

# Contents

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| CONTRIBUTORS | xi   |
| PREFACE      | xiii |

## **Introduction: Attribution Theory and Research— Still Vital in the 1980s**

JOHN H. HARVEY, GIFFORD WEARY, and MELINDA A. STANLEY

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Background   | 1 |
| Basic Tenets | 2 |
| References   | 4 |

### *I*

## ***BASIC ISSUES IN ATTRIBUTION THEORY AND RESEARCH*** 5

### **1. Strangers to Ourselves: The Origins and Accuracy of Beliefs about One's Own Mental States**

TIMOTHY D. WILSON

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Introduction   | 9  |
| Evidence for Limited Access to Mental States           | 12 |
| Two Mental Systems                                     | 16 |
| Conditions Fostering Imperfect Access to Mental States | 22 |
| Conclusions and Implications                           | 29 |
| References   | 31 |

### **2. Basic Determinants of Attribution and Social Perception**

SAUL M. KASSIN and REUBEN M. BARON

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Introduction: The Many Directions of Attribution Theory | 37 |
| What Do We Mean by "Basic"?                             | 40 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| The Basics of Social Perception   | 42  |
| The Attribution Paradigm: How Can Something<br>So Basic Be So Overlooked?   | 54  |
| Conclusions   | 57  |
| References  | 58  |
| <br>  |     |
| <b>3. Cognitive Economy and Commonsense<br/>Attribution Processing</b>  |     |
| RANALD D. HANSEN  |     |
| Introduction  | 65  |
| From Cognitive Economy to Inference Economy   | 66  |
| A Psychological Model of Attribution  | 67  |
| Toward a Theory of Attribution Processing   | 75  |
| Comment   | 81  |
| References  | 81  |
| <br>  |     |
| <b>4. Implicit Relations Between Dispositions<br/>and Behaviors: Effects on Dispositional Attribution</b>             |     |
| GLENN D. REEDER   |     |
| Introduction  | 87  |
| Reinforcement Assumptions   | 89  |
| Schematic Assumptions   | 90  |
| The Concept of Disposition  | 108 |
| Conclusion  | 111 |
| References  | 112 |
| <br>  |     |
| <b>5. Motivation and Attribution:<br/>The Effects of Control Deprivation<br/>on Subsequent Information Processing</b> |     |
| THANE S. PITTMAN and PAUL R. D'AGOSTINO   |     |
| Introduction  | 117 |
| Recent Research on the Instigation of Attributional Activity  | 118 |
| Control Motivation and Attributional Activity   | 119 |
| Changes in Information-Processing Strategy<br>Following Control Deprivation   | 122 |
| Other Effects of Control Deprivation on Attributions  | 126 |
| Limitations on the Effects of Control Deprivation<br>on Attributional Activity  | 132 |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Some Issues for Further Research  | 136        |
| Summary   | 138        |
| References  | 138        |
| <b>6. Social Comparison of Causal Understandings</b>  |            |
| MARTHA G. HILL, GIFFORD WEARY, LORRAINE HILDEBRAND-SAINTS,<br>and SUSAN D. ELBIN                    |            |
| Introduction  | 143        |
| Communicative Role of Attributions  | 144        |
| Observers' Reactions to Individuals' Causal Judgments   | 145        |
| Social Comparison   | 147        |
| Laboratory Studies of the Affective Consequences<br>of the Social Comparison of Causal Attributions | 149        |
| Concluding Remarks  | 163        |
| References  | 164        |
| <br>  |            |
| <b><i>II</i></b>  |            |
| <b><i>APPLICATION OF ATTRIBUTION THEORY<br/>AND RESEARCH</i></b>                                    | <b>167</b> |
| <br>  |            |
| <b>7. Self-Handicapping</b>   |            |
| ROBERT M. ARKIN and ANN H. BAUMGARDNER  |            |
| Introduction  | 169        |
| Self-Handicapping Strategies  | 171        |
| The Motivational Bases and Etiology<br>of Self-Handicapping   | 179        |
| Integrating Model and Motives   | 190        |
| Effectiveness of Self-Handicapping  | 192        |
| Summary   | 197        |
| References  | 198        |
| <br>  |            |
| <b>8. Attributions in Close Relationships</b>   |            |
| FRANK D. FINCHAM  |            |
| Introduction  | 203        |
| On the Ubiquity of the Terms <i>Attribution</i><br>and <i>Close Relationship</i>                    | 204        |
| Current Attribution Research<br>and Close Relationships   | 205        |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Toward a More Systematic Examination<br>of Attributions in Close Relationships                 | 213        |
| Conclusion   | 228        |
| References   | 229        |
| <b>9. Attributional Models of Depression,<br/>Loneliness, and Shyness</b>                      |            |
| CRAIG A. ANDERSON and LYNN H. ARNOULT  |            |
| Introduction   | 235        |
| Defining the Problems  | 236        |
| Causes of the Problems   | 240        |
| Attributional Style Models and Data  | 244        |
| The Causality Issue  | 264        |
| Summary and Conclusions  | 272        |
| References   | 274        |
| <b><i>III</i></b>  |            |
| <b>CONCLUDING COMMENTS</b>   | <b>281</b> |
| <b>10. Attribution Research: Past Contributions,<br/>Current Trends, and Future Prospects</b>  |            |
| JAMES M. OLSON and MICHAEL ROSS  |            |
| Introduction   | 283        |
| A Selective Review of Attribution Research   | 283        |
| Basic Processes  | 287        |
| Consequences of Attributions   | 294        |
| Conclusions  | 302        |
| Appendix: Bibliography of Selected Highlights<br>of Attribution Theory and Research, 1944–1980 | 305        |
| References   | 310        |
| <br>AUTHOR INDEX   | <br>313    |
| SUBJECT INDEX  | 325        |