PREFACE

At the university where I teach, and most others, introductory psychology is one of the most popular courses. This reflects the interest which most people have in understanding human behaviour – both their own, and that of others. While an introductory course should acknowledge this interest, it must also be an introduction to psychology as a discipline. In meeting these goals, the choice of a textbook is often crucial.

There are many possibilities in selecting course materials for introductory psychology. My own experience as a student involved a course which had no text; instead it used a set of readings which included several short books and a number of articles. While this gave the impression of encountering psychologists 'in their own words', it posed a very heavy burden of reading, and offered little coherence. Indeed, it was several courses later before I began to really grasp the outlines of the discipline, and what made it distinct from other fields of study. Hence, that first course failed one of the important requirements for an introductory course – providing a coherent understanding of the nature of psychology.

While using a textbook might seem to present a simple solution, there are literally dozens of introductory texts in print, and most seem to follow a formula which is less than satisfactory. Over almost thirty years, I have encountered many texts, and used more than a dozen in my classes. From my experiences as a teacher, and the feedback from several thousand students, I have come to recognize certain factors which seem important in a textbook.

Most textbooks today tend to be rather large volumes which provide an impressive amount of factual knowledge. Unfortunately, as teaching tools, these texts tend to have several limitations. First, they are both too large and too expensive. No student can really hope to assimilate all the detail which is provided, and often they find the mass of information overwhelming. So, they end up paying for content that isn't needed. Second, most students come to psychology with an interest in *human* behaviour, yet often find a large proportion of their text is devoted to research on other species. While such research clearly is part of psychology, it is often not handled in ways that help students

to understand its relevance to understanding human behaviour. Third, by presenting a survey of various sub-areas such as 'perception', 'development', and 'motivation', texts fail to provide a coherent framework for the discipline as a whole. In the end, it becomes as disjointed for students as my own text-less experience was.

Out of these concerns emerged this book, which is designed to offer a relatively brief, coherent introduction to psychology which emphasizes the understanding of human behaviour. The emphasis on human behaviour was the easiest goal to meet, since much of psychological research is focused on people; animal research is included only where it clearly relates to our understanding of human behaviour. The goal of brevity was met by making a conscious decision to be selective rather than encyclopedic. In order to define criteria for such selection, it was necessary to choose some organizing principles – which in fact related to the third goal, coherence.

The organizing structure of this book is based on the historical reality that psychology has been based on several different conceptual frameworks, each with its own assumptions, methods, and theories. Thus, the examination of five such frameworks (or approaches, as they are called in this text) forms the central focus of the book. Underlying this structure is a concern with the process of *how* we arrive at knowledge of behaviour – not just that different approaches exist, but how and why they arose. A central theme of the book is that the processes of perception are important for understanding both human behaviour and the nature of the discipline of psychology. That organizing structure has proven remarkably popular with students and instructors in previous editions. This edition remains faithful to the basic concepts and goals of the earlier editions.

The changes in this edition involve three goals: first, to clarify and update the material of the previous edition where necessary; second, to provide coverage of new topics where appropriate; and third, to provide more structural aids to readers. With regard to the first goal, this book represents a line-by-line rewrite of the previous edition, while maintaining a similar overall structure. In terms of the second goal, this edition represents a rethinking of the treatment of social behaviour (Chapter 8) to include more traditional social content. In addition, the book has been revised to include a new emphasis on the role of culture, thanks largely to the contributions by my able co-author, Marilyn Hadad.

A gifted and experienced teacher, her influence is present in many of the boxed features, but also through her input and criticism in the development of this edition as a whole. Beyond these two major improvements to coverage, readers will find discussion of new developments and new material in every chapter, and many new references for both research and further reading. The purpose of such changes has not been to be current for currency's sake, but to select material which contributes to the original goals of the text. Hence, the changes are meant to enhance the original conception, not to alter it. Overall, the book is modestly larger than the previous edition, but still provides a brief introduction to psychology – and one which provides a coherent understanding of the origins and nature of the discipline.

In terms of providing guidance to readers, it was felt important to retain, and where appropriate, build on existing features intended to make it more helpful. One new feature is a linked set of discussions at the end of Chapters 1-6. Chapter 1 provides a detailed case study, which is then discussed in Chapters 2-6, illustrating how each approach can assist in understanding some aspect of the case. The purpose of these discussions, called 'Putting It All Together', is to show how the approaches can be complementary, and thereby provide both a sense of integration, and also a counterweight the student's desire to view the approaches in terms of 'right' vs. 'wrong'. In addition to an extensive end Glossary, important terms are also highlighted and defined in context where they first occur, with formal definitions being provided in the margin. In this edition, the number of terms defined has been increased by approximately 10%. In the interests of both clarity and reader appeal, the number of illustrations has been increased by almost 50%; as in the previous edition, the choice of illustrations is intended to provide relevant information, not simply graphic fillers. The book continues to begin each chapter with an overall Outline to help readers grasp the structure of what lies ahead, and concludes with a point-form Summary and list of Key Terms and Concepts. It is hoped that these features will aid students in the process of studying and reviewing, without distracting from the flow of the text itself.

In addition, the discussion questions, which are dispersed throughout the book with the label 'For further consideration', have been retained, with questions appearing after each sub-section. These questions are meant to encourage readers to apply the ideas within the text as a means of enhancing understanding. In general, they go beyond simple rote

review, but are not intended to be completely open-ended. Some ask students to reflect on their own experiences, others may prove amenable to group discussions. While 'critical thinking' has become a much-abused buzz-word in the past few years, these questions are intended to provoke involvement and reflection.

Two notes on style: first, to preserve consistency of tone, the final wording throughout the book reflects the first author; hence, any references to 'I' should be taken as referring to WEG. Second, the handling of the third person singular in non-sexist ways is continuing to evolve, but this book adopts the (increasingly accepted) usage of 'their' rather than the awkward 'his/her'.

In writing this book, I have been clearly aware of my own limitations, and of my debts to others. The first edition of this book was a collaborative effort of six people, including myself. Since the second edition, I have been the sole author, but I still wish to acknowledge my colleagues who collaborated on the first edition. Whatever the evolution of this book has been, they were all part of its origin, and part of a productive collaborative experience: Gordon R. Emslie, Paul H. Hirschorn, Judith Kelly Waalen, John Medcof, and John Roth. To all of them, I give my thanks.

A further debt must be accorded to those readers and reviewers who provided comments on the previous edition, and thereby contributed to making this book better. Making psychology accessible and enjoyable for readers has always been a key goal, and the feedback and comments from students has been useful as well as gracious – it is yet one more reason why teaching is such a worthwhile endeavour. Many reviewers, who must go unnamed, have also contributed to this book, and their comments have been both supportive and extremely useful. In addition, I want to acknowledge my colleagues at Ryerson University, who have provided thoughtful comments and valuable criticism. Their support has been much appreciated.

Thanks are also due to my co-author, Marilyn Hadad. As mentioned above, she has made significant contributions in enhancing the coverage of culture in this text. Less obviously, but no less significantly, she has been an active collaborator in the overall revision, and her contributions have been timely, intelligent, and thoughtful. Her enthusiasm for teaching and for introductory psychology are exceptional, and she is a

welcome addition to this book. It is typical of Marilyn's self-effacing nature that she chose not to make specific comments in this preface, yet without her it is uncertain this edition would have ever been completed.

I also wish to thank my family, who made sacrifices in many ways during the time that this project consumed. My sons, Dave and Danny, aged fourteen and nine respectively, have been understanding of the many days, nights, and weekends which this project consumed. Their interruptions have been a frequent relief when the task has grown heavy, and their curiosity and enthusiasm is a constant reminder of just how remarkable our existence is. My wife, Lies Weijs, has been invaluable, emotionally, intellectually, and logistically. She has provided encouragement when I needed it, and bore the burdens of family demands when I could not fulfil them. Further, as a reader who is a non-expert in psychology, she provided insightful and intelligent feedback on clarity and readability. Family life and career often seem at odds in our society; in this case, my family has my gratitude and love for all that they have given to this project, and to my life.

Finally, I wish to thank the staff of Open University Press/McGraw-Hill. Open University Press has supported the development of this book through several editions, and their guidance and encouragement have been crucial. Ironically, as this book was under development, OpenUP was acquired by McGraw-Hill, with consequent changes in staff. However, I wish to thank Justin Vaughan, publisher for psychology when this project began, for his encouragement and support, and for his friendship. I also wish to thank Mark Barratt, editor for psychology, who had the awkward task of taking over the project in mid-stream. Nonetheless, he has worked diligently – being respectful of the original goals, but also advocating with confidence and enthusiasm to make the book even better. To Mark and all the staff at OpenUP/McGraw-Hill who have made this book possible, thank you.

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William E. Glassman

Toronto, July 2003

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