract." "Actions speak louder than words." All these familiar expressions contain common-sense ideas about social behaviour, and constitute our "naive psychology," which has grown out of generations of experience. Think about how all these aphorisms easily could be translated into hypotheses—predictions that we could test experimentally. If we could somehow cause lovers to be apart for varying periods of time, would attraction or love really increase? Can we find historical evidence, or could we demonstrate in group experiments, that leaders who have greater personal power tend to act in a corrupt way? Social psychology begins with the stuff of common experience and applies the methods of science to build valid and verifiable explanations and theories of social behaviour.

WHAT SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY IS AND IS NOT

Social psychology is the discipline that sets out to understand how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others (Allport, 1935). What does this definition tell us about social psychology? First, social psychologists study not only actual, observable behaviour, but inferences about people's inner lives: how they feel; their attitudes, opinions and ideologies; how they form impressions and try to make sense of their world. Second, human experience is understood in terms of the influence of other people. Obviously, social influence is not the only kind—we may be affected by our physical health, the weather, what we have learned, our brain and nervous system processes, psychotic and drug states, hormones, or what we have eaten. However, social psychologists focus on the vital role of social influences and relationships. Finally, the definition tells us that people are influenced by other people, even those who are not present. We are aware of belonging to certain family, occupational and cultural groups and of liking, loving or feeling responsible toward certain people in our lives. These groups and individuals profoundly influence our thoughts and actions.

To better appreciate the range of phenomena social psychologists study, consider the following examples:

- In a competitive economy, a job interview can be decisive. Social psychologists have studied how *first impressions* are formed and how people act to influence or *"manage" the impression* that others have of them.
- Amnesty International has documented routine torture in many countries. For the most part, torturers are not unusually sadistic by nature, but simply *obedient* to the instructions of authority. A series of important experiments has been conducted on *obedience to authority*.
- A substantial proportion of all marriages in North America will eventually end in divorce. *Social attraction* and the evolution of *intimate relationships* are areas of current, intensive research.
- While Québécois entrepreneurs move into the North American, English-speaking business milieu, English-Canadian parents in unprecedented numbers enrol their children in French immersion programs. There has been extensive research on the social aspects of *bilingualism*.

- Canada's economic policy has shifted dramatically toward deficit reduction and tax relief. Cutbacks in government spending have generated much *conflict*, a subject researched extensively by social psychologists.
- Many trials hinge on the credibility of a key witness. Social psychologists have studied *eyewitness testimony* and other aspects of the legal system.

As you can see, social psychologists study a wide range of social phenomena. Some of their concerns involve practical problems: Why don't patients do what their physicians recommend? What kinds of decisions do groups make and can the decisions be improved? Why do people persist in stereotyping males, females, professors, students and ethnic groups, regardless of the realities? Other equally important questions are more theoretical: What consistencies and inconsistencies are there between people's attitudes and their behaviour? What biases operate in the perception of cause and effect in interpersonal situations? How can we explain aggression in terms of social learning?

To clarify what social psychology is about, let us compare it with other areas of psychology and other related disciplines. Social psychology shares with other areas of psychology a focus on the individual. In particular, the interests of social psychology overlap the study of personality. However, the study of personality emphasizes individual differences in the way people think, feel or act, and, above all, factors operating within individuals. Social psychology, by contrast, looks at the situational factors that cause people in general to behave in certain ways. Thus, for example, personality psychologists study the *characteristics* of people who tend to behave aggressively; social psychologists investigate *situations* in which people are likely to behave aggressively. Of course, behaviour is determined by both person and environment, and students of social psychology must understand both types of variables.

Social psychology also shares many areas of interest with other social sciences, especially sociology (the study of society and social institutions) and anthropology (the study of human culture). Perhaps the major differences are found in each discipline's basic *unit of analysis* and *level of explanation*. The usual focus of study in these other social sciences is the large group, institution or custom (e.g., the school, the family, social norms, social class structure). The *rate* or typical pattern of behaviour in a population is also of concern. Sociologists and anthropologists are not interested in how one individual differs from another, but rather in how one *category* of individual differs from another (Macionis, Clarke & Gerber, 1994), and they seek to explain phenomena in terms of external characteristics such as social class mobility, customs of parental discipline, and the distribution of power in a society.

Social psychologists study not only actual observable behaviour, but also what can be inferred about the inner lives of people, how they feel, their attitudes, opinions and ideologies.

FOCUS ON RESEARCH

From Common Sense to Research Hypothesis

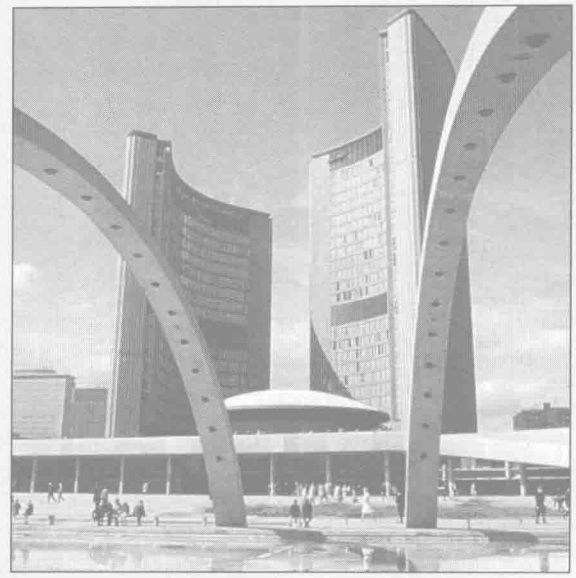
There's an old saying: Familiarity breeds contempt. That is, the more familiar we become with people or things, the less attractive they become. Many couples find it difficult or impossible to recapture the magic of their honeymoon stage.

The saying also seems to hold true of objects and places: we often feel an itch to travel for a change of scenery.

But consider the following:

- Students tend to feel rather uncomfortable in class in the first days of the new school year, particularly if they don't know many other students. As the course goes on, they feel more and more positive about the experience, even though they may not have interacted with many classmates. The people, the professors, the lecture room all seem familiar now. Commuters, immersed in their newspapers or daydreams, grow comfortable with the "familiar strangers" on their bus or train, as Stanley Milgram has called them.
- When the Eiffel Tower was first built in 1889 for a World Fair, the citizens of Paris so detested it that they felt France had lost its position as a cultural leader in the world (Harrison, A.A., 1977). Similar reactions greeted the construction of Toronto's distinctive City Hall. Eventually, residents of both cities developed a strong pride in these monuments as symbols of their civic identity.
- In recent years, many radio stations have switched from a top-20 format of current music to a play list featuring only familiar and popular music from the recent past.

How can we subject the principle that "familiarity breeds contempt" to experimental test? Zajonc (1968a) conducted a series of controlled experiments in which he varied the number of times different groups of subjects were exposed to certain stimuli. In one such experiment, subjects were shown a series of photographs from a university



yearbook, and later asked to rate them in terms of their "favourability." Some of the faces were repeatedly shown, as often as 25 times, while others were shown only once or twice. Here are the results:

Frequency of exposure to photograph	Average favourability rating (scale of 1–4)
1 time	2.8
2 times	2.9
5 times	3.0
10 times	3.6
25 times	3.7

As you can see, subjects were considerably more favourable toward the faces seen more frequently. In other experiments by Zajonc, the same was found to be true for other stimuli, including Chinese alphabet characters, foreign words, and the frequency with which names of cities, flowers, trees and vegetables occur naturally in speech.

In later chapters, consideration will be given to more of the research on this "mere exposure effect," when and why it occurs, what it means, and what other factors influence our like or dislike of someone or something.

By contrast, social psychology generally focusses on the individual, or at most the small group. Social psychologists generally explain the behaviour of individuals in terms of specific situations as well as psychological processes such as attitudes, emotional states or perception of cause and effect.

Both psychology and sociology have subdisciplines called "social psychology," which have subject areas in common but which differ in research methods, theories and theoretical orientation. Psychological social psychologists frequently do laboratory experiments, while sociological social psychologists often rely on participant observation, in which the researcher actually joins the institution or group and describes it from the inside. And while most social psychologists in sociology work within the framework of symbolic interactionism (how people come to attach meaning to experience through interaction with others), social psychologists within the field of psychology study the cognitive processes within individuals through which they make sense of the world.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY YESTERDAY AND TODAY

While social psychology is relatively young as a discipline, its roots lie deep in the history of Western thought. Like all of psychology, social psychology emerged from the work of philosophers. Plato was deeply concerned with the nature of leadership and the most desirable form of government, while Aristotle thought and wrote about the nature of friendship. English empiricist philosophers such as John Stuart Mill and Thomas Hobbes attributed all social behaviour to the search for pleasure and avoidance of pain (hedonism) or to the need for power. The 19th-century French philosopher Gabriel Tarde wrote that "society is imitation." In other words, people have an innate tendency to imitate, which causes them to conform in order to live together. While all these themes continue to be of interest to social psychologists, they have turned from "simple and sovereign theories" that explain social behaviour in terms of a single variable, such as power, pleasure or imitation, to more complex explanations.

Social psychology did not emerge dramatically through the declaration of a doctrine, a scientific breakthrough, or the influence of a personality such as Sigmund Freud. Rather, it evolved over several decades, marked by several key events (see Table 1).

Interest in social psychological theory and research began to grow in the late 19th century. Its roots formed in several quarters: in Germany, as an outgrowth of Wilhelm Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* ("folk psychology") (Danziger, 1983); in France, through the work of Gabriel Tarde and others (Lubek, 1990); in Great Britain as an extension of evolutionary theory to social interaction (Collier, Minton & Reynolds, 1991); and in the United States, through the research of John Dewey and colleagues at the University of Chicago (Rudmin, 1985). The first known book dedicated to social psychology was Vierkandt's (1896) *Naturvölker und Kulturvölker: Ein Beitrag zur Sozialpsychologie* (Rudmin, 1985). Baldwin's (1897) *Social and ethical interpretations of mental development: A study in social psychology*, Tarde's (1898) *Études de psychologie sociale*, and Ellwood's (1899) *Some prolegomena to social psychology* were also among the earliest social psychology books (Rudmin. 1985).

While psychologists in Western Europe and the United States played fundamental roles in the formation of the new discipline, interest in social psychology was taking root in various countries around the world. For example, a folk psychology focussing primarily on the analysis of language and social habits had been developing in Russia since the mid-19th century, and in 1896, A.M. Bobrishchev-Pushkin published his empirical studies of juries and the psychological factors involved in their decision-making (Strickland, 1991). In 1906, Tokutani's *Social psychology* brought the basic concepts of this new discipline to Japan (Hotta & Strickland, 1991).

Given this widespread interest in social psychology, it appears somewhat ethnocentric that North American social psychology texts typically credit the beginnings of social psychology to two textbooks published in the United States in 1908: *An introduction to social psychology* by William McDougall, a psychologist, and *Social psychology: An outline and sourcebook* by E.A. Ross, a sociologist. That such credit should go to McDougall is especially curious, given that neither he nor those who reviewed his book considered it to be a treatise on social psychology, despite its title; it was actually dedicated to the discussion of instinct theories (Rudmin, 1985).

It was not until 1924 that Floyd Allport published the first textbook based on empirical research. This highly influential book presented a scientific social psychology that was psychological, as opposed to sociological (Parkovnick, 1992), established the individual as the basic unit of analysis, and started social psychology on a scientific pathway (Minton, 1992). Allport

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