

**Bandura A. *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977. 247 p.**  
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This volume presents the basic tenets of social learning theory. It is founded on a causal model of triadic reciprocal causation in which behavior, environmental events, and cognitive, biological, and other personal factors all operate as determinants that influence each other bidirectionally. This theory accords a central role to cognitive, vicarious, self-regulative, and self-reflective processes in sociocognitive functioning. It addresses the three major aspects of human adaptation: the origins of human behavior; the mechanisms governing its activation and direction; and its long-term regulation. [The *SCI*® and the *SSCI*® indicate that this book has been cited in more than 1,800 publications.]

### Sociocognitive Theory of Human Adaptation

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This volume is an outgrowth of a publishing venture that began with much fanfare and elevated expectations but soon ended in a dignified burial. In this new undertaking, General Learning Press commissioned scholarly essays on major theoretical approaches in psychology that were published as separate modules. Some of the modules on related topics were then combined to serve as textbooks. I was sufficiently mesmerized by the prospect of rapid publication and flexible multipurpose use to willingly add to an already burdensome load of commitments spawned by an unbridled work ethic.

As it turned out, what looked promising in conception was generally weak in reception. General Learning Press ceased modulating and, instead, persuaded several authors whose essays were well received in academic circles to expand them to texts. The mesmerization recurred for this loftier effort, but not the publishing indenture to my unshakable persuaders. As editor of a series on so-

cial learning theory for Prentice-Hall, I embraced the unique opportunity to preside over my own burial should whatever gods who rule over academic texts express disinterest in this enlarged offspring.

I suspect there are several reasons this publication has been widely cited. It provides a concise analysis of the main tenets of social learning theory. The determinants and psychological mechanisms highlighted in this approach lend themselves readily to different specialities of psychology and to different disciplinary domains. Diverse application harvests numerous citations. As our discipline becomes more complex and specialized, we tend to make a virtue of narrowness. Many scholars welcome more integrative substance in their disciplinary gruel.

An earlier volume that I coauthored with Richard H. Walters, *Social Learning and Personality Development*,<sup>1</sup> and a subsequent volume, *Principles of Behavior Modification*,<sup>2</sup> undoubtedly created some carryover interest in an updated version of this sociocognitive theory. The publication under discussion also contains the initial statement on self-efficacy theory, which was published concurrently in full detail in the *Psychological Review*.<sup>3</sup> This line of theorizing has generated a large volume of research on the influential impact of self-efficacy beliefs on human thought, affect, motivation, and action. I notice that *Social Learning Theory* is frequently cited in articles on perceived self-efficacy.

Most of the issues addressed in this publication have been further developed and considerably extended in a recent volume, *Social Foundations of Thought and Action*.<sup>4</sup> This volume likewise analyzes determinants and processes governing human functioning that transcend the arbitrary boundaries of academic disciplines.

1. Bandura A & Walters R H. *Social learning and personality development*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963. 329 p. (Cited 1,800 times.) [See also: Bandura A. Citation Classic. (Smelser N J, comp.) *Contemporary classics in the social and behavioral sciences*. Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1987. p. 145.]
2. Bandura A. *Principles of behavior modification*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969. 677 p. (Cited 2,400 times.) [See also: Bandura A. Citation Classic. (Smelser N J, comp.) *Contemporary classics in the social and behavioral sciences*. Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1987. p. 143.]
3. .... Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychol. Rev.* 84:191-215, 1977. (Cited 1,720 times.) [See also: Bandura A. Exercise of control through self-belief. Citation Classic. *Current Contents/Social & Behavioral Sciences* 21(20):14, 15 May 1989.]
4. .... *Social foundations of thought and action: a social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1986. 617 p. (Cited 200 times.)

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