Psychology: The Rodney Dangerfield of the Sciences

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No Respect for Psychology

- Psychology is not a well respected field
- "How do you know anything about epilepsy? You're just a psychologist"
- Freud problem
- Take a look in your local bookstore, you will find that many books that have been written by psychologists are usually not under the psychology but rather under biology or science
  - Psychology becomes associated with other fields instead of its own
- Even though Psychologists do most of the research they are not given credit for it
  - AMA study of effects of television on children

Psychology and Parapsychology

- ESP, Telepathy, Clairvoyance, Recognition, Psychokinesis, and Psychic Surgery
- Many important books involving evidence with paranormal activities are written by psychologists
- These subtypes in parapsychology are not considered good topics in psychology because they do not yield replicable results.
- Many studies in ESP have been published in psychology journals, and the results are almost always negative.
- Double whammy

You're just a Psychologist.....

- Many people view psychology as being a field that just studies mental disorders...when in fact, there are many different sub-fields to choose from
  - i.e. physiological psychologists, cognitive psychologists, neuropsychologists, industrial psychologists, and evolutionary psychologists
- According to Stanovich, the public does not recognize psychologists as being psychologists because sometimes their names do not mention anything about psychology
  - i.e. cognitive scientist, neuroscientist (doesn't actually mention)
Self-Help Literature

- "Creates an inaccurate impression of the methods and goals of psychology"
- Most of the self-help includes new "therapies" that have not gone through the scientific method
  - Some of those "therapies" include: losing weight, making more money and having better sexual experiences
  - Most self-help literature is based on what the psychologists themselves have experienced
  - Also based on cases they have had
- Self-help literature again, makes the public think that psychologists only deal with mental disorders

Recipe Knowledge

- Is the knowledge of how to use something without knowledge of the fundamental principles that govern its functioning
- I.e. we have our phones, we know how to make calls, text (some of us), use it on a macro level; but we do not know how it works on a micro level. (the difference between applied and basic research).
- Or...you wouldn't go to a molecular biologist to find out how many aspirins to take (because he is not dealing with recipe knowledge, but the fundamental facts)

Our Own Worst Enemies

- For most people, when something does not go right, they tend to blame it on someone else, instead of acknowledging what they are doing wrong
  - This is exactly what is happening to psychology
- Some psychologists think that psychology is more of an art and that brings up the question of who should be funding it
  - Medicare vs. national endowment for the humanities

Our Own Worst Enemies (cont.)

- Looked at as being unscientific
- Critical incident stress debriefing
  - For use with survivors of traumatic events
  - Most of those that went through this program said that it helped them
  - There was no control group to compare those that received treatment and those that did not
- Child custody evaluations are based on pseudoscience
  - None of the scales showed reliable or valid results
  - There were no studies conducted to prove the effectiveness of the scales/measures
  - "No scientific justification at all"
According to the book, much of our personal psychological knowledge is recipe knowledge.

Recipe knowledge:

- When many people look at psychology, they are basing it off a “mixture of platitudes and cliches”, which are usually wrong