

4th
Edition

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND HUMAN NATURE

Baumeister • Bushman





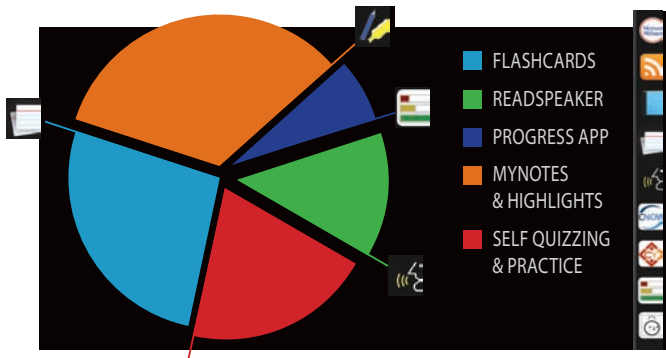
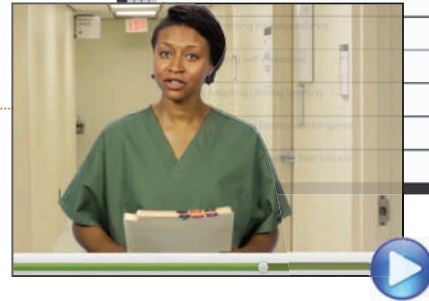
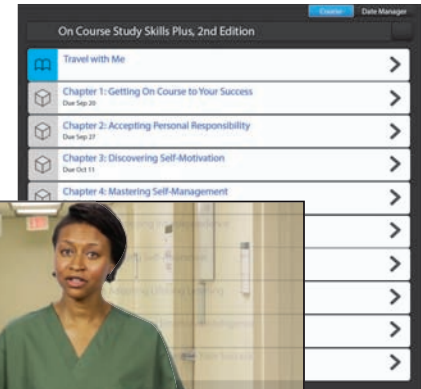
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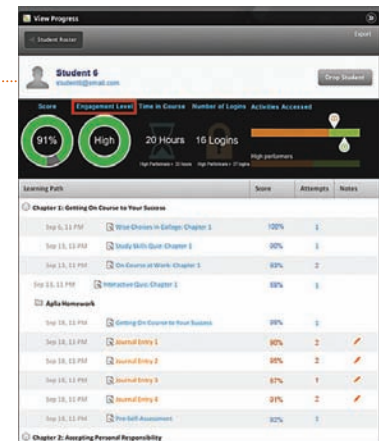
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SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
AND
HUMAN NATURE

About the Cover

For the cover of the fourth edition, we selected a progressive rock music theme. Progressive rock is a form of rock music that evolved in the late 1960s and early 1970s as part of a “mostly British attempt to elevate rock music to new levels of artistic credibility,”¹ in such bands such as *Genesis*, *Yes*, *King Crimson*, *Pink Floyd*, *Jethro Tull*, and *Emerson, Lake, and Palmer*. One distinguishing feature of progressive rock is “concept albums that made unified statements, usually telling an epic story or tackling a grand overarching theme.”² Rather than a collection of individual songs, the concept album used a unifying theme to weave the individual songs together. That is exactly what we try to do in our textbook *Social Psychology and Human Nature*. The unifying theme is that humans are cultural animals, and this underlying theme weaves the chapters of our textbook together.

Progressive rock bands also pushed “rock’s technical and compositional boundaries by going beyond the standard rock or popular verse-chorus-based song structures.”³ In our textbook, we also try to push the boundaries of typical introductory social psychology textbooks. For example, most textbooks talk about how humans are similar to other animals, whereas we talk about how humans are different from other animals. Likewise, most textbooks talk about how different people from different cultures are, whereas we talk about how similar people from different cultures are. In addition, most textbooks consider obedience to authority to be destructive. Of course, blind obedience to malevolent authority figures is destructive, but most obedience to authority is constructive rather than destructive, such as when people obey traffic laws. That is why we include obedience in our chapter on prosocial behavior.

Two progressive rock musicians, Steve Hackett and Patrick Moraz (friends of Bushman), have both received copies of earlier editions of our textbook. Both have written concept albums, not only in the progressive rock groups they were part of but also in their individual solo albums. Both have also pushed the technical and compositional boundaries of music. In addition, both are compassionate and kind human beings. It is an honor to have both of these progressive rock musicians endorse our textbook.

Steve Hackett was born in London, England. He played lead guitar for *Quiet World* (1969, with his younger brother John Hackett on flute), *Genesis* (1970–1977), and *GTR* (1985–1987; co-founded with guitarist Steve Howe from *Yes* and *Asia*). Hackett perfected the tapping technique, which has been copied by many other guitarists (e.g., Eddie van Halen). He also plays classical guitar on several solo albums.

Patrick Moraz was born in Morges, Switzerland. He played keyboards for progressive rock groups *Main-horse* (1968–1972), *Refugee* (1973–1974; with former members of *The Nice*—Lee Jackson and Brian Davison), *Yes* (1974–1976), and *The Moody Blues* (1978–1990). He also recorded several solo albums in which he plays his own jazz piano compositions or classical piano compositions. In 1976 he received the “Best Keyboard Album of the Year” award from Contemporary Keyboard Magazine for his album “I” (a.k.a. “The Story of I”).

In addition, Steve Hackett and Patrick Moraz have each been involved in numerous projects with other progressive rock musicians. Both Hackett and Moraz have recorded albums with drummer Bill Bruford (who played with progressive rock bands *Yes*, *King Crimson*, *Genesis*, *UK*, and *Gordian Knot* and produced several solo albums). Hackett has also played with several *Yes* musicians besides guitarist Steve Howe and drummer Bill Bruford, including bassist Christopher Squire (indeed they formed a band together—*Squackett*), guitarist Peter Banks, keyboardist Rick Wakeman, and keyboardist Geoffrey Downes (also of *Asia*). Patrick Moraz played on Christopher Squire’s solo album “Fish out of Water.”

This is what they had to say about our social psychology textbook *Social Psychology and Human Nature*.

Steve Hackett said: “As a musician, when I work on an album I draw ideas and music from many different genres and also from a variety of cultures. I find both the contrasts and similarities between cultures fascinating. Completely different musical forms can connect perfectly, whilst each adds something new and exciting to the whole. I also sometimes go for a theme that gives a framework and a sense of cohesiveness for all these linked ideas.

“In their textbook, Roy Baumeister and Brad Bushman tell a story using the important concept that humans are much more than social animals—they are cultural animals. They explore similarities and differences in the way I interplay contrasting and complementary musical cultures. Also, how they weave the concept through the chapters resembles the way I weave a concept through an album.”

Patrick Moraz said: “This fascinating and important work by Roy Baumeister, Ph.D., and Brad Bushman, Ph.D., is constructed in the same way I would research, elaborate, and compose the different movements felt and chosen from the various and immense repository of artistic and musical ideas at my mind’s disposal to create and produce a progressive rock album, or even a symphonic work.

“*Social Psychology and Human Nature*, in its entirety, will help the student analyze, understand and build a formidable knowledge to run the gamut of cultural perspectives that humans strive to acquire and assist them further in their explorations of ‘cognitive resonance’ to a point of utmost clarity and completeness.

“It will, most certainly, elevate its readers to the newest and highest levels of comprehension in the transcultural studies of human nature and might even help them update, enhance and modify their social media behavior.

“As a creative artist, I feel strongly that what clearly differentiates humans from animals and machines, is being inspired spontaneously by new emotional ideas, as opposed to only muscle memories, since the true emotion of the soul is at the basis of our Art.”



4th
Edition

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
AND
HUMAN NATURE

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***WE DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO OUR MENTORS AND THEIR MENTORS,
in appreciation of the teaching of psychology through these relationships.***



About the Authors

ROY F. BAUMEISTER holds the Eppes Eminent Professorship in Psychology at Florida State University, where he is the head of the social psychology graduate program and teaches social psychology to students at all levels. He has taught introductory social psychology to thousands of undergraduate students. He received his Ph.D. from Princeton in 1978, and his teaching and research activities have included appointments at the University of California at Berkeley, Case Western Reserve University, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Virginia, the Max Planck Institute in Munich (Germany), the VU University Amsterdam (the Netherlands), King Abdulaziz University (Saudi Arabia), and the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. Baumeister is an active researcher whose work has been funded by the National Institutes of Health and by the Templeton Foundation. He has done research on the self (including self-esteem and self-control), the need to belong, sexuality, aggression, and how people find meaning in life. In 2005, the Institute for Scientific Information concluded from a survey of published bibliographies that he was among the most influential psychologists in the world (the top 1%), and that status has been confirmed several times since then. According to Google Scholar, his works have been cited more than 90,000 times in the scientific literature. In his (very rare) spare time, he likes to ski and play jazz. In 2013 he received the William James Award, the highest honor bestowed by the Association for Psychological Science in all of psychology, as recognition of his lifetime achievements and contributions to basic scientific research in psychology.



BRAD J. BUSHMAN is a professor of communication and psychology at The Ohio State University, where he holds the Rinehart Chair of Mass Communication. He is also a professor of communication science at the VU University Amsterdam, the Netherlands, in the summer. For more than 25 years he has conducted research on the causes, consequences, and solutions to the problem of human aggression and violence. He co-chaired the National Science Foundation youth violence advisory committee that was formed in the wake of the shooting in Newtown, Connecticut. He also is a member of President Obama's committee on gun violence. He is ranked number 2 in citations among communication scholars. In 2014 he received the Distinguished Lifetime Contribution to Media Psychology and Technology, American Psychological Association. His research has challenged several myths (e.g., violent media have a trivial effect on aggression, venting anger reduces aggression, violent people suffer from low self-esteem, violence and sex on TV sell products, warning labels reduce audience size). One colleague calls him the "myth buster." His research has been published in the top scientific journals (e.g., *Science*, *Nature*, *PNAS*) and has been featured extensively in the mass media (e.g., *BBC*, *New York Times*, *NPR*). He lives in Columbus, Ohio, with his wife, Tam Stafford, and their youngest son, Branden. Their two oldest children, Becca and Nathan, are students at The Ohio State University. In his spare time, he likes to ride his bicycle (especially in Amsterdam), train in Tang Soo Do at J. Kim martial arts (where he currently is Dan 2), and listen to progressive rock (e.g., Patrick Moraz, Steve Hackett, *Yes*, *Genesis*, *Pink Floyd*) and jazz (e.g., Michiel Borstlap, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins).



Brief Contents

Preface xix

CHAPTERS

- 1** The Mission & the Method **1**
- 2** Culture and Nature **33**
- 3** The Self **67**
- 4** Choices and Actions: The Self in Control **113**
- 5** Social Cognition **147**
- 6** Emotion and Affect **185**
- 7** Attitudes, Beliefs, and Consistency **229**
- 8** Social Influence and Persuasion **257**
- 9** Prosocial Behavior: Doing What's Best for Others **291**
- 10** Aggression and Antisocial Behavior **331**
- 11** Interpersonal Attraction and Rejection **371**
- 12** Close Relationships: Passion, Intimacy, and Sexuality **403**
- 13** Prejudice and Intergroup Relations **447**
- 14** Groups **491**

APPLICATION MODULES

- A** Applying Social Psychology to Consumer Behavior **A1**
- B** Applying Social Psychology to Health **B1**
- C** Applying Social Psychology to the Workplace **C1**
- D** Applying Social Psychology to Law **D1**
- E** Applying Social Psychology to the Environment **E1**

Glossary G1

Endnotes E1

References R1

Name Index N1

Subject Index S1

Contents

1



The Mission & the Method 1

A Brief History of Social Psychology 3

What Do Social Psychologists Do? 6

Social Psychology's Place in the World 7

Social Psychology's Place in the Social Sciences 8

Social Psychology's Place Within Psychology 8

Why People Study Social Psychology 10

Curiosity About People 10

Experimental Philosophy 11

Making the World Better 11

Social Psychology Is Fun! 12

How Do Social Psychologists Answer Their Own Questions? 13

Accumulated Common Wisdom 13

Overview of the Scientific Method 14

Scientific Theories 15

Research Design 17

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 15

Does Chicken Soup Reduce Cold Symptoms?

TRADEOFFS 18

Research Ethics

How Much of Social Psychology Is True? 26

Self-Correcting Nature of Science 26

Reliance on Student Samples 26

Cultural Relativity 27

CHAPTER SUMMARY 28

2



Culture and Nature 33

Nature and Social Behavior 35

Explaining the Psyche 35

Nature Defined 36

Evolution, and Doing What's Natural 36

Social Animals 38

The Social Brain 39

Culture and Human Social Life 40

Social Animal or Cultural Animal? 40

Culture Defined 41

Nature and Culture Interacting 44

What Makes Cultural Animals? 47

Are People the Same Everywhere? 48

Important Features of Human Social Life 50

The Duplex Mind 50

The Long Road to Social Acceptance 54

Built to Relate 55

Nature Says Go, Culture Says Stop 56

Selfish Impulse Versus Social Conscience 57

Tradeoffs: When You Can't Have It All 58

MONEY MATTERS 43

Nature, Culture, and Money

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 44

Virtuous Vegetarians

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 46

Sex and Culture

TRADEOFFS 60

Political Tradeoffs

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 63

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

Putting People First 61

CHAPTER SUMMARY 64

3



The Self 67

- What Is the Self?** 69
- The Self's Main Jobs 69
- Who Makes the Self: The Individual or Society? 70
- Self-Awareness 73
- Why Do We Have Self-Awareness? 76
- Where Self-Knowledge Comes From** 78
- Looking Outside: The Looking-Glass Self 78
- Looking Inside: Introspection 79
- Looking at Others: Social Comparison 80
- Self-Perception 81
- The Fluctuating Image(s) of Self 82
- Why People Seek Self-Knowledge 84

- Self and Information Processing 88
- Anything That Touches the Self... 88
- Can the Self-Concept Change? 89
- Self-Esteem, Self-Deception, and Positive Illusions** 92
- Self-Esteem 92
- Reality and Illusion 94
- How People Fool Themselves 95
- Benefits of Self-Esteem 96
- Why Do We Care? 98
- Is High Self-Esteem Always Good? 99
- Pursuing Self-Esteem 100
- Self-Presentation** 101
- Who's Looking? 102

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 77

Eating Binges and Escaping the Self

MONEY MATTERS 82

Doing It for Money, Not Love

TRADEOFFS 86

Self-Handicapping

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 97

Self-Esteem and Saying No to Sex

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 108

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

Making an Impression 104

Self-Presentation and Risky Behavior 106

CHAPTER SUMMARY 109

4



Choices and Actions 113

- What You Do, and What it Means** 115
- Making Choices 116
- Why People Don't Choose 119
- Freedom to Change 121
- Freedom of Action** 122
- More or Less Free 123
- Free Action Comes from Inside 123
- Having an Out Versus No Escape 124
- Goals, Plans, Intentions** 125
- Setting and Pursuing Goals 125
- Hierarchy of Goals 127
- Multiple Goals and Goal Shielding 128
- Reaching Goals: What's the Plan? 129
- Common Mistakes in Planning 130

- Self-Regulation and Habits** 131
- Control and Willpower 131
- Standards: Ideas That Guide Self-Regulation 132
- Monitoring: Watching What You're Doing 133
- Willpower for Change 134
- Willpower and Decision Fatigue 136
- Habits 137
- Irrationality and Self-Destruction** 138
- Self-Defeating Acts: Being Your Own Worst Enemy 138
- Suicide 141
- CHAPTER SUMMARY** 144

MONEY MATTERS 117

How Money Can Trick You Into Making Bad Decisions

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 119

Gender, Sex, and Decisions

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 135

Dieting as Self-Regulation

TRADEOFFS 140

Now versus Tomorrow: Delay of Gratification

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 143

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

5



Social Cognition 147

- What Is Social Cognition?** 149
- Thinking About People: A Special Case? 149
 - Why People Think, and Why They Don't 150
 - Automatic and Deliberate Thinking 151
 - Thought Suppression and Ironic Processes 157
- Attributions and Explanations: Why Did That Happen?** 159
- It's Not My Fault: Explaining Success and Failure 160
 - You Know I'm Right: The Actor/Observer Bias 161
 - Challenging Attribution Theory 163
 - Explaining Actions: A Different Approach 163
- Heuristics: Mental Shortcuts** 164
- Representativeness Heuristic 164
 - Availability Heuristic 165
 - Simulation Heuristic 166
 - Anchoring and Adjustment Heuristic 166
- Flawed or Clever Thinking?** 168
- (So-Called) Errors and Biases** 169
- Confirmation Bias 171
 - Illusory Correlations 171
 - Base Rate Fallacy 172
 - Gambler's Fallacy and the Hot Hand 173
 - False Consensus Effect 174
 - False Uniqueness Effect 174
 - Perseverance of Theories 174
 - Statistical Regression 175

6



Emotion and Affect 185

- What Is Emotion?** 187
- Conscious Emotion versus Automatic Affect 187
- Emotional Arousal** 188
- James–Lange Theory of Emotion 188
 - Schachter–Singer Theory of Emotion 190
 - Misattribution of Arousal 190
- Some Important Emotions** 193
- Happiness 194
 - Anger 199
 - Guilt and Shame 202
 - Disgust 204
- Why Do We Have Emotions?** 207
- Emotions Promote Belongingness 207
 - Emotions Communicate Social Information 208
- Emotions Cause Behavior—Sort Of** 208
- Emotions Guide Thinking and Learning 210
 - (Anticipated) Emotion Guides Decisions and Choices 211
 - Emotions Help and Hurt Decision Making 212
 - Positive Emotions Counteract Negative Emotions 214
 - Other Benefits of Positive Emotions 214
- Group Differences in Emotion** 215
- Are Emotions Different Across Cultures? 215
 - Are Women More Emotional Than Men? 215
- Arousal, Attention, and Performance** 217
- Emotional Intelligence (EI or EQ)** 218
- THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX** 191
- Can People be Wrong about Whether They Are Sexually Aroused?
- TRADEOFFS** 199
- Affect Intensity: Emotional Roller Coaster or Even Keel?
- FOOD FOR THOUGHT** 209
- Mood and Food
- MONEY MATTERS** 213
- Emotions and Prices
- WHAT MAKES US HUMAN?** 223
- Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective
- Affect Regulation** 220
- How to Cheer Up 220
 - Affect Regulation Goals 221
 - Gender Differences in Emotion Control Strategies 222
 - Is Affect Regulation Safe? 222
- CHAPTER SUMMARY** 224

MONEY MATTERS 156

Does Money Make a Difference?

TRADEOFFS 158

Conscious and Unconscious Thought

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 159

It's the Thought That Counts (or Doesn't Count!) the Calories

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 170

Counting Sex Partners

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 179

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

Illusion of Control 175

Counterfactual Thinking 176

Are Most People Really Just Kind of Stupid? 178

Reducing Cognitive Errors 178

CHAPTER SUMMARY 180

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 191

Can People be Wrong about Whether They Are Sexually Aroused?

TRADEOFFS 199

Affect Intensity: Emotional Roller Coaster or Even Keel?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 209

Mood and Food

MONEY MATTERS 213

Emotions and Prices

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 223

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

Affect Regulation 220

How to Cheer Up 220

Affect Regulation Goals 221

Gender Differences in Emotion Control Strategies 222

Is Affect Regulation Safe? 222

CHAPTER SUMMARY 224

7



Attitudes, Beliefs, and Consistency 229

What Are Attitudes and Why Do People Have Them? 232

- Attitudes versus Beliefs 232
- Dual Attitudes 232
- Why People Have Attitudes 232

How Attitudes Are Formed 234

- Formation of Attitudes 234
- Polarization 237

Consistency 239

- Cognitive Dissonance and Attitude Change 239
- Justifying Effort 239
- Justifying Choices 241
- Advances in Dissonance Theory 243

Is the Drive for Consistency Rooted in Nature or Nurture? 243

Do Attitudes Really Predict Behaviors? 244

- Attacking Attitudes 245
- Defending Attitudes 246

Beliefs and Believing 247

- Believing versus Doubting 247
- Belief Perseverance 248
- Belief and Coping 249
- Religious Belief 251
- Irrational Belief 252

CHAPTER SUMMARY 254

TRADEOFFS 233

What Is the Real Attitude?

MONEY MATTERS 240

Would You Sell Your Soul for \$1?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 242

Would You Eat a Bug or a Worm?

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 245

A–B Inconsistency and Erotic Plasticity

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 253

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

8



Social Influence and Persuasion 257

Two Types of Social Influence 260

- Being Liked and Accepted: Normative Influence 260
- Being Correct: Informational Influence 261

Techniques of Social Influence 263

- Techniques Based on Commitment and Consistency 263
- Techniques Based on Reciprocation 266
- Techniques Based on Scarcity 268
- Techniques Based on Capturing and Disrupting Attention 269

Persuasion 270

- Who: The Source 271
- Says What: The Message 275
- To Whom: The Audience 278
- Two Routes to Persuasion 280

Resisting Social Influence Techniques 282

- Attitude Inoculation 283
- Forewarned Is Forearmed 284
- Stockpile Resources 284

CHAPTER SUMMARY 287

MONEY MATTERS 265

Even a Penny Will Help

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 272

Convert Communicators and Health Messages

TRADEOFFS 274

Should Speakers Talk Fast or Slow?

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 276

Scared into Safe Sex?

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 286

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

9



Prosocial Behavior 291

- Is Helping Contagious? 293
- What Is Prosocial Behavior? 294
 - Born to Reciprocate 295
 - Born to Be Fair 296
- Morality 298
- Cooperation, Forgiveness, Obedience, Conformity, and Trust 301
 - Cooperation 301
 - Forgiveness 304
 - Obedience 306
 - Conformity 309
 - Trust 309
- Why Do People Help Others? 311
 - Evolutionary Benefits 311
 - Two Motives for Helping: Altruism and Egoism 313
 - Is Altruism Possible? 314
 - Who Helps Whom? 316
 - Helpful Personality 316
 - Similarity 316
 - Gender 316
 - Beautiful Victims 317
 - Belief in a Just World 318
 - Emotion and Mood 318
 - Bystander Helping in Emergencies 319
 - Five Steps to Helping 320
 - Too Busy to Help? 323

10



Aggression & Antisocial Behavior 331

- Defining Aggression, Violence, and Antisocial Behavior 334
 - Is the World More or Less Violent Now Than in the Past? 335
- Is Aggression Innate or Learned? 338
 - Instinct Theories 338
 - Learning Theories 339
 - Nature *and* Nurture 340
- Inner Causes of Aggression 342
 - Frustration 342
 - Being in a Bad Mood 342
 - Hostile Cognitive Biases 343
 - Age and Aggression 345
 - Gender Differences in Aggression and Violence 345
- Interpersonal Causes of Aggression 347
 - Selfishness and Influence 347
 - Domestic Violence: Hurting Those We Love 347
- External Causes of Aggression 350
 - Weapons Effect 350
 - Mass Media 351
 - Unpleasant Environments 352
 - Chemical Influences 353
- Self and Culture 356
 - Norms and Values 356
 - Self-Control 356
 - Wounded Pride 357
 - Culture of Honor 358

TRADEOFFS 303

The Prisoner's Dilemma

MONEY MATTERS 305

Money, Prosocial Behavior, and Self-Sufficiency

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 310

Restaurants, Rules, and the Bad Taste of Nonconformity

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 317

Helping, Sex, and Friends

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 327

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

How Can We Increase Helping? 324

- Getting Help in a Public Setting 324
- Provide Helpful Models 325
- Teach Moral Inclusion 325

CHAPTER SUMMARY 328

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 348

Sexual Aggression

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 355

Is There a Link Between Diet and Violence?

TRADEOFFS 362

Creativity and Cheating

MONEY MATTERS 363

Money and Antisocial Behavior

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 366

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

Other Antisocial Behavior 360

- Lying 360
- Cheating 361
- Stealing 363
- Littering 364

CHAPTER SUMMARY 366

11



Interpersonal Attraction and Rejection 371

- The Need to Belong 373**
- Belongingness as a Basic Need 373
- Two Ingredients to Belongingness 376
- Not Belonging Is Bad for You 377
- Best Friends, Lovers, and Groups 377
- Attraction: Who Likes Whom? 378**
- Similarity, Complementarity, Oppositeness 378
- Social Rewards: You Make Me Feel Good 380
- Tit for Tat: Reciprocity and Liking 380

- You Again: Mere Exposure 382
- Looking Good 383
- Attraction in the 21st Century: Online Dating 385
- Rejection 388**
- Effects of Rejection: Inner Reactions 390
- Behavioral Effects of Rejection 392
- Loneliness 394
- What Leads to Social Rejection? 395
- Romantic Rejection and Unrequited Love 397
- CHAPTER SUMMARY 399**

TRADEOFFS 374

Testosterone—A Blessing and a Curse

MONEY MATTERS 384

Is Manhood Measured in Dollars or Inches?

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 386

What Is Beauty?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 391

Social Rejection and the Jar of Cookies

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 399

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

12



Close Relationships 403

- What Is Love? 405**
- Passionate and Companionate Love 406
- Love and Culture 406
- Love Across Time 407
- Sternberg's Triangle 408
- Different Types of Relationships 412**
- Exchange Versus Communal 412
- Attachment 413
- Loving People Who Love Themselves 416
- Maintaining Relationships 417**
- I Love You More Each Day(?) 418

- Investing in Relationships That Last 419
- Thinking Styles of Couples 421
- Being Yourself: Is Honesty the Best Policy? 423
- Sexuality 425**
- Theories of Sexuality 426
- Sex and Gender 428
- Homosexuality 431
- Extradynamic Sex 433
- Jealousy and Possessiveness 436
- Culture, Female Sexuality, and the Double Standard 440
- CHAPTER SUMMARY 444**

TRADEOFFS 409

Sex In and Out of Marriage

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 432

Eating in Front of a Cute Guy

MONEY MATTERS 439

Mating, Money, and Men

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 443

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

13



Prejudice and Intergroup Relations 447

- ABCs of Intergroup Relationships: Prejudice, Discrimination, and Stereotypes 449
- Common Prejudices and Targets 453
 - Muslims 454
 - Atheists 455
 - People Who Are Overweight 456
 - Homosexuals 457
- Why Prejudice Exists 461
 - Us Versus Them: Groups in Competition 462
 - Ignorance? The Contact Hypothesis 466
 - Rationalizations for Oppression 467
 - Stereotypes as Heuristics 467

- Prejudice and Self-Esteem 468
- Content of Prejudice and Stereotypes 470
 - Are Stereotypes Always Wrong, Mostly Wrong, or Mostly Right? 470
 - Are Stereotypes Always Negative? 471
- Inner Processes 472
- Overcoming Stereotypes, Reducing Prejudice 475
 - Conscious Override 476
 - Contact 479
 - Superordinate Goals 480
- Impact of Prejudice on Targets 480
 - Self-Fulfilling Prophecies 481

MONEY MATTERS 450

Racial Discrimination in Sports: Paying More to Win

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 457

Prejudice Against the Obese

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 460

Roots of Anti-Gay Prejudice

TRADEOFFS 465

Competition Versus Cooperation

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 487

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

- Stigma and Self-Protection 482
- Stereotype Threat 484
- Are Social Psychologists Biased? 486
- CHAPTER SUMMARY 488

14



Groups 491

- What Groups Are and Do 494
- Groups, Roles, and Selves 497
- Group Action 499
 - Social Facilitation 500
 - Social Loafing 501
 - Punishing Cheaters and Free Riders 503
 - Deindividuation and Mob Violence 504
 - Shared Resources and the Commons Dilemma 504
- How Groups Think 506

- Brainstorming, and the Wisdom of Groups 506
- Why Do People Love Teams? 508
- Transactive Memory: Here, You Remember This 509
- Groupthink 509
- Foolish Committees 510
- Group Polarization and the "Risky Shift" 511
- Power and Leadership 513
 - Leadership 513
 - Toxic Leaders 514
 - What Is Power? 517
 - Effects of Power on Leaders 517

SOCIAL SIDE OF SEX 495

Is a Marriage a Group?

TRADEOFFS 496

Diversity in Groups

FOOD FOR THOUGHT 502

Is Binge Eating Socially Contagious?

MONEY MATTERS 522

Money, Power, and Laughter

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN? 523

Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective

- Preserving Power 521
- Effects of Power on Followers 521
- Legitimate Leadership 522
- CHAPTER SUMMARY 524

Application Modules

- A Applying Social Psychology to Consumer Behavior A1**
Curtis P. Haugtvedt, The Ohio State University
- B Applying Social Psychology to Health B1**
Regan A. R. Gurung, University of Wisconsin, Green Bay
- C Applying Social Psychology to the Workplace C1**
Kathy A. Hanisch, Iowa State University
- D Applying Social Psychology to Law D1**
Margaret Bull Kovera, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York
- E Applying Social Psychology to the Environment E1**
Richard L. Miller, Texas A&M University–Kingsville

- Glossary G1**
- Endnotes E1**
- References R1**
- Name Index N1**
- Subject Index S1**

Preface

This textbook is simultaneously an expression of love and rebellion. The love is our feeling toward our field. We followed different paths into social psychology, but over the years we have developed an affectionate appreciation for it. We agreed to write this textbook partly because we thought we could contribute to the field by covering what we love about it. The process of writing strengthened those positive feelings, by helping us see the remarkably diverse and creative work that our fellow psychologists have produced over the past several decades. We are also both very active social psychological researchers and teachers. We love doing social psychology research, and we love teaching students about the field of social psychology.

The rebellion part begins with the title. Maybe social psychology has sold itself short by clinging to the message “it’s all about situations!” We think it’s partly about situations, but to us, social psychology is very much about people. We think students sign up for social psychology courses because they want to learn about people. And we think social psychologists actually have plenty to tell them about people. Hence the “human nature” part of our title.

In other words, we are rebelling against the old dogma that social psychology’s truth requires treating people as blank slates who just respond to situations. Instead, we see people as highly complex, exquisitely designed, and variously inclined cultural animals who respond to situations. Our textbook will tell students plenty about the power of situations, but it also seeks to tell them about the people in those situations.

To us, the most exciting aspect of this project has been the attempt to “put the person back together,” in the phrase that got us started on the book. We believe that social psychology can offer a remarkably new, coherent, and accurate vision of human nature.

In fact, this new vision of human nature was central to the story behind the book. Both of us had been approached many times by various publishers about possibly writing a social psychology textbook, and both of us had repeatedly brushed them off as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Back then we thought that writing a textbook sounded like a tedious, uncreative set of chores requiring reading and describing every part of the field, regardless of how interesting. Both of us loathe anything that is boring.

The turning point came when one of us spent a year at an interdisciplinary institute and embraced the task of trying to package what social psychology has learned that could be useful to other fields. Scholars in those fields mostly want to know about people and why they act as they do. The response to this took the form of a book for general audiences called *The Cultural Animal* (Baumeister, 2005), but the realization slowly dawned that this new, more integrated understanding of the human being might provide a powerful basis for a social psychology textbook.

We have used many different textbooks in our own social psychology courses. Many of them are quite good. One dissatisfaction with them, however, and indeed one that we have heard echoed by many other instructors and students, is that they end up being just narrative lists of findings grouped by topic, rather like a handbook or encyclopedia. We wanted more. We wanted an integrated, coherent vision. And now we had a basis in the form of a new understanding of human nature that put together the results of thousands

of social psychology studies. So this time when publishers asked us about writing a textbook, we thought it over. And then we decided to do it.

Some might think that explaining human nature isn't the job of social psychology and should be left to the personality psychologists. In our view, personality's claim to that question is not naturally any stronger than social psychology's. After all, personality psychologists mainly study differences between people, and so understanding the patterns common to all people isn't any more likely to arise from those data than from social psychology's data. *Au contraire*, learning about how people in general will respond to ordinary social dilemmas and events is at least as promising as studying individual differences in terms of being able to point toward general patterns of human nature.

Most general theories about human nature agonize over the competing explanations based on evolution and cultural influence. Our synthesis is based on the question "What sort of picture of the human being emerges from the results of thousands of social psychology experiments?" The answer is novel: Nature "made" human beings for culture. That is, we think human beings evolved specifically to belong to these complicated, information-using social systems that we call culture. It is interesting that the Merriam-Webster word of the year for 2014 was "culture" (based on online searches).

Our book has many themes that are mentioned occasionally in the various chapters to tie things together, and these are mostly derived from the central theme of human beings as cultural animals. The theme of putting people first is a subtle way of conveying what is biologically unique about humans: whereas most animals get what they need from their physical environment, people get what they need from each other. This message was implicit even in the classic Asch conformity experiments, in which people would disregard the direct evidence of their physical senses in order to go along with what other people (even a collection of strangers!) were saying.

Another central theme is that inner processes serve interpersonal functions. The conventional wisdom in psychology, going back to its Freudian roots, has been more or less that what happens to people is a result of what's inside them. We think the research in social psychology points toward the need to turn that on its head. What is inside people is a result of what happens between them. Even in terms of what evolution has built into the human psyche, what is there inside the person is there to help people thrive in their social and cultural groups. People are built to relate to other people. Even the "self," much discussed and invoked throughout social psychology, is designed to cultivate social acceptance and other forms of success that are valued in human cultures.

This is not a book about evolution, nor is it a book about cultural differences. It is a book about people. Toward that end, we occasionally use insights that emerge from cultural and evolutionary studies. But those remain mostly on the sidelines. We differ from the evolutionists in that we focus more on how humans are different from other animals rather than how they are similar to other animals. We differ from the cultural psychologists in that we focus more on what cultures have in common than on how they differ. These are differences of emphasis, but they are fundamental and large ones.

The bottom line, for us, is a very positive view of human nature. Over the years, many of the major theories about people have emphasized the negative. They have depicted people as dominated by violent, destructive urges or by strivings for power, as souped-up rats in societal Skinner boxes, as spineless beings at the mercy of giant social forces or willy-nilly situational influences. We have been persuaded partly by the positive psychology movement that psychology loses much of its value when it focuses overly on the negative side. And, heck, we like people. So the integrated picture we offer is a generally positive one, though we give the dark side of human nature its due.

Hence one important feature of this book is that every chapter ends with a brief section entitled "What Makes Us Human? Putting the Cultural Animal in Perspective" that provides a quick review of what answers have emerged in that chapter. These were easy to write because we really do see that human social life is remarkably and importantly different from that of other animals. We do not shrink from discussing the flaws and biases in humanity, and we acknowledge humankind's vast capacity for petty malice and occasional capacity for great evil. But we think the final picture is mostly favorable. These end-of-chapter sections offer a brief reflection on what is special about human nature.

Concept Features

When we embarked on this book we listened long and hard to the complaints that fellow teachers of social psychology had regarding their textbooks and the way the field was taught. We also listened to the feedback from many students. Several features of our textbook are directly influenced by this feedback. We have sought to offer a new, positive alternative to existing textbooks.

The most common complaint, of course, was the lack of integration. Many instructors, and even those who liked their particular textbook, still felt that textbooks merely hopped from one finding and one phenomenon to another without any broad vision. Hence at the end of the term, as one colleague put it, the take-home message was “Social psychology is a large, interesting, and diverse field of study.” Our overarching goal of putting the person back together was a direct response to this complaint and is, in our view, the defining feature of our book. The themes that run through the book help to flesh this out. These are developed in Chapter 2, “Culture and Nature,” which we regard as the theoretical foundation of the book. We recommend that instructors assign this chapter early in the semester. That is why we put it early in our textbook. The subsequent chapters can be taught in almost any order. Thus, the book is not a linear sequence in which each chapter builds on the preceding one. We deliberately rejected that approach because we know many instructors like to adapt the sequence of topics to their own schedules, goals, and plans. Instead, the design of this book is like a wheel. Chapters 1 and 2 are the center, and all the other chapters are spokes.

Our chapters contain four box feature inserts. Although many textbooks have boxes, we are especially pleased with our set. In the first edition, they proved to be student favorites. We began with a fairly long list of possible boxes and gradually, based on input and feedback from students and instructors, trimmed these down to the list of four that run through the chapters. For the second edition, we kept three of the four boxes from the first edition. The fourth set, devoted to the broad theme that “Bad is stronger than good,” was also well received, but reluctantly we deleted that set to make room for an even more exciting set called “Money Matters.” Our readers liked this set of boxes so much that we retained them for the third and fourth editions, but we updated them, replaced some with new ones, and added some. Some of the modules also contain boxes.

FOOD FOR *Thought*

One box in every chapter has to do with eating. One of us recalls a conversation years ago with Peter Herman, who observed, “Eating is the perfect social psychology variable, because it is connected to almost every social variable or process you can think of!” As we researched the various chapters and thought about the findings, we came to see he was right, and so each chapter has a box that covers some findings showing how the chapter’s topic influences or is influenced by eating. We thought this would be especially appealing to today’s students, for whom college often presents a novel set of challenges and opportunities for eating, dieting, drinking, and related concerns. Eating is a microcosm of social processes. Following are the *Food for Thought* topics included in the book:

- **Does Chicken Soup Reduce Cold Symptoms?** (Chapter 1)
- **Virtuous Vegetarians** (Chapter 2)
- **Eating Binges and Escaping the Self** (Chapter 3)
- **Dieting as Self-Regulation** (Chapter 4)
- **It’s the Thought That Counts (or Doesn’t Count!) the Calories** (Chapter 5)
- **Mood and Food** (Chapter 6)
- **Would You Eat a Bug or a Worm?** (Chapter 7)

- **Convert Communicators and Health Messages** (Chapter 8)
- **Restaurants, Rules, and the Bad Taste of Nonconformity** (Chapter 9)
- **Is There a Link Between Diet and Violence?** (Chapter 10)
- **Social Rejection and the Jar of Cookies** (Chapter 11)
- **Eating in Front of a Cute Guy** (Chapter 12)
- **Prejudice Against the Obese** (Chapter 13)
- **Is Binge Eating Socially Contagious?** (Chapter 14)
- **Is Comfort Food Really Comforting?** (Module B)
- **Work Stress and Eating** (Module C)

The Social Side of *Sex*

The same can be said for sex, and so most chapters include a box applying social psychology to sexuality. We suspect that few people leave college with their sexual selves unchanged since arrival, and so stu-

dents' natural and personal interest in sexuality can be useful for illuminating many perspectives and patterns in social psychology. Our emphasis is, of course, not on the mechanics or techniques of sex but rather on the social context and influences, which the field of sexuality has often underappreciated. It is also helpful that human sexual behavior is a vivid, dramatic example of something that shows powerful influences of both nature and culture. Following are *The Social Side of Sex* topics included in the book:

- **Sex and Culture** (Chapter 2)
- **Self-Esteem and Saying No to Sex** (Chapter 3)
- **Gender, Sex, and Decisions** (Chapter 4)
- **Counting Sex Partners** (Chapter 5)
- **Can People Be Wrong About Whether They Are Sexually Aroused?** (Chapter 6)
- **A–B Inconsistency and Erotic Plasticity** (Chapter 7)
- **Scared into Safe Sex?** (Chapter 8)
- **Helping, Sex, and Friends** (Chapter 9)
- **Sexual Aggression** (Chapter 10)
- **What Is Beauty?** (Chapter 11)
- **Roots of Anti-gay Prejudice** (Chapter 13)
- **Is Marriage a Group?** (Chapter 14)
- **Increasing Condom Use and Safe Sex Practices** (Module B)
- **Sexual Harassment** (Module C)

There is no *The Social Side of Sex* box in Chapter 12 because half of that chapter is about sex.



A third box presents tradeoffs. In this box we attempt to stimulate critical thinking. Many students come to social psychology wanting to find ways to change the world and solve its problems. We applaud that idealism, but we also think that many problems have their origin in the basic truth that solving one problem sometimes creates another. Many social psychology findings highlight tradeoffs in which each gain comes with a loss. Indeed, in other writings, we apply that principle to assorted issues, not least including gender differences: if men are better than women at something, they are probably worse at something else, and the two are interlinked. We hope that students will come away from these boxes with a heightened integrative

capacity to see both sides of many problems and behaviors. Following are the *Tradeoffs* topics included in the book:

- **Research Ethics** (Chapter 1)
- **Political Tradeoffs** (Chapter 2)
- **Self-Handicapping** (Chapter 3)
- **Now versus Tomorrow: Delay of Gratification** (Chapter 4)
- **Conscious and Unconscious Thought** (Chapter 5)
- **Affect Intensity: Emotional Roller Coaster or Even Keel?** (Chapter 6)
- **What Is the Real Attitude?** (Chapter 7)
- **Should Speakers Talk Fast or Slow?** (Chapter 8)
- **The Prisoner's Dilemma** (Chapter 9)
- **Creativity and Cheating** (Chapter 10)
- **Testosterone—A Blessing and a Curse** (Chapter 11)
- **Sex In and Out of Marriage** (Chapter 12)
- **Competition versus Cooperation** (Chapter 13)
- **Diversity in Groups** (Chapter 14)
- **Wrongful Convictions vs. Protecting Victims** (Module D)
- **The Tragedy of the Commons** (Module E)



We replaced the “Bad is stronger than good” boxes in the first edition of our book with a series of boxes on money for the second, third, and fourth editions.

This set was stimulated in part by listening to Paul Rozin, a thoughtful contrarian who has criticized psychology for being out of step with the interests of most people. He would hold up a copy of *USA Today*, “the nation’s newspaper,” and note that its four sections (politics/crime, money, sports, and life/style) are presumably what American citizens are most interested in reading—yet these topics are scarcely even mentioned in the indexes of most psychology textbooks.

Money is highly relevant to our theme of humans as cultural animals. Money is often spent on getting things that nature makes us want: food, shelter, warmth, comfort, and even health and sex. Social events, such as war, can greatly influence the value of money. Yet money is undeniably a cultural phenomenon. Thus, money shows how humankind has found cultural means of satisfying natural inclinations. Social psychologists (like intellectuals across the ages) have often been skeptical and critical of money, and especially of the desire for money. Although the Bible says “the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Timothy 6:10), money is a fact of life and an almost indispensable ingredient to the good life in modern society. We hope that this brand-new series of boxes will stimulate students to see money through the prism of social psychology’s diverse interests.

Following are the *Money Matters* topics included in the book:

- **Nature, Culture, and Money** (Chapter 2)
- **Doing It for Money, Not Love** (Chapter 3)
- **How Money Can Trick You Into Making Bad Decisions** (Chapter 4)
- **Does Money Make a Difference?** (Chapter 5)
- **Emotions and Prices** (Chapter 6)
- **Would You Sell Your Soul for \$1?** (Chapter 7)
- **Even a Penny Will Help** (Chapter 8)
- **Money, Prosocial Behavior, and Self-Sufficiency** (Chapter 9)

- **Money and Antisocial Behavior** (Chapter 10)
- **Is Manhood Measured in Dollars or Inches?** (Chapter 11)
- **Mating, Money, and Men** (Chapter 12)
- **Racial Discrimination in Sports: Paying More to Win** (Chapter 13)
- **Money, Power, and Laughter** (Chapter 14)
- **The Costs and Benefits of Environmental Protection** (Module E)

Other themes run through the book without being formally reflected in specific boxes. The “duplex mind,” divided into the automatic/deliberate and the controlled/conscious sets of processes, has become a powerful theme in the field’s thinking about a great many issues, and we want students to appreciate it. It is a profound insight into how the human mind is organized. “The long road to social acceptance” reflects how much work humans have to do to gain and keep their places in their social networks. “Nature says go, culture says stop” was not on our original list of themes but kept coming up as we wrote, and so we went back to revise our earlier chapters to recognize this common way that nature and culture interact to shape human behavior.

Pedagogical Features

Our book has also benefited from input and suggestions for what can help students master the material. We have kept what has worked well in other textbooks, such as including glossaries, tables, graphs, and illustrations. Each chapter begins with a set of “Learning Objectives” and ends with a “Chapter Summary,” where we present lists of bullet points summarizing key content in the chapter.

A more novel feature of our textbook is the inclusion of many self-quizzes. Each major header in each chapter ends with a series of multiple-choice questions. These were wildly popular with students in the first three editions. We can understand why many books don’t include them—they were an immense amount of work to prepare, and we wrote them ourselves rather than hiring them out to someone less familiar with the content—but we think the effort was worth it. Every time students finish reading a section of a chapter, they can get a quick check on how well they understood it by answering those questions and verifying whether their answers are correct. Research shows that taking quizzes is one of the best ways to learn new material,⁴ far more effective than other techniques such as highlighting and underlining textbooks, rereading, and summarization.⁵

Another exciting feature of this book is the set of five application modules that can be assigned according to instructor preference. It is possible to get the book printed with or without these modules, or indeed with any combination of them. The five modules are: (Module A) Applying Social Psychology to Consumer Behavior, (Module B) Applying Social Psychology to Health, (Module C) Applying Social Psychology to the Workplace, (Module D) Applying Social Psychology to Law, and (Module E) Applying Social Psychology to the Environment. These modules enable an instructor to tailor a course that can encompass some of the most important applied fields of study that have had long, close relationships with social psychology.

For the third and the fourth editions we added six to eight learning objectives for each chapter and module. A learning objective describes what students should know at the end of the chapter that they didn’t know before they read it. Learning objectives should be useful for both instructors and students. They also set our book apart from other social psychology books that do not include learning objectives.

More With Less

When we embarked on this textbook, we made “doing more with less” one of our guiding mottos. As we saw it, social psychology was approaching a turning point. The early textbooks often went into lively detail about many specific studies. That was possible because

back then there wasn't a great deal of material to cover. Since then, the body of knowledge in the field has expanded year by year, with new findings being continuously documented in established journals along with new journals popping up all the time. It is no longer possible to cover all the influential studies in great detail.

Some textbooks have responded to information overload by packing more and more findings into the same amount of space. This plainly cannot go on forever. Either textbooks have to get longer and longer, or they have to become more and more selective. We chose the latter course. As things turned out, we were able to cover most of what has become standard in textbooks, but we do not claim or pretend to be exhaustive. Our model for this is introductory psychology. Once upon a time, perhaps, introductory textbooks could provide a comprehensive overview of psychology, but it has by now become standard practice for them merely to select a few topics for each chapter to illustrate rather than fully cover what that field has to offer. We think social psychology is reaching the same point and that the way forward is to accept the impossibility of covering it all.

To be sure, the review process did push us to be more thorough. One thing experts are very good at is saying, "Well, you could also cover topic X," and we heeded many such comments from our expert reviewers. But our goal all along has been to offer students an in-depth look at some information, with all its implications and connections highlighted, rather than to make sure to cite every relevant study. We hope instructors will add their personal favorites to the lectures, to augment what we have included. But to keep the book to a manageable length and still do justice to our goals, we had to leave out many important and worthy studies. Even some large topics ended up getting short shrift. Most notably, we devote fairly little space to the social neuroscience work that has become an important theme in the field. We don't dispute its importance. We simply think it is not what is best for introductory students. Our recommendation is that universities offer a subsequent course that can focus on brain processes and their link to social behavior. For the first course, we think students would prefer to learn about the more familiar and more readily understood questions about how people think, feel, and act in recognizable social situations.

What's New in the Fourth Edition?

We were delighted with the positive reception of the first three editions of our textbook. We are full of gratitude toward all who have used the book. We heard from many instructors and students who made suggestions for material to cover, noticed typos or other things to fix, or simply wanted to express their liking for the book. Thanks to all.

In that happy spirit we set to work on the fourth edition. Our goals were to keep it current, to retain its core vision and best features, and to make substantial, targeted improvements in a few areas where we felt there were promising opportunities or recent developments in the field.

All chapters have come in for revision, especially updating their coverage with the addition of some recent research findings. Still, some chapters underwent more sweeping changes than others. We added a *Social Side of Sex* box to Chapter 14 called **Is Marriage a Group?** We also replaced the *Tradeoffs* box in Chapter 10 with a new one called **Creativity and Cheating**. The old *Tradeoffs* box called Gun Ownership no longer seemed much like a tradeoff, because it has become increasingly obvious, based on statistical and research evidence, that most people are much safer if they do not own a gun than if they do own a gun.

We added new opening vignettes to Chapter 5 on social cognition, Chapter 9 on pro-social behavior, and Chapter 13 on prejudice. We begin Chapter 5 by talking about why some people believe that vaccinations cause autism even though numerous reputable organizations have denied a link between vaccinations and autism (e.g., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Academy of Pediatrics, Institute of Medicine, U.S. National Academy of Sciences, U.K. National Health Service, Cochrane Library). We begin Chapter 9 by discussing "pay it forward," where a person does an unexpected good deed for someone, and asks the recipient to repay it to others instead of to the original

benefactor. Chapter 9 also includes a new section on morality. We begin Chapter 13 by discussing human zoos, in which Africans and indigenous peoples are put on display like animals. All modules were also revised and updated.

For the fourth edition, like the third edition, we use the endnote reference style used in the top scientific journals (e.g., *Science*, *Nature*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*). This is not a cosmetic change. This makes the text much more readable to students. It also changes the emphasis from *who* did the research to *what* the research found. The references in the endnotes are formatted according to the guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) so interested students can become familiar with APA formatting.

We hope you will enjoy the fourth edition of our book. If you have suggestions for improvement or discover errors in the text, please let us know by dropping us an e-mail (baumeister@psy.fsu.edu or bushman.20@osu.edu). Again, we are deeply grateful for the opportunity to share our love of social psychology with students and teachers around the world.

Content Overview

CHAPTER 1

The Mission & the Method

The opening chapter explains what social psychologists do and why students may want to learn about it. It explains social psychology's place among the different fields that study human behavior. It offers a brief introduction to the methods social psychologists use to tell the difference between right and wrong theories.

CHAPTER 2

Culture and Nature

Chapter 2 sets up the big picture. How do we explain people? Departing from the old and tired battle of nature against nurture, this book follows a newly emerging understanding: nature and culture worked together, such that nature designed the human being to be capable of culture. The stock notion of “the social animal” is shown to be correct but far too limited, whereas the “cultural animal” captures what is special about human beings.

This chapter then sets up many of the integrative themes that will run through the book to help make sense of the many facts and findings that will be covered.

CHAPTER 3

The Self

The human self is a complex and marvelous participant in the social world. This chapter provides a coherent understanding of the human self that is based on both classic and recent research in social psychology.

CHAPTER 4

Choices and Actions: The Self in Control

The self is not just an idea but also a doer. This chapter covers key social psychology topics of choice, decision-making, self-regulation, and the psychology of action. The remarkable recent progress in this work lends extra excitement to this material.

CHAPTER 5

Social Cognition

Social cognition revolutionized social psychology in the 1980s. Now it has settled into a core basis for understanding many spheres of social life. Cognition is vital to cultural

animals, because cultures operate on the basis of information. This is a showcase for many of the great achievements of social psychology.

CHAPTER 6

Emotion and Affect

Studying emotion has proven much harder than studying cognition, and so Chapter 6 cannot compare with Chapter 5 in being able to point to a solid body of accepted knowledge. Despite that, much has been learned, and the “work-in-progress” flavor of the social psychology of emotion—combined with the natural human interest in emotion that students can readily share—should make this chapter an appealing read.

CHAPTER 7

Attitudes, Beliefs, and Consistency

The study of attitudes has a long and distinguished history in social psychology. This chapter brings together the influential early, classic studies with the latest advances.

CHAPTER 8

Social Influence and Persuasion

Social influence and attempted persuasion are deeply woven into the fabric of human social life, and indeed it is the rare social interaction that has absolutely none. As information-using cultural animals, humans often find themselves wanting to influence others or being the targets of influence. This chapter covers how people exert that influence, why they do—and how sometimes people manage to resist influence.

CHAPTER 9

Prosocial Behavior: Doing What’s Best for Others

In this chapter, we look at what people do in order to make possible the success of their cultural and social groups. Many textbooks have a chapter on helping. We cover helping in this chapter, but the broad focus is on all prosocial behavior. The integrative focus helps resolve some long-running debates, such as whether helping is genuinely altruistic and prosocial or merely egoistic and selfish. We also break with the Milgram tradition of depicting obedience and conformity as bad, because culture and thus human social life would collapse without them. This chapter also discusses morality.

CHAPTER 10

Aggression & Antisocial Behavior

Just as Chapter 9 replaced the traditional, narrow focus on helping with a broader focus on prosocial behavior, this chapter replaces the traditional focus on aggression with a broader treatment of antisocial behavior. Aggression is treated here as a holdover from the social animal stage—which is why cultures mainly struggle to reduce and prevent aggression, favoring nonviolent means of resolving conflicts. Other antisocial behaviors covered include cheating, lying, stealing, and littering.

CHAPTER 11

Interpersonal Attraction and Rejection

This chapter combines two very different but complementary sets of findings. The study of interpersonal attraction has a long history and, despite the occasional new finding, is a fairly well-established body of knowledge. The study of interpersonal rejection is far more recent but has become a thriving, fast-moving area. Together they constitute the two sides of the coin of people trying to connect with each other.

CHAPTER 12

Close Relationships: Passion, Intimacy, and Sexuality

In its first decades, social psychology mainly studied interactions among strangers—but most social life involves ongoing relationships. The study of close, intimate relationships blossomed in the 1980s from a small, underappreciated corner into a profound and exciting enterprise that changed the field. This chapter covers this work, much of it quite recent. It emphasizes romantic and sexual relationships, showcasing what social psychology has contributed to understanding of these grand, perennial human dramas. Human romance and sex are eternal problems that reveal our evolutionary background but also highlight the many striking ways in which humans are unique.

CHAPTER 13

Prejudice and Intergroup Relations

Prejudice occurs all over the world, often contributing to violence and oppression and other forms of misery. This chapter examines the many forms and faces of prejudice, ranging from the standard topics of racism and sexism to the less remarked prejudices against obese people, Arabs and Muslims, atheists, and homosexuals. Special emphasis is given to the emerging and uplifting work on how people overcome prejudice.

CHAPTER 14

Groups

All over the world, human beings live in small groups. This chapter takes a fresh and exciting look at the social psychology of groups. The first part addresses one often overlooked but basic question, namely why are some groups more and others less than the sum of their parts? Classic material on group processes is mixed with new and exciting research.

MindTap for Baumeister and Bushman's *Social Psychology and Human Nature*

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THE MISSION & THE METHOD



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1 Define social psychology.
- 2 Name the early influences and key ideas that had a lasting influence on the field.
- 3 Describe the ABC triad of social psychology.
- 4 Explain how social psychology relates to other fields of study.
- 5 Assess the different methods of data collection in social psychology.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Does Chicken Soup
Reduce Cold Symptoms?

15



TRADEOFFS

Research Ethics

18

YOU

are a member of a social world on a planet containing more than seven billion people. This social world is filled with paradox, mystery, suspense, and outright absurdity. Recently, one man spent \$70,000 in an auction for eight stuffed squirrels wearing boxing gloves.¹ In many parts of the world less than \$50 can feed a person for a year, which means 1,400 people could be fed for an entire year for the price paid for just eight dead squirrels.

Or consider that a homeless man in Kansas City, Missouri, went from having no money to having \$145,000 after he returned an engagement ring that a woman accidentally dropped in his panhandling cup along with some spare change. He returned it to her the next day when she returned to see if

he had it. The woman was so happy to get her ring back that she set up a website seeking donations for him, and over 6,000 people responded.²

Another ironic case involved a U.S. Air Force officer who oversaw the Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention and Response unit. He was charged with groping a woman in a parking lot.³ The Air Force website states, "Sexual assault is criminal conduct. It falls well short of the standards America expects of its men and women in uniform."

Can social psychology help us make sense of the baffling diversity of human behavior? The answer to this question is a resounding "Yes!" **Social psychology** is the scientific study of how people affect and are affected by others. Whether you know it or not, social psychology can help you make sense of your own social world. The material discussed in this book is intensely relevant to your life. For example, have you ever asked yourself questions

such as these: "How can I get him to go along with my plan?" "Should I ask her right up front to do this big favor, or is there a better way to get her to say yes?" "How can I bring them around to my way of thinking?" Social psychology can also help you understand simpler things, such as taking a coffee break. If your boss told you to make 10,000 decisions before you got your first cup of coffee, you'd probably think you had a cruel boss! The Starbucks chain of coffee shops, however, has advertised that they offer 19,000 beverage options, if you count the different coffees, teas, cold drinks, and all the things you could add to them. In a sense, therefore, the



Jason Alden/Bloomberg/Getty Images

After making 19,000 decisions, you can end up with a cup of coffee that costs over \$50! The Sexagintuple Vanilla Bean Mocha Frappuccino has 60 shots and comes in a 128-ounce (3.75 liter) glass.

customer who walks into a Starbucks shop for a morning drink is confronted with more than 19,000 choices. After making 19,000 decisions, you can end up with a cup of coffee that costs over \$50! It is called the Sexagintuple Vanilla Bean Mocha Frappuccino. It has 60 shots and comes in a 128-ounce (3.75-liter) glass. Isn't having so many choices just a way to frustrate people? How does Starbucks make money? Why don't their customers protest? More to the point (at least for a social psychologist), how do people get by in a world that offers them thousands of options at every turn, even for the simplest decisions? In Chapter 5 we discuss some of the heuristics people use to manage such information overload.

Chances are, something in this book will prove helpful to you in the future. This is not to say that social psychology is a cookbook for how to influence and manipulate others. Social psychology, however, can help you understand basic principles of social influence, as well as many other principles of social behavior. It is also just plain interesting to learn how and why people act the way they do.

The point is that there are plenty of reasons why you ought to be interested in social psychology. As you learn more, you can profit more and get more enjoyment from what social psychology has to offer. Let's begin by looking at how social psychology became the field it is. ●



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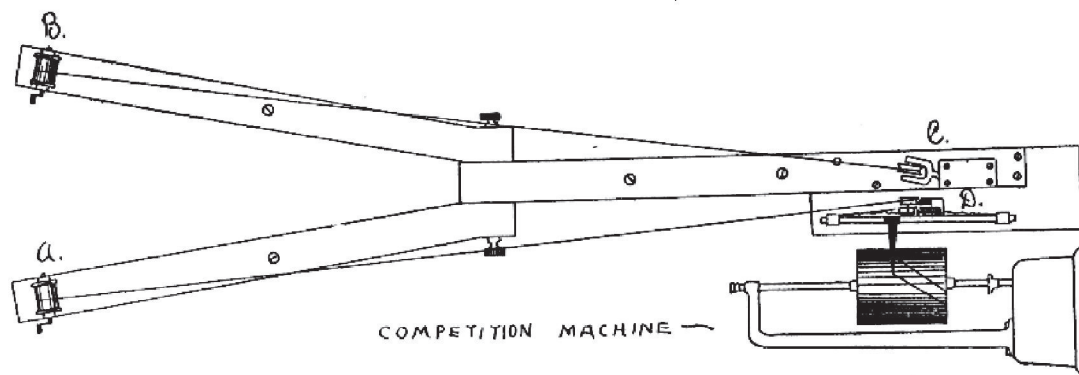
A Brief History of Social Psychology

It is hard to know what the first social psychology experiment was, but consider a few of the earliest ones we know about. Indiana University professor Norman Triplett conducted one of the first social psychology experiments in 1897.⁴ While examining the cycling records for the 1897 season, he noticed that bicycle riders who competed against others performed better than those who competed against the clock. Triplett proposed that the presence of another rider releases a competitive instinct, which increases “nervous energy” and thereby enhances individual performance. Triplett tested his hypothesis by building a “competition machine.” He had 40 children wind up a reel, alternating between working alone and working parallel to each other. Winding times were faster when children worked side by side than when they worked alone. Thus, the mere presence of another person enhanced performance on this simple task.

Another early social psychological experiment was conducted in the 1880s by a French professor of agricultural engineering named Max Ringelmann.⁵ He had men pull on a rope alone and as part of a group, and he measured the amount of effort exerted by each participant. He found that as group size increased, individual effort decreased. This study can explain why people tend to slack off when working on group projects.

These two seminal studies started a long chain of subsequent studies. Note, though, that the two studies pointed in opposite directions—one found that people worked harder in the presence of others, and the other found that people slacked off in the presence of others. Chapter 14 will try to resolve this seeming contradiction, but for now the point is to get used to the idea that social behavior is complicated.

social psychology the scientific study of how people affect and are affected by others



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The competition machine (pictured above), created by Triplett to test whether the presence of others affects individual performance, is one of the first social psychology experiments. Triplett found that children wound the fishing reel faster in the presence of other children than when they were alone. Ringelmann found that people exert less effort in groups, such as in a tug-of-war (pictured left), than as individuals.

The introduction of textbooks is an important milestone in the development of a field. In 1908, the first two books to bear the title *Social Psychology* were published, one by the psychologist William McDougall⁶ and the other by the sociologist Edward Ross.⁷ In 1924, Floyd Allport⁸ published another early social psychology book. Your own current textbook is another in a long line of social psychology textbooks. It addresses many of the same issues as those early ones—but of course it has much more information, thanks to the toils of researchers all over the world.

During the early part of the 20th century, many thinkers began to ponder where human society was going and why it had changed so much. Two world wars, the rise of communism and fascism, the spread of automobiles, the rapid changes in sexual behavior, the rise of advertising, popular fads, the population shift from farms to cities, and shocking economic events such as the Great Depression all challenged intellectuals to wonder what were the basic laws of how people relate to each other. They began to toss about various new and big ideas, including some that would shape the thinking of early social psychologists. One idea was that modern life makes people vulnerable to alienation and exploitation by giant social systems. Another idea was that we learn who we are from other people and our interactions with them. Still another idea was that modern humans act less on the basis of firm inner moral principles than on the basis of following the crowd.

Two ideas from this period had a lasting influence on social psychology. One was Gordon Allport's observation in 1954 that attitudes were "the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary American social psychology" (p. 43).⁹ The study of attitudes dominated social psychology research for decades and is still centrally important today (see Chapter 7). (Gordon Allport also observed that the study of the self was going to be recognized as increasingly important in the coming years, and on that prediction he was also quite correct; see Chapter 3.)

The other key idea was Kurt Lewin's formula that behavior is a function of the person and the situation.¹⁰ Thus, if you want to predict whether Nathan will finish his school paper on time, you need two kinds of information. First, you must know something about Nathan: Is he lazy? Does he like the topic of the paper? Is he smart enough to get the job done? Is he punctual? Second, you must know something about his situation: Is the task hard? Are other people bothering him? Is there a penalty for being late? Is his printer broken? Knowing only one kind of information without the other is an inadequate basis for predicting what will happen.

World War II stimulated a great deal of research in the social sciences, and in social psychology in particular. Several factors contributed to this rise in research. Some involved grand theoretical questions: Why did millions of citizens in a modern, civilized

nation with a long tradition of religion, morality, and philosophy follow the cruel dictator Adolf Hitler in his policies that included systematic mass murder and violent invasion of neighboring countries? Other factors were more practical: Why did soldiers seem to have so many psychological problems with stress? What exactly motivates soldiers to continue doing their duty on modern battlefields where they could be killed at any moment? World War II also caused many researchers to leave Europe and migrate to the United States. The influx of influential thinkers (including Kurt Lewin, whom we already mentioned) swelled the ranks of American thinkers and helped make the United States a world leader in social psychology. This European "brain drain" helped social psychology flourish in the United States.

In fact, the terrible events during World War II in Nazi Germany were the impetus for the most well-known social psychology studies ever conducted. It was shortly after Adolf Eichmann (a high-ranking Nazi and SS officer) was captured, tried, and hanged by an Israeli court that Stanley Milgram conducted his studies on obedience. During his trial, Eichmann did not dispute the facts of the Holocaust but said he was only



World War II stimulated a great deal of social psychological research.

Historical/Corbis

“following orders.” He testified that he “never did anything, great or small, without obtaining in advance express instructions from Adolf Hitler or any of my superiors.” Milgram asked, “Could it be that Eichmann and his million accomplices in the Holocaust were just following orders? Could we call them all accomplices?”¹¹ In summarizing his findings, Milgram said, “I set up a simple experiment at Yale University to test how much pain an ordinary citizen would inflict on another person simply because he was ordered to by an experimental scientist. Stark authority was pitted against the subjects’ strongest moral imperatives against hurting others, and, with the subjects’ ears ringing with the screams of the victims, authority won more often than not.”¹² In Chapter 9, we describe Milgram’s original study and subsequent studies in detail. We point out, however, that although obedience to malevolent authority is detrimental, obedience to nonmalevolent authority is often very beneficial to society (e.g., when motorists obey traffic laws).

Social psychology began to come into its own as a field in the 1950s and 1960s. At the time, psychology was divided between two camps. One camp, known as **behaviorism** sought to explain human behavior in terms of learning principles such as reward and punishment. (Countless studies were conducted with white laboratory rats in order to establish these principles.) Behaviorists were opposed to talking about the mind, thoughts, emotions, or other inner processes, focusing instead on observable actions that could be studied experimentally using the scientific method. The other camp was **Freudian psychoanalysis** which preferred elaborate interpretations of individual experiences (especially from clinical practice) instead of experimental studies that counted behaviors. Social psychology was not really compatible with either camp. Social psychology was more congenial to the behaviorist camp, in that it favored experiments and the scientific method, but it was also sympathetic to the Freudian camp with its interest in inner states and processes. For a while it sought to steer a middle course. Eventually (by the 1970s and 1980s), social psychology found its own way, using scientific approaches to measure not only behavior but also thoughts, feelings, and other inner states.

What about the more recent past? Historians are generally uncomfortable writing about recent times because main themes are easier to see from a distance than from up close. Still, we can make a few broad statements about the recent history of social psychology. The study of simple cognitive (mental) processes, such as attribution theory (attributions are explanations people come up with to explain the behavior of others), evolved in the 1970s and 1980s into a large and sophisticated study of social cognition (how people think about people and the social world in general). This area of interest has continued up to the present.

Another huge development from the 1990s onward was a growing openness to biology. The influx of biology was boosted by evolutionary psychology, which sought to extend and apply the basic ideas of evolution to understanding human social behavior. It gained further momentum as some social psychologists began to study the brain in order to learn how its workings are related to social events. Today, social neuroscience is an interdisciplinary field of study that investigates how biological systems influence social thought and behavior. Sophisticated instruments allow researchers to directly manipulate (e.g., transcranial direct current stimulation, tDCS) and measure (e.g., functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging, fMRI) brain processes.

The study of the self has been another central theme of social psychology since the 1970s. It is hard to realize that in the 1960s people hardly ever used the term *self-esteem* or cared about it. In recent decades, social psychologists have explored many different aspects of the self—not only self-esteem but also self-control, self-concept, and self-presentation. We discuss these topics in Chapters 3 and 4.

The field continues to change and evolve. In the 1980s, the conflict between the so-called free world and communist totalitarian systems was the dominant conflict in the world and the main focus of conflict studies. When the Soviet empire abruptly collapsed in 1989, the study of conflict between groups refocused on racial and ethnic conflict, which in the United States meant a sharp rise of interest in prejudice and stereotyping. Today, the same theories have been applied to understand stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination of other stigmatized groups.



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Behavioral psychologists conducted countless studies using white rats.

behaviorism theoretical approach that seeks to explain behavior in terms of learning principles, without reference to inner states, thoughts, or feelings

Freudian psychoanalysis theoretical approach that seeks to explain behavior by looking at the deep unconscious forces inside the person

QUIZ YOURSELF

A Brief History of Social Psychology

1. The earliest social psychological experiments were conducted in the late 1800s by researchers such as Max Ringelmann and Norman Triplett. What was the topic of these early studies?

(a) Aggression

(b) Attitude change

(c) Presence of others on individual performance

(d) Prosocial behavior

2. According to Gordon Allport, what was the most central concept in social psychology?

(a) Aggression

(b) Altruism

(c) Attitudes

(d) Attributions

3. According to Kurt Lewin's formula, behavior is a function of what two variables?

(a) Affect and cognition

(b) Appraisals and attributions

(c) Attitudes and beliefs

(d) Person and situation

4. In the 1950s and 1960s, psychology was divided between what two camps?

(a) Behaviorist and cognitive camps

(b) Behaviorist and psychoanalytical camps

(c) Cognitive and comparative camps

(d) Cognitive and psychoanalytical camps

answers: see pg 30

What Do Social Psychologists Do?

Social psychology aims for a broad understanding of the social factors that influence how human beings think, act, and feel. It focuses particularly on normal adult human beings, though some social psychologists do study children and people who suffer from mild mental illness (such as depression). Very little of what people do, other than those with severe mental illness, is off-limits to social psychology. Clinical psychologists study people with severe mental illness.

Social psychology is concerned with the effect of other people (real or imagined) on our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. These three dimensions or building blocks of social psychology are known as the **ABC triad** (FIGURE 1.1). The **A** stands for Affect (pronounced 'AF-ekt; note that this word is a noun, not a verb, which is pronounced 'ə-'fekt)—how people feel inside. Social psychologists are interested in how people feel about themselves (e.g., self-esteem), how they feel about others (e.g., prejudice), and how they feel about various issues (e.g., attitudes). The **B** stands for Behavior—what people do, their actions. Social psychologists are interested in all the various behaviors people engage in, such as joining groups, helping others, hurting others, loving others, working, playing, praying, and relaxing. The **C** stands for Cognition—what people think about.

Social psychologists are interested in what people think about themselves (e.g., self-concept), what they think about others (e.g., forming impressions), and what they think about various problems and issues in the social world (e.g., protecting the environment).

Social psychologists study the effects of personal and situational influences on these ABCs—especially the power of situations. That is, when trying to explain some pattern of behavior, the first place social psychologists generally look is to the situation. In this focus, social psychology departed from two powerful traditions in psychology. Freudian psychoanalysis sought to explain behavior by looking at the deep unconscious forces inside the person, whereas behaviorist learning theory sought to explain behavior by looking at reinforcement histories (e.g., what behaviors were previously rewarded or

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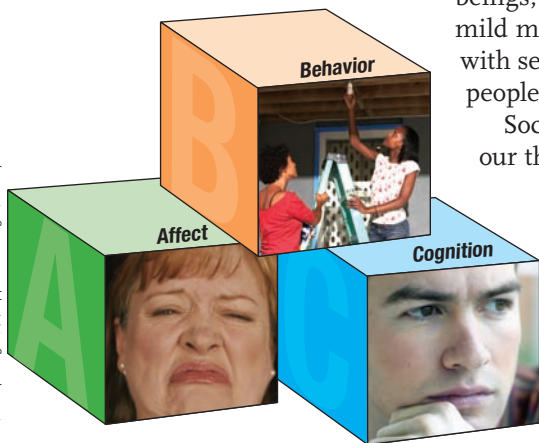


FIGURE 1.1

Affect, Behavior, and Cognition are the ABCs of what social psychologists study.

ABC triad Affect (how people feel inside), Behavior (what people do), Cognition (what people think about)

punished). Social psychology emphasizes how people react to the world around them, and how small changes in their immediate circumstances can produce substantial changes in behavior. Social psychologists even study the influence of situational factors that people may not even be aware of. For example, participants in one famous study¹³ arranged scrambled words to form sentences. Participants were shown five words and were told to choose four of the words to make a sentence. By the flip of a coin, participants received either words associated with the elderly (e.g., A LET'S KITE FLY OLD, which can make the sentence LET'S FLY A KITE), or words not associated with the elderly (e.g., A LET'S KITE FLY COLOR, which can make the same sentence LET'S FLY A KITE). After participants completed the task, the researcher thanked them for participating and told them that the elevator was down the hall. Using a hidden stopwatch, the researchers timed how long it took participants to walk to the elevator. Participants who had unscrambled the elderly words took significantly longer to walk to the elevator than did participants who had unscrambled the neutral words. In contrast, participants in another study¹⁴ who were subliminally exposed to entitlement words (e.g., SPECIAL, SUPERIOR) walked significantly faster when they left the study than did participants who were subliminally exposed to neutral words (e.g., WATER, NUMBER), presumably because they felt like they were very important people who had better things to do with their “precious” time.

Social psychology embraces the scientific method. Most social psychologists conduct experiments, which are careful and systematic ways of testing theories. You will learn more about how experiments are conducted later in this chapter. There are many ways to learn about people, such as reading a novel, watching people at the shopping mall, living in a foreign country, or talking with friends for hours at a time. All those approaches may yield valuable lessons, but the scientific method has important advantages over them. In particular, it is hard to know whether the insights gleaned from reading a novel or watching people are correct. The scientific method is the most rigorous way of sorting out the valid lessons from the mistaken ones. We discuss the scientific method later in this chapter.

1. **Unconscious forces are to reinforcement histories as _____ is to _____.**

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| affect; cognition | cognition; affect | behaviorism; psychoanalysis | psychoanalysis; behaviorism |

2. **What research methodology do most social psychologists use?**

- | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| Experimental studies | Longitudinal studies | Quasi-experimental studies | Survey studies |

3. **What are the components of the ABC triad?**

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| Affect, Behavior, Cognition | Affect, Beliefs, Cognition | Attitudes, Beliefs, Compliance | Affect, Behavior, Conformity |

4. **What is the primary approach that social psychologists use to uncover the truth about human social behavior?**

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| Reliance on authority | Introspection figures | Rationalism | Scientific method |

answers: see pg 30

QUIZ YOURSELF

What Do Social Psychologists Do?

Social Psychology's Place in the World

Social psychology is related to other social sciences and to other branches of psychology. It also differs from them in important ways.

Social Psychology's Place in the Social Sciences

Social scientists study people and the societies in which they live. Social scientists are interested in how people relate to one another. The various social sciences focus on different aspects of social life.

Anthropology is the study of human culture. Human culture consists of the shared values, beliefs, and practices of a group of people, which are passed down from one generation to another. Not only are humans social animals, they are also cultural animals. This is one of the central themes of this book (see Chapter 2). Social psychologists cannot understand human behavior fully unless they understand the cultural context in which that behavior occurs.

Economics is the study of the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. Social psychologists are very interested in these topics. In fact, some social psychological theories are based on economic principles. For example, social exchange theory predicts commitment to relationships by considering factors such as the costs, rewards, investments, and the number of alternatives available. Economics also calls our attention to large social systems (such as the labor market or money system) and to how these systems shape human behavior. Again, a full understanding of human behavior requires appreciating not just what goes on inside one person's head and what is happening in his or her immediate environment at the time, but also how the person's behavior fits into the larger social system.

History is the study of past events. For humans to progress, they should understand past events and learn from them. As Spanish philosopher George Santayana said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."¹⁵ Society progresses when members can avoid repeating the same mistakes others have made. Social psychologists sometimes debate whether the behaviors they study have changed historically, but until recently little interaction has occurred between social psychologists and historians.

Political science is the study of political organizations and institutions, especially governments. Social psychologists conduct research on political behavior. They study political issues such as voting, party identification, liberal versus conservative views, and political advertising. Political leaders can have a tremendous influence on the people they govern. Social psychologists are also interested in what makes some people better leaders than others (see Chapter 14).

Sociology is the study of human societies and the groups that form those societies. Although both sociologists and social psychologists are interested in how people behave in societies and groups, they differ in what they focus on. Psychologists tend to start from inside the individual and work outward, whereas sociologists start with large units such as countries, religions, and organizations, and work from there. Some sociologists call themselves social psychologists, and the exchange of ideas and findings between the two fields has sometimes been quite fruitful because they bring different perspectives to the same problems. For example, one social psychology textbook titled *Two Social Psychologies: An Integrative Approach* tried to integrate sociological and psychological perspectives of human behavior.¹⁶

anthropology the study of human culture—the shared values, beliefs, and practices of a group of people

economics the study of the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services, and the study of money

history the study of past events

political science the study of political organizations and institutions, especially governments

sociology the study of human societies and the groups that form those societies

psychology the study of human behavior

biological psychology (physiological psychology, neuroscience) the study of what happens in the brain, nervous system, and other aspects of the body

Social Psychology's Place Within Psychology

Psychology is the study of human behavior. Psychology is like a big tree that contains many branches. Social psychology is just one of those branches, but it is intertwined with some of the other branches (see **TABLE 1.1**).

People are biological creatures, and everything that people think, do, or feel involves some bodily processes such as brain activity or hormones. **Biological psychology** or **physiological psychology** and (more recently) **neuroscience** have focused on learning about what happens in the brain, nervous system, and other aspects of the body. Until recently, this work had little contact with social psychology, but during the 1990s (the "Decade of the Brain") many social psychologists began looking into the biological aspects of social behavior, and that interest has continued into the 21st century. Social neuroscience and social psychophysiology are now thriving fields.

TABLE 1.1 Descriptions of Psychology Subdisciplines

Psychology Subdiscipline	Description
Biological psychology	Biological psychologists focus on what happens in the brain, nervous system, and other aspects of the body.
Clinical psychology	Clinical psychologists focus on “abnormal” behavior.
Cognitive psychology	Cognitive psychologists focus on thought processes, such as how memory works and what people notice.
Developmental psychology	Developmental psychologists study how people change across their lives, from conception and birth to old age and death.
Personality psychology	Personality psychologists focus on important differences between individuals, as well as inner processes.
Social psychology	Social psychologists focus on how human beings think, act, and feel. Thoughts, actions, and feelings are a joint function of personal and situational influences.

Clinical psychology focuses on “abnormal” behavior, whereas social psychology focuses on “normal” behavior. Social psychological theory can shed a great deal of light on so-called normal behavior. Although abnormal and clinical cases may seem different, in fact social and clinical psychology have had a long tradition of exchanging ideas and stimulating insights into each other’s fields. In particular, clinical psychologists have made good use of social psychological theories.

Cognitive psychology is the basic study of thought processes, such as how memory works and what events people notice. In recent decades, social psychology has borrowed heavily from cognitive psychology, especially by using their methods for measuring cognitive processes (e.g., reaction times to various stimuli). Under the rubric of “social cognition,” social psychologists study how people think about their social lives, such as thinking about other people or solving problems in their world. Conversely, however, cognitive psychology has not borrowed much from social psychology except the occasional theory.

Developmental psychology is the study of how people change across their lives, from conception and birth to old age and death. In practice, most developmental psychologists study children. Developmental psychology has borrowed much from social psychology and built on it, such as by studying at what age children begin to show various patterns of social behavior. Developmental psychology also has often borrowed social psychology theories. Until now, social psychology has not taken much from developmental psychology, though this may be changing. Social psychologists interested in self-regulation, emotion, gender differences, helping behavior, and antisocial behavior sometimes look to the research on child development to see how these patterns get started.

Personality psychology focuses on important differences between individuals, as well as inner processes. For example, some people are introverted and avoid social contact, whereas other people are extraverted and crave social contact. Social and personality psychology have had a long and close relationship,¹⁷ as reflected in the titles of four of the top scientific journals in the field: *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, and *Social Psychological and Personality Science*. The relationship between personality and social psychology has been sometimes complementary (personality psychologists looked inside the person, whereas social psychologists looked outside at the situation) and sometimes competitive (is it more important to understand the person or the situation?). In recent years, the line between these two fields has become blurred, as social psychologists have come to

clinical psychology branch of psychology that focuses on behavior disorders and other forms of mental illness, and how to treat them

cognitive psychology the study of thought processes, such as how memory works and what people notice

developmental psychology the study of how people change across their lives, from conception and birth to old age and death

personality psychology the branch of psychology that focuses on important differences between individuals