“T” Textbook Authors, Psi Chi Members

Many Psi Chi members and current or former Board of Directors members have authored textbooks. Dr. Virginia Andreoli Mathie, Psi Chi A-Z fundraising cochair, 2019-20, asked many of them what motivated them to write a textbook, what they had hoped to convey, and what were the rewards of sharing psychology in the textbook format.

Dr. Betsy Morgan, University of Wisconsin La Crosse
Psi Chi Midwestern Regional Vice President from 2006–10; Psi Chi President 2014-15

My book was basic information about career options for psychology majors. My impetus for writing it was to focus on two primary ideas 1) that psychology is an excellent liberal arts undergraduate major that is a good background from many types of careers and 2) that the vast majority of psychology undergraduates do *not* go on to graduate school and they have career information and development needs that deserve to be met.

One of the real benefits to writing a psychology textbook is that the number of psychology undergraduates nationally and internationally is so large that you know you will be potentially impacting/benefitting a large number of people. In addition, depending on the type of text and content, your work will be read by many non-psychology majors who may only have a few changes to interface with psychological science.

Drew Appleby (Psi Chi Distinguished Member) often writes and speaks about “giving psychology away” and I think most of us who write textbooks are motivated by the pleasure of sharing psychological science with students in ways that they can use it to improve their own work, lives, and well-being.

Dr. Shawn Charlton, University of Central Arkansas
Current Southwest Regional Vice-President

My co-authors (Ken and Susan Sobel) and I wrote Psychology: The Science of Who We Are to highlight psychology's powerful ability to promote self-understanding, a skill that is critical to improving mental health, social interactions, and our communities.

Dr. Daniel Corts, Augustana College
Psi Chi President 2015-16

For Psychologica Science (Introductory textbook with Mark Krause)

In addition to introducing students to psychology, we wanted to help readers develop scientific literacy: the ability to understand the content of psychological science as well as the research and applications that bring those ideas to life. To support scientific literacy, we developed models and exercises that model scientific literacy and provide opportunities to practice.
It's difficult for me to believe that we just finished revising our third edition. This project has been part of my career for 15 years! And the most rewarding part of it all came as a surprise to me: It's the chance to meet and interact with so many others who love teaching and learning about psychology. In developing our content, we spent hours in small focus groups with colleagues and students from all over the US and Canada. Anytime we found ourselves attending a conference, we would take the opportunity to gather a group of no more than a dozen instructors or a small group of students. We've met some very interesting people along the way, and those conversations always left us feeling energized about our work.

For *Ethics in Psychological Research: A practical guide for the student scientist* (with Holly Tatum)

Holly and I have supervised hundreds of student researchers between us over the past 20 years. During that time, we would often face ethical problems in very unexpected ways and in some cases, were unable to find any guidance on how to move forward. We determined that this was because ethics training focuses on the treatment of human subjects (arguably the most important part of research ethics) at the expense of many other aspects of ethics, such as how academic freedom applies to undergraduate research, who was the right to authorship, and what it means to engage in ethical data analysis and reporting. We intended it to be a practical guide it certainly has helped my research students work more effectively and more ethically. The surprising part has been how engaged students are in discussions of ethical dilemmas—we've had ongoing discussions and debates that have lasted well into a second semester!

**Dr. Stephen F. Davis**  
Retired, Emporia State University (emeritus)  
Psi Chi Midwestern Regional Vice-President, 1990–93  
Psi Chi National President, 1994–95

My coauthors and I have always attempted to make psychology an alive and relevant field, and viable occupational choice for the students who use our books. Because my first coauthor and I taught average students at less prestigious institutions, we wanted to write a text that would appeal and be affordable to "our" students. As a teacher, I have always hoped that my books would have a positive impact on as wide a range of students as possible.

**Dr. R. Eric Landrum**  
Psi Chi President 2017-18

If I actually limit myself to the single most important thing I wanted to convey as a textbook author, it is the idea that knowledge from psychological science can make a positive difference in people's daily lives. Our is a basic science and an applied science, and it is in that application where we can truly change lives and change the world for the better.

For one textbook it was filling a need that I thought was not being met (necessity is the mother of invention). For another book I wanted students to be able to improve a particular skill (writing).

Sharing knowledge and helping others improve their skills through books can be very satisfying, just as it is in the classroom. Writing a book is a great excuse to read a lot, get updated on the latest research, and thus practice my own reading, writing, and editing skills. And let's be honest—there are monetary rewards to writing successful books as well.