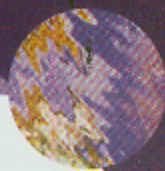


PREFACE



Although the preface is the first part of the book that you read, it is the last part that I write. It is my opportunity to reflect on the completed project in the hope that these reflections will help introduce you to the text. Over seven editions, the unchanging goal of *Psychology: An Introduction* has been to *teach*. We (referring to the large group of talented psychologists, editors, consultants, and reviewers who have worked with me) have centered our efforts on giving you a text that fully captures the immense importance and fascination of the scientific study of ourselves. You have my pledge that I have done my best to teach the concepts and facts of psychology in the clearest and most exciting manner possible. The gratifying responses of both instructors and students to the first six editions of this textbook have been a wonderful source of encouragement for these efforts.

Four kinds of changes were made in this edition in an effort to improve it, however: (1) an increased emphasis on the methods of research that psychologists use to learn about behavior and mental processes, (2) improvements in the presentation of information, (3) increased use of visual review exercises, and (4) the addition of new and timely information in all chapters.

1. *Increased emphasis on the methods of research.* There are many fields that attempt to understand people and other animals—from philosophy to biology. Psychology differs from many of these fields in its use of the methods of science to understand our behavior and mental processes. In order to help make this point clearer to students, the section on research methods, which was part of chapter 1 in the previous edition, has been placed in a separate chapter (the new chapter 2) and expanded slightly. As before, an appendix on statistics and measurement is supplied to build on the content of chapter 2 for those instructors who want particularly strong coverage of research methods. Alternatively, for those instructors who do not wish to cover research methods in this course, moving this material into a separate chapter will make it easier to skip the topic.
2. *Improvements in the presentation of information.* As in previous editions, we have worked very hard to provide you with a textbook that sets a standard for the field through the *clarity* of both the written language and the visual illustrations. Students cannot learn what they do not understand, and this book goes to great lengths to make the science of psychology understandable. Every sentence in the textbook was reconsidered, and many sections were rewritten to make them clearer to the student. Similarly, several new illustrations were added and several were redrawn for greater clarity.

As in previous editions, a concerted effort was made to estimate realistically the memory required to process the meaning of complex passages. Most textbooks are based on the assumption that all information from previous sentences has been encoded in memory, when this is obviously not always the case. In this book, sentences were written to avoid unrealistic reliance on previous sentences and to build repetition of key terms and concepts into the prose. These features are subtle, but they enhance readability.

3. *Increased use of visual reviews.* In the past several editions, I have presented illustrations at the end of the chapter on the biological foundations of behavior and the chapter on sensation and perception to help students review the material that they just learned. For example, students could attempt to fill in blank labels on an illustration of the eye to see if they could remember the names of all of the parts. In this edition, I have expanded this popular learning tool. I added visual reviews at the end of additional chapters that include important information that lends itself to visual presentation to help students test themselves to improve their learning.
4. *New information.* New information has been included in this edition in several other ways. First, as always, one of the pleasures of revising a textbook is seeing how much the field has advanced in three short years. Although coverage of the fundamental principles in this edition has not changed greatly, much new information has been integrated. The book is filled with important new information on virtually every aspect of psychology. Psychology is clearly a discipline that is still in an age of rapid accumulation of information. The responsibility of revising a basic textbook pushes me to read very broadly in the psychological literature. It is a fascinating field!

REVIEWERS

The following individuals have helped tremendously by reviewing this or previous editions of *Psychology: An Introduction*; their helpful guidance has been carried forward into the current edition.

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Many talented editors and illustrators also played essential roles. The results of that combined effort are before you, and I hope that it will serve the needs of students and instructors even better than did the previous edition.

In the two sections that follow, the mechanics of *Psychology: An Introduction* are explained in detail. "To the Instructor" describes the pedagogical strategy used in the textbook and my reasons for selecting the elements that are included. The next section, titled "To the Student: How the Book Works," explains in a step-by-step manner each teaching device I have used. It's essential that the student understand the purpose of each teaching device to derive maximum benefit from this book.

*A special thanks to Professor Whitten for her work on the Human Diversity boxes that were introduced in the fifth edition and have been retained in subsequent editions.