

Introduction & Prologue

Myers Psychology for AP (p.1-17)

Once upon a time, on a planet in your neighbourhood of the universe, there came to be people. Soon thereafter, these creatures became intensely interested in themselves and in one another. They wondered "Who are we? From where come our thoughts? Our feelings? Our actions? And how are we to understand those around us?" Psychology's answers to these wonderings have developed from international roots in philosophy and biology into a science that aims to describe and explain how we think, feel and act. Understanding the roots of today's psychology helps us appreciate psychologists' varied perspectives. ☺

"I have made a ceaseless effort not to ridicule, not to bewail, not to scorn human actions, but to understand them."

- Benedict Spinoza (1677)

TERMS:

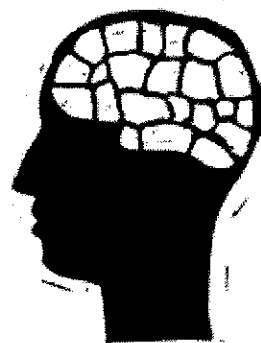
- Empiricism
- Structuralism
- Functionalism
- Psychology
- Nature/Nurture Issue
- Natural Selection
- Basic Research
- Applied Research
- Clinical Psychology
- Psychiatry

TOPICS:

- Roots of Psychology
- Pre-Scientific Psychology
- Psychological Science is Born
- Psychological Science Develops
- Contemporary Psychology
- Psychological Perspectives
- Psychological Sub-Fields

Early Psychologists:

- Wilhelm Wundt
- Edward Bradford Titchener
- William James
- Mary Whiton Calkins
- Margaret Floy Washburn
- John B. Watson
- Rosalie Rayner



Wundt



Freud



Watson



Psychology's "BIG ISSUES"

During its short history, psychology has wrestled with some issues that will re-appear in this class and in your textbook. There are three 'BIG ISSUE' that psychologists deal with:

1. Stability vs. Change
 - a. Do our individual traits persist as we age?
 - b. Do we become older versions of our younger selves?
 - c. OR...do we change as we age?
2. Rationality vs. Irrationality
 - a. How deserving are we of our name 'homo sapiens'- wise humans?
 - b. Do we make rational or irrational decisions? Does the situation count?
3. The Relative Contributions of Biology and Experience (aka: Nature vs. Nurture)
 - a. Do our human traits develop through experience OR do we come equipped with these traits at birth?

FAQ'S REGARDING PSYCHOLOGY

What is Psychology?

- It is a science that has developed from international roots in biology and philosophy that aims to describe and explain how we think, feel and act. Today it is defined as *'the science of behaviour and mental processes.'*

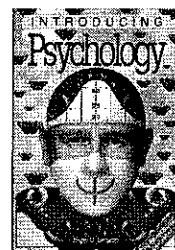
Where did Psychology come from?

- since early recorded history, humans have pondered and debated about human nature and how the body and mind relate. Are we born with built in knowledge or are we born with 'blank slates' and learn?
- Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Augustine, Confucius, Buddha, Descartes, etc...

How did Psychology become a Science?

- In ancient cultures, philosophers like Socrates and Plato started discussing the human mind and body. It was not until the Renaissance in Europe when newly formed science gave the world new discoveries and theories that the two schools of thought and study merged.

PHILOSOPHY + BIOLOGY = PSYCHOLOGY



The First 'Psychological Experiment'

On a December day in 1879, in a small room on the third floor of a shabby building at Germany's University of Leipzig, two young men were helping a long-faced middle-aged professor named Wilhelm Wundt, create an experimental apparatus. Their machine measured the time lag between people's hearing a ball hit a platform and their pressing a telegraph key. Later, researchers compared this lag to the time required for slightly more complex tasks. Curiously, people responded in about one-tenth of a second when asked to press the key as soon as the sound occurred- and in about two-tenths of a second when asked to press they key as soon as they were aware of perceiving the sound. Wundt was seeking to measure 'atoms of the mind'- the fastest and simplest mental processes. Thus began what many consider psychology's first experiment, launching the first psychological laboratory, staffed by Wundt and his graduate students.

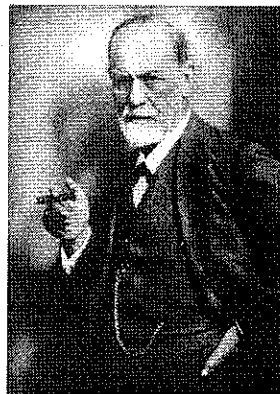
This new science of psychology became organized into different branches or schools of thought, each promoted by pioneering thinkers. These early schools included:

1. **STRUCTURALISM** - an early school of psychology that used introspection (looking inward) to explore the elemental structure of the human mind.

- introduced by Wundt's student Edward Bradford Titchener
- idea was to engage people in self-reflection

2. **FUNCTIONALISM** - a school of psychology that focused on how mental and behavioural processes function- how they enable the organism to adapt, survive, and flourish.

- introduced by William James
- believed it was more important to consider the evolved functions of our thoughts and feelings



Modern Psychologists:

- **Ivan Pavlov** (Russian Psychologist- pioneered study of Learning)
- **Sigmund Freud** (Austrian Physician- controversial personality theorist)
- **Jean Piaget** (Swiss Biologist- observer of children and development)
- **B.F. Skinner** (leading behaviorist who studied how consequences shape behaviour)

Psychology's Approaches (Main Perspectives)

Approach	Focus	Sample Questions/Ideas
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		
5)		
6)		
7)		