

P R E F A C E

In regard to authors, it has been said that there is the book one intended to write, the book one thought one wrote, and the book one actually wrote. According to responses from users and reviewers of the first two editions of this book, the book I actually wrote was, indeed, the one I intended to write and thought I had written.

What was the book I intended to write? To accomplish all that I originally intended, the book would easily have been twice as long as it is now. A century ago, William James, disturbed at the length of his now-classic *Principles of Psychology*, gave his own stinging review of it. He called it, among other things, "a bloated tumescent mass." Though this comment may have been written during one of James's frequent bouts with depression, it indicates that, from psychology's inception as a separate discipline, authors of introductory psychology textbooks have been confronted with the need to convey a broad discipline to students in a book of reasonable length. Given that psychology has become an even broader discipline and has accumulated an enormous information base, I quickly discovered that I would somehow have to manipulate a kind of intellectual "Rubik's cube" of seven goals to avoid producing a bloated, tumescent mass (or what textbook reviewers often, perhaps euphemistically, refer to as an "encyclopedic" book). My goals could only be achieved by considering each goal in light of the others.

MY SEVEN GOALS

1. To Do Justice to the Breadth of Psychology

My students often express amazement at the breadth of psychology. One psychology major might devote a career to studying the relationship between brain activity and schizophrenia; another might devote a career to studying the social factors that promote human love. And while one member of a psychology department studies the perceptual abilities of newborn infants, another studies the language abilities of chimpanzees. Because of this breadth, I was forced to be selective in the topics, studies, and concepts that I included in the book. Nonetheless, I believe the book presents a fair, representative sampling of the discipline.

2. To Present Material in Sufficient, but not Excessive, Detail

Again compromise was in order. As a teacher and a student, I have disliked textbooks that go to extremes. At one extreme are textbooks that present many topics but with superficial coverage of them. At the other extreme are textbooks that present few topics but overwhelm the reader with details. Though my discussions of topics naturally vary somewhat in their extensiveness, I have provided enough information to assure student comprehension, while permitting coverage of a sufficient number of topics to assure a good representation of the entire discipline. The main exceptions to this approach are topics covered in greater depth in the "Thinking about Psychology" sections (discussed below) that end each chapter.

3. To Encourage Appreciation of the Research Process

A psychology textbook should provide students with more than theories and research findings. It should discuss “how we know” as well as “what we know.” To give students enough background to appreciate the research process, I introduce, in chapter 2, psychology as a science, the methods of psychological research, and the statistical analysis of research data. The chapter includes a concrete example of the scientific method that shows how it relates to a classic study of interpersonal attraction. The chapter also includes data from a hypothetical health-psychology study and tells how to calculate descriptive statistics using that data.

In trying to help the student appreciate the research process, I have once again tried to strike a balance throughout the book by discussing research studies in moderate detail. For examples of this, turn to page 325 for the discussion of a study on naturalistic concepts in which nonartists formed concepts of artistic styles from paintings without being able to state the defining features that distinguish one style from another; or turn to page 583 and read the discussion of a study of the use of classical conditioning to suppress the immune system. The moderately detailed discussion of research studies contrasts with textbooks that present little more than research findings and with textbooks that describe research studies in overwhelming detail.

4. To Promote Critical Thinking

I believe that students should know scientific methodology, research findings, and how to critically evaluate what they read by relying on objective, rational evaluation of empirical evidence. Chapter 2 describes formal steps in thinking critically. Students will find that the ability to think critically benefits them in their daily lives when confronted with claims made by friends, relatives, politicians, advertisers, or anyone else. Almost every page of this book gives the student an opportunity to think about popular claims, provide alternative explanations for research findings, or think of possible implications of research findings. For an example of how I have integrated critical thinking in the text, turn to page 231 for a discussion of hypnosis as an altered state of consciousness. Most of the “Thinking about Psychology” sections also provide extended examples of critical thinking.

5. To Present Psychology in Context

An article in the June 1991 issue of the *American Psychologist*, dealing with psychology and the liberal arts curriculum, stressed that providing students with the historical context of psychology is an essential goal in undergraduate psychology education. Introductory psychology textbooks should not present psychology as though it developed in “ivory towers” divorced from a historical or personal context. Throughout this book, you will find many ways in which topics are given a historical grounding. For example, chapter 10 traces the nature-nurture debate regarding intelligence back to the work of Francis Galton and the flood of immigrants in the early twentieth century. And chapter 11 highlights changing values concerning sexuality by discussing the case of an article submitted to the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 1899 but not published until 1983.

I have also taken care to show that psychology is a human endeavor, practiced by people with emotions as well as intellects, and that scientific progress depends on serendipity as well as cool calculation. For example, chapter 1 discusses William James’s effort to have Harvard University grant the doctoral degree to Mary Whiton Calkins, who became an eminent psychologist, but who, as a woman, was denied the degree despite fulfilling the requirements for it. Chapter 3 tells how the first demonstration of the chemical basis of communication between nerve cells came to Otto Loewi in a dream. Chapter 7 explains why the name *Pavlov* rings a bell but the name *Twitmyer* does not. And chapter 10 describes how psychoanalyst Alfred Adler’s concept of the inferiority complex may be rooted in his own sickly childhood.

6. To Present a Balanced and Scholarly View of Psychology

This is not a psychoanalytic book, a behavioristic book, a cognitive book, a humanistic book, or a biopsychological book. It is a bit of each, which reflects my belief that an introductory psychology textbook should introduce students to a variety of perspectives, rather than reflect the author's favored one. Over the decades, the perspectives have waxed and waned in their dominance. Students are introduced to the major psychological perspectives in chapter 1 and continue to encounter them throughout the book, most obviously in the chapters on personality, psychological disorders, and therapy.

For students to respect psychology as a science, the textbook they use must be scholarly. Though popular examples are sprinkled throughout this text, they are not used as substitutes for evidence provided by scientific research. A perusal of the reference list at the end of the text reveals that it is up-to-date in its coverage of research studies, yet does not slight classic studies. Of course, solving my intellectual "Rubik's cube" prevented me from including every important classic study or many other worthy "cutting edge" studies.

7. To Show the Relevance of Psychology to Everyday Life

I enjoy books that give me a sense of the author by providing "coloration" for the typically sober material that is presented. I believe that the examples I use in showing the relevance of psychology to everyday life provides this coloration. The examples come from virtually every area of life, including art, literature, history, biography, entertainment, sport, politics, and student life. Instead of showing the relevance of psychology by using the common practice of segregating it in "boxes," I have interwoven the examples into the body of the text. For example, page 221 provides research-based suggestions for overcoming insomnia, page 270 discusses how operant conditioning is used to train animals, and page 306 describes ways to improve one's memory and study habits.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Anatomy of a Research Study

New to this edition of the text is a unique examination of research methodology. Beginning with chapter 2, each chapter now features brief expositions of both a classic and a contemporary psychological research study. These "Anatomy of a Research Study" sections briefly highlight the rationale, methods, and results of featured studies in an accessible manner for beginning students. These studies are tied directly to the text discussion and emphasize both methodology and critical thinking. This new feature reinforces the focus on essential and ongoing issues of psychology that run throughout the book and is highlighted in the "Thinking about Psychology" sections that end each chapter.

Thinking about Psychology

In a senior seminar course I have taught over the years, entitled "Current Issues in Psychology," students read many journal articles and some popular articles on a host of controversial topics, which they then discuss or debate. Because of the success of this course—students enjoy sinking their teeth into controversial issues—I have adapted its rationale for this text in many of the topics covered in the "Thinking about Psychology" sections. To provide adequate discussion of each topic, I devote several pages to presenting the status of a particular issue or application.

Many of the topics in these sections illustrate how psychologists think critically about issues such as hemispheric specialization, parapsychology, unconscious influences, ape language, personality consistency, effectiveness of psychotherapy, and Type A behavior. Other "Thinking about Psychology" sections illustrate the connection of research to practical reality, as in the sections discussing biofeedback and motivation and sport. And some of the sections illustrate how scientific issues cannot always be divorced