AP Psychology – Mr. Finnegan
Summer 2020 Materials

Welcome to AP Psychology! AP Psych is a fast-moving course that covers more psychology material than many Intro to Psych courses in college. For that reason, it is imperative that we hit the ground running in August.

You will have two summer assignments in order to be ready for Day 1:

1. **Reading: "The Roots and Branches of Psychology" by Mark F. Griffin**
    - This is a brief overview of the history of psychology and current psychological perspectives. This reading summarizes the majority of the information we will cover in Unit 1. You are expected to actively read the article, research anything you are unsure of, and be ready to discuss on the first day of class.
    - The reading makes up the final 12 pages of this document.
    - **The information from the Griffin reading will be tested within the first few days of class.**

2. **Define/Identify Key Terms and People for Unit 1**
    - On the next page of this document, you will find a list of key terms and people from Unit 1. Use the Griffin document and online research methods to create a list of definitions/identifications.
    - *Please note: This list contains many important terms from the textbook we will use for this course. It does not align perfectly with every topic addressed in the Griffin reading.*
    - **Some of the terms and people from this list will be included on the test we take within the first few days of class.**

If you have any questions over the summer, email me at **pfinnegan@oaklandcatholic.org**. I will do my best to get back to you in a timely fashion.

Thanks for your interest in psychology. It is a fascinating and rewarding subject to study. I look forward to seeing you on Day 1.

Mr. Finnegan

AP Psychology

Unit 1: Key Terms

Psychology
Empiricism
Structuralism
Functionalism
Behaviorism
Humanistic Psychology
Cognitive Neuroscience
Nature-Nurture Issue
Biopsychosocial Approach
Behavioral Psychology
Biological Psychology
Cognitive Psychology
Evolutionary Psychology
Psychodynamic Psychology
Social-cultural Psychology
Developmental Psychology
Social Psychology
Industrial-Organizational Psychology
Counseling Psychology
Clinical Psychology
Psychiatry

Unit 1: Key People

Wilhelm Wundt
William James
Mary Whiton Calkins
Margaret Floy Washburn
Sigmund Freud
John B. Watson
B.F. Skinner
Carl Rogers
Ivan Pavlov
Jean Piaget

The Roots and Branches of Psychology:

Historical and Contemporary Views on Human Nature and Psychology

by Mark F. Griffin

The Roots of Psychology

Introduction

Morton Hunt (1993) begins his comprehensive and entertaining history of psychology by recounting the story of a "psychological experiment" conducted by an ancient king of Egypt in the seventh century B.C. Through this experiment, which involved an exploration of the development of language in infancy, the king hoped to find evidence to support his hypothesis that Egyptians were the most ancient of the "human races." While the experiment failed to support the king's hypothesis, Hunt suggests that it does illustrate perhaps the first evidence in written history that as long as 2700 years ago there was at least one individual who had the "highly original notion" that mental processes could be systematically investigated and studied. As Hunt recounts, many generations would pass before the idea that "human beings could study, understand, and predict how their thoughts and feeling arose" (p. 2) would become widely embraced and accepted. This was true despite the fact that "many other complex natural phenomena" (p. 2) had been studied and mastered for tens and even hundreds of centuries. As Hunt suggests, this was principally because the ancients viewed their thoughts and emotions as originating in the activities of various spirits and deities. In the sixth century B.C. (according to Hunt) a rather remarkable development seems to have occurred independently and simultaneously in various parts of the world – a development that he refers to as "the discovery of the mind" (p. 5). Among those whom he credits with making this "discovery" are the Buddha in India who taught that our sensations and perceptions gradually and automatically combine themselves into ideas and thoughts, and Confucius in China who emphasized the power of thinking and the ability that each person has to make decisions. Such developments were also taking place in Greece at this time and it is the ancient Greeks who Hunt suggests most fully developed such a perspective. Among those whom Hunt cites as introducing these ideas were the poet, Sappho, the poet and lawgiver, Solon, and the philosopher, Thales. This period saw the rapid development in Greece of art, science, and thought. One outgrowth of this development was the emergence of a new area of knowledge that became known as *philosophy*. While the ancient philosophers did not use the term psychology (Hunt reports that the term did not exist until approximately 1520 A.D.) nor did they view it as a distinct area of knowledge, they did

explore nearly all aspects of psychology that have engaged the interests of scholars and scientists since that time. Among the questions that the philosophers investigated and developed hypotheses about were the following:

- Is there only one substance, or is “mind” something different from “matter”?
- Do we have souls? Do they exist after the body dies?
- How are mind and body connected? Is mind part of soul, and if so can it exist apart from the body?
- Is human nature the product of inborn tendencies or of experience and upbringing?
- How de we know what we know? Are our ideas built into our minds, or do we develop then from our perceptions and experiences?
- How does perception work? Are our impressions of the world around us true representations of what is out there? How can we know whether they are or not?
- Which is the right road to true knowledge – pure reasoning or data gathered by observation?
- What are the principles of valid thinking?
- What are the causes of invalid thinking?
- Does the mind rule the emotions, or vice versa? (Hunt, 1993, pp. 6-7)

We will begin our exploration of the roots of psychology with a brief review of the contributions of the ancient Greek philosophers and trace the development of philosophical thought regarding human nature until we reach the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the period in which historians agree that psychology as we know it today – the scientific study of behavior and mental processes – emerged. We will also acknowledge the contributions of that other group of scholars – the physiologists - who are credited as the other parent (along with the philosophers) of psychology.

Section 1: The Roots of Psychological Thought

Ancient Greek Era

While psychology is interested in the nature of humanity, in understanding how human beings function, psychology is by no means the only field of inquiry that seeks answers to the puzzles of human nature. Even though psychology as an independent field of study is only 125 or so years old, as indicated above, the questions that interest psychologists have been asked

for centuries. The psychology that you are studying developed in Western Europe and is largely derived from and influenced by Western European cultural traditions, which can be traced back to the ancient Greeks. Some of the earliest records of the attempt to understand human psychology can be found in works of literature. The Iliad and The Odyssey, the epic poems of the Greek poet Homer, are filled with the poet's insights about human nature. The field of psychology derives its very name from the Greek myth of Psyche. Psyche is variously translated as soul or spirit (or sometimes mind) - the very essence of what it means to be human (Sternberg, 1998)

Though ancient literature often provides insights into early views of human behavior, the earliest roots of the modern discipline of psychology can be traced to two different approaches to human behavior. Philosophy is a means of exploring and understanding various aspects of the nature of the world in general - including human nature. Philosophy operates primarily through introspection - the self-examination of ideas and inner experiences. The second field from which psychology derives is physiology (a subfield of biology)- the scientific study of living organisms and of life sustaining processes and functions. Physiologists seek knowledge primarily through observation - an approach known as empiricism. In ancient Greece these fields were closely allied and even physiology relied more on introspection than on observation. The fields gradually diverged from one another.

Hippocrates (460-377 B.C.), who is known as the father of modern medicine, had an impact on both philosophy and physiology (which were still closely connected in his time). He proposed the then "radical" ideas that disease is not a punishment sent by the gods and that physical malfunctions rather than demons caused mental illness. Hippocrates used what were at the time unorthodox methods - empirical observations - to study medicine. These included dissection (operating on human cadavers) and vivisection (operating on living organisms). He was interested in the nature of the mind and what its source is. He viewed it as an entity that controls the body. The philosophical belief that the mind (or spirit or soul) is qualitatively different from the body is known as mind-body dualism. According to this view the body is composed of physical substance but the mind is ethereal or intangible - not composed of physical substance. Hippocrates was the first to suggest that the mind resides in the brain (Sternberg, 1998).

Two famous contemporaries of Hippocrates, Plato (428-348 B.C.) and Aristotle (384- 322 B.C.) also believed that the mind was to be found within the body. Plato located it in the brain and Aristotle placed it in the heart. Plato and Aristotle had a profound effect on modern thinking not only in psychology but also in many fields. With regard to psychology they particularly impacted three areas:

1. The relationship between mind and body.

2. The use of observation versus introspection as a means of discovering truth.

3. The question of what is the original source of our ideas (Sternberg, 1998).

Plato and Aristotle had different views on the nature of reality. Plato believed that reality lies not in concrete objects that we are aware of through our senses but in the ideal, abstract forms that these objects represent. These ideal forms exist in a timeless dimension of pure abstract thought. The objects we sense are simply poor, imperfect and transient copies of the "real" idea that exists in our minds. Plato reasoned that the head must be the seat of the mind because it resembles a sphere, which he considered to be a perfect abstract form. Mind and body interact with one another according to Plato but they are essentially different and the mind is superior to the body. Truth is found in our thoughts (via introspection) not through our senses (via observation). Aristotle, in contrast, believed that reality lies only in the concrete world of objects that we apprehend through our senses. From Aristotle's point of view, Plato's abstract forms derive from concrete objects. He believed that reality is a unified whole, that it is not separated into physical substance versus the non-physical mind. His position on this issue is known as monism. (Plato's position was a form of dualism). According to Aristotle, the mind (soul) doesn't exist apart from the body. It is an illusion, a byproduct of anatomical and physiological activity. Because Aristotle held to this physically-based view of reality, he believed that the study of the mind and body are one and the same. He believed that we understand the mind by studying the body and that we rely on observation of concrete objects and actions (rather than on our own thoughts - introspection) to discover truth (Sternberg, 1998)

Aristotle was an empiricist. Empiricists hold that knowledge is gained by experience, observation and experimentation. Plato was a rationalist. Rationalists believe that knowledge is gained through thinking and analyzing in an effort to understand the world and people's relationship to it. Aristotle's view formed the foundation for the methods of empirical psychological research. Plato's view formed the foundation for theorizing about psychological processes, an activity that may or may not lead to subsequent empirical investigation. Today most psychologists (and most scientists in general) would agree that both approaches have merit. Most would agree that theorizing needs empirical research to confirm its conclusions while empirical research needs theorizing to organize and make sense of its observations (Sternberg, 1998).

With regard to the origin of ideas, Aristotle believed that ideas come from experience. Plato believed that ideas are innate and need to be "dug out" of the places in the mind where they might be "hiding." This foreshadowed the modern debate (known as the nature-nurture controversy) over whether abilities and dispositions such as athletic skills or intelligence are innate or acquired through various kinds of experiences. Today most psychologists would say that innate ability and experience interact with one another to produce many aspects of personality, skills and abilities (Sternberg, 1998).

Early Christian Era and the Middle Ages

The ideas of Plato and Aristotle continued to form the basis of debate about human nature during the period from 200-450 A.D. (the early Christian era) and 400-1330 A.D. (the Middle Ages). In these periods scientific efforts were often discouraged unless their results confirmed what scripture was understood to say about various phenomena. The Christian philosophers of this era agreed with Plato that introspection not observation was the better path to discover truth. After centuries of domination by religious dogmatism, the Christian philosopher and theologian Thomas Aquinas revived Aristotelian ideas and tried to integrate faith and empiricism. He tried to establish a sort of Christian science in which empiricism could operate within the boundaries of Christian theology. He believed that reasoning is important and acceptable because reasoning can lead to God. This set the stage for Renaissance thinkers who emphasized reasoning as a route to truth (Sternberg, 1998).

The Renaissance

The period from 1300-1600 A.D. is known as the Renaissance. During this period, critical thought was revitalized in Europe and science, as we know it was born. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) proposed the viewpoint that scientific study must be purely empirical. It should not be guided at all by theory. Bacon thought that theories color our vision and interfere with our perception of the "truth." Studies of nature and of humanity should be wholly unbiased and atheoretical (not based on any particular theoretical approach). Today most scientists support a model of inquiry in which theory is used to guide and give meaning to observations and in which observations provide data which is used to form, modify and even discard theory. Psychology today depends on an interaction between theory and data (Sternberg, 1998)

Early Modern Period

In the early modern period (1600-1850) the debate between Aristotelian and Platonic approaches continued to thrive. Rene' Descartes (1596-1650), a French mathematician and philosopher, disagreed with Bacon's emphasis on

empirical methods. He took up Plato's viewpoint that introspection and reflection as investigatory methods were superior to observation. Descartes revived the Platonic ideas of mind-body dualism and innate (versus acquired) knowledge. He said that what separates humans from animals is that humans have a non-material, spiritual mind and a material body. The human mind and its powers were supreme. He is known for coining the famous phrase "Cogito ergo sum" (I think therefore I am). Though he gave supremacy to the mind he agreed that the body could influence the mind so he is considered both mentalistic because he viewed the mind as superior to the body, and interactionistic because he suggested there is a two way interaction between mind and body (Sternberg, 1998).

John Locke (1632-1704), an Englishman, believed that the interaction between mind and body is a symmetrical relationship between two aspects of the same unified phenomenon. The mind depends on the body through the senses for its information while the body depends on the mind to process and store sensory experience for later use. Locke was also an empiricist and believed that humans are born without knowledge, which is subsequently acquired through experience and empirical observation. He proposed the term *tabula rasa* (blank slate) to describe this condition. Life and experience, according to Locke, "write" knowledge on each of us. James Mill (1773-1836) was Locke's philosophical successor. He took British empiricism to its philosophical extreme. He was known as an associationist and believed that events that occur close to one another in time become associated in the mind and can be recalled in tandem. He viewed the mind in entirely mechanistic terms and thought that the laws of the physical universe can explain everything - even the workings of the mind. The idea of a separate mind or soul that exists independently of the body is both unnecessary and wrong. This form of monism is known as reductionism. It reduces the role of the mind to the status of a mere cog in a large physiological machine and reduces the vast complexity of human behavior to a mere by-product of physiological activity (Sternberg, 1998).

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), a German philosopher, began the process of trying to reconcile or synthesize the competing viewpoints of dualism vs. monism and empiricism vs. rationalism. He redefined the mind-body question by asking how the mind and body are related rather than whether the mind is in control. Kant proposed that humans have a set of faculties or mental powers - senses, understanding, and reasoning. These faculties working together control and provide a link between mind and body thus integrating the two. Kant believed that to understand the mental faculties we must use both rationalistic and empirical approaches. He believed that there were two types of knowledge: experiential (which he called "a posteriori"

knowledge - meaning from afterward - after the fact) and "a priori" (from beforehand) or general knowledge that exists regardless of one's experience. An example of the latter type of knowledge would be our knowledge of time. Kant thought that understanding requires both types of knowledge. A priori knowledge permits us to make use of a posteriori knowledge. For example, with respect to time, we link together our fleeting sensations into a seemingly continuous stream of existence in which one event precedes and causes another event (cause and effect relationships). Understanding involves both nature (innate concepts and abilities) and nurture (knowledge gained through experience). Kant's influence on philosophy was enormous. Philosophy in the 19th century worked together with the science of the time in exploring the body and how it works to set the stage for the eventual establishment of psychology as a separate discipline in the late 1800's (Sternberg, 1998).

The issues confronted by philosophers, physicians, and psychologists are so intertwined that when psychology was starting out as a field of study in the late 1800's it was viewed by some as a branch of philosophy and by others as a branch of medicine. Gradually the psychological branches of philosophy and medicine broke away from their parent disciplines and psychology increasingly became a distinct, unified scientific discipline focused on the study of the mind and behavior. Contemporary psychology continues to wrestle with the same issues that its ancestor disciplines of philosophy and physiology wrestled with. As you explore the field you will hear echoes of these debates. One thing that the diverse points of view on human behavior and mental processes have in common, however, is the view that humans are organisms that have adapted to their environment. Charles Darwin in his theory of natural selection suggested that only those organisms that adapt well to their environment thrive. Humans, thus far, both as a species and as individuals have adapted and thrived.

Section 2: Early Theoretical Perspectives in Psychology

The year 1879 is generally regarded as the year in which psychology as a formal science was officially born. A German scholar named Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), who was trained in both philosophy and medicine, had written in his first book on sense perception in 1862 that psychology could become science only if it employed the experimental method in the study of its subject matter (at the time the workings of the mind) and that, furthermore, the mind could be studied experimentally (Hunt, 1993). In a subsequent publication in 1873, he announced that that he intended to make psychology a science and he established the first psychology laboratory in Leipzig, Germany in 1879. Others in both North America and Europe were also doing psychological research at this time but Wundt's was the first

laboratory to be formally established and to have its research results published in a scholarly journal. These are among the reasons that he is credited as the primary founder of the modern discipline of psychology. Many of America's early psychologists received their training in Wundt's lab. The focus of research in the Leipzig Laboratory was on sensation, perception, reaction times, imagery and attention (Wade & Tavris, 2002). These were viewed as the basic elements of psychological functioning. Wundt doubted that more complex processes could be studied experimentally.

One of Wundt's favorite research methods was "trained introspection." Wundt and his associates and students trained research subjects to carefully observe and analyze their own mental experiences - including sensations, mental images, and emotional reactions - under controlled conditions. The training of subjects in introspection was rigorous and exhaustive. Wundt hoped that by providing such training he could produce reliable, verifiable, objective results. In the long run, however, it proved to be impossible to use introspection to produce reliable results and the approach was abandoned as a research technique by other psychologists (Wade & Tavris, 2002).

In the early days of psychology there were two dominant theoretical perspectives. **Structuralism** was the name given to the approach pioneered by Wundt. The term was not used by Wundt himself but originated with Edward Titchener, an American psychologist who had been trained by Wundt. The goal of structuralism was to understand the structure of the mind. It was thought that this could be accomplished by analyzing sensations, images and feelings into their basic elements. Despite extensive research efforts this approach proved to a dead end. Once you've found the basic building blocks of a particular sensation or image, what do you do with that information? As it turned out, not much. Structuralism relied on trained introspection, a research method that proved to be unreliable because there was too much individual variation in the experiences and reports of research subjects (Wade & Tavris, 2002).

An American psychologist named William James (1842-1910), who like Wundt was trained in both medicine and philosophy, developed a competing approach, which came to be known as **functionalism**. He took the position that because the brain and mind are constantly changing it is foolish to look for the basic building blocks of experience as the structuralists were doing. Instead, James said, the important questions were how and why an organism does something. What purpose or function does the organism's behavior serve? Functionalists, who were influenced by the work of the evolutionist, Charles Darwin, asked how specific behaviors or mental processes help an animal or a person adapt to the environment. Consequently, they looked for

underlying causes and practical consequences of behavior and mental processes. They felt free to use a variety of research methods and broadened the field to focus on children, animals, religious experiences, and what James called "the stream of consciousness" - the way thoughts flow like a river sometimes placid and calm and at other times turbulent and murky. Functionalism also didn't last long as a school of psychology because it lacked a precise theory and program of research to hold it together. But it has left its mark on the field with its emphasis on the causes and consequences of behavior, both of which are prominent features in particular theoretical perspectives in contemporary psychology (Wade & Tavris, 2002).

Another early theory in psychology was developed by the Austrian physician, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). Originally trained as a neurologist, Freud became interested in how psychological factors might contribute to some of his patients' problems. He became convinced that many of his patients' symptoms had mental rather than physical explanations. In particular, he believed that early experiences such as conflicts and traumas had caused such distress for his patients as children that the memory of them was extremely threatening and therefore the patients were unable to consciously recall these events. Despite their inability to remember childhood experiences, the memories and the feelings associated with them exerted a powerful influence on the patients' behavior and emotions. Freud argued that conscious awareness is only the "tip of the iceberg" when it comes to psychological functioning. He believed that even more important than our conscious thoughts in determining how we react and respond to events are forces that operate unconsciously. Such unconscious material as repressed wishes, conflicts, guilty secrets, yearnings and desires exert a powerful influence on our behavior and emotional reactions. Freud gradually developed his ideas into a broad theory of human psychological functioning and a method for treating patients with psychologically based disorders. Both the theory and the treatment method became known as **psychoanalysis** (Wade & Tavris, 2002).

A very different approach to psychology emerged in the early twentieth century. The work of several scholars contributed to the development and growth of this approach but one of them, the American John B. Watson (1878-1958) is typically credited as the “father of **behaviorism**.” Behaviorism is a theoretical perspective that is “based on the premise that scientific psychology should study only observable behavior” (Weiten, 2004, p. 6). As Weiten observes, it is important to understand that this was a radical departure from the ways in which psychology had been defined up until this point. Watson, who in 1913 published an article that has since

become known as “The Behaviorist Manifesto”, argued that psychology should altogether abandon the study of consciousness (mental processes) and attend only to directly observable and, therefore verifiable, behavior. A strict empiricist, Watson proposed a revolutionary re-definition of what psychology should be about arguing that mental processes were not a proper subject of study for a scientific discipline because they were private events that could not be examined by an impartial observer. He proposed that psychology should instead be the science of behavior. Under the influence of Watson and others (especially the American psychologist B.F. Skinner [1904-1990]) behaviorism became the dominant theoretical perspective in much of psychology from the 1920’s to the 1960’s.

The Branches of Psychology

Section 3: Contemporary Psychological Perspectives

None of the early theoretical perspectives described above “won” the battle for supremacy in psychology. Contemporary psychology has no single unifying theoretical perspective. Rather, it is a field comprised of various theoretical points of view. Though sometimes it seems that these perspectives are competing with each other, most current day psychologists are likely to agree that the various perspectives are better understood as complementary: The most complete and accurate picture of human behavior and mental processes can be created by integrating these various perspectives together. That being said, it remains true that individual psychologists tend to specialize in and emphasize a particular theoretical perspective. Myers (2004) organizes psychology's current theoretical perspectives as follows:

Neuroscience: The neuroscience perspective in psychology emphasizes the role of the brain and other bodily systems in creating our emotions, our memories and our sensory experiences. From this perspective human beings are best understood as biological organisms. Every aspect of human behavior and every human mental process can be traced back to biological events.

Evolutionary Psychology: From the perspective of evolutionary psychology, human behavior and mental processes have evolved because they have adaptive value. Behavioral tendencies and human mental abilities and capacities have evolved through a process of natural selection in the same way that physical traits evolve. These behavioral tendencies and mental abilities are ultimately rooted in biological structures and processes.

Behavior Genetics: Evolutionary psychology has its effect through the process of genetic transmission. Among the psychological abilities we have inherited are those that help us to adjust or adapt to environmental demands.

Sometimes, however, psychological factors that are not so helpful are also genetically influenced. Individuals also differ in the extent to which they exhibit various psychological traits. Behavioral geneticists are interested in determining the extent to which psychological factors such as intelligence, personality traits, sexual orientation, and even psychological disorders are attributable to our genes and how those genetic factors interact with the environment.

These first three perspectives all share in common an emphasis on biological processes and their influence on behavior and mental life though each perspective emphasizes a different aspect of biological activity. Together they represent what many consider the result of a recent *biological revolution* in psychology (Myers, 2004).

The Psychodynamic Perspective: Psychodynamic psychology traces its origins to Freud's psychoanalytic theory. There are several different versions of psychodynamic theory today. What they share in common is an emphasis on early childhood experiences as being critical for the formation of personality and on the role of unconscious mental processes in affecting behavior and emotions.

The Behavioral Perspective: Behavioral psychologists emphasize the role that experience plays in shaping our responses to environmental events. They study the processes by which our observable actions and reactions become associated with particular environmental variables and how our behavior produces consequences that in turn exert an influence on subsequent behavior. Though this perspective grew out of behaviorism, modern behavioral psychologists acknowledge the role of mental and biological processes in influencing behavior.

The Cognitive Perspective: Cognitive psychology emphasizes the ways in which we process information. This includes the ways that we perceive and interpret experiences, the ways that we store and organize information in our memories, the ways that we use information to make decisions and solve problems, and the ways in which these processes affect our behavior and our emotional reactions. In many respects modern cognitive psychology is responsible for once again (following the influence of behaviorism) making the study of mental processes a principal focus of psychology

The Social-Cultural Perspective: Behavior and thinking are affected by the social and cultural environment. Social-cultural psychologists emphasize the role that social and cultural forces play in influencing behavioral patterns as well as such cognitive variables as attitudes and values.

One additional contemporary theoretical perspective that Myers does not include in his list is the perspective known as *humanistic psychology.*

Humanistic psychologists view human nature as innately good and people as capable of taking charge of their lives and, by acting on their free will, choosing the type of life that they will live and the type of person that they will be. Humanistic psychology has been influential in the fields of counseling, education, and organizational dynamics.

At times psychologists blend particular combinations of these theoretical perspectives together. For example, some psychologists are interested in studying how cognitive processes are related to various brain structures. These psychologists might refer to themselves as *cognitive neuroscientists*. Other psychologists might combine cognitive and behavioral approaches in treating psychological disorders such as depression or anxiety. They might refer to themselves as *cognitive-behavioral therapists*. Still other psychologists might describe themselves as eclectic in their orientation which means that they draw upon several theoretical perspectives in their work.

References

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