

TWO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGIES

SECOND EDITION



COOKIE WHITE STEPHAN ■ WALTER G. STEPHAN

■ **SECOND EDITION** ■

Two Social Psychologies

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Two Social Psychologies



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*To Janie and Neil White,
and to the memory of Peg and Jim Stephan.*

INSTRUCTOR'S PREFACE

In this text we attempt to integrate sociological and psychological social psychology. For each of the topics we discuss we have tried to bring together and synthesize the theories and research of both disciplines.

We begin the book with three introductory chapters, starting with a discussion of the differences between the two social psychologies in theory, level of analysis, and methods. We show students that combining the two approaches yields a richer and more complete understanding of social behavior than using only one approach. In the second chapter we first present two sociological social psychology theories: symbolic interactionism and role theory. Then we present two theories used by both social psychologies: exchange theory and social learning theory. We present these theories to illustrate the range of theories used in the two disciplines and to provide students with a background in some of the theories we will rely on in subsequent chapters. Chapter 3 covers a wide variety of techniques employed by the two social psychologies. It starts with techniques employed primarily by sociological social psychologists including questionnaires, interviews, and observational techniques. This chapter then covers techniques more commonly employed by psychological social psychology including experiments and field studies.

Having laid the groundwork for an understanding of how the two social psychologies approach social behavior, we proceed to a discussion of specific topic areas. These chapters are arranged in an order that we find logical, but since each is a separate unit they may be covered in any order the instructor wishes. We begin with a chapter on the self because self cognitions have such an important impact on behavior. The chapter on the self and the following ones on socialization and gender roles rely heavily on both sociological and psychological approaches. We have paired conformity and deviance, even though traditionally the first has primarily

been the domain of psychology and the second of sociology. We think these chapters, along with the ones on socialization and gender roles, provide students with an essential background in understanding the important influence that social structure exerts on social interaction.

Next we explore a set of topics that derive primarily from psychological social psychology, including person perception, attitude change, attraction, prosocial behavior, and aggression. Our discussions of each of these topics include contributions of sociological social psychologists that are often ignored in psychological social psychology texts. For instance, discussions of establishing and negotiating identities, sociobiology, charitable contributions, rape, child abuse, and wife abuse are included. These chapters illustrate the role that factors associated with social situations, as well as individual factors, play in shaping social behavior.

The chapters on groups, intergroup relations, and collective behavior show how effectively the two social psychologies can be combined to yield a more comprehensive picture of a given topic than relying on only one approach. The study of groups and their interrelations provides a perfect opportunity to demonstrate that individual behavior is embedded in social contexts, of which a prominent feature is the groups to which individuals belong.

We end the book by applying the two social psychologies to the criminal justice system and to health and illness. We do this to show students that social psychology can make contributions to our understanding of important social institutions.

The essence of our approach is well summarized by Sheldon Stryker in a review of this text: "You cannot think reasonably about human behavior without considering the impact of cultural, social, and interactional processes on the human who behaves."

We would like to thank Sheldon Stryker, Indiana University; J. Michael Armer, Florida State University; Charles M. Bonjean, University of Texas, Austin; Nathan Church; Kathleen T. Crittenden, University of Illinois, Chicago; Harry Gyman, Bowling Green State University; Cary S. Hart, University of Toledo; Judith A. Howard, University of Washington; Jerri Husch, Tufts University; Karl Pillemer, University of

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STUDENT'S PREFACE

We are all social psychologists at heart because we all share a fascination with social behavior. In this book we will try to teach you a systematic approach to understanding social behavior. We have made this text as “user friendly” as we can. This preface outlines what we have done to make this book easy to use. We also offer suggestions concerning how to read this book to achieve maximal learning.

Organization within the Chapters

Every chapter begins with an outline and ends with a summary. At the beginning of each chapter we briefly discuss the main topics to be covered. The material in the chapters is divided through the use of three levels of subheads. These subheads form a hierarchy. The primary subhead indicates the main topics to be presented. The second level of subhead is used to divide these main topics into subcategories. The third level of subhead is used for more detailed information. Generally the first and last paragraphs under each subheading contain the most valuable information. New ideas are presented and material is summarized in these paragraphs. Similarly, the first and last sentences of each paragraph are usually the most important. The central concepts in each chapter are italicized. Usually the definition of the concept is presented the first time the concept appears.

Each chapter contains extra material to lighten your reading. Boxes are used to supplement the ideas presented in the text. Pictures, figures, tables, and cartoons are included to make the material easier to understand or more interesting. To help you focus on the ideas and information presented in the book we have tried to minimize the use of names and dates. You can find the references to the material we cite at the end of each chapter.

Study Tips

To learn the material in our book, or in any other book, you must comprehend and organize the information you read. You will remember more if you follow a few simple rules.

First, you should read in blocks of time. How long these blocks should be depends on your reading rate, ability to concentrate, and alertness. When you are tired or distracted a half hour may be too much, but when you are able to give yourself fully to the job of reading it may be possible to go for hours. To make it easier to concentrate, try to read in an environment that is free from distractions or disruptions.

Second, prepare to read the material you are going to cover before you start. If you are beginning a chapter, read the outline. Then read the summary at the end of the chapter. You may not fully understand all the concepts and findings that are summarized, but don't be discouraged. What you do not understand tells you what you need to pay the most attention to as you read. Next, decide how much material you are going to read at this sitting. Preview this material by skimming the subheadings so you get a general idea of the topics covered in this section.

Why all this preparation? Memory depends on understanding and structuring information. Knowing the structure of the material beforehand gives you a framework into which you can fit information as you read it. The material will be easier to recall later if it is well organized to begin with.

Third, read for comprehension. If you cannot comprehend the information, you will not remember it. We have tried to help you comprehend the material by presenting it in a logical fashion, but ultimately you must do the work of comprehending it. This is an active, not a passive process. If you want to remember information you cannot simply try to understand it, you must actively engage it and challenge your own understanding in the process. Before you read a paragraph ask yourself relevant questions, such as “What is cognitive dissonance?” or “Is self-monitoring useful or harmful?” Try to think of examples of concepts or apply them to your

own life or the lives of friends of yours. Relate the concepts to one another as you read.

Fourth, match your reading style to the material. If the material is unfamiliar or difficult, read more slowly and go back over it if necessary. Read illustrations or examples more quickly. Varying your reading rate will maintain your interest. Sometimes reading a little faster than usual will force you to concentrate harder and this can have beneficial effects. To make it easier to review the material later, and to force you to note what is worth remembering, underline the central concepts of theories and important research findings for each topic.

Fifth, recall what you have read. Recalling information is one of the best ways of improving memory for it. After you have read a paragraph or a section, try to recall the main points. If you cannot remember them immediately after reading them, you almost certainly will not be able to recall them later. If you have difficulty remembering the material, read it again. You can't answer questions about material you do not understand or remember. When you have finished reading all the material for this sitting spend an extra minute or two to see if you can recall the main points in order. Ask yourself what questions your instructor is likely to ask about this material. Could you answer them now? If not, you may want to spend some extra time on this material later.

Actively extracting the desired information from the text, asking yourself questions, thinking of examples, and trying to recall the information you have read are all useful in aiding memory. The reason is that these techniques make you process the information more thoroughly and relate it more effectively to what you already know than simply reading to understand. It may take a little more work, but it is more interesting and has a higher payoff than reading the lazy way.

Now if you are following this strategy, you should try to remember the points we have just made. This will give you an opportunity to practice this technique right now and increase the chances you will use it when reading the book.

We hope you enjoy reading our book. We learned from the first edition that students are the first to spot our mistakes. If you find one we would really appreciate it if you would write us. Also, if there are things you particularly like, or dislike, about the book, let us know. You can write us at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology or the Department of Psychology, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM 88003.

***Cookie White Stephan
Walter G. Stephan***



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CHAPTER 1

The Two Social Psychologies

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Sociological Heritage

Sociological Social Psychology's Two Perspectives

Content

Level of Analysis

Methodology

Theoretical Perspectives

Psychological Social Psychology

Psychological Heritage

Content

Level of Analysis

Methodology

Theoretical Perspectives

Why a Synthesis of Social Psychologies?

The Robbers Cave Study: An Integrated Strategy