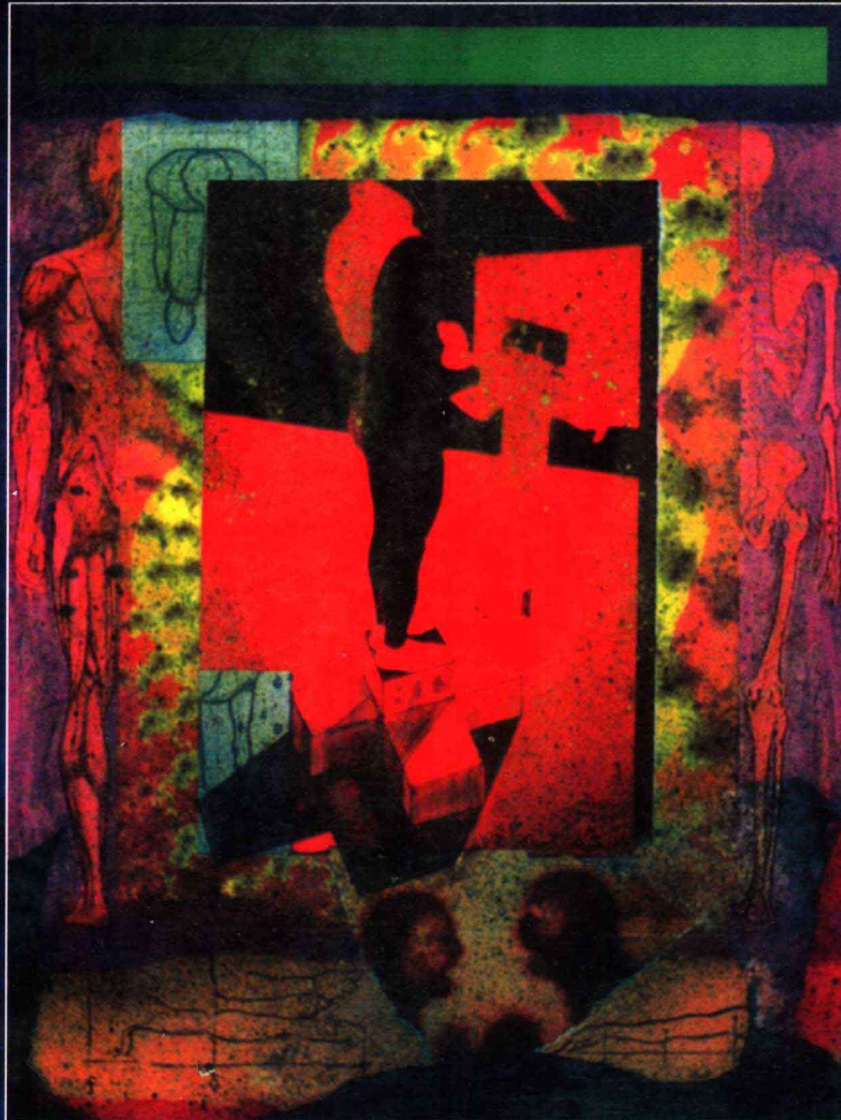


THIRD EDITION

E S S E N T I A L S O F
**UNDERSTANDING
PSYCHOLOGY**



Robert S. Feldman

ESSENTIALS OF
UNDERSTANDING
PSYCHOLOGY

THIRD EDITION

Robert S. Feldman

University of Massachusetts at Amherst

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ESSENTIALS OF UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGY

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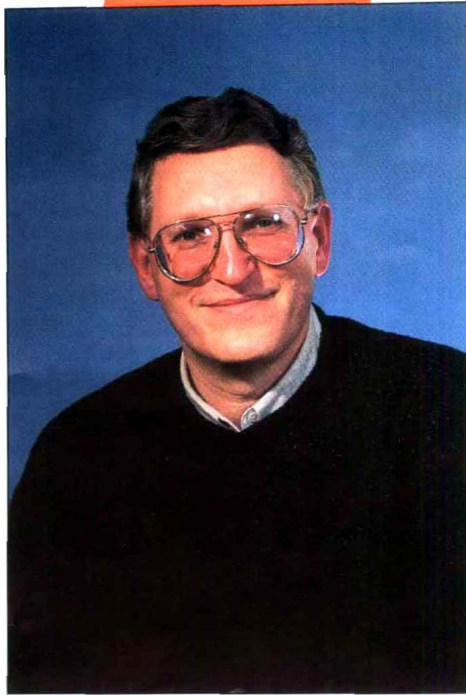
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Robert S. Feldman is professor of psychology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where he is director of undergraduate studies. A graduate of Wesleyan University and the University of Wisconsin–Madison, he is a former Fulbright Senior Research Scholar and Lecturer. He has been teaching introductory psychology for more than two decades and has taught courses at Mount Holyoke College, Wesleyan University, and Virginia Commonwealth University, in addition to the University of Massachusetts.

Dr. Feldman is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the American Psychological Society and author of more than 100 scientific articles, book chapters, and papers. He has also written or edited more than a dozen books, including *Fundamentals of Nonverbal Behavior* (Cambridge University Press) and *Applications of Nonverbal Behavioral Theories and Research* (Erlbaum). His research interests include nonverbal behavior and the social psychology of education.

His spare time is most often devoted to serious cooking and earnest, but unpolished, piano playing. He lives with his wife, also a psychologist, and three children, in a home overlooking the Holyoke mountain range in Amherst, Massachusetts.

REVIEWERS

One of the most important features of *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* is the involvement of both professionals and students in the review process. The third edition of *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* has relied heavily—and profited substantially—from the advice of instructors and students from a range of backgrounds.

First, the manuscript was evaluated by traditional academic reviewers, who served in their capacity as content experts and teachers of psychology. These reviewers helped to ensure that this new edition was accurate and that it incorporated state-of-the-art research findings in psychology.

The second group of reviewers consisted of a panel of three students who assessed *Understanding Psychology*, literally line by line. Their insights and suggestions were invaluable to me in preparing this text.

Finally, dozens of students read parts of the manuscript to ensure that the material was clear and engaging. Their suggestions are incorporated throughout the text.

I am grateful to all these reviewers, who provided their time and expertise to help ensure that *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* reflects the best that psychology has to offer.

PROFESSIONAL REVIEWERS

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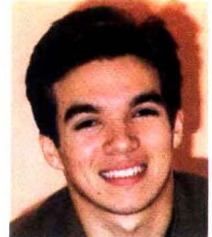
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PREFACE

The complexities and contradictions of human behavior defy easy explanation. We see good behavior and bad; we encounter rational and illogical conduct; and we find cooperation and violent competition among the peoples of the world.

The third edition of *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* reflects what psychologists have learned in their quest to understand and explain the behavior we see around us. The text is designed to provide a broad introduction to psychology. While focusing on the building blocks of the field, it also makes clear the relevance of psychology to people's everyday lives.

In revising *Essentials of Understanding Psychology*, I had four major goals:

- To provide broad coverage of the field of psychology, introducing the theories, research, and applications that constitute the discipline
- To serve as an impetus for readers to think critically about psychological phenomena, particularly those that have an impact on their everyday lives
- To illustrate the substantial diversity both within the field of psychology and in society as a whole by presenting material that reflects the discipline's increasing concern with cultural, gender, racial, and ethnic issues
- To arouse intellectual curiosity and build an appreciation of how psychology can increase students' understanding of the world around them

In short, *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* is meant not only to expose readers to the content—and promise—of psychology, but to do so in a way that will bring to life basic concepts and research findings and sustain interest in the discipline long after readers have completed their introductory course in psychology. My hope is that initial exposure to the realm of psychology will forge an ongoing enthusiasm and passion for the discipline, one that lasts a lifetime.

AN OVERVIEW OF *ESSENTIALS OF UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGY*

Essentials of Understanding Psychology is based on the 19-chapter, widely used fourth edition of *Understanding Psychology*, a broad and comprehensive introduction to

the field of psychology. Like the book from which it is derived, *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* includes coverage of the traditional topical areas of psychology. It covers, for example, the biological foundations of behavior, sensation and perception, learning, cognition, development, personality, abnormal behavior, and the social psychological foundations of behavior.

Unlike its predecessor, however, *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* is a briefer volume. It focuses on the essence of psychology, providing an initial broad introduction to the field. The book also shows how the field's theories and research have an impact on readers' everyday lives.

There is considerable flexibility in the book's organizational structure. Each chapter is divided into between three and five manageable, self-contained units, permitting instructors to choose and omit sections according to their syllabus. In addition, because the applications material is well-integrated throughout, even in the chapters that cover the most traditional theoretical topics, the relationship between theory, research, and applications of psychology is addressed throughout the book.

In sum, the book reflects a combination of traditional core topics and contemporary applied subjects, providing a broad, eclectic—and current—view of the field of psychology. It draws from theoretical and applied approaches, and integrates the two with objective presentations of research that illustrate the way in which the science of psychology has evolved and grown. Indeed, the book exemplifies the view that a theory-application dichotomy is a false one. The text does not present applications as devoid of theory, but places them in a theoretical context, grounded in research findings. Likewise, when the text presents theoretical material, it draws practical implications from the theory.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE THIRD EDITION?

Much thought has gone into the changes incorporated into this edition of *Essentials of Understanding Psychology*. Because the basic structure and features of the first editions met with such a positive response from both students and professors, the fundamental attributes of

the book remain intact. At the same time, additions and changes that reflect developments in the field of psychology have been incorporated.

Two major new features are found throughout the book. Every chapter includes a section called Exploring Diversity, which deals with an aspect of racial, ethnic, gender, or cultural diversity. For instance, the chapter on research discusses concerns of psychologists in choosing subjects that represent a broad sample of human behavior; the chapter on learning discusses the controversy over the existence of culturally based learning styles; and the chapter on memory considers whether there are differences in basic memory processes across cultures.

Furthermore, every chapter contains a Pathways through Psychology box. These boxes include biographical sketches of people who are making use of psychology in their work or professional pursuits.

Overall, a wealth of contemporary research is cited in this edition. Hundreds of new citations have been added, most published in the 1990s. Furthermore, an extensive array of new topics has been incorporated, along with information updating existing material. For instance, the new and revised topics featured in this edition include such subjects as psychology's role in preventing violence, distortions in surveys, brain lateralization, pheromones, cultural learning styles, the repressed memory controversy, bilingual education, measurement of intellectual ability, sexual harassment, cultural differences in academic performance, developmental changes in personality, *DSM-IV*, multiple personalities, Prozac, anger, collectivism and individualism, and aggression and culture.

LEARNING AIDS AND FEATURES OF ESSENTIALS OF UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGY

Essentials of Understanding Psychology is designed with its ultimate consumer—the student—in mind. As you can see from the following full list of elements that are common to every chapter, the book incorporates several major educational features. These features are meant to make the book an effective learning device and, simultaneously, enticing and engaging:

■ **Chapter Outline.** Each chapter opens with an outline of the chapter structure. The outline helps orient readers to the chapter content and the relationships among topics.

■ **Prologue.** Each chapter starts with an account of an actual situation that demonstrates the relevance of basic principles and concepts of psychology to pertinent issues and problems. Each of these prologues is new to this edition and reflects current events.

■ **Looking Ahead.** A chapter overview follows the prologue. It articulates the key themes and issues covered within the chapter.

■ **Orienting Questions.** Each major section within the chapter begins with several broad questions, providing a framework for understanding and mastering the material that is to come.

■ **Psychology at Work.** The Psychology at Work boxes illustrate applications of current psychological theory and research findings to real-world problems.

PSYCHOLOGY AT WORK

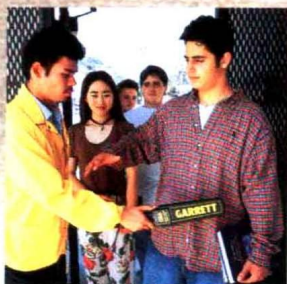
Psychology and the Prevention of Violence

As he walks calmly through a Long Island Railroad car, Colin Ferguson shoots several rounds of ammunition from a handgun, killing five people and injuring twenty-three others.

A hired hitman smashes a portable nightstick into the knee of figure skater Nancy Kerrigan in an effort to keep her from competing in the winter Olympics.

A woman is killed by two teenage muggers during a robbery which nets the perpetrators less than \$2.

It has been called the twentieth-century plague: violence in the United States. Surveys show that violence and crime rank at the top of any list of concerns for most



The epidemic of violence in the United States has extended into the schools, where metal detectors are sometimes used to prevent weapons from being brought to class.

gun used by a friend or acquaintance. The higher rate

that others' behavior was intended to upset them. The training resulted in a reduction of anger in the face of provocation (Graham & Hudley, 1992). One fact that has emerged quite clearly from this research is the requirement that programs be culturally, ethnically, and racially sensitive (Hammond & Yung, 1993).

- How prevalent is violence on television? It is clear that violence on television is common. One survey found that of ninety-four prime-time programs examined, forty-eight showed at least one act of violence, and they include fifty-seven people killed and ninety-nine assaulted (Hanson & Knopes, 1993). Furthermore


- **Pathways through Psychology.** These boxes, found in every chapter, provide biographical sketches of people working in professions that make use of the findings of psychology.

PATHWAYS THROUGH PSYCHOLOGY

Mary Garrett
San Francisco State College,
San Francisco, California

Born: 1947
Education: A.A., City College
of San Francisco; B.A., San
Francisco State College;
currently enrolled in M.A.
program, San Francisco State
Home: San Francisco, California

Most high school students have only a vague idea of what they want to do with their lives, but as far as Mary Garrett was concerned, there



Mary Garrett


these effects in order to design effective psychosocial intervention," she said.

The impetus for the study was a similar project conducted by one of her professors. He had done an initial study on coping with AIDS, but he only used men in his sample. Garrett is interested in comparing how women and men deal with the disease.

"I want to find out if the coping strategies and processes are different for women. Women do have different stressors than men, such as being single mothers or being a black female in this society," she said.

The research, according to Gar-

- **Exploring Diversity.** Every chapter includes at least one section devoted to an aspect of racial, ethnic, gender, or cultural diversity. These sections highlight the way in which psychology informs (and is informed by) issues relating to the increasing multiculturalism of our global society.




Exploring Diversity

Are There Cross-Cultural Differences in Memory?

Many travelers who have visited areas of the world in which there is no written language have returned with tales of people with phenomenal memories. Presumably because they have no written records, people in such cultures develop memories that can provide a kind of oral record keeping to keep track of important events in the society's history. For instance, storytellers in some preliterate cultures can recount long chronicles that recall the names and activities of people over many generations.

On the basis of such anecdotes, memory experts initially argued that people in preliterate society develop a different, and perhaps better, type of memory than those in cultures that employ a written language (Bartlett, 1932). They suggested that, in a society which lacks writing, people are going to be motivated to recall information with accuracy, particularly in terms of tribal histories and traditions that would otherwise be lost if not passed down orally from one generation to another.

- **The Informed Consumer of Psychology.** Every chapter includes material designed to make readers more informed consumers of psychological information by giving them the ability to critically evaluate what the field of psychology offers.



The Informed Consumer of Psychology

Effective Coping Strategies

How does one cope most effectively with stress? Researchers have made a number of recommendations for dealing with the problem. There is no universal solution, of course, since effective coping depends on the nature of the stressor and the degree to which control is possible. Still, some general guidelines can be followed (Folkman, 1984; Everly, 1989; Holahan & Moos, 1987, 1990):

- **Turning threat into challenge.** When a stressful situation might be controllable, the best coping strategy is to treat the situation as a challenge, focusing on ways to control it. For instance, if you experience stress because your car is always breaking down, you might take an evening course in auto mechanics and learn to deal directly with the car's problems. Even if the repairs prove too difficult to do yourself, at least you'll be in a better position to understand what's wrong.

■ **Recap and Review.** Every chapter is divided into three or four sections, each of which concludes with a Recap and Review. The Recaps summarize the key points of the previous section, and the Reviews present a vari-

ety of questions for students to answer in order to test both recall and higher-level understanding of the material.

RECAP AND REVIEW	
<p>Recap</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People do not respond passively to visual stimuli; rather, they try to separate a given figure from the background. • Among the gestalt laws of organization are closure, proximity, similarity, and simplicity. • Feature analysis considers how people perceive a stimulus, break it down into the individual elements that make it up, and then use those elements to understand what they are seeing. • Perception occurs through top-down and bottom-up processing. • Depth perception occurs because of binocular disparity, motion parallax, and the relative size of images on the retina. Motion perception is the result of the movement of images across the retina, combined with information about head and eye movements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual illusions are physical stimuli that consistently produce errors in perception. Among the most common are the Poggendorf illusion and the Müller-Lyer illusion. • Subliminal perception and extrasensory perception remain controversial. <p>Review</p> <p>1. Match each of the following organizational laws with its meaning:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elements close together are grouped together. 2. Patterns are perceived in the most basic, direct manner possible. 3. Groupings are made in terms of complete figures. 4. Elements similar in appearance are grouped together. <p>a. Closure</p>

■ **Running Glossary.** Key terms are highlighted in boldface type within the text where they are introduced and are defined in the margin of the page, with pronunciation guides for difficult words. There is also an end-of-book glossary.

■ **Looking Back.** To facilitate both the review and synthesis of the information covered, a numbered summary is included at the end of every chapter. The summary emphasizes the key points of the chapter and is organized according to the orienting questions posed at the beginning of every major section.

■ **Key Terms and Concepts.** A list of key terms and concepts, including the page numbers where they are introduced, is also provided at the end of each chapter.

ANCILLARY MATERIALS

The Third Edition of *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* is accompanied by an extensive, integrated set of supplemental materials designed to support the classroom teaching of both new and veteran instructors. Prepared under the supervision of Professor Mark Garrison, the student *Study Guide*, *Instructor's Manual*, and *Test Bank* are fully integrated to provide a consistent pedagogical framework for students and professors using *Understanding Psychology*.

The *Study Guide* has been completely revised and features an enhanced illustration program. The *Study Guide* opens with an introductory essay that provides the student with suggestions for how best to utilize the SQ3R study and review method (discussed in the next introductory section, To the Student). It also features a brief guide for nonnative speakers of English. Each *Study Guide* chapter contains a chapter outline with high-

lighted key terms, a detailed chapter summary, learning objectives keyed to page numbers in the text, and a set of self-study questions of various types and levels of difficulty.

The *Instructor's Manual* contains a wide variety of new lecture ideas, handouts, and resources. Designed to complement the *Study Guide* and *Test File*, each chapter in the *Instructor's Manual* includes a detailed chapter outline, a chapter summary, learning objectives, and a set of Lecture Resources including discussion topics, ideas for classroom demonstrations, a list of relevant films and videos, and suggestions for many new activities and projects that can be used both in and out of the classroom.

The *Test File* contains thousands of factual and conceptual multiple-choice and essay questions indexed to the text and keyed to the learning objectives. Computerized Test Banks are available in IBM (on both 5.25 and 3.5 disks) and Macintosh formats.

McGraw-Hill also provides a wide variety of audio-visual and computerized teaching aids. Available for the first time with this edition, *MICROGUIDE* offers a computerized version of the study guide with interactive testing and tutorial features.

Professors using *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* will receive a regular update, called *PsychFax*, written by this book's author. *PsychFax* will include reports of new psychological findings and will discuss the psychological implications of current events in the news. The update can be distributed to students or incorporated into lectures.

Finally, a toll-free, interactive reader comment line has been established for comments and queries. Users of *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* can call 1-800-223-6880, extension 29496, to have access to this line.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As the list of reviewers on page xix attests, this book involved the efforts of many people. They lent their expertise to evaluate all or part of the manuscript, providing an unusual degree of quality control. Their careful work and thoughtful suggestions have improved the manuscript many times over from its first-draft incarnations. *I am grateful to them all for their comments.*

My thinking has been shaped by many teachers along the way. I was introduced to psychology at Wesleyan University, where several committed and inspiring teachers—in particular Karl Scheibe—conveyed their sense of excitement about the field and made its relevance clear to me. By the time I left Wesleyan I could envision no other career but that of psychologist. Although the nature of the University of Wisconsin, where I did my *graduate work*, could not have been more different from the much smaller Wesleyan, the excitement and inspiration were *similar*. Once again, a cadre of excellent teachers—led, especially, by the late Vernon Allen—molded my thinking and taught me to appreciate the beauty and science of the discipline of psychology.

My colleagues and students at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst provide ongoing intellectual stimulation, and I thank them for making the University a fine place to work. Several people also provided extraordinary research and editorial help. In particular, I am grateful to Erik Coats, a constant source of ideas and (more often than I wished) constructive criticism, and to John Graiff, who helped immeasurably on just about everything involving this book.

Every reader of this book owes a debt of gratitude to Rhona Robbin, senior developmental editor. Her relentless pursuit of excellence shaped the underlying quality of this book. Brian McKean, sponsoring editor of this edition, has brought innovation, creative energy, and a strong degree of commitment to the book, and I am very appreciative of his efforts.

Other people at McGraw-Hill were central to the design, production, and marketing process; these include editing supervisor David Damstra, designer Howard Leiderman, production supervisor Annette Mayeski, and photo editors Nancy Dyer and Elyse Rieder. I am also appreciative of Kim Hulbert and Annie Mitchell, whose marketing savvy informed the development of the third edition from its conception. I am proud to be a part of this world-class team.

Finally, I am, as always, indebted to my family. My parents, Leah Brochstein and the late Saul D. Feldman, provided a lifetime foundation of love and support, and I continue to see their influence in every corner of my life. My extended family also play a central role in my life. They include, more or less in order of age, my nieces and nephews, my brother, various brothers- and sisters-in-law, and Harry Brochstein. Finally, I am grateful to my aunt, Ethel Radler, to whom this book is dedicated, for her constant support and love.

Ultimately, my children, Jonathan, Joshua, and Sarah, and my wife, Katherine, remain the delight of my life. I thank them, with immense love.

Robert S. Feldman

TO THE STUDENT

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE STUDY AND CRITICAL THINKING

Essentials of Understanding Psychology has been written with the reader in mind, and it therefore includes a number of unique features intended to help you to maximize your learning of the basic concepts, principles, and theories that make up the field of psychology. To take advantage of these features, there are several steps you should take when reading and studying this book. By following these steps, not only will you get the most out of this book, but you will also develop study habits that will help you to learn more effectively from other texts and to think critically about new material that is presented. Among the most important steps to follow:

■ Familiarize yourself with the logic of the book's structure. Begin by reading the Table of Contents. It provides an overview of the topics that will be covered and gives a sense of the way in which the various topics are interrelated. Next, review the Preface, which describes the book's major features. Keep in mind that each chapter is divided into three to five self-contained units; these provide logical starting and stopping points for reading and studying.

Note, also, the major highlights of each chapter: a chapter-opening outline, a Prologue, a Looking Ahead section, Recaps and Reviews of key information following each of the major units, and—at the end of every chapter—a Looking Back section and a list of Key Terms and Concepts. The Looking Back summary is organized around the questions posed in the Looking Ahead section at the beginning of the chapter, thereby tying the chapter's contents together.

Because every chapter is structured in this same way, the book provides a set of familiar landmarks to help you chart your way through new material. This structure will help you in organizing each chapter's content.

Finally, there are certain styles of writing used by psychologists with which you should be familiar. In particular, citations to previous research are indicated by a name and date, typically set off in parentheses. Each of these names and dates refers to a book or article included in the Reference list at the end of this book.

■ Use a study strategy. Although we are expected to study and ultimately learn a wide range of material throughout our schooling, we are rarely taught any systematic strategies that permit us to study more effectively. Yet just as we wouldn't expect a physician to learn human anatomy by trial and error, it is the unusual student who is able to stumble upon a truly effective studying strategy.

Psychologists, however, have devised several excellent (and proven) techniques for improving study skills, two of which are described here. By employing one of these procedures—known by the initials “SQ3R” and “MURDER”—you can increase your ability to learn and retain information and to think critically, not just in psychology classes but in all academic subjects.

The SQ3R method includes a series of five steps, designated by the initials S-Q-R-R-R. The first step is to *survey* the material by reading the chapter outlines, chapter headings, figure captions, Recaps, and Looking Ahead and Looking Back sections, providing yourself with an overview of the major points of the chapter. The next step—the “Q” in SQ3R—is to *question*. Formulate questions—either aloud or in writing—before actually reading a section of the material. For instance, if you had first surveyed this section of the book, you might jot down in the margin, “What do ‘SQ3R’ and ‘MURDER’ stand for?” The queries posed at the start of the major sections and the reviews that end each part of the chapter are also good sources of questions. But it is important not to rely on them entirely; making up your own questions is critical. *Essentials of Understanding Psychology* has wide margins in which you can write your own questions. This process helps you to focus on the key points of the chapter, while at the same time putting you in an inquisitive frame of mind.

It is now time for the next, and most crucial, step: to *read* the material. Read carefully and, even more importantly, read actively and critically. For instance, while you are reading, answer the questions you have asked yourself. You may find yourself coming up with new questions as you read along; that's fine, since it shows you are reading inquisitively and paying attention to the material. Critically evaluate material by considering the implications of what you are reading, thinking about

possible exceptions and contradictions, and examining the assumptions that lie behind the assertions made by the author.

The next step—the second “R”—is the most unusual. This “R” stands for *recite*, in which you look up from the book and describe and explain to yourself, or to a friend, the material you have just read and answer the questions you have posed earlier. Do it aloud; this is one time when talking to yourself is nothing to be embarrassed about. The recitation process helps you to clearly identify your degree of understanding of the material you have just read. Moreover, psychological research has shown that communicating material to others, or reciting it aloud to yourself, assists you in learning it in a different—and deeper—way than material that you do not intend to communicate. Hence, your recitation of the material is a crucial link in the studying process.

The final “R” refers to *review*. As we discuss in Chapters 5 and 6, reviewing is a prerequisite to fully learning and remembering material you have studied. Look over the information, reread the Recaps and Looking Back summaries, answer in-text review questions, and use any ancillary materials you may have available. (Both a traditional and a computerized student study guide are available to accompany *Essentials of Understanding Psychology*.) Reviewing should be an active process, in which you consider how different pieces of information fit together and develop a sense of the overall picture.

An alternative approach to studying—although not altogether dissimilar to SQ3R—is provided by the MURDER system (Dansereau, 1978). Despite the deadly connotations of its title, the MURDER system is a useful study strategy.

In MURDER, the first step is to establish an appropriate *mood* for studying by setting goals for a study session and choosing a time and place in which you will not be distracted. Next comes reading for *understanding*, in which careful attention is paid to the meaning of the material being studied. *Recall* is an immediate attempt to recall the material from memory, without referring to the text. *Digesting* the material comes next; you should correct any recall errors, and attempt to organize and store newly learned material in memory.

You should work next on *expanding* (analyzing and evaluating) new material and try to apply it to situations that go beyond the applications discussed in the text. By

incorporating what you have learned into a larger information network in memory, you will be able to recall it *more easily in the future*. Finally, the last step is *review*. Just as with the SQ3R system, MURDER suggests that the systematic review of material is a necessary condition for successful studying.

Both the SQ3R and MURDER systems provide a proven means of increasing your study effectiveness. It is not necessary, though, to feel tied to a particular strategy; you might want to combine other elements into your own study system. For example, learning tips and strategies for critical thinking will be presented throughout *Essentials of Understanding Psychology*, such as in Chapter 6 when the use of mnemonics (memory techniques for organizing material to help its recall) is discussed. If these tactics help you to successfully master new material, stick with them.

The last aspect of studying that warrants mention is that *when* and *where* you study are in some ways as important as *how* you study. One of the truisms of the psychological literature is that we learn things better, and are able to recall them longer, when we study material in small chunks over several study sessions, rather than massing our study into one lengthy period. This implies that all-night studying just before a test is going to be less effective—and a lot more tiring—than employing a series of steady, regular study sessions.

In addition to carefully timing your studying, you should seek out a special location to study. It doesn't really matter where it is, as long as it has minimal distractions and is a place that you use *only* for studying. Identifying a special “territory” allows you to get in the right mood for study as soon as you begin.

A FINAL COMMENT

By using the proven study strategies presented above, as well as by making use of the pedagogical tools integrated in the text, you will maximize your understanding of the material in this book and will master techniques that will help you learn and think critically in all your academic endeavors. More importantly, you will optimize your understanding of the field of psychology. It is worth the effort: The excitement, challenge, and promise that psychology holds for you are significant.

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