

GLOBAL
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Abnormal Psychology

SIXTEENTH EDITION

James N. Butcher • Jill M. Hooley • Susan Mineka

ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

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GLOBAL EDITION

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What's New in *DSM-5*? A Quick Guide

Many changes occurred from *DSM-IV* to *DSM-5*. Here is a summary of some of the most important revisions. Many of these changes are highlighted in the “Thinking Critically about *DSM-5*” boxes throughout this edition.

- The chapters of the *DSM* have been re-organized to reflect a consideration of developmental and lifespan issues. Disorders that are thought to reflect developmental perturbations or that manifest early in life (e.g., neurodevelopmental disorders and disorders such as schizophrenia) are listed before disorders that occur later in life.
- The multiaxial system has been abandoned. No distinction is now made between Axis I and Axis II disorders.
- *DSM-5* allows for more gender-related differences to be taken into consideration for mental health problems.
- It is extremely important for the clinician to understand the client's cultural background in appraising mental health problems. *DSM-5* contains a structured interview that focuses upon the patient's cultural background and characteristic approach to problems.
- The term *intellectual disability* is now used instead of the term *mental retardation*.
- A new diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder now encompasses autism, Asperger's disorder, and other forms of pervasive developmental disorder. The diagnosis of Asperger's disorder has been eliminated from the *DSM*.
- Changes to the diagnostic criteria for attention deficit disorder now mean that symptoms that occur before age 12 (rather than age 7) have diagnostic significance.
- A new diagnosis, called disruptive mood regulation disorder, has been added. This will be used to diagnose children up to age 18 who show persistent irritability and frequent episodes of extreme and uncontrolled behavior.
- The subtypes of schizophrenia have been eliminated.
- The special significance afforded to bizarre delusions with regard to the diagnosis of schizophrenia has been removed.
- Bipolar and related disorders are now described in a separate chapter of the *DSM* and are no longer listed with depressive disorders.
- Premenstrual dysphoric disorder has been promoted from the appendix of *DSM-IV* and is now listed as a new diagnosis.
- A new diagnosis of persistent depressive disorder now subsumes dysthymia and chronic major depressive disorder.
- The bereavement exclusion has been removed in the diagnosis of major depressive episode.
- The diagnosis of phobia no longer requires that the person recognize that his or her anxiety is unreasonable.
- Panic disorder and agoraphobia have been unlinked and are now separate diagnoses in *DSM-5*.
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder is no longer classified as an anxiety disorder. *DSM-5* contains a new chapter that covers obsessive compulsive and related disorders.
- New disorders in the obsessive compulsive and related disorders category include hoarding disorder and excoriation (skin picking) disorder.
- Post-traumatic stress disorder is no longer considered to be an anxiety disorder. Instead, it is listed in a new chapter that covers trauma- and stressor-related disorders.
- The diagnostic criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder have been significantly revised. The definition of what counts as a traumatic event has been clarified and made more explicit. *DSM-5* now also recognizes four-symptom clusters rather than the three noted in *DSM-IV*.
- Dissociative fugue is no longer listed as a separate diagnosis. Instead, it is listed as a form of dissociative amnesia.
- The *DSM-IV* diagnoses of hypochondriasis, somatoform disorder, and pain disorder have been removed and are now subsumed into the new diagnosis of somatic symptom disorder.
- Binge eating disorder has been moved from the appendix of *DSM-IV* and is now listed as an official diagnosis.
- The frequency of binge eating and purging episodes has been reduced for the diagnosis of bulimia nervosa.
- Amenorrhea is no longer required for the diagnosis of anorexia nervosa.
- The *DSM-IV* diagnoses of dementia and amnesic disorder have been eliminated and are now subsumed into a new category called major neurocognitive disorder.
- Mild neurocognitive disorder has been added as a new diagnosis.
- No changes have been made to the diagnostic criteria for personality disorders.
- Substance-related disorders are divided into two separate groups: substance use disorders and substance-induced disorders.
- A new disorder, gambling disorder, has been included in substance-related and addictive disorders.
- Included for the first time in Section III of *DSM-5* are several new disorders regarded as being in need of further study. These include attenuated psychosis syndrome, non-suicidal self-injury disorder, Internet gaming disorder, and caffeine use disorder.

The guidelines and standards that we follow in our professional activities are not set in stone. Change is a big part of life and new research or novel new theories can impact the way mental health professionals view problems. Although many of the ideas and diagnostic concepts in the field of abnormal psychology have persisted for hundreds of years, changes in thinking do occur. And, at some point there are events that occur that force a rethinking of some issues. Most recently in abnormal psychology, the publication of the *DSM-5*, after years of development and considerable controversy, is one of those momentous changes. Reflecting this, we have revised this new edition of *Abnormal Psychology* to reflect the most up-to-date information about diagnostic categories, classifications, and criteria.

Every time we work on a revision of *Abnormal Psychology* we are reminded of how dynamic and vibrant our field is. Developments in areas such as genetics, brain imaging, behavioral observation, and classification, as well changes in social and government policy and in legal decisions, add to our knowledge base and stimulate new treatments for those whose lives are touched by mental disorders. This is exciting. But the rapid progress of our field also presents its own challenges. One of the most important is how best to provide students with an integrated perspective—one that respects new ideas and discoveries and places them into the existing body of knowledge in a way that emphasizes multiple perspectives, provokes thought, and increases awareness.

We use a biopsychosocial approach to provide a sophisticated appreciation of the total context in which abnormalities of behavior occur. For ease of understanding we also present material on each disorder in a logical and consistent way. More specifically, we focus on three significant aspects: (1) the clinical picture, where we describe the symptoms of the disorder and its associated features; (2) factors involved in the development of the disorder; and (3) treatment approaches. In each case, we examine the evidence for biological, psychosocial (i.e., psychological and interpersonal), and sociocultural (the broader social environment of culture and subculture) influences. Because we wish never to lose sight of the person, we try to integrate as much case material as we can into each chapter. An additional feature of this book is a focus on treatment. Although treatment is discussed in every chapter in the context of specific disorders, we also include a separate chapter that addresses issues in treatment more broadly. This provides students with increased understanding of a wide range of treatment approaches and permits more in-depth coverage than is possible in specific disorder-based chapters.

The Butcher–Hooley–Mineka author team is in a unique position to provide students with an integrated and comprehensive understanding of abnormal psychology. Each author is a noted researcher, an experienced teacher, and a licensed clinician.

Each brings different areas of expertise and diverse research interests to the textbook. Importantly, these different perspectives come together in a systematically integrated text that is accessible to a broad audience. The depth and breadth of the author team provides students with learning experiences that can take them to new levels of understanding. Our approach emphasizes the importance of research as well as the need to translate research findings into informed and effective clinical care for all who suffer from mental disorders.

Abnormal Psychology has a long and distinguished tradition as an undergraduate text. Ever since James Coleman wrote the first edition many years ago, this textbook has been considered the most comprehensive in the field. Along the way there have been many changes. However, the commitment to excellence in this now-classic textbook has remained ever constant. In this new edition, we seek to open up the fascinating world of abnormal psychology, providing students with comprehensive and up-to-date knowledge in an accessible and engaging way. We hope that this newest edition conveys some of the passion and enthusiasm for the topic that we still experience every day.

Why Do You Need This New Edition?

If you're wondering why you should buy this new edition of *Abnormal Psychology*, here are 7 good reasons!

1. The sixteenth edition of *Abnormal Psychology* includes the most up-to-date and in-depth information about biological influences on the entire spectrum of behavioral abnormalities, while still maintaining its comprehensive and balanced biopsychosocial approach to understanding abnormal behavior.
2. After years of planning, *DSM-5* was published in May 2013. This major revision of the diagnostic system means that the diagnostic criteria for many disorders have changed. To stay current, you need to know about the changes that have been made in *DSM-5*. Books that do not include coverage of *DSM-5* are books that are out of date.
3. Our new edition provides you with detailed tables showing the current *DSM-5* diagnostic criteria for all the disorders covered in the book.
4. New highlight boxes alert you to some of the most important changes in *DSM-5*. These include changes to the diagnostic criteria for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder as well as new diagnoses such as binge eating disorder and premenstrual dysphoric disorder.
5. Other feature boxes provide opportunities for critical thinking by illustrating some of the controversies associated with the changes that were (or were not) made. Throughout the

book we also provide readers with different perspectives on the likely implications that these changes will have for clinical diagnosis and research in psychopathology.

6. Changes have been made in many chapters to improve the flow of the writing and enhance learning. Reflecting the ever-changing field of abnormal psychology, new references have been added and new research findings highlighted.
7. Finally, at the beginning of each chapter clearly defined Learning Objectives provide the reader with an overview of topics and issues that will be included in the chapter. At the end of each chapter a summary of answers to these Learning Objective questions are provided. In-Review Questions at the end of major sections within chapters also provide additional opportunities for self-assessment and increased learning.

What's New

A major change in the 16th edition of *Abnormal Psychology* is the focus on *DSM-5*. This important revision to the diagnostic system was published in May 2013. To assist both instructors and students, we include specialized feature boxes, highlighting many of the key changes that were made in *DSM-5*. This makes new material immediately accessible. Other important changes in *DSM-5* are also mentioned throughout the text. Providing students with this material as soon as possible after the publication of *DSM-5* reflects our commitment to staying ahead of the curve and to providing students with the most up-to-date information possible.

This new edition of *Abnormal Psychology* has been redesigned to remain visually engaging to the newest generation of students. Chapters begin with learning objective questions. These orient the reader to the material that will be presented in each specific chapter. Learning objective questions are also repeated at the end of each chapter and answers to each are provided. Most chapters also begin with a case study that illustrates the mental health problems to be addressed in the chapter. This serves to capture students' interest and attention right from the outset. Numerous new photographs and illustrations have also been added. In addition, this edition also contains updated case material, new unresolved issues (e.g., why is the study of trauma so contentious?; why are recovery rates in schizophrenia not improving?), and new feature boxes designed to be of high interest to students (e.g., non-suicidal self-injury disorder). Reflecting the ever-changing field of abnormal psychology, numerous new references have been added. Outdated material has been replaced, current findings have been included, and new developments have been identified. The 16th edition also includes the most up-to-date and in-depth information about the role of biological factors in abnormal behavior, while at the same time placing this in the context of a comprehensive biopsychosocial approach. Our coverage of cultural issues and diversity has also been strengthened. We hope readers will be

pleased to know that all of this has been accomplished without adding length to the book!

Features and Pedagogy

The extensive research base and accessible organization of this book are supported by high-interest features and helpful pedagogy to further engage students and support learning. We also hope to encourage students to think in depth about the topics they are learning about through specific highlight features that emphasize critical thinking.

Features

FEATURE BOXES

Special sections, called Developments in Research, Developments in Thinking, Developments in Practice, and The World Around Us, highlight topics of particular interest, focusing on applications of research to everyday life, current events, and the latest research methodologies, technologies, and findings.

CRITICAL THINKING

New to this edition are special highlight boxes about *DSM-5*. Many of the revisions to *DSM-5* were highly contentious and controversial. A new feature box called "Thinking Critically About *DSM-5*" introduces students to the revised *DSM* and encourages them to think critically about the implications of these changes.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES

All chapters include end-of-chapter sections that demonstrate how far we have come and how far we have yet to go in our understanding of psychological disorders. The topics covered here provide insight into the future of the field and expose students to some controversial topics. New to this edition is a discussion of the problems associated with the study of trauma. In another chapter, we raise the contentious issue of whether treatment with antipsychotic medications is helpful or harmful in the very long term.

Pedagogy

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Each chapter begins with learning objective questions. These orient the reader to the material that will be presented in each specific chapter. Learning objective questions are also repeated at the end of each chapter, along with their answers. This provides students with an excellent tool for study and review. In this edition, sections of many chapters have also been reorganized and material has been streamlined whenever possible. All the changes that have been made are designed to improve the flow of the writing and enhance pedagogy.

CASE STUDIES

Extensive case studies of individuals with various disorders are integrated in the text throughout the book. Some are brief excerpts; others are detailed analyses. These cases bring important aspects of the disorders to life. They also remind readers that the problems of abnormal psychology affect the lives of people—people from all kinds of diverse backgrounds who have much in common with all of us.

IN REVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions appear at the end of each major section within the chapter, providing regular opportunities for self-assessment as students read and further reinforce their learning.

DSM-5 BOXES

Throughout the book these boxes contain the most up-to-date (*DSM-5*) diagnostic criteria for all of the disorders discussed. In a convenient and visually accessible form, they provide a helpful study tool that reflects current diagnostic practice. They also help students understand disorders in a real-world context.

RESEARCH CLOSE-UP TERMS

Appearing throughout each chapter, these terms illuminate research methodologies. They are designed to give students a clearer understanding of some of the most important research concepts in the field of abnormal psychology.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

Each chapter ends with a summary of the essential points of the chapter organized around the learning objectives presented at the start of the chapter. These summaries use bulleted lists rather than formal paragraphs. This makes the information more accessible for students and easier to scan.

KEY TERMS

Key terms are identified in each chapter. Key terms are also listed at the end of every chapter with page numbers referencing where they can be found in the body of the text. Key terms are also defined in the Glossary at the end of the book.

Supplements Package

MyPsychLab® for Abnormal Psychology

MyPsychLab is an online homework, tutorial, and assessment program that truly engages students in learning. It helps students better prepare for class, quizzes, and exams—resulting in better performance in the course. It provides educators a dynamic set of tools for gauging individual and class performance.

Speaking Out: Interviews with People Who Struggle with Psychological Disorders

This set of video segments allows students to see firsthand accounts of patients with various disorders. The interviews were conducted by licensed clinicians and range in length from 8 to 25 minutes. Disorders include major depressive disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anorexia nervosa, PTSD, alcoholism, schizophrenia, autism, ADHD, bipolar disorder, social phobia, hypochondriasis, borderline personality disorder, and adjustment to physical illness. These video segments are available through MyPsychLab.

Instructor's Manual

A comprehensive tool for class preparation and management, each chapter includes teaching objectives; a chapter overview; a detailed lecture outline; a list of key terms; teaching resources, including lecture launchers, class activities, demonstrations, assignments, teaching tips and handouts; a list of video, media, and Web resources; and a sample syllabus. Available for download on the Instructor's Resource Center at www.pearsonglobaleditions.com/Butcher.

Test Bank

The Test Bank is composed of approximately 2,000 fully referenced multiple-choice, completion, short-answer, and concise essay questions. Each question is accompanied by a page reference, difficulty level, skill type (factual, conceptual or applied), topic, and a correct answer. Available for download on the Instructor's Resource Center at www.pearsonglobaleditions.com/Butcher.

Lecture PowerPoint Slides

The PowerPoint slides provide an active format for presenting concepts from each chapter and feature relevant figures and tables from the text. Available for download on the Instructor's Resource Center at www.pearsonglobaleditions.com/Butcher.

PowerPoint Slides for Photos, Figures, and Tables contain only the photos, figures, and line art from the textbook. Available for download on the Instructor's Resource Center at www.pearsonglobaleditions.com/Butcher.

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CourseSmart* Textbooks Online is an exciting choice for students looking to save money. As an alternative to purchasing the print textbook, students can subscribe to the same content online and save up to 60 percent off the suggested list price of the print text. With a CourseSmart eTextbook, students can search the text, make notes online, print out reading assignments that incorporate lecture notes, and bookmark important passages for later review. For more information or to subscribe to the CourseSmart eTextbook, visit www.coursesmart.co.uk.

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James N. Butcher was born in West Virginia. He enlisted in the army when he was 17 years old and served in the airborne infantry for 3 years, including a 1-year tour in Korea during the Korean War. After military service, he attended Guilford College, graduating in 1960 with a BA in psychology. He received an MA in experimental psychology in 1962 and a PhD in clinical psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was awarded Doctor Honoris Causa from the Free University of Brussels, Belgium, in 1990 and an honorary doctorate from the University of Florence, Florence, Italy, in 2005. He is currently professor emeritus in the Department of Psychology at the University of Minnesota. He was associate director and director of the clinical psychology program at the university for 19 years. He was a member of the University of Minnesota Press's MMPI Consultative Committee, which undertook the revision of the MMPI in 1989. He was formerly the editor of *Psychological Assessment*, a journal of the American Psychological Association, and serves as consulting editor or reviewer for numerous other journals in psychology and psychiatry. Dr. Butcher was actively involved in developing and organizing disaster response programs for dealing with human problems following airline disasters during his career. He organized a model crisis intervention disaster response for the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport and organized and supervised the psychological services offered following two major airline disasters: Northwest Flight 255 in Detroit, Michigan, and Aloha Airlines on Maui. He is a fellow of the Society for Personality Assessment. He has published 60 books and more than 250 articles in the fields of abnormal psychology, cross-cultural psychology, and personality assessment.



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Dr. Hooley has a long-standing interest in psychosocial predictors of psychiatric relapse in patients with severe psychopathology such as schizophrenia and depression. Her research has been supported by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and by the Borderline Personality Disorder Research Foundation. She uses fMRI to study emotion regulation in people who are vulnerable to depression and in people who are suffering from borderline personality disorder. Another area of research interest is nonsuicidal self-harming behaviors such as skin cutting or burning.

In 2000, Dr. Hooley received the Aaron T. Beck Award for Excellence in Psychopathology Research. She is also a past president of the Society for Research in Psychopathology. The author of many scholarly publications, Dr. Hooley was appointed as Associate Editor for Clinical Psychological Science in 2012. She is also an associate editor for *Applied and Preventive Psychology* and serves on the editorial boards of several journals including the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, the *Journal of Family Psychology*, *Family Process*, and *Personality Disorders: Theory, Research and Treatment*.

At Harvard, Dr. Hooley has taught graduate and undergraduate classes in introductory psychology, abnormal psychology, schizophrenia, mood disorders, clinical psychology, psychiatric diagnosis, and psychological treatment. Reflecting her commitment to the scientist-practitioner model, she also does clinical work specializing in the treatment of people with depression, anxiety disorders, and personality disorders.



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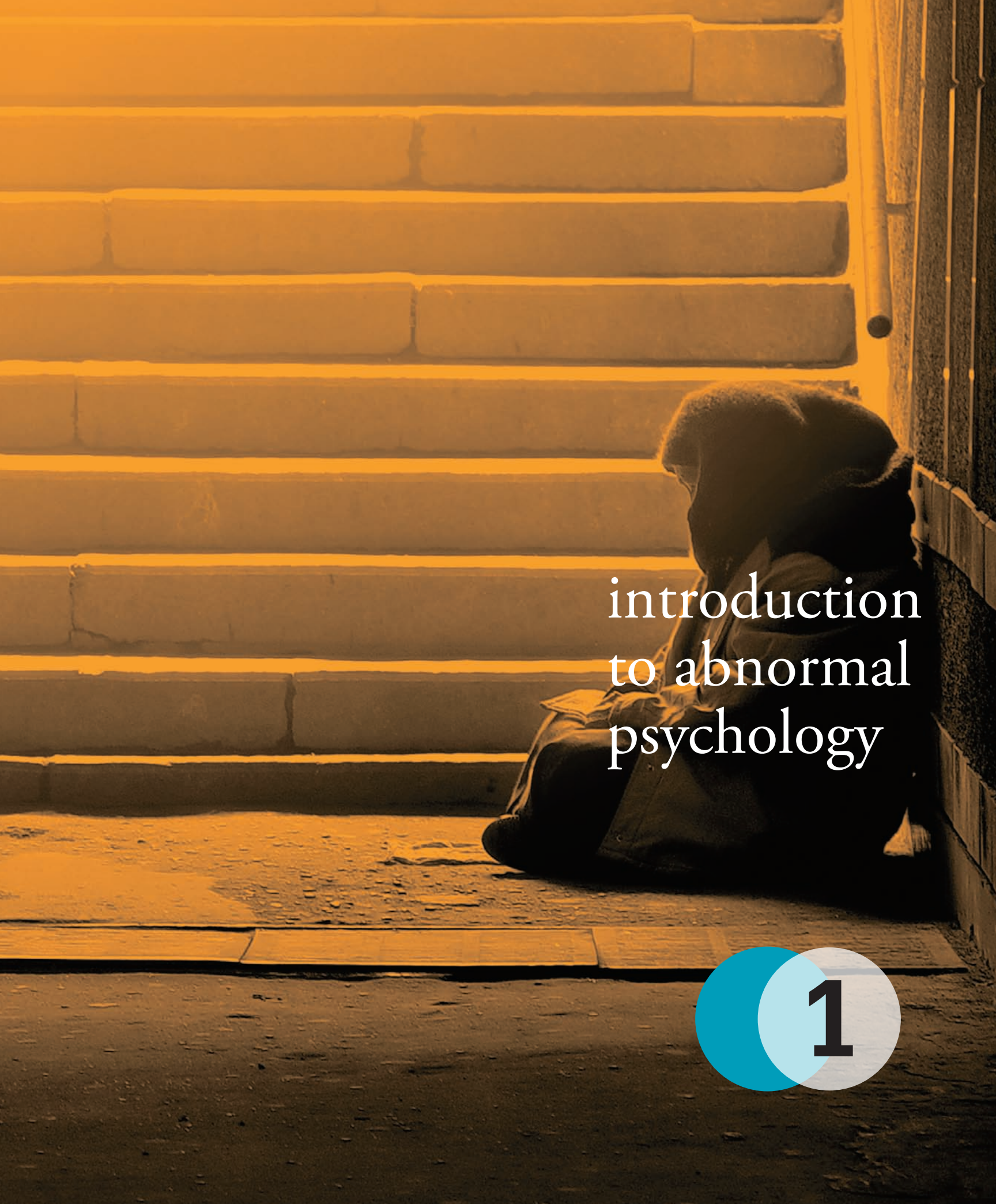
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introduction
to abnormal
psychology

1



learning objectives

1.1

How do we define abnormality and classify mental disorders?

1.2

What are the advantages and disadvantages of classification?

1.3

How common are mental disorders? Which disorders are most prevalent?

1.4

Why do we need a research-based approach in abnormal psychology?

1.5

How do we gather information about mental disorders?

1.6

What kinds of research designs are used to conduct research in abnormal psychology?

Abnormal psychology is concerned with understanding the nature, causes, and treatment of mental disorders. The topics and problems within the field of abnormal psychology surround us every day. You have only to pick up a newspaper, flip through a magazine, surf the web, or sit through a movie to be exposed to some of the issues that clinicians and researchers deal with on a day-to-day basis. Almost weekly some celebrity is in the news because of a drug or alcohol problem, an eating disorder, or some other psychological difficulty. Countless books provide personal accounts of struggles with schizophrenia, depression, phobias, and panic attacks. Films and TV shows portray aspects of abnormal behavior with varying degrees of accuracy. And then there are the tragic news stories of mothers who kill their children, in which problems with depression, schizophrenia, or postpartum difficulties seem to be implicated.

Abnormal psychology can also be found much closer to home. Walk around any college campus, and you will see flyers about peer support groups for people with eating disorders, depression, and a variety of other disturbances. You may even know someone who has experienced a clinical problem. It may be a cousin with a cocaine habit, a roommate with bulimia, or a grandparent who is developing Alzheimer's disease. It may be a coworker of your mother's who is hospitalized for depression, a neighbor who is afraid to leave the house, or someone at your gym who works out intensely despite being worryingly thin. It

may even be the disheveled street person in the aluminum foil hat who shouts, "Leave me alone!" to voices only he can hear.

The issues of abnormal psychology capture our interest, demand our attention, and trigger our concern. They also compel us to ask questions. To illustrate further, let's consider two clinical cases.

→ **Monique** Monique is a 24-year-old law student. She is attractive, neatly dressed, and clearly very bright. If you were to meet her, you would think that she had few problems in her life; but Monique has been drinking alcohol since she was 14, and she smokes marijuana every day. Although she describes herself as "just a social drinker," she drinks four or five glasses of wine when she goes out with friends and also drinks a couple of glasses of wine a night when she is alone in her apartment in the evening. She frequently misses early-morning classes because she feels too hung over to get out of bed. On several occasions her drinking has caused her to black out. Although she denies having any problems with alcohol, Monique admits that her friends and family have become very concerned about her and have suggested that she seek help. Monique, however, says, "I don't think I am an alcoholic because I never drink in the mornings." The previous week she decided to stop smoking marijuana entirely because she was concerned that she might have a drug problem. However, she found it impossible to stop and is now smoking regularly again.

→ **John** John comes from a family with no history of mental illness. He had a normal birth and seemed to develop normally when he was a child. However, when he was 21, John began to hear voices and started to believe that there was a conspiracy against him. Since that time, he has been on various different anti-psychotic medications. Although these have helped a little, he still has symptoms of psychosis. Now aged 46, John has been unable to work since he became ill. He has also been hospitalized many times. John lives in sheltered accommodation, although he maintains contact with his parents and his older brother.

Perhaps you found yourself asking questions as you read about Monique and John. For example, because Monique doesn't drink in the mornings, you might have wondered whether she could really have a serious alcohol problem. She does. This is a question that concerns the criteria that must be met before someone receives a particular diagnosis. Or perhaps you wondered whether other people in Monique's family likewise have drinking problems. They do. This is a question about what we call **family aggregation**—that is, whether a disorder runs in families.

You may also have been curious about what is wrong with John and why he is hearing voices. Questions about the age of onset of his symptoms as well as predisposing factors may also have occurred to you. John has schizophrenia, a disorder that often strikes in late adolescence or early adulthood. Also, as



Fergie has spoken about her past struggles with substance abuse, specifically crystal meth.

John's case illustrates, it is not unusual for someone who develops schizophrenia to develop perfectly normally before suddenly becoming ill. You can read more about John's case and treatment in Valmaggia and colleagues (2008).

These cases, which describe real people, give some indication of just how profoundly lives can be derailed because of mental disorders. It is hard to read about difficulties such as these without feeling compassion for the people who are struggling. Still, in addition to compassion, clinicians and researchers who want to help people like Monique and John must have other attributes and skills. If we are to understand mental disorders, we must learn to ask the kinds of questions that will enable us to help the patients and families who have mental disorders. These questions are at the very heart of a research-based approach that looks to use scientific inquiry and careful observation to understand abnormal psychology.

Asking questions is an important aspect of being a psychologist. Psychology is a fascinating field, and abnormal psychology is one of the most interesting areas of psychology (although we are undoubtedly biased). Psychologists are trained to ask questions and to conduct research. Though not all people who are trained in abnormal psychology (this field is sometimes called psychopathology) conduct research, they still rely heavily on their scientific skills and ability both to ask questions and to put information together in coherent and logical ways. For example, when a clinician first sees a new client or patient, he or she asks many questions to try and understand the issues or problems related to that person. The clinician will also rely on current research to

choose the most effective treatment. The best treatments of 20, 10, or even 5 years ago are not invariably the best treatments of today. Knowledge accumulates and advances are made. And research is the engine that drives all of these developments.

In this chapter, we will outline the field of abnormal psychology and the varied training and activities of the people who work within its demands. First we describe the ways in which abnormal behavior is defined and classified so that researchers and mental health professionals can communicate with each other about the people they see. Some of the issues here are probably more complex and controversial than you might expect. We also outline basic information about the extent of behavioral abnormalities in the population at large.

You will notice that a large section of this chapter is devoted to research. We make every effort to convey how abnormal behavior is studied. Research is at the heart of progress and knowledge in abnormal psychology. The more you know and understand about how research is conducted, the more educated and aware you will be about what research findings do and do not mean.

What Do We Mean by Abnormality?

It may come as a surprise to you that there is still no universal agreement about what is meant by *abnormality* or *disorder*. This is not to say we do not have definitions; we do. However, a truly satisfactory definition will probably always remain elusive (Lilienfeld & Landfield, 2008; Stein et al., 2010) even though there is a great deal of general agreement about which conditions are disorders and which are not (Spitzer, 1999).

Why does the definition of a mental disorder present so many challenges? A major problem is that there is no one behavior that makes someone abnormal. However, there are some clear elements or indicators of abnormality (Lilienfeld & Marino, 1999; Stein et al., 2010). No single indicator is sufficient in and of itself to define or determine abnormality. Nonetheless, the more that someone has difficulties in the following areas, the more likely he or she is to have some form of mental disorder.

1. **Suffering:** If people suffer or experience psychological pain we are inclined to consider this as indicative of abnormality. Depressed people clearly suffer, as do people with anxiety disorders. But what of the patient who is manic and whose mood is one of elation? He or she may not be suffering. In fact, many such patients dislike taking medications because they do not want to lose their manic "highs." You may have a test tomorrow and be suffering with worry. But we would hardly label your suffering abnormal. Although suffering is an element of abnormality in many cases, it is neither a sufficient condition (all that is needed) nor even a necessary condition (a feature that all cases of abnormality must show) for us to consider something as abnormal.
2. **Maladaptiveness:** Maladaptive behavior is often an indicator of abnormality. The person with anorexia may restrict her intake of food to the point where she becomes so emaciated

that she needs to be hospitalized. The person with depression may withdraw from friends and family and may be unable to work for weeks or months. Maladaptive behavior interferes with our well-being and with our ability to enjoy our work and our relationships. However, not all disorders involve maladaptive behavior. Consider the con artist and the contract killer, both of whom have antisocial personality disorder. The first may be able glibly to talk people out of their life savings, the second to take someone's life in return for payment. Is this behavior maladaptive? Not for them, because it is the way in which they make their respective livings. We consider them abnormal, however, because their behavior is maladaptive for and toward society.

3. **Statistical Deviancy:** The word *abnormal* literally means “away from the normal.” But simply considering statistically rare behavior to be abnormal does not provide us with a solution to our problem of defining abnormality. Genius is statistically rare, as is perfect pitch. However, we do not consider people with such uncommon talents to be abnormal in any way. Also, just because something is statistically common doesn't make it normal. The common cold is certainly very common, but it is regarded as an illness nonetheless.

On the other hand, intellectual disability (which is statistically rare and represents a deviation from normal) is considered to reflect abnormality. This tells us that in defining abnormality we make value judgments. If something is statistically rare and undesirable (as is severely diminished intellectual functioning), we are more likely to consider it abnormal than something that is statistically rare and highly desirable (such as genius) or something that is undesirable but statistically common (such as rudeness).

4. **Violation of the Standards of Society:** All cultures have rules. Some of these are formalized as laws. Others form the norms and moral standards that we are taught to follow. Although

many social rules are arbitrary to some extent, when people fail to follow the conventional social and moral rules of their cultural group we may consider their behavior abnormal. For example, driving a car or watching television would be considered highly abnormal for the Amish of Pennsylvania. However, both of these activities reflect normal everyday behavior for most other Pennsylvania residents.

Of course, much depends on the magnitude of the violation and on how commonly the rule is violated by others. As illustrated in the example above, a behavior is most likely to be viewed as abnormal when it violates the standards of society and is statistically deviant or rare. In contrast, most of us have parked illegally at some point. This failure to follow the rules is so statistically common that we tend not to think of it as abnormal. Yet when a mother drowns her children there is instant recognition that this is abnormal behavior.

5. **Social Discomfort:** When someone violates a social rule, those around him or her may experience a sense of discomfort or unease. Imagine that you are sitting in an almost empty movie theater. There are rows and rows of unoccupied seats. Then someone comes in and sits down right next to you. How do you feel? In a similar vein, how do you feel when someone you met only 4 minutes ago begins to chat about her suicide attempt? Unless you are a therapist working in a crisis intervention center, you would probably consider this an example of abnormal behavior.

6. **Irrationality and Unpredictability:** As we have already noted, we expect people to behave in certain ways. Although a little unconventionality may add some spice to life, there is a point at which we are likely to consider a given unorthodox behavior abnormal. If a person sitting next to you suddenly began to scream and yell obscenities at nothing, you would probably regard that behavior as abnormal. It would be unpredictable, and it would make no sense to you. The disordered speech and the disorganized behavior of patients with schizophrenia are often irrational. Such behaviors are also a hallmark of the manic phases of bipolar disorder. Perhaps the most important factor, however, is our evaluation of whether the person can control his or her behavior. Few of us would consider a roommate who began to recite speeches from *King Lear* to be abnormal if we knew that he was playing *Lear* in the next campus Shakespeare production—or even if he was a dramatic person given to extravagant outbursts. On the other hand, if we discovered our roommate lying on the floor, flailing wildly, and reciting Shakespeare, we might consider calling for assistance if this was entirely out of character and we knew of no reason why he should be behaving in such a manner.

7. **Dangerousness:** It seems quite reasonable to think that someone who is a danger to him- or herself or to another person must be psychologically abnormal. Indeed, therapists are required to hospitalize suicidal clients or contact the police (as well as the person who is the target of the threat) if they have a client who makes an explicit threat to harm another person.



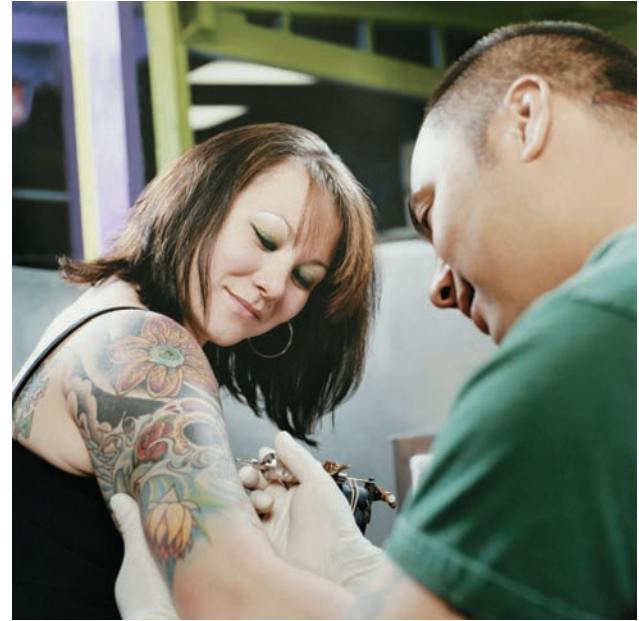
As with most accomplished athletes, Venus and Serena Williams' physical ability is abnormal in a literal and statistical sense. Their behavior, however, would not be labeled as being abnormal by psychologists. Why not?



How important is dangerousness to the definition of mental illness? If we are a risk to ourselves or to others, does this mean we are mentally ill?

But, as with all of the other elements of abnormality, if we rely only on dangerousness as our sole feature of abnormality, we will run into problems. Is a soldier in combat mentally ill? What about someone who is an extremely bad driver? Both of these people may be a danger to others. Yet we would not consider them to be mentally ill. Why not? And why is someone who engages in extreme sports or who has a dangerous hobby (such as free diving, race car driving, or keeping poisonous snakes as pets) not immediately regarded as mentally ill? Just because we may be a danger to ourselves or to others does not mean we are mentally ill. Conversely, we cannot assume that someone diagnosed with a mental disorder must be dangerous. Although mentally ill people do commit serious crimes, serious crimes are also committed every day by people who have no signs of mental disorder. Indeed, research suggests that in people with mental illness, dangerousness is more the exception than it is the rule (Corrigan & Watson, 2005).

One final point bears repeating. Decisions about abnormal behavior always involve social judgments and are based on the values and expectations of society at large. This means that culture plays a role in determining what is and is not abnormal. For example, in the United States, people do not believe that it is acceptable to murder a woman who has a premarital or an extramarital relationship. However, *karo-kari* (a form of honor killing



Tattoos, which were once regarded as highly deviant, are now quite commonplace and considered fashionable by many.

where a woman is murdered by a male relative because she is considered to have brought disgrace onto her family) is considered justifiable by many people in Pakistan (Patel & Gadit, 2008).

In addition, because society is constantly shifting and becoming more or less tolerant of certain behaviors, what is considered abnormal or deviant in one decade may not be considered abnormal or deviant a decade or two later. At one time, homosexuality was classified as a mental disorder. But this is no longer the case. A generation ago, pierced noses and navels were regarded as highly deviant and prompted questions about a person's mental health. Now, however, such adornments are commonplace, considered fashionable by many, and attract little attention. What other behaviors can you think of that are now considered normal but were regarded as deviant in the past?

As you think about these issues, consider the person described in The World Around Us box on page 26. Is he a courageous man of profound moral commitment? Or is his behavior abnormal and indicative of a mental disorder? Do others share your view about him?

The DSM-5 and the Definition of Mental Disorder

In the United States, the accepted standard for defining various types of mental disorders is the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. This manual, commonly referred to as the *DSM*, is revised and updated from time to time. The current version, called *DSM-5*, was published in 2013. Its revision has been a topic of much debate and controversy. In the box on page 27 we explain more about the *DSM* and discuss why a revision was necessary.