



# The Psychologist as Detective: An Introduction to Conducting Research in Psychology (5th Edition)

*By Randolph A. Smith, Stephen F. Davis*

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This text conveys the excitement of research methodology through a lively, conversational style. To make the study of the research process interactive and accessible, student-focused features and critical thinking activities are integrated throughout the text. Actual student research appears in each chapter to increase relevance and heighten student interest.

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- Sales Rank: #384541 in Books
- Published on: 2009-03-21
- Fabric type: Hard Cover
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.30" h x .80" w x 7.70" l, 1.90 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 456 pages

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### **Editorial Review**

From the Inside Flap

Preface Note to the Instructor

Margery Franklin (1990) quotes former Clark University professor and chair Heinz Werner's views on psychological research. Werner indicated:

I got rather apprehensive at finding that students were frequently taught that there was only one acceptable way of conduct in the laboratory—there has to be an hypothesis set up, or a set of hypotheses, and the main job of the experimenter is to prove or disprove the hypothesis. What is missed here is the function of the scientist as a discoverer and explorer of unknown lands ....Hypotheses...are essential elements of inquiry, but they are so, not as rigid propositions but as flexible parts of the process of searching; by the same token, conclusions drawn from the results are as much an end as a beginning ....Now...academic psychologists are beginning to see research not as a rigid exercise of rules of a game but as a problem solving procedure, a probing into unknown lands with plans which are not fixed but modifiable, with progress and retreat, with ranching out into various directions or concentration on one.

Clearly Werner's views are as applicable in the 21st Century as they were during the heyday of behaviorism; they reflect perfectly the intent of this text.

From our vantage point, research in psychology is like a detective case; hence, the title we have chosen, *The Psychologist as Detective*. A problem presents itself, clues are discovered, bits of evidence that compete for our attention must be evaluated and accepted or discarded, and, finally, a report or summary of the case (research) is prepared for consideration by our peers.

When presented in this light, the research process in psychology will, we believe, be an interesting and stimulating endeavor for students. In short, our goal is to attract students to psychological research because of its inherent interest.

To accomplish this goal several pedagogical features have been employed in this text:

1. To provide a sense of relevance and continuity, the theme of "psychologist as detective" runs throughout the text.
2. **Interactive Style of Writing.** Based on the belief that the experimental psychology—research methods text should be lively and engaging, we employ an interactive, conversational style of writing that we hope will help draw students into the material being presented.
3. **The Psychological Detective Feature.** The questions or situations posed by these sections that appear throughout each chapter will encourage students to engage in critical thinking exercises. These sections also serve as excellent stimulants for productive class discussions.

4. Marginal Definitions. Key definitions appear in the margin, close to the introduction of the term in the text.

5. Review Summaries. To help students master smaller chunks of material, each chapter contains several review summaries.

6. Study Breaks. Each Review Summary is followed by a Study Break that students can use to test their mastery of the material they have just completed. These study breaks should be especially helpful to your students when they prepare for quizzes and examinations.

We hope that these special features will provide your students with a positive experience as they learn the fundamentals of research methodology in psychology. Note to the Student

Welcome to the world of psychological research! Because the two of us have taught this course for over fifty years (combined!), we have seen the excitement that research can generate in student after student. As you will learn, conducting psychological research is very much like being a detective on a case.

Throughout this text we have tried to make it perfectly clear that research is something that you can (and should) become involved in. We hope you will enjoy reading about the student projects that we use as research examples throughout this text. Student research projects are making valuable contributions to our field. We hope to see your name among those making such contributions!

At this point we encourage you to stop immediately to review the list of pedagogical features highlighted in the "Note to the Instructor"...Did you humor us by actually looking at that list? If not, please do so now. To make full use of this text, you need to become actively involved; these pedagogical features will help you. Active involvement means that you need to stop to think about The Psychological Detective sections immediately when you encounter them, refer to figures and tables when directed to do so, and complete the Study Breaks when they appear. Becoming actively involved in this course helps the material come alive; your grade and your future involvement in psychology will thank you. Acknowledgments

We would like to express our appreciation to the consultants who suggested improvements for the second edition of this text: Chris Spatz, Hendrix College; Beth Dietz Uhler, Miami University (Ohio); Janet Larson, John Carroll University; Doreen Arcus, University of Massachusetts, Lowell; Lynette Zeleny, California State University, Fresno; Robert Batsell, Southern Methodist University; Scott Gronlund, University of Oklahoma; Laura Bowman, Central Connecticut State University; Celia Brownell, University of Pittsburgh. Their comments were especially helpful as we prepared the second edition.

In many ways the final preparation of a text is only as good as the publisher. We express our appreciation to the editorial staff, and especially, our production editor, Maureen Richardson. Thanks, folks—It would not have worked without your concern and support!

We also thank our families (Cordless, Tyler, and Ben—RAS; Kathleen and Jennifer—SFD) for putting up with us during the preparation of this text. True friends and real supporters are few and far between!

R.A.S.

S.F.D.

From the Back Cover

This text conveys the excitement of research methodology through the use of a lively, user-friendly presentation. It makes the process of research accessible by providing reviews, exercises and examples throughout the text. The text introduces the science of psychology, research ideas, and hypothesis, non-

experimental methods, surveys and questionnaires, basic research strategies and the basics of experimentation design, conduct, analysis, and interpretation, as well as, alternative research designs. For individuals requiring an introduction or review of research methods.

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## Preface

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*R.A.S.*

*S.F.D.*

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