Psychological Science (7th Ed.)

by Phelps, E.A., Berkman, E.T., & Gazzaniga, M.S. · Language: EN

Overview

Psychological Science (7th Ed.) by Phelps, Berkman, and Gazzaniga serves as a comprehensive introductory textbook designed to provide students with a foundational understanding of the scientific study of mind and behavior. The book meticulously covers the breadth of psychological inquiry, from the biological underpinnings of thought and emotion to complex social interactions and psychological disorders. It emphasizes psychology as an empirical science, showcasing how research methods, critical thinking, and data analysis are central to understanding human experience.

This edition integrates cutting-edge research and contemporary perspectives, ensuring that students are exposed to the most current findings and debates in the field. It systematically explores core areas such as neuroscience, sensation and perception, learning, memory, cognition, development, personality, social psychology, and clinical psychology. The authors consistently highlight the relevance of psychological science to everyday life, encouraging readers to apply scientific principles to their own observations and experiences. The book's primary argument is that a scientific approach is essential for accurately understanding and addressing the complexities of human behavior, making it an indispensable resource for anyone beginning their journey in psychology.

Key Takeaways

- Psychology is a rigorous empirical science that relies on systematic observation, experimentation, and critical analysis to understand mind and behavior.
- The brain is the biological basis of all psychological processes, and understanding its structure and function is crucial for comprehending human experience.
- Learning and memory are adaptive processes that allow individuals to acquire new information and skills, shaping their responses to the environment.
- Cognition encompasses how we think, perceive, problem-solve, and use language, demonstrating the intricate workings of the human mind.
- Human development is a lifelong process influenced by both genetic predispositions and environmental factors, leading to continuous change and adaptation.
- Social contexts profoundly influence individual behavior, thoughts, and emotions, highlighting the interconnectedness of human experience.

- Psychological disorders are complex conditions with biological, psychological, and social roots, requiring evidence-based approaches for diagnosis and treatment.
- Critical thinking skills are essential for evaluating psychological claims and distinguishing scientific evidence from pseudoscience or anecdotal information.

Chapter Summaries

The Science of Psychology

This chapter introduces psychology as a scientific discipline, outlining its historical roots, major schools of thought, and the importance of empirical research. It covers the scientific method, ethical considerations in research, and various research designs used to study mind and behavior.

The Biological Mind

Exploring the biological foundations of psychology, this chapter delves into neuroscience, including the structure and function of neurons, neurotransmitters, and the organization of the brain. It explains how different brain regions contribute to behavior, emotion, and cognition.

Sensation and Perception

This section examines how sensory organs detect stimuli from the environment and how the brain organizes and interprets this information into meaningful perceptions. It covers the processes of vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell, and discusses perceptual biases.

Learning

Focusing on how experience changes behavior, this chapter explores different types of learning, including classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational learning. It discusses the principles, applications, and biological bases of these fundamental processes.

Memory

This chapter investigates the mechanisms of memory, from encoding and storage to retrieval. It differentiates between short-term and long-term memory, explores various memory systems, and discusses factors that influence memory accuracy, forgetting, and eyewitness testimony.

Cognition and Language

Delving into higher-order mental processes, this chapter covers thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and intelligence. It also explores the acquisition and structure of language, examining how language influences thought and communication.

Motivation and Emotion

This section examines the forces that drive behavior and the complex nature of human feelings. It discusses theories of motivation, such as drives and incentives, and explores the physiological, cognitive, and cultural aspects of various emotions.

Developmental Psychology

Tracing human growth and change across the lifespan, this chapter covers physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional development from conception through old age. It explores key theories and stages of development, including attachment, moral reasoning, and identity formation.

Social Psychology

This chapter explores how individuals think about, influence, and relate to one another. Topics include social cognition, attitudes, persuasion, conformity, obedience, group dynamics, prejudice, aggression, and altruism, highlighting the power of social context.

Personality

Examining the unique patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that characterize an individual, this chapter reviews major theories of personality, including psychodynamic, humanistic, trait, and social-cognitive approaches. It also discusses personality assessment.

Psychological Disorders

This section provides an overview of abnormal psychology, defining psychological disorders and discussing their classification, causes, and symptoms. It covers major categories such as anxiety disorders, mood disorders, schizophrenia, and personality disorders.

Treatment of Psychological Disorders

Concluding the exploration of mental health, this chapter reviews various therapeutic approaches for psychological disorders. It covers psychodynamic, humanistic, cognitive, behavioral, and biological therapies, emphasizing evidence-based treatments and their effectiveness.

Themes

- Scientific Method
- Brain and Behavior
- Cognitive Processes
- Social Influence
- Mental Health

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Psychological Science (7th Ed.) about?

Psychological Science (7th Ed.) is an introductory psychology textbook that provides a comprehensive overview of the scientific study of mind and behavior. It covers core areas like neuroscience, sensation, perception, learning, memory, cognition, development, social psychology, personality, and psychological disorders, emphasizing research methods and critical thinking.

Is Psychological Science (7th Ed.) worth reading?

Yes, it is highly recommended for anyone seeking a foundational understanding of psychology. As a leading textbook, it offers a rigorous, evidence-based introduction to the field, making complex concepts accessible while maintaining scientific accuracy. It's an excellent resource for students and general readers alike.

How does Psychological Science (7th Ed.) end?

Spoiler: As an academic textbook, Psychological Science (7th Ed.) does not have a narrative ending. It concludes with chapters on advanced topics in psychology, typically focusing on psychological disorders and their treatments, summarizing the current understanding and future directions in the field of mental health.

Who should read Psychological Science (7th Ed.)?

This book is primarily intended for undergraduate students taking an introductory psychology course. However, it is also valuable for anyone interested in gaining a solid, scientifically-grounded understanding of human behavior, cognition, and emotion, or for those considering a career in psychology.

How long does it take to read Psychological Science (7th Ed.)?

Given its comprehensive nature and typical textbook length, reading Psychological Science (7th Ed.) thoroughly could take approximately 1100 minutes, or about 18-19 hours, at an average reading speed of 250 words per minute. This estimate does not include time for reviewing or studying.