

Understanding Social Psychology

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Fourth Edition

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Giancarlo Impiglia was born in Rome, Italy. He received his art training there at the Liceo Artistico and Accademia Di Belle Arti. His works have appeared in numerous exhibitions in Europe and America, and they are included in both public and private collections. He lives and works in New York City.

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Understanding Social Psychology

To our parents,
who were our first teachers
of psychology;
to Jack W. Brehm and Edward E. Jones,
who imparted to us a respect
for the field of social psychology;
to our children, Leah, Jessica,
Jason, Aaron, Grant, Jefferson, and Andrew,
who have shown us how much more
psychology we still have to learn;
and to our wives, Frances, Barbara, and Marion,
who have worked so hard
at creating the type of environment
that allows us to continue our own learning.

PREFACE

There are two approaches to revising textbooks. One is the “fine tuning” approach where the author(s) keep the book basically as it was but update and add areas they overlooked in the earlier edition. This approach works if a field has not experienced significant changes over the three or four years between revisions. The other type of revision calls for more radical surgery. It involves taking a broader look at the discipline by asking, “If I were to write a new book, how would I present the field?”

After three editions, we decided that it was time to attempt a more radical revision. The previous editions each presented roughly the same outline of social psychology. Further, each edition was longer than its predecessor as we attempted to retain the cherished tidbits while adding new material. Eliminating sections or topics felt like giving away our old baseball cards. Too often we soothed our pain by keeping the old section and simply added on a new section or chapter.

To overcome our reluctance to eliminate old material, we decided to bring in a new co-author, someone familiar with our purposes and the course who could help us revise the text with a fresh and knowing eye. The perfect choice was our long-time colleague, George R. Goethals, who knew our approach but was not constrained by a previous association with the book. We hoped he could see the shortcomings that we had previously overlooked, and one of his appointed tasks was to point out these lapses, omissions, and excesses. We also requested reviewers to point out sections that could be deleted or covered more concisely, as well as to suggest material that we needed to add. Thus, with a new mission and a new co-author, who seemed to delight in his role as devil’s advocate and inquisitor, we began the fourth edition of *Understanding Social Psychology*.

It was clear from the reviews of the third edition and our own discussions that the first principle in any presentation of social psychology was to include both the classical and the new. New material would be included, not only because it was new, but also because it helped define

or integrate key areas of study. A second principle that guided us was to present a balanced coverage of both theory and research in social psychology. The field was built on solid theory and methodology, and these basics must form the foundation of the text. The third principle was that we must show both the basic scientific and applied sides of social psychology. These two sides do not represent unrelated approaches; rather, they are two sides of the same coin. They support and draw from each other. We resisted the temptation to add a number of "applied" chapters at the end of the book. To do so would give the students the impression that research and application were unrelated. We decided instead to blend the basic and applied work into the appropriate chapters to show their kinship. (In our own class testing, we found that this approach greatly enhances students' ability to remember theories and to see the value of applications.) Finally, new developments in the discipline made it imperative to expand coverage of both the motivational and cognitive approaches to social psychology. While the two approaches are often presented as competing explanations for social behavior, they in fact complement one another and add important pieces to the puzzle of human behavior.

With these principles in mind we set out to rework the text so that it would instruct without being encyclopedic. The result is a somewhat shorter volume, but one that more fairly represents cognition and motivation, classical and new areas, and basic and applied social psychology. We retained our structure of focusing first on individuals (cognitions, attribution, and attitudes), next examining dyadic interactions (attraction, altruism, and aggression), and then studying group and intergroup behavior. In concert with the field, there is a greater emphasis in this edition on social cognition and the self. There is a new chapter on social cognition (Chapter 2) and a new chapter on the self in social interaction (Chapter 3). At the other end of the continuum, there is more material on intergroup relations (Chapters 9 and 11). We have worked in new material on applied areas such as health, law, sports, and organizations throughout the text.

We also retained our approach of showing how social psychology can be used to better understand situations and events that are encountered in everyday life. Each chapter begins with an incident that raises questions central to the chapter's themes. We then refer to the incident throughout the chapter. The incidents should not only serve as a heuristic device for learning the material, but we hope that they will challenge readers to apply social psychology to their own experiences. The glossary has been expanded and, as in the previous edition, we have included suggested readings at the end of each chapter. We might

describe the end product by stating that the heart of the old edition beats strongly in the new.

A Student Study Guide, prepared by Frederick Rhodewalt of the University of Utah is available separately. The Study Guide will help students place the information in the text into theoretical frameworks enabling them to understand and integrate the research areas.

Many people contributed to this new edition. First, we would like to thank the surprisingly large number of students and faculty members who wrote us with suggestions for a revised edition. We tried to include as much of your input as possible. Please continue to send us your comments.

We would like to thank our brave band of reviewers, whose creative suggestions and sensitivity to the frazzled state of the authors managed to help us overcome our biases and expand our coverage. We appreciate the help of Richard L. Archer, Southwest State University; Roy F. Baumeister, Case Western Reserve University; Sharon S. Brehm, University of Kansas; John T. Cacioppo, University of Iowa; Jerome M. Chertkoff, Indiana University; Keith E. Davis, University of South Carolina; E. Tory Higgins, New York University; Douglas T. Kenrick, Arizona State University; Eric Knowles, University of Arkansas; Diane M. Mackie, University of California, Santa Barbara; Richard L. Moreland, University of Pittsburgh; Miles L. Patterson, University of Missouri; and Daniel M. Wegner, Trinity University.

We would also like to thank Brian Mullen, Fred Rhodewalt, and Bill Webb for additional, and much needed, comments and support. Within each of our respective schools, an army of students and staff helped prepare the manuscript, track down material, and offer suggestions. More importantly, these people had to put up with our ranting and raving during the revision period. The following contributors to the book and to our mental health are: Dink Asano, Sandy Camp, Vicky Corrington, John Fleming, Linda Ginzel, Angie Giusti, Therese Marcellin, Kerry Marsh, Susie Marten, Sarah McFarland, DiAnne Poehl, Steven Scher, Alan Singh, and Vera Sohl. We would also like to thank O. K. (Buddy) Davis of the *Ruston (L.A.) Daily Leader* for his help in providing information on Eddie Robinson.

Finally, we'd like to thank the people at Dorsey Press who rallied for yet another revision. As the number of authors increased, so did the number and scope of diabolical plots we could hatch on the Dorsey staff. Your support, good humor, and professionalism made the project possible. We will long remember Paul O'Connell's stoic smile as yet another deadline passed, Ann Knowles's cheerful telephone calls to ask whether Joel Cooper really existed, Charlotte Green's letters asking what type

of book this really was, Jane Lightell who orchestrated the works of the three authors who often had nonoverlapping styles, and Keith McPherson who put the final bow on the package through his design. Thanks also to Waivah Clement who skillfully coordinated our schedule with Dorsey's schedule and guided the text to completion.

Stephen Worchel
Joel Cooper
George R. Goethals

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