

stand out is its section on health, mental disorders, and therapy. Students generally find such material interesting, although they often gain exposure to the latter two topics in an abnormal psychology course. Also, the chapter on therapy was a bit frustrating because, by my count, Aiken discusses 17 different therapies. Little more than sound bites can be offered to the reader when the effort is to cover so much. To some extent, though, this characterizes the book. In general, the coverage is extensive and far-ranging but not deep. Aiken is big on lists, but not much for detailed exposition. This text is for those instructors who like a book to cover a lot of ground and who use class time to provide expanded coverage on selected topics. A nice touch are the many exercises, demonstrations, and discussion topics included with each chapter.

The Burger text, in its third edition, follows a consistent formula: Seven approaches are covered, and each approach gets a chapter on theory, application, and assessment, followed by a chapter on contemporary research. Rather than try to cover it all, Burger picks and chooses among research programs to illustrate each of the seven perspectives. Although he does not state how the particular topics were selected, I think most are of high interest to college students. For example, he covers research on such topics as social anxiety, happiness, mate selection, loneliness, reactions to failure, humor, hypnosis, religion, and sex differences in dream content. From this book the student will get the impression that personality psychologists study some pretty interesting things.

An appealing feature of the Burger text is his coverage of 25 or so research programs. He goes into some detail about how researchers formulated initial questions on a topic, changed hypotheses, worked results to refine their questions, encountered and overcame problems, and so on. His detailed description gives a sense that personality psychology is a living and growing discipline.

In this edition Burger develops *biological approaches* as one of the major paradigms, putting it on par with psychoanalytic theory, trait approaches, the cognitive and humanistic movements, and so on. This is a bold step, and makes the book unique among the three. For Burger the biological research and theorizing that has been building up in personality now represent not just a collection of ideas and findings but a distinct perspective on human nature.

Pervin's strong text, now in its sixth edition, retains his distinctive style of illustrating concepts with engaging clinical material and case studies. Although Pervin's stated goal is to integrate theory with research, this book (compared with the other two) actually covers the least amount of research. When illustrating or explaining a concept, Pervin's preference is to discuss a case rather than a program of research. For example, in discussing the relation between traits and vocational interests, Pervin elects to present the case of a 21-year old woman who, because of her personality profile, might be interested in careers that are artistic or investigative. There are, however, several relevant bodies of contemporary research on, for example, occupational choice, employee selection, and job satisfaction. These could have been used to teach the notion of personality and vocational interest.

It might be argued that the goal of a textbook is not to provide proof of the concepts under discussion. After all, that is what the professional journals are for. The goal of a text is to teach the material and to convey to the student an understanding of the basic concepts from the

field. Clearly, with personality psychology, this can be done through illustration with cases and discussion of everyday life. In fact, this approach can be quite engaging for college students. However, if this narrative and clinical approach is overemphasized students might be left wondering, "How do you know that?" For example, how do you know that personality traits are related to occupational satisfaction? How can you make such predictions for individual persons? This is where research comes in. Coverage of research conveys to the students how personality psychologists come to know what they teach. Clearly, the teacher or text author need not be held to standards of evidence and prove every statement. Nevertheless, discussion of research programs provides some grounding for personality psychology as a scientific discipline and illustrates to students how personality psychologists come to know what they know. Pervin's text is thorough and interesting, and the case material is engaging and provocative. What is de-emphasized is the sense that personality is an exciting scientific discipline and that trying to understand human nature is an interesting and engaging endeavor. ■

Social Interactionism and Violence: Promising a Lot, Delivering a Little

Richard B. Felson and
James T. Tedeschi (Eds.)
**Aggression and Violence: Social
Interactionist Perspectives**

Washington, DC: American
Psychological Association, 1993.
265 pp. ISBN 1-55798-190-6. \$40.00
(nonmembers); \$34.00 (members)

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authors attended in 1991, titled "Social Interactionist Approaches to Aggression and Violence." Some of the participants of the conference then wrote chapters for the book based on their papers. Perhaps one should not be surprised that much of the book reads like the proceedings of a conference.

The social interactionist approach is an interesting and bold perspective to maintain in the face of the cognitive (intrapyschic) revolution in psychology. In our view, these two perspectives—the social interactionist and the cognitive—complement each other nicely and can be usefully integrated. This book provides a taste of several different social interactionist cuisines. We hope that future

works will provide a full meal without the indigestion.

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cognitive processing is evoked. Hence, the link between stimulation, affect, and social behavior is considered not only automatic but also unmediated by conscious thought or constructivist social cognition. Consisting largely of hardwired and classically conditioned responses, the anger-aggression syndrome and its action tendencies can be overridden by conscious effort, but only after the fact. The model thus leans to the noncognitive side of the cognition-affect controversy (Zajonc, 1980; see also Lazarus, 1982, 1984).

Despite the pertinence of the Berkowitz model to the cognition-affect controversy, it has not figured prominently in this debate, a fact representing the very kind of scholarly myopia that this series of volumes, edited by Wyer and Srull, was initiated to remedy in the general area of social cognition. The format includes one chapter that presents an innovative theoretical framework followed by a series of commentaries. This particular volume showcases the Berkowitz model and the longstanding program of empirical research it has inspired. To serious scholars who are often exasperated by the frequency with which mutually relevant streams of research fail to speak to one another, this volume will offer welcome relief, presenting an intellectually provocative dialogue that is likely to stimulate empirical research and further theoretical integration.

One hopes that this is the case, at least, because taking the kind of position Berkowitz takes in this volume concerning social cognition requires backbone. Even with the complexity and diversity of the cognitive models and research programs presented in most of the commentaries, the focus of the commentaries is clearly on *cognitive mediation*, that is, on the role of meaning-ascription in the onset of an affective response. Moreover, most of these commentaries rightly draw attention to the extensive research literature demonstrating that cognitive activity itself often takes place automatically and outside of conscious awareness. They also draw attention to the literature indicating that much cognitive activity may, indeed, be based on learned associations. Hence, the commentaries frequently take issue with the definitions of cognitive process that Berkowitz uses. Beyond this, many authors in this volume specifically argue that the exact construal an individual constructs of a situation, whether consciously or nonconsciously, is crucial to the affect he or she experiences, and they point to research that supports this prop-

On Lashing Out in Rage: Thoughts on the Anger-Aggression Syndrome

Robert S. Wyer, Jr., and
Thomas K. Srull (Eds.)

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Review by
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To lash out in rage, even in small ways, is both a familiar personal experience for many people as well as a culturally shared concept. It is thus tempting to try to explain the phenomenon as essentially hardwired. It is also tempting, however, to consider it due to the particular meanings the individual assigns, whether implicitly or explicitly, to the particular situation.

This is the topic of the present volume, in which the eminent social psychologist, Leonard Berkowitz, presents his cognitive-neoassociationist model of affect, which has been supported by a program

of experimental research spanning nearly three decades. Inspired by the frustration-aggression hypothesis, this research focuses on aggressive social behavior and on anger as the emotional response that elicits it. The model assumes that an automatic association exists between pain (or other aversive stimulation) and the emergence of aggressive behavior. Bad experiences activate the anger-aggression syndrome and this leads to the attack response. In a two-stage model, affective associations (i.e., anger) and associated action tendencies are activated by aversive stimulation, and then higher order