Interpersonal psychology emerged as a significant academic discipline in the 1950s, when the field was dominated by behaviorism and psychoanalysis. Many researchers and practitioners at the time, dissatisfied with the extreme positions of those two schools of thought, sought an integrative alternative. In place of either doctrine, they looked for a more moderate position that was scientifically sound but also addressed internal states (e.g., interpersonal motives) as well as observable behavior. “Interpersonalists” distinguished themselves from their mainstream counterparts with their assumption that human behavior is best understood within the context of transactional causality and reciprocal influence: Persons A and B mutually and reciprocally influence each other, in that the behavior of each is both a response to and a stimulus for the other’s behavior.

During the past 60 years thousands of research articles, chapters, and books have been published that address interpersonal processes in personality, social, and abnormal psychology, behavior in dyads and groups, relationship patterns, and psychotherapy. Old models of interpersonal behavior have been modified and new models have been developed. Especially important during the past decade has been the implementation of new research methods that capitalize on the latest developments in communication technology (e.g., low-cost video equipment, miniature cameras, hand-held computers, wireless networks, and the Internet), which has made it possible to study aspects of interpersonal behavior that were previously off limits. See Table 1.1 for a list of milestones in the evolution of the field.

Interpersonal psychology is clearly at a point where advances need to be brought together and organized so that researchers, practitioners, and students can develop a clearer perspective about the territory that has been covered and what is new, different, and state-of-the art. This handbook was designed to fill this need. Its main purpose is to inform readers about the central issues that are being addressed by researchers and clinicians in the realm of interpersonal psychology, with the aim of providing individuals new to the area some of the basic tools they need to become participants in this important area of scientific inquiry. We also believe that the book can help define and shape the field as it evolves during the first half of the 21st century.
TABLE 1.1 Some Milestones in the History of Interpersonal Psychology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Event(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1922–1930</td>
<td>Treating schizophrenics on a special ward at the Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital in Maryland, Harry Stack Sullivan develops his interpersonal theory of psychiatry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>George Herbert Meade explains how individual personality and self-concept arise as a function of social processes in his monograph, <em>Mind, Self, and Society.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>In <em>Principles of Topological Psychology,</em> Kurt Lewin describes behavior as a function of the individual’s perceptive capacities in interaction with the dynamic forces that exist within specific environments. Sullivan helps found the Washington School of Psychiatry. The school becomes a forum for his work and attracts scholars from anthropology, political science, psychology, and sociology, including Ruth Benedict, Erick Fromm, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, Karen Horney, and David and Margaret Rioch. Many of Sullivan’s students make their own contributions to the budding field of interpersonal psychology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938–1945</td>
<td>The rise of Nazi Germany and World War II galvanize the interests of researchers and practitioners to study social and interpersonal processes, and to develop group treatments for soldiers suffering from “combat fatigue.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>The first widely disseminated summary of Sullivan’s interpersonal model is published as <em>Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations is founded in Britain as a charity concerned with studying group and organizational behavior, and the treatment of war casualties. Several key figures at the institute make seminal contributions to interpersonal psychology, including Wilfrid Bion, John Bowlby, Melanie Klein, and Ronald Laing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Professor Hubert Coffey’s students at the University of California at Berkeley begin to publish the results of their cooperative studies on personality processes in group psychotherapy (Freedman, Leary, Ossorio, &amp; Coffey, 1951).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>The first volumes in a series of posthumous works are published on Sullivan’s interpersonal theory of psychiatry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Timothy Leary’s monograph, <em>Interpersonal Diagnosis of Personality,</em> is published, offering the first circular model of interpersonal behavior.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Maurice Lorr and Douglas McNair (1963, 1965) revitalize interest in Leary’s work with their factor analytic research demonstrating the robustness of a two dimensional, circular representation of behavior.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>The first of John Bowlby’s books on <em>Attachment and Loss</em> is published. Bowlby offers a developmental perspective on the processes of early attachment that lead to internalized expectations for future relationships. In <em>Interaction Concepts of Personality,</em> Robert Carson focuses attention on the interpersonal processes that “pull” for symmetrical or complementary responses from others. Walter Mischel publishes his initial account of a social-cognitive theory of personality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Lorna Smith Benjamin’s dimensional model of interpersonal behavior, <em>Structural Analysis of Social Behavior (SASB),</em> is published, leading to numerous empirical investigations of social processes in psychotherapy, as well as two books on interpersonal treatment of psychiatric disorders: <em>Interpersonal Diagnosis and Treatment of Personality Disorders</em> (1993) and <em>Interpersonal Reconstructive Therapy</em> (2003). Gerald Klerman and colleagues (Klerman, DiMascio, Weissman, et al., 1974) present their initial research on <em>Interpersonal Therapy</em> (IPT) for the treatment of depression, which is now recognized as one of the most effective interventions ever developed for the treatment of this disorder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Leonard M. Horowitz publishes the first of many studies on interpersonal problems expressed in psychotherapy. Horowitz’s influential work on interpersonal problems and motives is summarized in his 2004 monograph, <em>Interpersonal Foundations of Psychopathology.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TABLE 1.1 Continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Event(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Hans Strupp and Jeffrey Binder develop <em>Time-Limited Dynamic Psychotherapy</em> (TLDP), which facilitates awareness in the client of relationship patterns that foster dysfunctional behavior, and teaches healthy alternatives. TLDP has since been found to be effective in treating a wide range of psychiatric disorders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Michael B. Gurman publishes the first of several articles and chapters that help illuminate and make accessible the unique methodologies for analyzing and interpreting assessments from circumplex measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Robert Plutchick and Hope Conte survey the wide range of two dimensional psychological models developed since the 1950s in their edited book, <em>Circumplex Models of Personality and Emotions</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>The <em>Society for Interpersonal Theory and Research</em> (SITAR) meets for the first time in Snowbird, UT. Conceived the year before during a luncheon hosted by Leonard M. Horowitz following an American Psychological Association symposium, SITAR is now an international, multidisciplinary, scientific association. Goals of the Society are to encourage the development of interpersonal research; foster communication, understanding, and application of research findings; and to enhance the scientific and social value of interpersonal psychology.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Aaron L. Pincus (Pincus &amp; Ansell, 2003) begins offering a series of articles and chapters that expand and reinterpret traditional interpersonal theory, helping to widen its influence in clinical and personality psychology. Using new technology and sophisticated statistical methods (i.e., structural equation modeling), Pamela Sadler and Erik Woody offer an integrative model of interpersonal complementarity that can predict outcomes in interactions using interpersonal traits and situational patterns that incorporate the effects partners have on each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Sidney J. Blatt publishes the first of two volumes summarizing his clinical and research work over a 30-year span, <em>Experiences of Depression: Theoretical, Clinical, and Research Perspectives</em>. His more recent book, <em>Polarities of Experience: Relatedness and Self-Definition in Personality Development, Psychopathology, and the Therapeutic Process</em> (2008), offers a complex model of normal and abnormal interpersonal behavior using the metaconcepts of agency and communion. Debbie S. Moskowitz and David C. Zuroff present a dynamic view of interpersonal behavior based on a new method of data collection: Intensive repeated measures in naturalistic settings. Their work shows that interpersonal behavior can exhibit considerable variability within situations, and is measurable in terms of <em>flux</em>, <em>pulse</em>, and <em>spin</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Mario Mikulincer and Philip R. Shaver publish <em>Attachment Patterns in Adulthood: Structure, Dynamics, and Change</em>, summarizing 25 years of research based on Bowlby’s clinical and theoretical formulations.</td>
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</table>
To set the stage for readers, we first present a history of modern interpersonal psychology that focuses on the theoretical roots that commonly underlie its major lines of science and practice. We then describe how the handbook evolved into its current form and offer a summary of what can be found in each section and chapter.

HISTORY OF MODERN INTERPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Interpersonal psychology can trace its roots to ancient philosophy (e.g., Plato, Hippocrates, Aristotle, Galen), evolutionary biology (e.g., Darwin, 1859), and the pioneers who spawned the subfields of abnormal, organizational, personality, and social psychology (e.g., F. H. Allport, 1924; G. Allport, 1937; Münsterberg, 1915; Murray, 1938; Prince, 1914). However, it was the events of World War II that galvanized the interests of scientists and clinicians in this area. Seeking explanations for the decline of German society into Nazism during the 1930s, and the atrocities of the war that followed, one group of scientists began studying the social processes that shape intolerance and destructive behavior (e.g., Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939), while another focused on dispositional individual differences variables associated with aggression and the formation of dysfunctional groups (e.g., Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). Clinicians were called to action to provide effective treatments for thousands of ‘combat fatigue’ casualties that had to be seen in groups because of their vast numbers (Coffey, 1954).

The field as we know it today was initially shaped by theoretical developments in American and British psychiatry during the 1930s and 1940s, and by academic social psychologists, primarily from Europe, who developed the first models to explain human behavior as a function of the reciprocal influence among individuals and the social environment. In America, the clinical roots of modern interpersonal psychology can be traced to the psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan (e.g., 1940, 1953a, 1953b, 1954, 1956), who was trained as a psychoanalyst but dissatisfied with the lack of attention paid by psychoanalytic theory to interpersonal processes in the development and treatment of psychopathology. Sullivan was originally hired in 1921 by the psychiatrist William Alanson White to work with patients at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington, D.C. He later transferred to the Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital in Maryland where, in his work primarily with schizophrenics, he began developing his interpersonal theory of psychiatry. The data for his theory came mostly from his psychotherapy patients and, in particular, his observations of patients on a ward that he created as a kind of interpersonal field laboratory (Evans, 1996; D. M. Rioch, 1985).

Sullivan radically transformed psychoanalysis and psychiatry from the study of things and events that occur within an individual (particularly the patient) to the study of interpersonal living (Evans, 1996). Whereas psychoanalysis emphasized intrapsychic processes in the development of personality and psychopathology, and viewed the psychiatrist as a physician ministering to a sick individual, Sullivan believed that the psychological contents of a person are inextricably derived from social processes, and that a psychiatrist could never be a neutral observer in the presence of the patient; instead, he or she was a participant-observer because the interpersonal field is always active and every participant shapes, and is shaped by, its ongoing dynamics (Sullivan, 1953a). For Sullivan, personality wasn’t something that resides in the individual; instead, it is “the relatively enduring pattern of recurrent interpersonal situations which characterize a human life” (Sullivan, 1953b, p. 18). He viewed the structure of personality as a system of security mechanisms for managing interpersonal anxiety. He used his one-genus hypothesis (i.e., “everyone is much more simply human than otherwise,” Sullivan, 1953a, p. 32) as a guide
for developing treatments that put the therapist and patient on equal footing.

Sullivan's ideas were originally presented as lectures to small groups of psychiatrists and residents, but his fame grew with the establishment of the Washington School of Psychiatry in the 1930s, which he helped found, and which attracted an eclectic, multidisciplinary group of students from anthropology, political science, psychiatry, psychology, and sociology, including Ruth Benedict (1934), Erich Fromm (1941), Frieda Fromm-Reichmann (1960), Karen Horney (1937), and David and Margaret Rioch (D. M. Rioch, 1959, 1985; M. J. Rioch, 1970, 1986). Sullivan's theoretical approach was not widely appreciated until the appearance of *Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry* in 1940, and much of the body of his work was not published until after his death in 1949 (Evans, 1996; D. M. Rioch, 1985). By the time his ideas were adopted by psychologists in the 1950s, there were a number of others making independent contributions to interpersonal theory and treatment, including Wilfrid Bion (1961) and Melanie Klein (1962) from Britain, who worked at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, Erik Erickson (1950), Jurgen Ruesch and Gregory Bateson (Ruesch & Bateson, 1951), and the individuals mentioned above.

During the same time that Sullivan was developing his interpersonal theory of psychiatry, the American social psychologist George Herbert Meade (1934) presented his ideas on how the human mind and self-concept arise from, and are shaped by, social processes, especially by way of linguistic communication or *symbolic interactionism*. Instead of approaching human experience from the standpoint of individual psychology, Meade contended that mental phenomena are substantive because they can be traced to and correlated with social behavior. He rejected the traditional view of the mind as separate from the body, as well as the behaviorist attempt to account for mind solely in terms of physiology or neurology.

Also during the 1930s, the German-born social psychologist Kurt Lewin (1936) offered his influential Field Theory, which provided a framework for examining the dynamic "forces" or conditions present in specific environments that influence behavior within them. Breaking from person-centered accounts of human behavior, Lewin argued that both nature and nurture interact to shape individual development, and that behavior is best understood as a function of the interplay between person and environment: $B = f(P, E)$. Lewin (1947, 1948) was strongly influenced in his early career by the Gestalt school of psychology, which primarily studied perception, and was later affiliated with the Tavistock Institute.

Another important development for interpersonal psychology came from Lewin's colleague, the Austrian-born social psychologist Fritz Heider, whose book *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations* (1958) essentially founded the modern field of social cognition (e.g., Bandura, 1986; Mischel, 1973; Mischel & Shoda, 1995), which has attracted the attention of interpersonal psychologists. Heider argued that social perceptions follow many of the same rules of physical object perception, including the way such perceptions are organized within the individual. Just as errors in sense perception can lead to problems in performance, errors in social perception can lead to all sorts of miscommunications and social misfires. Heider is also credited with developing the concept of social attribution, and providing a framework for understanding how individuals make causal attributions using a mix of person-centered dispositions and situational factors that may be stable or transient.
In America in the 1950s, a new generation of scientist-practitioners began to operationalize Sullivan's interpersonal theory of psychiatry. Seeking to understand social influences on personality and behavior, University of California at Berkeley social psychologist David Krech became interested in Sullivan's work and attended lectures at the Washington School of Psychiatry in the 1940s (D. M. Rioch, 1985). Krech stimulated the interest of a young psychology professor, Hubert Coffey, who was brought to Berkeley to help spearhead a new department of clinical psychology. Coffey enlisted a group of bright graduate students returning from the war to help test Sullivan's ideas, which to that point had never been empirically investigated (LaForge, 2004).

Coffey and his students—Mervin Freedman, Rolfe LaForge, Timothy Leary, and Abel Ossorio—used group psychotherapy sessions and psychological test data as the raw material for developing a comprehensive model of interpersonal behavior in the form of an Interpersonal Circle (Freedman, Leary, Ossorio, & Coffey, 1951). Their work culminated in the publication of Timothy Leary's 1957 book, *Interpersonal Diagnosis of Personality*, which provided a taxonomy of normal and abnormal personality styles, and demonstrated that personality and the behavior of individuals can be fully understood only within an interpersonal context. By engineering Sullivan's ideas into a framework that could be understood and tested by personality, social, and clinical psychologists, Coffey and his students provided a scientific foundation for the proliferation of interpersonal research both inside and outside the clinic (Strack, 1996).

Although post-Freudian ego psychology and object relations theory provided views of child development that focused on the interaction of the infant and caregivers (e.g., A. Freud, 1946; Klein, 1962), it was the work of British psychologist John Bowlby (e.g., 1973, 1980, 1982, 1988) on attachment that stimulated the interests of interpersonal psychologists seeking to understand the roots of relationship patterns in children and adults. In the 1940s and 1950s, at the Tavistock Institute and Child Guidance Clinic in England, Bowlby worked with young children displaced from their families during World War II. His clinical observations provided the data for his monumental trilogy: *Attachment*, *Separation*, and *Loss*. Breaking with existing psychoanalytic models of child development, Bowlby asserted that attachment in infants is primarily a process of proximity-seeking to an identified caregiver in situations of perceived distress, for the purpose of survival. Infants become attached to adults who are sensitive and responsive in interactions with the infant, and who remain as consistent caregivers during the critical period of 6 to 24 months. Parental responses lead to the development of patterns of attachment that, in turn, lead to internal working models that guide the individual's feelings, thoughts, and expectations in subsequent relationships.

In the 1960s theory and research on interpersonal behavior began to grow at a pace that has quickened during each successive decade. Through the circular framework provided by Leary (1957) and colleagues, Sullivan's insights have continued to inspire new ideas in personality theory and assessment (e.g., Benjamin, 1974; Carson, 1969; Lorr, 1991; Wiggins, 1979, 2003), the study of psychopathology (e.g., Horowitz, 2004; Kiesler 1996; Pincus & Ansell, 2003), treatments for psychiatric disorders (e.g., Klerman, DiMascio, Weissman et al., 1974; Klerman, Weissman, Rounsaville, & Chevron, 1984; Strupp & Binder, 1984), and hundreds of studies on interpersonal processes (e.g., Plutchik & Conte, 1997). The work of Meade, Lewin, and Heider spawned sophisticated models of social behavior focusing on the mental representation of interaction patterns based on the interplay of cognitive, affective, and dispositional traits (e.g., Bandura, 1986; Mischel, 1973; Mischel & Shoda, 1995). With the help of his associate Mary Ainsworth.
INTRODUCTION

Also noteworthy in the evolution of the field, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, are the contributions of communications and systems theorists, who elaborated on Meade’s (1934) early work to show how human behavior can be radically shaped through a complex system of shared cultural norms codified and operationalized in language and nonverbal behavior (e.g., Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967; Watzlawick & Weakland, 1977). Their ideas were particularly influential in shedding light on the communication patterns of families that foster psychopathology (e.g., Bateson, Jackson, Haley, & Weakland, 1956; Coyne, 1976; Laing, 1960), and the development of therapeutic interventions for couples and families (Broderick & Schrader, 1991).

To a great extent interpersonal psychology in the 21st century is based on, and driven by, the results of empirical investigations that have been conducted to test hypotheses generated by the theorists presented earlier. As methods have become more sophisticated (e.g., Gurtman & Balakrishnan, 1998; Moskowitz & Zuroff, 2004) researchers have been able to examine more complex hypotheses (e.g., Sadler & Woody, 2003), and new theoretical lines have been offered that integrate concepts from social, personality, and clinical perspectives on interpersonal behavior (e.g., Horowitz, 2004; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Pincus, 2005a, 2005b). Throughout the pages of this handbook, readers will note both the sustaining power of early interpersonal theorists as well as the creativity of current researchers and clinicians in using research findings and new methods to generate increasingly complex models of interpersonal behavior and effective treatment interventions.

PUTTING THE HANDBOOK TOGETHER

Developing the scope and content of this volume was a group effort that took place over 18 months. Recognizing that the territory of interpersonal science had never been fully mapped, we believed it was important to seek the advice of as many insiders as possible. We first discussed with our colleagues, including members of the Society for Interpersonal Theory and Research (SITAR), the perceived boundaries of the field and areas of research and practice that had evolved enough to have a sound empirical base. We asked what could be reasonably covered in a single book that would capture the range of topics being addressed today, and also be of greatest benefit to an audience of researchers and clinicians. Next, we asked people to nominate specific chapter topics as well as prospective authors who were “leaders in the area” and/or “the person you would most like to see write the chapter.” Our survey yielded over 50 topics and many more potential authors. We divided the topics according to themes (e.g., theory, interpersonal processes) and then had our colleagues rank-order them according to what they thought was absolutely essential, important but not essential, good but not essential, and so forth.

Based on the ratings we selected 38 potential topics and authors that were grouped into several sections. We prepared a book proposal with the list and negotiated a publishing contract for 35 chapters. After this we began contacting prospective authors with an invitation that asked them to provide a comprehensive review of their topic from the standpoint of theory, research, and applications. We asked that they address the empirical validity of their approach, and to write for an audience that would include advanced undergraduates, graduate students, and professionals. They were encouraged to write in such a way that people new to the field—those who are not familiar with terms, ideas, and methods unique to interpersonal psychology—will understand the material. We did not
provide an outline for authors to follow but asked everyone to provide a conclusion or summary section at the end that gave a synopsis of their contribution.

The job of preparing the handbook has been a labor of love. We were fortunate to have the support and guidance of SITAR, whose members are well represented in the list of contributors, understanding and accommodating wives (Suzanne Horowitz and Léni Ferrero), and a charming executive editor at John Wiley & Sons, Patricia Rossi, who shared our vision but never lost track of deadlines and space limitations. We were blessed to have chapter authors who offered not only their time, expertise, and scholarship, but their enthusiasm, patience, and tact throughout the sometimes lengthy review process. Because of them, we feel confident that we can offer you, the reader, a comprehensive overview of the field of interpersonal psychology written by those most qualified to present it.

ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT

Divided into six parts, the handbook covers major theories, methods, measures, therapeutic interventions, and empirical research that take as their parentage the interpersonal concepts and models of the last half of the 20th century. The handbook summarizes data from the vast domain of interpersonal phenomena (both within and between persons), with the goal of elucidating the complex interplay of biopsychosocial variables that make up the interpersonal world of human beings across all cultures and ages.

Part I, Theoretical Perspectives, includes five chapters addressing traditional and new ways of organizing and understanding the entire spectrum of interpersonal behavior. In Chapter 2, Shaver and Mikulincer offer a complex, developmental model of interpersonal behavior based on a blend of Bowlby’s (1973, 1980, 1982, 1988) attachment theory, traditional interpersonal theory, and social-cognitive theory. Much of what is new and different about the field of interpersonal psychology can be gleaned from their work, as well as that of Blatt and Luyten in Chapter 3. In the evolution of interpersonal theory, the circumplex dimensions of dominance-submission and love-hate were linked by Wiggins (1991) to the metacommunication theory and communion (Bakan, 1966) which have their roots in human evolution. Blatt and Luyten offer an intriguing model of relatedness (communion) and self-definition (agency) that integrates circumplex models, attachment theory, and psychodynamic views of normal and maladaptive interpersonal functioning.

Those who have followed the advance of circular models of interpersonal behavior from the 1950s to now will find in Chapter 4 by Fournier, Moskowitz, and Zuroff an elegant historical summary of this tradition, as well as a call for future researchers to think “outside the circle.” To make their point, they present recent research findings that at once add to our knowledge base about the dynamics of interpersonal processes and go beyond a two-dimensional circle.

Chapter 5 by Simpson, Griskevicius, and Kim provides a perspective on interpersonal behavior that will be novel to many readers. The authors trace the roots of interpersonal needs, motives, and behavior patterns in human evolution and genetics. This perspective is important because we know that the “unit of survival” for human beings is the group. No one can survive or grow into maturity without the help of many others, and so we need to understand how interpersonal elements of survival and adaptation have been encoded in our biological make-up.

Rounding out the section is a contribution by Costa and McCrae (Chapter 6). They examine traditional interpersonal models of personality from the lens of the five-factor model, which has become the most widely applied framework for understanding personality traits in both normal and abnormal persons.

Part II, Basic Interpersonal Processes and Mechanisms, consists of five chapters
INTRODUCTION

that address fundamental elements of interpersonal behavior. Holtforth, Thomas, and Caspar (Chapter 7) argue that essentially all interpersonal behavior is motivationally directed, and so it is vital for both researchers and therapists to understand the implicit and explicit goals of those who participate in any interpersonal encounter. Chapter 8 by Sadler, Ethier, and Woody provides an historical account of interpersonal complementarity, which posits that certain kinds of interpersonal behaviors cause or “pull” specific responses from others. They argue for, and demonstrate, new ways of looking at complementarity as forms of relational adaptation over time that involve a variety of cognitive and motivational mediating processes.

The ability to be empathically attuned to others is important for success in many kinds of relationships, and is especially important for psychotherapists. In Chapter 9, Rollings, Cuperman, and Ickes introduce the reader to a growing body of research on empathic accuracy and inaccuracy, and provide evidence for the sometimes unusual consequences of being emotionally attuned or not in a variety of relationship situations.

Social cognition is now recognized by many interpersonal psychologists as an essential ingredient in shaping interpersonal behavior. Leising and Borkenau (Chapter 10) highlight some of the important consequences of how we perceive others (e.g., as potential threats or objects of affection), make judgments about motives and behaviors, and form stereotypes.

Gifford (Chapter 11) highlights the important role of nonverbal behavior in shaping our thoughts about people and situations, and how we respond interpersonally. He also describes a number of methodological challenges to researchers in this area of scientific inquiry.

In Part III, Personality and Interpersonal Interactions, there are six chapters focusing on a variety of dispositional individual difference variables known to impact interpersonal behavior. The topics in this section range in scope from specific behavioral triggers (social allergens) to pervasive, maladaptive patterns of relating to others in a wide variety of contexts (personality disorders). Starting off in Chapter 12, Murray and Holmes offer a lucid account of how trust (and the lack of it) mediates and moderates the interpersonal “dance” of partners in romantic relationships. Collins, Ford, and Feeney (Chapter 13) follow with an attachment-theory perspective on two forms of social support and care-giving, and provide a review of empirical findings.

Recent studies in personality, social, and clinical psychology are shedding light on the situational and interpersonal factors that influence aggressive acts in people whose potential for antisocial behavior might not otherwise be recognized. In Chapter 14 Bartholomew and Cobb discuss this work, which shows that violence in close relationships can be predicted by specific patterns of individual dispositions and relationship behaviors. Jones and Paulhus follow in Chapter 15 with a report on how contemporary interpersonal theory may be used to elucidate differences in three semantically similar constructs: Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. They argue that temporal orientation (whether behavior is focused on short-term or long-term goals) and identity strength (strong or diffuse focus on self) can differentiate these personality styles and predict their varying responses to similar circumstances.

We are all aware of the everyday annoyances of others that shape whether and how we interact with them in the future. In Chapter 16, O’Connor reports on a new field of study that addresses these behaviors, termed “social allergens.” The final chapter in this section, by Hill, Pilkonis, and Bear (Chapter 17), presents the importance of the social context of behavior in determining people’s reactions. A bid for intimacy from a romantic partner is judged very differently from a similar bid from a co-worker.
Part IV highlights important topics in the Assessment of Interpersonal Characteristics. Gurtman (Chapter 18) discusses the methodological properties of the circular measurement models that are a hallmark of interpersonal psychology. Locke (Chapter 19) summarizes the family of instruments developed over the past 50-plus years to assess interpersonal aspects of personality and related constructs such as interpersonal motives and values. Benjamin (Chapter 20) offers a fresh perspective on Structural Analysis of Social Behavior (SASB), a three-dimensional model of interpersonal behavior that she originally developed in the 1970s to elucidate maladaptive patterns in psychotherapy clients. Following this, Schauenberg and Grande (Chapter 21) review interview-based measures of interpersonal behaviors and object relations, which show promise in providing data to clinicians and researchers that is not biased by self-report impression management tendencies.

Psychopathology and Health is the theme of Part V, where readers will find six chapters that highlight the contributions of interpersonal theory to the understanding of psychiatric and medical disorders. Starting off, Pincus and Wright (Chapter 22) provide a historical review of efforts by interpersonal psychologists to create a nosology for psychopathological conditions that would also inform treatment, and then offer suggestions for the future from recent research on interpersonal pathoplasticity, intraindividual variability, and behavioral signatures. Next, Clarkin, Levy, and Ellison (Chapter 23) focus their attention on the interpersonal features of personality disorders, and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of existing personality models for understanding the interpersonal processes that lead to the pervasive, maladaptive functioning of individuals with these disorders. Nugent, Amstader, and Koenen (Chapter 24) assert the view that there is a robust and reciprocal relationship between interpersonal processes and trauma. They offer strong empirical evidence for this and note that there are a growing number of comprehensive models of coping with traumatic stress that include interpersonal processes as a central feature. Segrin (Chapter 25) follows with a survey of recent research on social skills deficits, interpersonal responses to depression, and dysfunctional family interactions as causes, consequences, maintaining forces, and vulnerabilities to depression.

In Chapter 26, Alden and Regambal review the interpersonal factors associated with the development and treatment of social anxiety disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder. In the final chapter of this section, Smith and Cundiff (Chapter 27) review evidence for the importance of interpersonal behavior in the development, management, and treatment of coronary heart disease.

Completing our survey of the field is Part VI, Interpersonal Therapeutic Interventions, which offers six contributions on recent developments in interpersonal approaches to treating a wide variety of psychiatric and behavior problems in children, adolescents, and adults. Costa, Benoit, and Ollendick (Chapter 28) review the link between a variety of dispositional, familial, and peer variables and interpersonal development, discuss the interpersonal processes that influence the development and expression of psychopathology in childhood and adolescence, and explore the implications of interpersonal processes in the treatment of these disorders.

The relationship between therapist and client has been a focus of attention for interpersonal psychologists since the 1930s. Castonguay, Constantino, Boswell, and Kraus (Chapter 29) review current theory and research on the relationship factors of greatest impact on therapeutic success. In a companion chapter (30), Eubanks-Carter, Muran, Safran, and Hayes address a new generation of research that seeks to clarify how the therapeutic alliance develops, why
strains or ruptures occur, and how the alliance can be repaired.

Interpersonal therapy for depression, originally developed by Gerald Klerman and Myrna Weissman in the 1970s (Klerman et al., 1974; Klerman et al., 1984), has become a treatment of choice for psychologists all over the world. In Chapter 31, Gunlicks-Stoessel and Weissman provide a concise but thorough overview of this intervention technique and review a large body of empirical evidence demonstrating its efficacy. Levenson (Chapter 32) follows with a report on another well-validated interpersonal treatment, Time-Limited Dynamic Psychotherapy (TLDP), which was developed by Hans Strupp and Jeffrey Binder in the 1980s (Strupp & Binder, 1984). TLDP has been shown to be effective in treating a wide range of psychiatric disorders by using the therapist-client relationship as the main focus of treatment. Interpersonal processes in group psychotherapy are the focus of Chapter 33 by Piper and Ogrodniczuk. They review therapeutic factors that are unique to group treatment, describe different approaches to treatment, and provide evidence for the efficacy and efficiency of group therapy.

The final contribution to the book (34), written by the editors, offers a synthesis of salient themes presented by chapter authors. It also provides a perspective on the process of confluence and integration over the past 60-plus years of the ideas that now form the mainstream of interpersonal psychology.

References


