remarkable dissociations that can exist between an individual's understanding of the world and his or her ability to produce complex language. *Laura* provides the kind of detailed evidence in both linguistic and cognitive domains that will help to build those better theories.

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Social Impressions

Interpersonal Perception. EDWARD E. JONES. Freeman, New York, 1990. xvi, 313 pp., illus. $29.95; paper, $18.95. A Series of Books in Psychology.

"There is more to seeing," the aphorism goes, "than meets the eyeball." Edward E. Jones's *Interpersonal Perception* seeks to show us how much more there is, particularly when what we are seeing is other people. It is a fascinating volume, one that seems simultaneously aimed at three audiences. For each, it should prove a different book; for each, it should prove a valuable book.

A first audience for Jones is the intelligent layperson. For this reader, *Interpersonal Perception* is designed as an introduction to a field of research that has become one of the half-dozen major topics defining the field of social psychology in recent years. The central question that Jones's book addresses is how we come to know, or think we know, what another person is *really* like. When we perceive another person, we typically come away not just with an idea of that person's size, shape, color, and the like; we also, almost inevitably, have beliefs about what that person is like inside—beliefs about that person's underlying intentions, dispositions, preferences, and attributes.

For this first audience, the very fact that we automatically reach such conclusions and the processes by which we do so are the subjects of Jones's selective survey of this field. Although Jones does describe the actual research from which his conclusions derive in some detail, this work is presented in the form of a narrative designed to be accessible to readers without strong backgrounds in psychology. Jones tells the story of his field with charm and grace.

A second audience for this volume is Jones's professional colleagues. For this group, the book serves as an intellectual autobiography, presenting the history of Jones's own central involvement in this field of research (indeed, in making this a significant "field of research") for more than 40 years. Although, as Jones himself notes, he was not actually "there at the beginning," he was there close to it. Both Jones's own career and the current book begin with the 1957 Harvard symposium that first led to the recognition of a coherent and substantial field of social psychology concerned with "person perception."

For this second audience, the heart of Jones's account is the progression of his own seminal work and its links to other important landmarks in the field. The result is a portrait of the artist that makes clear the coherence underlying Jones's many distinctive research endeavors in a way individual research accounts typically do not. Three characteristics of this portrait, three recurrent themes, stand out.

First, Jones chose from the start to define the central question of person perception as one of understanding intentional action and the inferences people draw about underlying dispositions, attitudes, and capabilities from those actions—a question that serves to focus attention on the uniquely social aspects of interpersonal perception. Hence, the correspondence between overt actions and covert characteristics necessarily becomes a central theoretical issue. Second, Jones also focused quite early on the manner in which social perception processes are deeply dependent on individuals' goals in particular settings. Thus, Jones was one of the first to highlight the sometimes powerful conflict between people's desire to perceive their social world accurately and their desire to perceive their social world as they would like it to be or in ways that make them feel good about themselves—the tension between effective reality-testing and successful wish-fulfillment. Third, Jones also chose from the outset to stress the interpersonal character of social perception. Interpersonal perception is necessarily a process that takes place primarily in contexts in which individuals are simultaneously perceivers of others and objects of others' perceptions. In such an account, potentially competing motives and the manner in which we cope with such conflicts ourselves and analyze them in others assume importance.

From these three central choices comes the rich array of problems that Jones has addressed over the years and discusses in this volume. These include the study of ingratiation and its surprisingly powerful effects even on forewarned targets, research on the proverbial "rocky [inferential] road" from actions to dispositions, analyses of the different goals and perspectives of "actors" versus "observers," and work on the psychological impact of stigma. Jones is a master of the technique of moving back and forth between the study of phenomena of interest that imply new processes and the study of processes of interest that imply new phenomena.

Finally, a third potential audience for this volume is the beginning student in psychology. For this last group, Jones's book can be seen as a loving exposition by example of the art of classical experimental social psychology. The book is filled with excellent illustrations of experiments that "tell a story" about people's reactions to experimental situations carefully crafted to involve participants in meaningful social interactions, albeit within a laboratory context. In an era in which social psychologists all too frequently ply their trade "hypothetically," assessing participants' reactions to verbal descriptions of persons and situations, Jones's insistence on the study of real people in real social interactions and his focus on the uniquely social and interactive nature of interpersonal perception provide a refreshing reminder of the power of the classic experimental approach to social psychology.

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