

Preface

To many students, abnormal psychology is the heart of the discipline of psychology. Often it is the subject area that attracts students to the field. Its high level of inherent interest and social significance makes abnormal psychology an exciting course to teach—and a difficult one. Because of the complexities of the material, its emotional impact, the preconceptions that students bring to its study, among other factors, abnormal psychology presents many difficulties for instructors and students alike. In our years of teaching, this course has consistently been the most enjoyable, yet most challenging we have taught.

This book was conceived as a teaching aid to convey the excitement of the field, to help teach the important concepts and facts, and to provide students with a sophisticated perspective on maladaptive behavior. The resulting text, of course, reflects our own conceptions about abnormal psychology and how it should be taught. These should be made explicit to improve the text's usefulness to students and instructors.

AIMS

Our primary aim in writing this book has been to give the student an educated understanding of maladaptive behavior. We have attempted to do so through both organization and content. The initial chapters introduce the student to the definition of basic terms, the history of attempts to comprehend and deal with maladaptive behavior, different theoretical approaches, and empirical studies of causes, classification, and treatment. The next sections describe the major diagnostic categories, with a final chapter on more common maladaptive patterns.

We have introduced three unique features to these later chapters: a unified framework for describing behavior disorders, an emphasis on causes and treatment, and a presentation of our use of the DSM-III diagnostic system. First, every diagnostic category is described in a broad and inclusive way. In each case, the affective, motivational, cognitive, interpersonal, biological, motor, and self-care dimensions of the maladaptive pattern are described. This unified format is designed to help students organize the multitude of descriptions they will encounter and to introduce them to all of the types of assessment information the psychologist gathers. A summary table of the major maladaptive dimensions of each diagnostic category is included in each chapter as a further study aid.

Second, our treatment of diagnostic categories also differs from other textbooks in its integrated discussion of causes and treatment in each chapter. After a general overview in the early chapters of causative variables and approaches to treatment, each chapter on the diagnostic categories summarizes what is known about the origins, treatment, and expected outcome of that behavior disorder. Thus we are able to give a more meaningful, detailed discussion of treatment and to give the student a fuller understanding of each disorder by describing some of the ways that psychologists attempt to remediate it.

Third, we have decided to use most of the organization and terminology of the new third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-III) in our discussion of the diagnostic categories. It is much improved over previous editions of the DSM in being more data-based and in using less ambiguously defined categories. The DSM-III went through a number of revisions during its development, but we have been careful to use the final version of this manual in the writing of our own book.

STYLE AND LEVEL

This text is primarily intended for use in undergraduate abnormal psychology courses. There is much diversity among texts for this course: some attempt to be encyclopedic, while others provide a brief overview; some are highly technical, while others emphasize the personal experience of maladaptive behavior. We have attempted to *strike an even balance* and to neglect no important aspect of abnormal psychology. Our goal has been to write a very well-researched and data-based text but at the same time to write a readable and exciting one.

We have attempted to provide instructors with a text of manageable length that can be used in any level of undergraduate course. While we have tried to make the text easy to comprehend, avoiding unnecessarily arcane and technical language, we have studiously avoided "over-simplifying" anything. We hope that the text will provide a great deal of sophisticated information, but in an easily understood fashion.

ORIENTATION

Every textbook of abnormal psychology has a theoretical orientation. This text is written from a perspective that is somewhat difficult to label. It is perhaps best described as a *data-based, broadened social learning orientation*. In some ways, however, the book was influenced less by our orientation than our orientation was influenced by the process of writing the book. This is why we refer to the book as data-based and broadened. When we seriously read the experimental literature on, for example, cognitive factors, genetic predisposition, and stressful life changes, we found our appreciation of other perspectives broadening. As a result, the book was shaped more by research findings and our experience as clinicians than by our theoretical preconceptions. We have attempted to make every major statement in the text reflect what is currently known about the topic. That is why the research and writing process consumed a large part of three years of our lives. It has been an exciting learning process, but not one that we are entirely sorry to see end!

While this broad social learning orientation provides a consistent framework for the text, we have not excluded other theoretical viewpoints. An attempt was made to give fair coverage to psychodynamic, humanistic, and more strictly behavioral perspectives as well.

TEACHING AIDS

To aid the learning process, a number of teaching aids have been introduced in the text. These include numerous quotes of both clinical cases and personal accounts of behavior disorders, boxed statements on related high-interest topics, and an extensive glossary that is tied to the text by setting the first use of all glossed terms

in boldface type and by indicating in the glossary the page number in the text where the glossed words appear. In addition, an instructor's manual, prepared by Anthony R. Ciminero and Alan G. Glaros of Wayne State University, and a student's guide, prepared by Alan G. Glaros, are keyed to the text.

Many people contribute in essential ways to a text of this type. We have been most fortunate in receiving excellent and talented contributions at all stages of the process. We gratefully acknowledge the support of William Pavlik and the Department of Psychology of the University of Georgia. Excellent detailed reviews of the manuscript were provided by Alan Kazdin of Pennsylvania State University, Karen LaPointe of Lewis and Clark College, Ted Weerts of the University of Iowa, and Steve Haynes of Southern Illinois University. James Romig, John Staley, Christy Bowman, Marilyn Martin, Joanne Tinsley, and Marguerite Clark of Scott, Foresman's College Division provided excellent and invaluable assistance in the development of the manuscript. Sincere thanks are also due the many people who worked on the typing and preparation of the manuscript, particularly Jacqueline Johnson. Our deepest appreciation, however, goes to our families, especially Susan and Cynthia, for their contributions, support, and incredible patience.

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