

Preface

Over in a far corner of my office is a small collection of books now turning yellow with age. What are they? Textbooks I bought when I was in college and decided to keep because I felt that they might prove useful. Standing tall among those books is the text I used in my introductory psychology course, back in the fall of 1961. "No surprise," I can almost hear you saying, "after all, you *are* a psychologist!" In fact, though, it is somewhat surprising that I decided to keep that particular book for the following reasons. First, when I took that course, I was a biology major; I didn't switch to psychology until the end of my junior year. Second, my introductory psychology course was a total fizzle: The professor actually read to us from the textbook and regularly bored us into a state bordering on oblivion. Looking back, though, I can see that even under those bleak circumstances, I recognized psychology as something *useful*—a field to which I'd probably want to refer again and again.

It has now been more than thirty-five years since I took that course, but I'm happy to note that my thinking in this respect has not changed; I still perceive psychology as a field that everyone can, and will, use throughout life. In my view, introductory psychology is much more than just a "pretty face"—an interesting course to be enjoyed and then forgotten. Rather, I see psychology as a body of knowledge and a way of looking at the world that everyone should take with them when their first course is over.

That idea provides a basic theme for this text. In addition to describing the knowledge base of psychology in as accurate and up-to-date a manner as possible, I've also tried to accomplish something else: I've tried to maximize the chances that students will indeed take psychology with them—that they will use this body of knowledge in dealing with the problems and challenges of their future lives. How have I tried to reach this goal? Primarily, through the steps and features described below.

New Features Relating to the Theme of "Taking Psychology with You"

To encourage readers to recognize the intrinsic usefulness and value of psychology, and so to take it with them throughout life, I've added the following new features:

BEYOND THE HEADLINES:

As Psychologists See It

These special sections, which appear in every chapter, begin with a short excerpt from an actual news story. They then describe what psychological research (and the scientific method) has to say about the topic or issues raised in the story. The purpose is primarily to illustrate how psychology can provide important insights into virtually anything relating to human behavior. A few examples of these **Beyond the Headlines** sections:

- Warning: H-O-T Really Means \$\$\$ When It Comes to Safety (Chapter 3)
- Drugged in Colombia (Chapter 4)
- Psychotherapist Successfully Treats Stage Fright (Chapter 5)
- It's Computer Chessmate for Chessmaster! (Chapter 7)
- The Secret of Long Life? Be Dour and Dependable (Chapter 9)
- Why Men Lose Keys—and Women Find Them (Chapter 11)
- Nursing the Funny Bone: Carol O'Flaherty Goes from Giving Shots to Needling Audiences (Chapter 15)
- Shh!! Napping Is Trying to Tiptoe into the Workplace (Chapter 17)

As you can see, these new sections touch on a very wide range of topics and lines of research in psychology.

RESEARCH METHODS:

How Psychologists Study...

This is another new type of special section, and one I view as especially important. These **Research Methods** sections describe the methods used by psychologists to study important topics—just at the point where they are considered in the text. Research Methods sections have two major goals: (1) explaining how psychologists have uncovered the findings described in each chapter (and therefore in each major branch of psychology), and (2) illustrating how the scientific approach adopted by modern psychology can be used to study and understand virtually any aspect of behavior. Reading these sections, I believe, will give students

practice in “thinking like a psychologist”—an important skill they can continue to use in the years ahead. In my opinion, discussing the methods used by psychologists to study various topics in close proximity to these topics is a much more useful approach than describing them in a separate Research Methods chapter. Some examples:

- How Psychologists Study Synaptic Transmission (Chapter 2)
- How Psychologists Study Circadian Rhythms—and Disruptions in Them (Chapter 4)
- How Psychologists Study Applications of Operant Conditioning (Chapter 5)
- How Psychologists Study the Nature of Short-Term Memory (Chapter 6)
- How Psychologists Study Development (Chapter 8)
- How Psychologists Study Aggression (Chapter 10)
- How Psychologists Study the Cognitive Basis of Intelligence (Chapter 11)
- How Psychologists Study Health-Related Behavior (Chapter 13)
- How Psychologists Study the Effectiveness of Various Forms of Therapy (Chapter 15)
- How Psychologists Study Sexism—and the “Glass Ceiling” (Chapter 16)
- How Psychologists Study Job Satisfaction (Chapter 17)

IDEAS TO TAKE WITH YOU

A special **Ideas to Take with You** feature in each chapter reviews and illustrates important ideas central to that chapter—ideas readers may find especially useful in the future. In other words, these features provide concrete illustrations of the “taking psychology with you” theme by highlighting key ideas and principles readers should remember—and use. Some examples:

- Applying Knowledge of Synaptic Transmission to Treat Psychological Disorders (Chapter 2)
- The Facts about Hypnotism (Chapter 4)
- When—and Why—Memory Sometimes Fails (Chapter 6)
- How to Reason Effectively (Chapter 7)
- Gender Differences: The Real and the Imaginary (Chapter 8)
- Aging and Cognition: Myth and Reality (Chapter 9)
- Some Tips on Winning the “Battle of the Bulge” (Chapter 10)

- Measuring Validity (Chapter 11)
- How to Recognize Depression (Chapter 14)
- When Should You Seek Therapy? (Chapter 15)
- Resisting Social Influence: Some Useful Steps (Chapter 16)
- When Will People Work Hard—or Goof Off? (Chapter 17)

MAKING PSYCHOLOGY PART OF YOUR LIFE

These sections, which appear at the end of each chapter, describe ways in which readers can apply the findings and principles of that chapter to their own lives. While similar sections were present in the previous edition, they have been modified, and several new ones have been written, to better echo the text’s new major theme. A few examples of **Making Psychology Part of Your Life**, all new to this edition:

- How to Discipline Children Effectively: Avoiding Some Common Mistakes (Chapter 8)
- How to Tell When Another Person Is Lying: Nonverbal Cues and the Detection of Deception (Chapter 10)
- Managing Anger: A Key Aspect of Emotional Intelligence (Chapter 11)
- Are You a High or a Low Self-Monitor? (Chapter 12)

EXPANDED PRACTICE IN CRITICAL THINKING

Providing students with practice in critical thinking has always been a theme of this text, because thinking critically is definitely one of the skills students will take with them from introductory psychology. I have expanded this feature in the following ways:

- **Critical Thinking Questions at the end of each Beyond the Headlines section** ask readers to think about the issues raised by the topic of the news story and special section, and to reach conclusions about these topics.
- **Critical Thinking Questions at the end of each chapter** raise major issues concerning human behavior and are designed to encourage readers to “pull together” themes and findings reported in that chapter—and in other areas of psychology as well.
- **Key Questions** follow major sections in the text and are designed both to encourage students to review the materials they have just read, and to think critically about them.