

# SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

SIXTH EDITION



SEARS

PEPLAU

FREEDMAN

TAYLOR

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**6<sup>th</sup>** *edition*

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# SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

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# PREFACE

When we wrote the first edition of this book nearly twenty years ago, our task was a much simpler one. The field of social psychology then was relatively new and relatively small. In the intervening decades it has changed dramatically.

There has been an explosion of research and theory, and a corresponding proliferation of journals meeting the specialized needs of social psychologists. There has been a renewed interest in the practical applications of social psychology for understanding urgent social issues. Women and ethnic minorities have been attracted to the field and have enriched it with new perspectives and new research questions. The students who take social psychology courses today are also a more diverse group: Minority students are better represented than ever before; women are now over half the students in American colleges; and more and more older students are taking our courses.

Our book has grown and changed with the times. This sixth edition incorporates the major new topics of research, the outstanding new studies, and the most contemporary examples. But all is not focused on newness; certain basic principles and goals have guided us in the development of this edition.

We believe that social psychology, like any science, is cumulative. As researchers push toward exciting new frontiers, they build on the accumulated knowledge of the field. The new findings of

today are best understood as adding to this body of knowledge. Our primary goal in this edition, as in each prior edition, has been to present the “basics” of the field—the core theories and findings that form the shared heritage of our discipline. We believe this has been one of the distinctive merits of the book through its several editions.

We have also been sensitive to the important changes taking place in contemporary social psychology. Over time, the core of the field has gradually shifted. There is less emphasis today on group dynamics, and more on intimate relationships, less interest in attitude change and more in social cognition, and so on. This changing core is reflected in this new edition. We have made every effort to include the most recent new research and the most advanced theories in social psychology.

A third goal has been to offer an integrated presentation of the field. As we discuss different topics, we have tried to keep the main theoretical ideas and traditions of social psychology firmly in view, so that students can see the underlying conceptual continuities in the field. For example, we initially introduce social cognition and attribution theory in our discussion of social perception, and then show how they have been used to understand such topics as attitude change, aggression, prejudice, and bias against women.

The application of research methods and theories to understanding social issues has been a major theme in social psychology. Throughout the text, we highlight ways in which social psychology sheds light on everyday experiences and social problems. We conclude with a section on applied social psychology that explores the most recent research and theory on prejudice, gender roles, environmental psychology, health psychology, and political psychology.

The success of any text depends ultimately on its ability to communicate clearly to student readers and to spark interest in the field. Our goal has been to present materials simply, without oversimplifying. The text is comprehensive, but not encyclopedic. We have written a textbook for undergraduate students, not a handbook of social psychology for professionals. We have paid special attention to selecting examples that illustrate basic principles in a lively way and to sharing our own personal enthusiasm for the field.

### *Special Features of the Sixth Edition*

This book has been successful throughout its life. Although our basic philosophy about the text remains the same, much has changed in the sixth edition. We think that the old book was good, but we have not left well enough alone. Here are some of the main features of the sixth edition.

**SHELLEY TAYLOR JOINS THE AUTHOR TEAM** A strong team can often benefit from the addition of new talent, particularly as the directions and emphases of a field change. We are fortunate to have Shelley Taylor bring her impressive expertise to this new edition. Shelley is the author of a bestselling book on *Social Cognition* (with Susan T. Fiske) and a leading textbook in *Health Psychology*. Her contributions are particularly evident in the completely revised chapter on social cognition and in the new chapter on health psychology.

**ORGANIZATION** The book is organized to provide a systematic presentation of the material. Two beginning chapters on theory and methods are followed by five major sections that progress from individual-level topics to dyads and groups,

and then to specific applications of social psychology.

Part One on social perception includes expanded coverage of new work on social cognition and attribution. Part Two presents work on attitude theory, attitudes and behavior, and attitude change. Part Three discusses interpersonal attraction, personal relationships, aggression, and prosocial behavior. Part Four on groups incorporates work on conformity and compliance as well as group behavior. Part Five on applied social psychology has chapters on prejudice, gender, environmental psychology, health psychology, and political psychology. We think that this sequence will fit well with the teaching preferences of many instructors. However, each chapter is self-contained and so the chapters can be used in any order.

**STYLE** We have made a major effort to keep the clarity and interest level of the text high. As in previous editions, we have kept the level of writing non-technical, and geared for the beginning student of social psychology. We have scrutinized every line of text, every table and figure, and every photograph. We enlisted the aid of undergraduates in our classes to help make the book readable. We have included many concrete examples. For instance, the book begins with several vignettes about social behavior for students to ponder. These illustrations raise questions about such topics as conformity, bystander intervention, and TV violence. In Chapter 2, we use specific studies that address the topics in these vignettes to illustrate different research methods.

**LEARNING AIDS** Various teaching aids further increase the effectiveness of the text. Each chapter begins with an outline. At the end of each chapter is a comprehensive summary of major concepts and findings. Key terms, which are shown in bold-face in the text, are listed at the end of each chapter and are defined in the glossary. Each chapter includes suggestions for further reading. The bibliography at the end of the book is extensive and up-to-date.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF NEW CONTENT** This edition provides a comprehensive survey of the mainstream of contemporary social psychology. In every chapter we

present both classic early studies that shaped the field and the best of very recent work. The new additions to this edition reflect two major trends in social psychology today: greater interest in the cognitive side of social psychology and greater attention to the application of social psychology to practical problems. Some of the highlights of new material in the sixth edition are:

- A completely revised chapter on social cognition presents the most active research areas in social psychology such as cognitive heuristics, categorization, salience, schemas, and person memory.
- The latest work on attribution processes is presented, including new material on the role of attributions in emotion, self-handicapping, false consensus, and learned helplessness.
- An updated discussion of attitudes gives major coverage to the elaboration-likelihood model of attitude change, especially research on peripheral cues, argument strength, repetition, and forewarning.
- Two chapters on interpersonal attraction and personal relationships include the latest research on loneliness, physical attractiveness, and social exchange theory, as well as a new “triangular” theory of romantic love.
- A completely revised chapter on prejudice presents major theories of prejudice, and includes the latest work on cognitive processes in stereotyping, social identity theory, and contact theory.
- A new chapter on health psychology discusses when and why people practice good health behaviors, how people know when they are sick and need treatment, how stress affects illness and how effective coping can mute the effects of stress, and how people adjust to long-term disability and disease.
- A new chapter on political psychology has sections on personality and politics, voting behavior, racial and gender conflict in politics, political socialization, mass media and politics, and international conflict and peace research.
- A chapter on gender in social life supplements the extensive coverage of gender throughout the book and provides in-depth coverage of gender stereotypes, androgyny and gender differences in social behavior, including new methods of meta-

analysis that have challenged our views about sex differences in several areas.

## *Instructor's Manual and Study Guide*

The text is accompanied by a comprehensive *Instructor's Manual with Tests* prepared by Gary T. Long. The manual outlines learning objectives for each chapter and provides detailed suggestions for lectures. Also included are numerous ideas for classroom discussions, student projects, paper topics, and other activities. There is a complete listing of films, references, and other materials to enrich the course. An extensive testbank of multiple-choice questions test students' recall of material as well as their ability to comprehend and apply the concepts presented in the text. Essay questions are also provided.

An important new feature of this edition is a student *Study Guide* prepared by Albert T. Smith and Deborah Prentice. For each chapter, the guide includes a detailed outline, a set of learning objectives to highlight the most important material, and a section on key terms and concepts. Multiple-choice questions permit students to test their own mastery of each chapter and aid in effective studying. Suggestions for student activities are included to enhance the learning of materials in the text.

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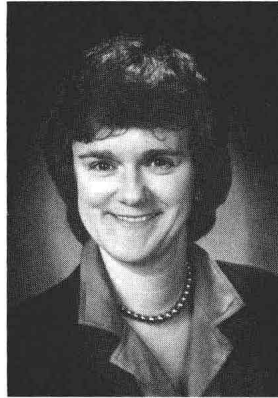
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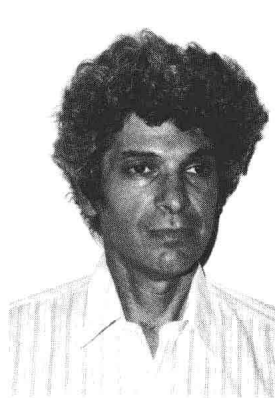
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## WHAT DO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGISTS STUDY?

**S**ocial psychology is the systematic study of social behavior. It deals with how we perceive other people and social situations, how we respond to others and they to us, and in general how we are affected by social situations. To start with, let us take a look at the kinds of things social psychologists are interested in understanding. Here are five vignettes, each illustrating a somewhat different area of interest in social psychology.

### *First Impressions and Lasting Relationships*

While you are driving to class, listening to some music on the radio, you are suddenly jolted out of your dreamlike state by a young woman who cuts in front of you. She is driving a bright red sports car considerably faster than the speed limit. She speeds on, finally squealing around a corner and disappears into the distance. You are a little startled, but then you reflect on the experience. You are surprised to find how quickly you came to have a strongly negative feeling toward her, even though you had only the briefest encounter. You quickly categorized her as a spoiled rich kid, probably from the wealthy neighborhood up in the hills near the campus. You also find that you came to a quick judgment about the causes of her behavior—you concluded that she cut in front of you because she is a generally reckless driver, not because she was avoiding a pothole or another driver or because she was getting ready to turn. When you think about it, you are a little surprised to realize that you have such a clear impression of a person with whom you have had only the briefest and most fleeting contact.

Then your mind drifts to the mixer you went to last Friday afternoon. You start to think about Mark, the student you met and talked to for about three-quarters of an hour. He seemed quite attrac-

tive and had a good sense of humor. Your roommate's brother went to high school with him and said he was a good student and people liked him. But you wonder. You noticed that he was wearing a religious medallion, and it is not your religion. He talked about going to religious services earlier in the week, so he seems to be fairly religious himself, and you are not. You had been telling him about the beautiful house your mother had just put on the market with her real estate firm, and Mark had asked how your father felt about that because he wasn't sure *he* wanted his wife to have a full-time job. You were certainly interested in Mark, but you have begun to wonder. How important is attractiveness over the long haul? What about differences in values? Are those issues that can iron themselves out over time, or be negotiated to mutually satisfactory agreements? Or do they just get more important over time, causing increasing amounts of conflict? What kinds of problems might they create? How could those problems be dealt with?

Social relationships always involve elements such as these. They raise many questions about how we form impressions, what is important in a relationship, how relationships change over time, and so on. The study of interpersonal relationships is central to social psychology.

### *Conformity and Attitude Change*

In your modern history class, you see a documentary on student protest on your campus in the 1960s. All the students have long hair and wear jeans and various kinds of old clothes. The males all seem to have beards or mustaches. They are passing marijuana cigarettes around, and they are constantly coming together in crowds, carrying signs and posters, and listening to speakers argue politics. There



A couple celebrates their 40th wedding anniversary. What factors have kept this marriage together for so many years, while other marriages end in divorce?

is an atmosphere of rebelliousness, of great activity in large crowds, and certainly a feeling of general carelessness, sloppiness, and untidiness about personal appearance.

After the film, you walk out onto your late 1980s campus. The students all are quite nicely dressed, and some of the clothes look quite expensive. Everyone is neat, clean, and tidy. The men all have fairly short hair. The students occasionally see someone they know and call out a greeting to them. No one seems to be angry or rebellious; on the contrary, almost everyone is smiling and friendly. There are no crowds, just groups of two or three or four friends walking along or talking. There are no signs or posters in evidence, or anything political at all. War and protest seem a million light years away.

Why have things changed so much? Can this be the same campus that was shown in the docu-

mentary? How can everything be so different? Why are students today so much less interested in protest? Why did students in the 1960s seem so upset and angry about everything? Where did their attitudes come from? Have their attitudes changed? Are they now driving imported cars and living in the suburbs and wearing coats and ties or dresses to work every day? What about the overt behavior the students were exhibiting? Is everyone just an incredible conformist, so that whatever clothing or hair style is in fashion is adopted by everyone?

You do not feel much like a blind conformist yourself, yet you notice that you are dressed much like everyone else. What makes people behave so similarly? And what about those large groups and crowds the 1960s students got into? What makes people join such groups? How are people different when they are in groups? Does a group make people do extreme things? Hostile things? Out of the corner of your eye, just as you are lost in these thoughts, you see two students walking along in punk rock outfits, and you see that one of them was your straight roommate's best friend in junior high school. What is going on?

### *Violence on Television and in the Streets*

Violent crime is a major problem in America. All over the country, people have become afraid to leave their homes at night because of the danger of being assaulted. For example, 47 percent of those surveyed in 1982 (National Opinion Research Center) said there were areas within a mile of their homes where they would be afraid to walk alone at night. Many observers have noted that the rate of violent crime has increased during the same period that television has become the dominant entertainment medium in America. Almost all Americans seem to watch huge amounts of television—virtually every household has a set, and the average set is on about seven hours a day. Young people are exposed to enormous amounts of television: By the age of 18, the average American child has spent 20,000 hours watching television, more time than they spent in classrooms, churches, and all other educational and cultural activities put together.

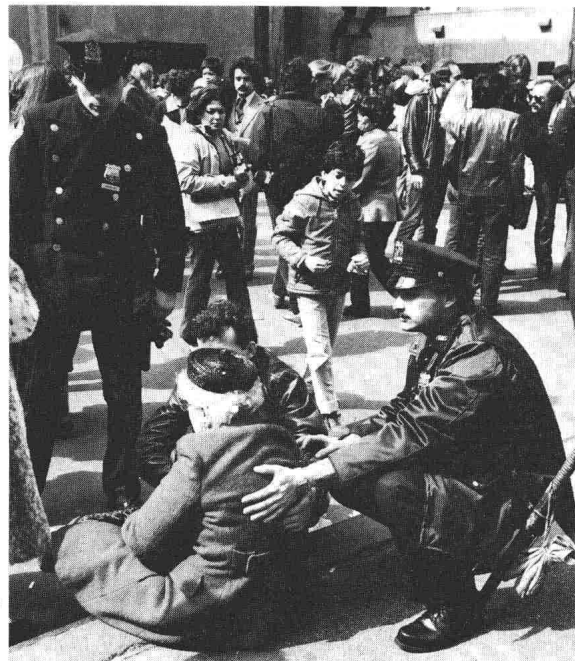
Much television programming depicts violent physical force. By the early 1980s, prime-time television exposed viewers to almost five acts of violence involving physical force per hour, involving more than half of all the leading characters in prime-time shows. And almost three-fourths of all the shows contained violence (Comstock, 1982).

Many have linked these two developments and concluded that such widespread crime must stem at least in part from violent television. Sometimes they offer vivid anecdotes to support this view. For example, in San Francisco, an 11-year-old girl was raped with a soda bottle shortly after a television movie had depicted an assault with a similar weapon. In Miami, the lawyer for a boy who had killed someone pleaded that the boy was not responsible for the death because he was just imitating what he had seen on television. The belief that television violence causes crime is widely held. In the mid-1970s, the national PTA began a campaign to monitor television content. The American Medical Association adopted a resolution calling on broadcasters to reduce television violence as a menace to the nation's health. An advisory committee to the U.S. Surgeon General said there was reasonable evidence of a link between television violence and aggressive behavior.

The origin of violent crime, or of aggressive behavior in general, is a central topic for social psychology. That violent television breeds violent crime is a popular theory. But is it true? And if so, under what conditions does media violence have such an effect? Does it occur for all kinds of people? Of all ages? What about the effects of going to a boxing match, or watching a football game? In asking whether or not viewing television violence increases aggression, we may really be raising a more general question: Namely, what are the effects of watching *any* kind of violence, be it on television or anywhere else? These are among the many questions social psychologists have raised about violence.

### ***Woman in Distress: No One Came to Help***

At about 9 P.M. on Sunday, March 6, 1983, a 21-year-old woman walked into a bar in a blue-collar



Ken Karp

**Why does this woman get help, unlike those in the text? Why is it only police officers who seem to be helping?**

neighborhood of New Bedford, Massachusetts, and stopped to have a drink. She later stated that when she tried to leave, a man blocked the door, tackled her, stripped off her clothes except for a sweater, and attacked her. Two other men held her down and tried to force her to perform oral sex acts. As she struggled, screaming and pleading for help from the other customers at the bar, she was lifted onto the pool table and raped. In the words of the police, "She cried for help, she asked for help, she begged for help—but no one helped her." The bartender told police he gave a customer a dime to call the police, but that the customer dialed a wrong number. No one went to the woman's aid, the bartender said, because one of the attackers brandished a butter knife.

The woman finally broke free and ran out of the tavern, naked from the waist down. She flagged down a car, and the driver took her to a telephone. She was treated at a hospital and released. Police later arrested six men between the ages of 23 and 26, though the men who witnessed the incident



did not come forward. Under public pressure, the bar owner handed in his liquor license two days later, and the bar was closed for good. Ultimately, four men were convicted of aggravated rape, and given long prison sentences.

There have been other highly publicized cases of refusal to help, notably that of another young woman, Kitty Genovese. On March 13, 1964, as she was coming home from work late at night, she was attacked and repeatedly stabbed in front of her apartment building in Kew Gardens, New York. During her half-hour struggle with the attacker, she repeatedly screamed that she was being stabbed and begged for help. Thirty-eight people living in adjacent houses and apartments later said they had heard her screams. But no one came to her aid or even called the police. They said they did not want to get involved. The police were not called until twenty minutes after she died; then they arrived in two minutes. Even then, none of her neighbors would come out onto the street until an ambulance arrived to take her body away.

Why did no one help? How did the bystanders perceive these two victims? How did they perceive their own responsibility and the morality of what they and others were doing? Furthermore, how can we explain the fact that in other situations, bystanders often do volunteer assistance. We know of instances where volunteers work tirelessly for long hours to save the lives of people trapped by earthquakes, floods, or accidents. Or cases where passers-by risk their own lives to help someone being mugged on the street. At times, people act helpfully, even heroically toward total strangers. Under what conditions do people step forward to help others, and when do they just passively permit suffering to continue? Social psychologists are concerned with uncovering the answers to these questions.

### ***The Eichmann Defense: Just Obeying Orders***

Before World War II, nearly 9 million Jews lived in Europe. The European Jewish community had had a long and brilliant tradition of culture, artistic and intellectual achievement, and religious devotion. Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party came to power



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Nazi official Adolph Eichmann testifies from a bullet-proof booth. An Israeli court found him guilty of sending Jews to their death, thus rejecting his claim that he was innocent because he merely obeyed orders.

in Germany in 1933, contending that the Aryan race was superior to such “mongrel races” as the Jews and gypsies, and that Europe needed to be racially purified. Within a few years, the Nazi regime had begun to arrest and imprison Jews in Germany. By 1939, when Germany invaded Poland, hundreds of thousands were already in concentration camps.

Soon thereafter, Nazi officials began secretly exchanging memos on “a final solution to the Jewish problem.” Under the effective management of Adolph Eichmann, a dedicated career bureaucrat, Jews throughout Europe were systematically rounded up and shipped to concentration camps such as Dachau and Auschwitz, where they were starved, gassed, shot, cremated, and buried in mass graves. By 1945, when World War II ended, about 6 million European Jews had died. Of those Jews who had lived before the war in the 21 countries fully occupied by the Germans, three out of every four were dead. Atomic bombs would have had