

## The Origins of Psychology

*General Psychology: Chapter 1*  
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## Why Study Psychology?

- o Psychology investigates a wide variety of questions and attempts to answer them using scientific methods.
- o Psychology helps us evaluate the many so-called psychological facts we encounter everyday.
- o An understanding of psychology will help you to think critically and evaluate scientifically based facts.

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## Definition of Psychology

- o **Psychology** is a science, the scientific study of the behavior of humans and other animals.
  - Based on the careful application of scientific methods
  - Not just a matter of common sense
  - Deals with people effectively and is only a small part of the science of behavior

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● ● ● | Psychology as a Science

- Latane and Darley (1970)
  - The presence of other people affects our perception of an emergency situation.
  - We tend to diffuse our responsibility to act to others who are present.
  - We are more likely to act when we are alone.
  - This helps explain bystander apathy.

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● ● ● | The Study of Behavior

- Contemporary psychologists are interested in studying both observable behavior and mental processes.

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● ● ● | The Study of Humans and Other Animals

- Five major reasons for the study of animal behavior:
  - Satisfies the need to find a simpler model
  - Provides greater control
  - Considers ethical issues
    - Institutional review boards
  - Practicality (cost)
  - To learn more about animal behavior

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● ● ● | Psychology's History

- Psychology has roots in philosophy.
- Fundamental interest in the relationship between mind and body
- Rene Descartes proposed that mind and body are distinct entities that interact at the pineal gland - known as dualism.
  - The physical body was mechanical.
  - The mind or soul was not physical; it interacted through pineal gland to produce intentional behavior.

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● ● ● | Psychology's History

- Descartes' ideas have influenced our thinking of mind and body.
- Free will
  - Central to our assumption that behavior is caused or determined by physical events
- Determinism
  - Central to the science of psychology

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● ● ● | Psychology's History

- Psychology has roots in physiology.
  - Physiologists adhere to the concept of empiricism.
  - They are well versed in the scientific method.
- **Scientific method** – Careful observation of events in the world, the formation of predictions based on these observations, and the testing of these predictions by manipulations of variables and systematic observation
- Anthropology – cultures and their importance

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● ● ● | **Structuralism**

- **Structuralism** – An approach to psychology that attempted to break down experience into its basic elements or structures
- Wilhelm Wundt established the first psychology laboratory in 1879 at the University of Leipzig.
- He defined the task of psychology as the systematic study of the structure of the conscious mind.



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● ● ● | **Functionalism**

- **Functionalism** – An approach to psychology that emphasized the functional, practical nature of the mind
- William James's emphasis was on the functional, practical nature of the mind.
  - Influenced by Charles Darwin
  - *Principles of Psychology* (1890) his landmark text



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● ● ● | **Psychoanalysis**

- Sigmund Freud developed psychoanalysis.
  - Its emphasis was the unconscious mind.
- Freud's impact on psychology was profound.
- Psychoanalysis is still practiced today – though less and less often



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## Behaviorism

- Emphasizes the relationship between environmental events and an organism's behavior
- John Watson (Rooted in Pavlovian conditioning) – Classical Conditioning
- BF Skinner – Operant Conditioning



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## Other historical perspectives

- Gestalt Psychology - started by group of German psychologists who disagreed with the principles and methods of both structuralism and functionalism.
- Humanistic psychology – emphasizes role of free choice and our ability to make conscious rational decisions about how we live our lives

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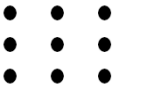
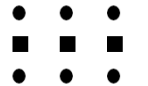


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## Gestalt principles

<p><b>Proximity</b></p>  <p>(We organize nearby objects together. Thus, you should see columns because the dots in columns are closer than the dots in rows.)</p>	<p><b>Similarity</b></p>  <p>(We organize together objects that are similar in shape. Thus, you should see rows instead of columns.)</p>
<p><b>Good Continuation</b></p>  <p>(We organize lines to minimize abrupt changes. Thus, you should see the curved line as one, with a straight diagonal line cutting through it.)</p>	<p><b>Closure</b></p>  <p>(We organize lines to create whole figures when possible. Thus, you should organize this figure as a square in spite of the gap.)</p>

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● ● ● | Fields of Specialization in Psychology

- Cognitive
- Developmental psychology
- Social psychology
- Personality psychology
- Experimental psychology
- Biological psychology
- Clinical psychology/Counseling psychology

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● ● ● | Fields of Specialization in Psychology

- Educational psychology
- School psychology
- Industrial and organizational (I/O) psychology
- Engineering psychology
- Health psychology
- Positive psychology
- Forensic psychology
- Artificial intelligence/Connectionism

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● ● ● | Psychological Associations

- **American Psychological Association (APA)** – The major professional organization of psychologists in the United States founded in 1892
- **American Psychological Society (APS)** – Professional group of academic and research psychologists founded in 1988

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● ● ● | **The Goals of Psychology**

- **Common goals include the following:**
  - Understanding, predicting, and controlling or influencing the phenomena that constitute the subject matter
- The idea of applying psychology to control people's behavior is controversial.

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