

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 eight 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 seven editions of this textbook have been a wonderful source of encouragement for these efforts.

Overall, the time-tested format of the book has not changed in the eighth edition. Students continue to like the format, and research continues to support its use. As before, the book enhances learning and memory by using advance organizers followed by clearly written text (with explicit organizational cues) and repeated reviews. An additional advance organizer was added to the eighth edition, however, to help you see the “forest” before you begin to read about the “trees.” The opening page to each major section of the text now contains a visual overview of the conceptual organization of the information presented in that section. This should help you use the prologue to each chapter to create a cognitive structure to organize your learning.

It has only been three years since the last revision of this text, but the thousands of psychologists at work in research these days have given us rapid scientific progress. The rapidity of scientific advance is striking when I read the wide range of psychological literatures needed to keep up with the field. This progress is reflected in many changes in the content of the text. Most of these changes reflect confirmations and relatively minor modifications of existing hypotheses, but there have been some notable advances in knowledge and theory. The major content changes in the eighth edition include

1. New information on *positive psychology*—the study of happiness, productiveness, and other aspects of successful adjustment in addition to the study of maladjustment.
2. Expanded coverage of *evolutionary psychology*, particularly its application to theories of gender differences.
3. New information on *developmental changes in the brain* and their relation to changes in behavior and mental processes—it is now clear that the brain is a dynamic organ that changes in response to the environment.
4. Expanded coverage of how the *genome* influences behavior and mental processes.
5. Enhanced coverage of the modern version of the *reconstruction theory of forgetting*, which has received substantial support in recent years, and discussion of its relation to *false memories*.
6. New information on the role of psychological research in improving the validity of *eyewitness testimony* in legal proceedings.
7. Increased inclusion of brain imaging findings related to *cognitive neuroscience* and *affective neuroscience* when discussing cognition, emotion, and personality.
8. New information on *cultural influences* on psychological processes such as inferential reasoning and on mental health problems.
9. Studies of the emotional effects of the *terrorist attacks* on September 11, 2001, and effective coping responses to such traumatic stress.
10. New information on *individual differences in response to stress*, particularly the new hypothesis that the notion of the fight-or-flight syndrome may be more applicable to men than to women.
11. New coverage of the applications of psychological principles to *safety management* in the workplace and in automobiles.
12. Coverage of recent research on the *psychology of the entrepreneur*.
13. Discussion of recent applications of cognitive neuroscience to the field of *human factors engineering*, particularly the development of methods to help persons with health problems interact safely and productively with their environments.

14. Use of recent research on the psychology of *racial prejudice* to improve this section.

15. Expanded coverage of psychology's role in *environmental protection*.

I hope you enjoy reading about these advances in psychology as much as I enjoyed writing about them!

● 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.

Edward Brady
Southwestern Illinois College

Gary Caldwell
John A. Logan College

James Carroll
Central Michigan University

Richard X. Chandler
Itawamba Community College

Joan Cook
Community College of Morris

Brenda K. Davis
South Georgia College

Randall D. Gold
Cuesta College

Terri Heck
Macomb Community College

Benetha Jackson
Angelina Junior College

Charmaine E. Jake-Matthews
Prairie State College

Diana Kyle
Fullerton College

Velton Lacefield-Cole
Prairie State College

R. Eric Landrum
Boise State University

Callista Lee
Fullerton College

Giovanni Misceo
Benedictine College

Donald Nichols
Oakland Community College

James E. Oliver
Henry Ford Community College

Jeanne Porcelli
*Florida Community College
of Jacksonville*

Amy Posey
Benedictine College

Charles N. Riley
Itawamba Community College

Deanna Riveira
College of the Canyons

Mark Silkey
Northern Oklahoma College

Christine M. Vanchella
South Georgia College

Jean P. Volckmann
Pasadena City College

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.