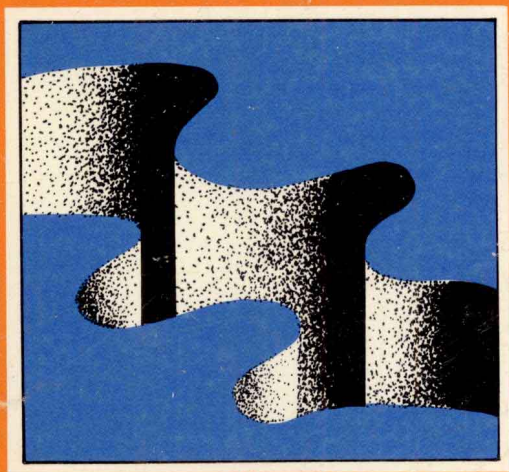


TAKING SIDES

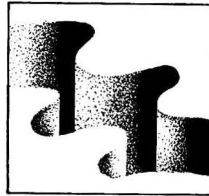


Clashing Views on Controversial Psychological Issues

fifth edition

Joseph Rubinstein • Brent Slife

TAKING SIDES



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Edited, Selected and with Introductions by

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and

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PREFACE

The “facts” we amass from our scientific laboratories are an important part of the way we live, and so are the debates—the dialogues—that follow from the “facts.” Does smoking really cause cancer? Does eating eggs lead to heart problems? Is sugar really harmful? In psychology, too, there are issues that begin with research and become part of the dialogues that affect our lives: Can suicide be rational? Are intelligence tests helpful? Should we use a behavior technology to control social behavior? In deciding how we will allow these questions to affect our lives, we conduct dialogues—sometimes within ourselves, sometimes with others: Should we avoid smoking, eggs, and sugar? Should we avoid intelligence tests and behavior control?

Sometimes a dialogue can degenerate into an argument: “I don’t care what you say; if I feel like smoking, I’ll smoke!” Sometimes a dialogue is emotional and does not seriously consider information: “That’s nothing but a political move to smash the tobacco industry!” We feel that the most productive dialogues are those in which the evidence for all points of view is carefully examined and considered in point-counterpoint fashion.

A dialogue approach to learning is certainly not new. Socrates engaged in it with his students in ancient Greece. His point-counterpoint procedure was termed a *dialectic*. Although Socrates and his companions hoped eventually to know “truth” by this method, they did not see the dialectic as having a predetermined end. Each issue was considered to be open-ended and discussable from another point of view. There were no “right answers” to know or “facts” to memorize. The emphasis in learning was on how to evaluate information from opposing perspectives.

It is in this dialectical spirit that *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Psychological Issues*, Fifth Edition, was compiled. To aid this process, an introduction is provided at the beginning of each pair of articles that points out significant quotes and defines the positions of each author on the issue being considered. Also provided is a set of point-counterpoint statements pertaining to the issue, which should help get your dialogue off the ground. Your acceptance, rejection, or modification of this material—your involvement—constitutes the dialogue; do not only embrace one side of an issue or another. This Fifth Edition contains issues of importance to us all. We cannot afford to let them pass without discussion.

So become involved, make the information truly yours, and enjoy!

Joseph R. Rubinstein
Brent D. Slife

INTRODUCTION

Ways of Looking at Psychological Issues

In a sense, all of life may be viewed as a trial. We are all members of the jury called upon to participate in decisions that will affect the lives of friends, neighbors, family, and ourselves. Somewhere along the line, even though we cannot be certain about what is “true,” we must make a decision that calls for some sort of action. We must take a side.

People who are alert to social issues frequently ask specific questions to help them in their search for evidence. After gathering evidence from various points of view, they deliberate and make decisions. But, as any involved citizen is keenly aware, knowing the “facts” often is not enough to make useful decisions. It is seeing relationships after examining evidence from all sides and the development of personal insights that makes it worthwhile to gather “facts.”

YOUR LIFE IS IN YOUR HANDS—IF YOU CHOOSE

The issues that stimulate heated controversy usually do so because they touch our lives and because there is no final proof or fully objective answer. Although it may not always be obvious how they do it, issues have the potential to command our personal destinies, as people who wish to have a say in their future are well aware.

The process of our personal deliberation about these questions and attempts to find answers constitutes, in large measure, our role in the world in which we live. If we choose *not* to explore, we are placing major decisions about our lives in the hands of parents, teachers, salespeople, government officials, and others in our local community, state, and nation. On the other hand, a concern for exploring these issues can be a prelude to active community involvement and to taking a vital part in fashioning our future.

It may not always be apparent how some of the psychological issues in this anthology affect you, especially if you have no prior knowledge of them. Some questions may seem to be mere intellectual exercises. Resolving questions such as “Do attitudes affect cancer?” (Issue 4) or “Can intelligence be increased?” (Issue 11) may seem to have no personal consequences. However, coming to grips with questions such as these is very likely to provide personal direction in your own life. If you fully accept that the effects of cancer and the quality of intelligence are beyond our conscious control, you are not very likely to make attempts to modify them in yourself. If you believe otherwise, however, you might change your style of living.

Other issues may be fascinating in and of themselves but seem remote to your life—for example, “Is the state of hypnosis a unique altered state of

WAYS OF LOOKING AT PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES

consciousness?" (Issue 6). But once you begin to explore this question, you will discover that if hypnosis is not a unique state, then some of the apparently extraordinary feats of memory, concentration, and strength supposedly caused by hypnosis are just as feasible without undergoing any special procedures for inducing the hypnotic state. In other words, it may be possible for you to improve your memory, strength, or self-discipline to the degree you thought possible only through hypnosis.

DISTINGUISHING TYPES OF INFORMATION

In the exploration of public issues, there are certain skills that lead to constructive resolutions. Chief among these is the ability to distinguish among the various types of information we all use to arrive at conclusions. We become lost in a discussion when we cannot distinguish between fact and opinion or between evidence based on data and evidence based on values. When we can sort out types of information, we are prepared for an orderly discussion based on a combination of objective evidence and personal values. In the process, we frequently find out more about ourselves and what we really consider important in life.

In order to help you develop the ability to make these distinctions, several types of information are listed below. A definition for each term is in *italics*.

HYPOTHESIS: *A statement of how at least two events or conditions may be related.* Hypotheses are stated as though they are answers to questions, but they are actually guesses. The reason for stating a hypothesis is to make clear what events or conditions must be investigated. The definitions for the terms in a hypothesis are very often at the heart of the problem being discussed. Participants in a discussion may be arguing without getting anywhere simply because they each have a different meaning for the same term and do not realize it. A research investigation is done in order to determine whether a hypothesis should be accepted or rejected.

DATA: *The recorded observations and measurements collected in a research study.* The data in some cases may be simply a collection of numbers. They indicate what the results of the study are *before* any conclusions are made.

EVIDENCE: *The application of data to confirm or reject a hypothesis that has been previously stated.* This involves a use of the data to make conclusions.

CONCLUSIONS: *The final inferences concerning what the evidence allows us to assume.*

FACT: *Information that we take to be true because it is widely accepted.* Facts are the trickiest kinds of information. In a court of law, the jury's responsibility is to decide what the "facts" are. The court's responsibility is to decide what is meant by the law. It is common in science for new facts to change old facts. In some case, it can be done by a simple vote. Mental disorders, "abnormalities," are officially designated and classified by a committee of the American Psychiatric Association. Trustees of the association vote to approve or disapprove of the committee's classifications. Since these experts agree that schizophrenia is abnormal, it is therefore a "fact."

OPINION: *A judgment made by an individual who interprets the data in terms of what makes personal sense.* Opinions are often confused with objective evidence.

VALUES: *Ideas held by an individual or a group about the way things ought to be.* Values are extremely important determinants of how we live our lives and make decisions. We all have values, but we are often not clear about them until we think about them or discuss issues with other people.

FREE WILL AND DETERMINISM

Underlying many public issues dealing with the scientific study of humans is a fundamental question that philosophers have asked for centuries: "Do people have *free will* to exert control over their own destinies, or are their destinies completely *determined* by forces outside their control?"

If you are a strong believer in *free will*, then when reading the issues here, you may take the position that we are always free to make a decision that will change the future.

If you are an advocate of *determinism*, then you will believe that what we are is already locked up in our genetic structures and that how we behave is fully determined by a combination of our past experiences and our environmental circumstances.

When scanning the questions in the table of contents, you will note that some of them are specifically concerned with the extent to which certain characteristics, such as intelligence, are inherited. Others are concerned with the value of using psychological knowledge to control the behavior of other people.

To find out why people are as they are, psychologists assume that there are reasons for people being as they are. In other words, our biology determines what we are, and conditions and events determine how we will behave.

One scientific strategy accepted by many psychologists in their search for causes assumes that human nature is lawful and ordered by conditions and events. We attempt to predict the fate of humans by studying the forces acting upon them and within them. The responsibility of a scientist is to find as many cause-and-effect relationships and explanations as possible.

The idea that things cause us to be what we are has been quite fruitful. It has helped us discover some highly predictable relationships. For example, if certain areas of the brain are destroyed, a person will not be able to remember events that happen after the brain injury. But what are the limitations of predictability? Would knowing everything about the brain enable us to predict everything about the person? This scientific strategy assumes that there are *no* limitations to predictability. According to this notion, *everything* is caused by *something*.

This is primarily the premise of determinism. It keeps psychologists looking for causes that determine human affairs. It is not necessarily a "fact" or a "truth." In discussing these issues, you will soon begin to appreciate the difference between making assumptions about truth and making assumptions for strategic reasons.

WAYS OF LOOKING AT PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES

While psychologists may appear to take the strict determinist position in the search for causes, they are, nevertheless, very likely to take the free will position that we must accept personal responsibility for our conduct.

PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACHES

In making sense of information, we all use a framework to put it all together. As individuals, we are not always aware of our own frameworks. They are hard to recognize because we may change our way of looking at information from time to time. You may view the same information in a variety of ways, depending upon whether it comes from your boyfriend or girlfriend, your mother or father, your teacher, or today's newspaper.

The more we engage in specific attempts to put information together, the more likely we are to achieve personal insights and to believe that we know who we are and what we are like. This development of a sense of personal identity is a part of the excitement of discussing issues.

Just as we personally develop frameworks for putting information together, so do specialists in human behavior. In the brief history of psychology, specialists have developed a variety of scientific approaches. Several modern perspectives have evolved from these and are easily recognizable today. They may be roughly categorized as follows:

BIOLOGICAL. In its extreme form, this point of view suggests that if we fully understand all there is to know about the human body and how all of its parts operate we would understand all we wish to know about our emotions, creative urges, and social behavior. In this extreme form, we are just mechanisms. Prediction and control of human behavior may be achieved by fine technicians just as prediction and control of automobile performance may be achieved by fine engineers and mechanics.

If we knew enough, according to this view, we could eliminate fighting by cutting it out of the brain, or we could combat the "blues" by swallowing pills to change our personal chemistry.

PSYCHODYNAMIC. This point of view emphasizes that the behavior we are aware of in ourselves and in others stems from forces within us that we are not normally aware of—that we are born with an inventory of drives and instincts that respond to life's experiences. These hidden inner forces are considered to be responsible for the way we feel, think, and behave. To understand these forces is to understand human nature, according to this school of thought.

BEHAVIORAL. This perspective contends that we need only observe how a person responds to stimuli in the environment; all that we would ever want to know about a person can be described in terms of the individual's behavior. If we achieve control over the environment, we achieve control over the individual.

You may have noticed how obvious the deterministic assumption is in these frameworks. Humans are acted upon by their inherited nature, by the environment, or by a combination of both. The following two frameworks

lean more toward the direction of free will, with humans taking an active role in decision making.

COGNITIVE. Human beings receive information about the world in which they live, and then they do something with it. From the cognitive viewpoint, we are active agents in choosing which information we will receive. After receiving information, we process it in some personally meaningful way and then either use it or put it away in the form of memories for later use. Here, consideration for the active selection and personal processing of information implies that we are not merely passive responders.

HUMANISTIC. The point of view grew specifically out of a reaction against other psychological perspectives that emphasize the forces determining human destiny. The humanistic orientation places emphasis on our *human* nature, rather than our mechanistic nature. It emphasizes how we see and think about ourselves, rather than what we do. It is a concern for our striving to become more than we are at this moment, a striving to fill our potentials.

There is yet another orientation: the eclectic one. An eclectic orientation chooses whatever seems to work best from any of the many existing frameworks for understanding human nature. An eclectic psychologist may take a biological point of view when researching and theorizing, a psychodynamic point of view when trying to understand his children, a behaviorist point of view when training his experimental subjects to perform certain tasks, a cognitive point of view when teaching, and a humanistic point of view in his general way of dealing with people. You may best understand this if you think about the different ways you might answer the question, "What have you been doing lately?" when asked by your best friend, your kid sister, your mother, or your chemistry professor.

IN CONCLUSION

As the editors of this volume, we respect all these points of view. We see the fruitfulness of scientific strategies that seek the determining causes of behavior. In that sense, we appreciate a deterministic orientation. Nevertheless, we are unwilling to ask you to sit back and take a passive role in these issues. We firmly believe that your active involvement in these issues will help you develop the skills that give you increasing control over your own destiny. In that sense, we emphasize your freedom of will.

In order to have an impact on your world, you must learn, deliberate, discuss, decide, and act. To do this effectively, you should know the difference between what the objective evidence tells you and what your values tell you. And you should be able to distinguish between "truth" and "strategy" when you take sides.

After you have come to grips with various types of information and various psychological frameworks, you will find that the last issue in this book pulls it all together. It is a well-known classic and still hotly-debated issue: "Is the control of human behavior a proper goal for psychology?"

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Some researchers contend that subjects must sometimes be "fooled" into yielding important experimental results. It is argued that the results will be unreliable if the subjects know the true objective of the experiment. Is the danger of embarrassment or even anguish for the subject justified by the information that is produced?	
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NO: Peter Singer , from "Tools for Research, or What the Public Doesn't Know It Is Paying For," <i>The New York Review of Books</i>	32
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Is free will a delusion? Do biological processes control our behavior? Or does physiological research generally support the existence of free will? These	

questions are addressed and debated by a forensic neurologist and a humanistic psychologist.

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There is great trauma that attends serious disease. Can a positive attitude affect the progress of illness, or are we doing a disservice to patients by suggesting that they bear a responsibility for their condition? Science has produced conflicting evidence in response to this question.

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The existence of extrasensory perception has long been the subject of great debate among scientists. Has science succeeded in proving or disproving this phenomenon? Much of the debate is centered on the reliability of experimental results and how they are interpreted.

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NO: Theodore X. Barber , from "Who Believes in Hypnosis?" <i>Psychology Today</i>	96

In recent years, many psychologists have turned their interest inwards to the nature of mental phenomena. Concern for special states of consciousness induced by drugs, meditation, sleep, and hypnosis has raised questions about their very existence. Are they distinct and unique, or do they merely emphasize the varieties that a single state of consciousness may assume?

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ISSUE 7. Should Use of the Principles of Conditioning Be Limited in the Modification of Undesirable Behavior? 106

YES: R. Joseph Lucero, David J. Vail, and John Scherber, from "Regulating Operant Conditioning," *Hospital and Community Psychology* 108

NO: Nathan B. Miron, from "Issues and Implications of Operant Conditioning," *Hospital and Community Psychology* 110

Operant conditioning principles are widely used to treat all types of problems, from student misbehavior to patient psychosis. Many have questioned their use, contending that their application is unethical and dehumanizing. A special concern is the application of conditioning to patients in mental institutions.

ISSUE 8. Can Computers Think? 116

YES: H. A. Simon, from "Using Cognitive Science to Solve Human Problems," *Science and Public Policy Seminar* 118

NO: Ulric Neisser, from "Computers Can't Think," *Creative Computing* 123

What is the nature of human thought? If machines can perform problem-solving and decision-making functions, does that make them capable of thought as we understand it? This issue goes to the very heart of our view of ourselves as unique in our reasoning abilities.

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ISSUE 9. Should Children Learn Morality Primarily by Examining Their Own Reasoning? 134

YES: Lawrence Kohlberg, from "The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Moral Education," *Phi Delta Kappan* 136

NO: Edward A. Wynne, from "The Great Tradition in Education: Transmitting Moral Values," *Educational Leadership* 145

Kohlberg discusses theories of cognitive and moral growth. He argues that moral and civic education have much in common and are most effective when educational methods are designed to stimulate personal growth. But Edward Wynne traces and provides justification for traditional methods of transmitting moral values in our educational systems.

ISSUE 10. Should Parents Provide Academic Instruction for Their Children Before They're Old Enough for School? 154

YES: Siegfried and Therese Englemann, from *Give Your Child a Superior Mind* 156

NO: David Elkind, from "Formal Education and Early Childhood Education: An Essential Difference," *Phi Delta Kappan* 163

Siegfried and Therese Englemann claim that preschool instruction using their procedures is pleasurable and will give children a lasting head start. David Elkind forcefully argues against giving academic instruction to very young children because of the risks it can pose to a child's development.

ISSUE 11. Can Intelligence Be Increased? 174

YES: R. J. Sternberg, from "How Can We Teach Intelligence?" *Educational Leadership* 176

NO: Arthur R. Jensen, from "Compensatory Education and the Theory of Intelligence," *Educational Leadership* 187

Psychologists have long debated the origins of intelligence. Is a person's intelligence set for life, or is it possible to increase intelligence through training programs? The answers to this issue have profound educational and social implications and bring into question many long-standing assumptions.

ISSUE 12. Can Intelligence Be Measured with a Single Score? 196

YES: Arthur R. Jensen, from *Straight Talk About Mental Tests* 198

NO: Howard Gardner, from "The Seven Frames of Mind," *Psychology Today* 209

Is intelligence a single, measurable characteristic, or is it the result of an interaction among many elements? If the tests now in use are based on a single definition, are we making accurate assessments of intelligence or are we only predicting success or failure in school? The answers to this debate have profound social implications.

PART 5: MENTAL HEALTH AND THERAPY 217

ISSUE 13. Do Diagnostic Labels Hinder the Effective Treatment of Persons with Mental Disorders? 218

YES: D.L. Rosenhan, from "On Being Sane in Insane Places," *Science* 220

NO: Robert L. Spitzer, from "On Pseudoscience in Science, Logic in Remission and Psychiatric Diagnosis: A Critique of 'On Being Sane in Insane Places,'" *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* **235**

The traditional first step in treating a disorder is to diagnose it—that is, to classify it, give it a name, label it. But once a label has been affixed, it may put blinders on the way the problem is seen—properly or improperly.

ISSUE 14. Can Suicide Be Rational? **250**

YES: Mary Rose Barrington, from "Apologia for Suicide," in *Suicide: The Ethical Issues* **252**

NO: Herbert Hendin, from "The Right to Suicide," *Suicide in America* **260**

We often think of suicide as a final act of desperation undertaken by a person who must be emotionally unbalanced even to contemplate such an act. Aren't there times when suicide may be the most rational way out of an intolerable situation?

ISSUE 15. Is Psychotherapy Effective? **268**

YES: Julian Meltzoff and Melvin Kornreich, from "It Works," *Psychology Today* **270**

NO: Martin Gross, from *The Psychological Society* **277**

Treatment for psychological problems is almost as common nowadays as is treatment for physical problems. No longer is psychotherapy used exclusively for patients in mental institutions. Now, people with all types of problems are going to therapists. Are these people wasting their time and money in therapy, or are they getting significant benefits they cannot gain anywhere else?

ISSUE 16. Should Electroshock Therapy Be Discontinued? **288**

YES: Leonard Roy Frank, from "Electroshock: A Paradigm of Psychiatric Tyranny," *Issues in Radical Therapy* **290**

NO: Harold Sackheim, from "The Case for ECT," *Psychology Today* **297**

Electroshock therapy has long been used to aid in the treatment of various emotional disturbances. Is it an unwarranted and dangerous infringement on the rights and well-being of patients, or is it a valuable and effective therapy that can produce positive results?

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ISSUE 17. Is Pornography Harmful? 306

YES: James C. Dobson, from *Final Report of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography* 308

NO: Larry Baron, Barbara Ehrenreich et al., from "Statements of the Shadow Commissioners," *The United States vs. Sex: How the Meese Commision Lied About Sex* 315

Psychologist James Dobson, who was a member of the Meese commission on pornography, feels that pornography is devastating to its victims. Baron, Ehrenreich, and other "Shadow Commissioners," a group of citizens concerned about the report, contend that there is no evidence to support a causal connection between pornography and possible harms.

ISSUE 18. Should Insanity be Considered a Legal Defense for Criminals? 326

YES: Richard Bonnie, from Statement Submitted to the Committee on the Judiciary, *United States Senate* 328

NO: Jonathan Rowe, from "Why Liberals Should Hate the Insanity Defense," *Washington Monthly* 335

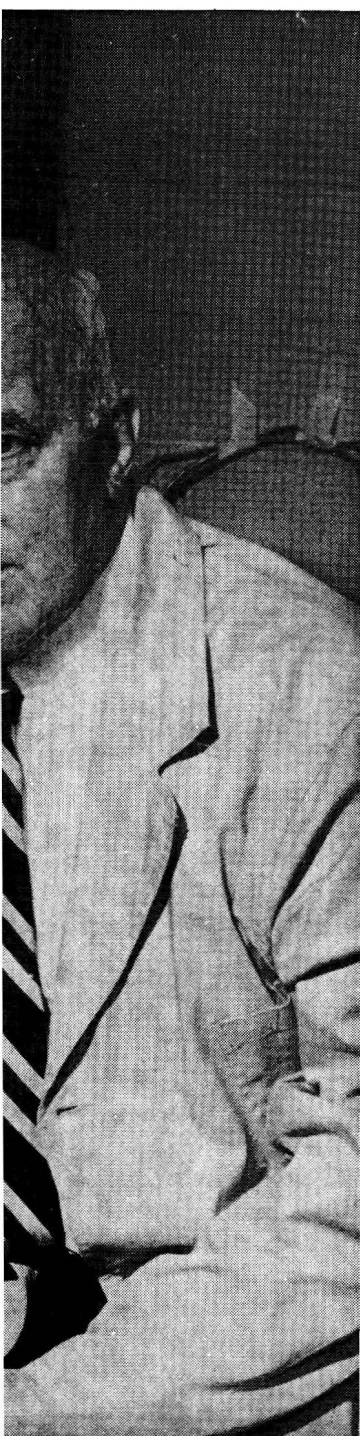
Richard Bonnie has testified that a modified form of the existing insanity defense is essential because some people with mental disorders do not deserve to be punished. Jonathan Rowe feels that the insanity defense is simply, most often, a legal ploy exploited to service white, upper-middle-class defendants.

ISSUE 19. Is the Control of Human Behavior a Proper Goal for Psychology? 346

YES: B. F. Skinner, from "Some Issues Concerning the Control of Human Behavior: A Symposium," *Science* 348

NO: Carl R. Rogers, from "Some Issues Concerning the Control of Human Behavior: A Symposium," *Science* 356

Both behaviorism and humanism have provided strong influences in psychology. These influences have, in fact, often conflicted. One of the classic conflicts has to do with the proper overall objectives of psychology.



Neal E. Miller

PART 1

Research and Biological Processes

Scientific research can raise serious ethical concerns. For example, difficult questions are posed by the use of deception of human subjects and by the use of animals in studies in which human subjects could not ethically be used. Can deception and the use of animals in research be justified by the benefits to society?

Sometimes we try to solve ancient philosophical problems by studying the relationship between biology and behavior. Can studies of the brain help resolve questions of free will and determinism? Can a positive attitude alter the course of serious disease?

Can Deception in Research Be Justified?

Can Experiments Using Animals Be Justified?

Is Our Behavior Primarily Determined by Biological Processes?

Do Attitudes Affect Cancer?
