

Social Psychology

INTRODUCTORY PSYCHOLOGY

This series of titles is aimed at introductory-level psychology students in sixth forms, further education colleges and on degree courses and those wishing to obtain an overview of psychology. The books are easy to use, with comprehensive notes written in coherent language; clear flagging of key concepts; relevant and interesting illustrations; well-defined objectives and further reading sections to each chapter; and self-assessment questions at regular intervals throughout the text.

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Preface to the Second Edition

It is now seven years since the first edition of *Social Psychology* was published in this series and a great deal has happened during this time. In the first place there have been changes in the content of the syllabus for A-level both with the Associated Examining Board and the Northern Examinations and Assessment Board. Furthermore, the Oxford and Cambridge Board has introduced a syllabus for A-level. This book attempts to accommodate these changes.

As well as this, the emphases within the field of social psychology have altered fairly radically. The focus is presently much more upon social cognition: that is, the way in which social events are stored in memory and used subsequently to determine social behaviour. This focus has been more clearly represented in the new edition with clear explanations of such concepts as schemata and scripts, social representation and social identity.

Traditionally, social psychology has been dominated by American theory and research. There has been an attempt here to introduce more of the work done in Europe, as well as in Australia and New Zealand.

The aim has been to set out theories and the research which underpins them in as clear and succinct way as possible, using illustrations and boxes to focus attention on the detail of important pieces of research. Important concepts are highlighted and explained throughout the book and each chapter starts with a set of objectives for that chapter so as to make it easier for those who are working largely on their own to focus upon the relevant ideas. In addition, there are self-assessment questions at the end of each section to enable students to check their understanding.

Social psychology is a fascinating study and one which has relevance to everyday life. These relevances have been highlighted also. Some areas have received more attention than in the first edition, notably affiliation, love and marriage. Self-concepts and self-perceptions have been examined more fully, while persuasive

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communication, much of the research into which now seems rather dated, has had less attention. In general, the intention has been to provide an up-to-date picture of social psychology for students who are studying psychology at a fairly basic level, particularly for A-level and for GCSE. We hope that you will find the book understandable and above all enjoyable.

Tony Malim

Acknowledgement

The author would once again like to thank Sally Artz for the cartoons at the beginning of each chapter.



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