SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

H. Andrew Michener
John D. DeLamater

third edition

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PREFACE

The third edition of *Social Psychology* builds on the strengths of prior editions. Most importantly, the book covers the whole range of phenomena of interest to social psychologists. While treating intrapsychic processes in detail, it provides strong coverage of social interaction and group processes and of large-scale phenomena like intergroup conflict and social movements.

Our goal has been both to describe contemporary social psychology and to present the theoretical concepts and research findings that make up this broad field. We have drawn on work by all types of social psychologists—those with sociological, psychological, and even anthropological perspectives. This book stresses the impact of social structure and group membership on the social behavior of individuals, but at the same time it covers the intrapsychic processes of cognition, attribution, and learning that underlie social behavior. Throughout the book we have used the results of empirical research—surveys, experiments, and observational studies—to illustrate these processes.

New Features in this Edition

In developing this edition, we sought not only to keep the book abreast of changes within the field of social psychology but also to improve and strengthen the presentation of various topics. Important changes in this edition include the following:

1. All of the chapters have been revised, and the text brought up to date. Several new boxes have been included and hundreds of new references have been added.
2. Two chapters are new to this edition: Chapter 10 (Helping and Altruism) and Chapter 11 (Aggression). The previous edition combined these topics in a single chapter. Separating them into distinct chapters considerably expands coverage of each topic.
3. The treatment of language and language learning has been extensively revised. In particular, Chapter 7 (Symbolic Communication and Language) has been strengthened and reorganized. This places greater emphasis on accuracy of communication and the interface between language and cognition. Chapter 3 incorporates the latest research on language acquisition.
4. The concept of cognitive schema is utilized more prominently in several chapters, providing greater conceptual integration. Chapter 5 (Social Perception and Cognition) has been extensively revised.
5. Chapter 14 (Group Structure and Interaction) has been substantially revised. The treatment of group structure (role status, role differentiation, status characteristics, etc.) has been rewritten and sharpened.
6. Several other chapters have been revised to improve the organization of material. These

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include Chapter 2 (Research Methods in Social Psychology), Chapter 4 (Self and Identity), Chapter 9 (Self-Presentation and Impression Management), and Chapter 17 (Personality and Social Structure).

Content and Organization

This book opens with a chapter on theoretical perspectives in social psychology (Chapter 1) and a chapter on research methods (Chapter 2). These provide the groundwork for all that follows. The remainder of the book is divided into four substantive sections.

Section one focuses on individual social behavior. It includes chapters on socialization (Chapter 3), self and identity (Chapter 4), social perception and attribution (Chapter 5) and attitudes (Chapter 6).

Section two is concerned with social interaction, the core of social psychology. Each of these chapters discusses how people interact and how they are affected by this interaction. These chapters cover such topics as communication (Chapter 7), social influence and persuasion (Chapter 8), self-presentation and impression management (Chapter 9), altruism (Chapter 10), aggression (Chapter 11), and interpersonal attraction (Chapter 12).

Section three provides extensive coverage of groups. It includes chapters on group cohesiveness and conformity (Chapter 13), status processes in interaction (Chapter 14), group performance and leadership effectiveness (Chapter 15), and intergroup relations (Chapter 16).

Section four considers the relationship between individuals and the wider society. These chapters treat the influence of life course and gender roles (Chapter 17), the impact of social structure on the individual (Chapter 18), deviant behavior (Chapter 19), and collective behavior and social movements (Chapter 20).

Ease of Use

Because there are many different ways in which an instructor can organize an introductory course in social psychology, each chapter in this book has been written as a self-contained unit. Later chapters do not presume that the student has read earlier ones, enabling instructors to assign chapters in whatever sequence they wish.

Chapters share a standard format. To make the material interesting and accessible to students, each chapter's introductory section poses four to six thought-provoking questions. These questions establish the issues to be discussed in the chapter. The remainder of the chapter consists of four to six major sections, each addressing one of these issues. A summary at the end of each chapter reviews the key points.

In addition, the text includes several learning aids. Tables are used to emphasize the results of important studies. Figures are used to illustrate important social psychological processes. Photographs dramatize essential ideas from the text. Boxes in each chapter highlight interesting or controversial issues and studies and also discuss the applications of social psychological concepts in daily life. Key terms appear in boldface type and are listed alphabetically at the end of each chapter. And a glossary of key terms is included at the end of the book.

Acknowledgments

First of all, we thank our colleague, Shalom H. Schwartz, who, as co-author of the earlier editions of this book, contributed substantially to this project.

Over the various editions of this book, many of our colleagues reviewed one or more chapters and provided useful comments and criticisms. We extend thanks to reviewers for the third edition, including: Peter L. Callero, Western Oregon State College; Gregory Elliott, Brown University; Richard B. Felson, State University of New

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We express thanks to the many students who used the previous editions and who provided us with feedback about the book. We have used this feedback to improve the presentation, pace, and style of the new edition.

We thank Kirsten Paap for her research assistance in developing the manuscript for this edition.

We also express thanks to the professionals at Harcourt Brace who contributed to the process of turning the manuscript into a book. Chris Klein, acquisitions editor, provided support for the project. Karee Galloway, developmental editor, worked directly with us throughout the process of preparing the third edition. Jeff Beckham, project editor, oversaw the transformation of manuscript into printed pages. Monica Reeves, manuscript editor, significantly improved the text's clarity and conciseness. Annette Coolidge, photo editor, worked diligently to find attractive, illuminating photographs. Our appreciation extends to them all.

While this book has benefited greatly from feedback and criticisms from colleagues, the authors accept full responsibility for any mistakes that remain.

H. Andrew Michener
John D. DeLamater

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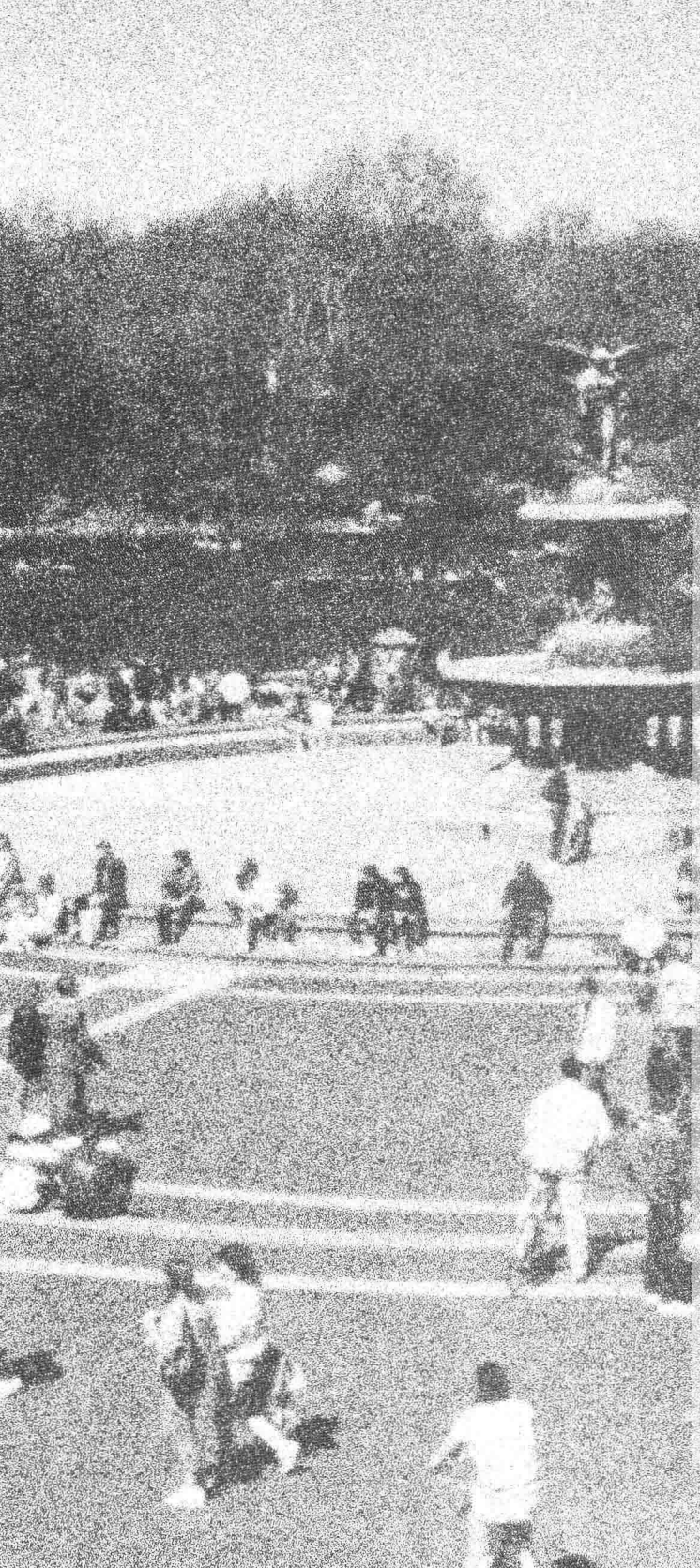

INTRODUCTION

- Why are some persons effective leaders and others not?
- What makes people fall in love? What makes them fall out of love?
- Why can people cooperate so easily in some situations but not others?
- What effects do major life events like getting married, having a child, or losing a job have on physical health, mental health, and self-esteem?
- What causes conflict between groups? Why do some conflicts persist far beyond the point where participants can expect to achieve any real gains?
- Why do some people conform to norms and laws, while others violate them?
- Why do people present different images of themselves in various situations? What determines the particular images they present?
- What causes harmful or aggressive behavior? What causes helpful or altruistic behavior?
- Why are some groups so much better at doing their work than others?
- What causes people to develop unique conceptions of themselves? How do these self-concepts change?

- Why are some people more persuasive and influential than others? What techniques do they use?
- Why do stereotypes persist even in the face of information that obviously contradicts them?

Perhaps questions such as these have puzzled you, just as they have perplexed others down through the ages. You might wonder about these issues simply because you want to understand better the social world around you. Or you might want answers for practical reasons, such as increasing your effectiveness in day-to-day relations with others.

Answers to questions such as these come from various sources. Personal experience is one such source. Answers obtained by this means are often insightful, but they are usually limited in scope and generality, and occasionally they are even misleading. Another source is informal knowledge or advice from others. Answers obtained by this means are sometimes reliable, sometimes not. A third source is thinkers of various orientations—philosophers, novelists, poets, and men and women of practical affairs—who, over the centuries, have written about these issues. Their answers have filtered down and take the form of sayings, or aphorisms, that make up commonsense knowledge. Common sense covers a great diversity of topics. We are told, for instance, that punishment is essential to successful child rearing ("Spare the rod and spoil the child") and that joint effort is an effective way to accomplish large jobs ("Many hands make light work"). Principles such as these reflect certain truths, and they appear to provide guidelines for action.

Although commonsense knowledge may have some merit, it also has certain drawbacks, not the least of which is that it often contradicts itself. For example, we hear that persons who are similar will like one another ("Birds of a feather flock together") but also that persons who are dissimilar will like each other ("Opposites attract"). We learn that groups are wiser and smarter than individuals ("Two heads are better than one") but also that problem solving by groups entails many compromises and inevitably produces mediocre results ("A camel is a racehorse designed by a committee"). Each of these contradictory statements may hold true under particular conditions, but without a clear statement of when they apply and when they do not, aphorisms provide little insight into relations among people. They provide even less guidance in situations where we must make decisions. For example, when facing a choice that entails risk, which guideline should we use—"Nothing ventured, nothing gained" or "Better safe than sorry"?

If sources such as personal experience and commonsense knowledge have limited value, how are we to attain an understanding of social interaction and relations among people? Are we forever restricted to intuition and speculation, or is there a better alternative?

One resolution to this problem—the one proposed by social psychologists—is to obtain accurate knowledge about social behavior by applying the methods of science. That is, by taking systematic observations of behavior and formulating theories that are subject to test and disconfirmation, we can attain a valid and comprehensive understanding of human social relations.

One goal of this book is to present key facts discovered through systematic research by social psychologists. In this chapter, we lay the foundation for this effort by addressing the following issues:

1. What exactly is meant by "social psychology"? How should this term be defined? What are the core concerns of the field of social psychology?
2. What broad theoretical perspectives prevail within social psychology today? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each theory?

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