

Introduction: Why Take History and Systems in Psychology?

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Questions

- Write a brief characterization of each of the following professionals:
 - Psychologist, Astrologist, Scientist
- List the most interesting idea(s) in psychology you have encountered.
 - Ideas you found exciting, surprising, or important.
- How do psychology theories change?
 - How and why did Psychodynamic, Behavioral, and Humanistic, and Cognitive views of human nature rise and fall over time?

II. IMAGE OF PSYCHOLOGY

A. Is Psychology Scientific?

- Is your image of psychologists like scientists?
 - Psychology has been defined in textbooks as the scientific study of the mind and behavior.
 - To study people, psychologists, like other scientists, predict and explain behavior.
 - Is your image of psychologists and scientists different or the same?
 - Astrologist predict and explain of behavior but not scientifically.
 - In the eyes of psychology, astrology is a pseudoscience
 - Is your image of psychologists and astrologists the same or different?

II. IMAGE OF PSYCHOLOGY

A. Is Psychology Scientific?

- The discipline presents itself as scientific.
 - Psychologists see themselves as scientists and as very different than astrologists
- Even psychologists who work in clinics or hospitals often (although not always) see themselves as scientist-practitioners.
 - Psychologists are supposed to be practitioner-scientists like medical doctor.
 - The activities of psychologists like doctors are based on the best scientific evidence, with no activities being performed without such evidence.

II. IMAGE OF PSYCHOLOGY

A. Is Psychology Scientific?

- Curiously, Hergenhahn's textbook defines psychology differently than the standard definition of psychology in textbooks!
- Psychology is defined by the professional activities of psychologists. (p. 2)*
- Why would Hergenhahn define psychology in such a circular and non-standard manner?
- Two reasons
 - Historical diversity.
 - Professional diversity

II. IMAGE OF PSYCHOLOGY

B. Historic Diversity

- The definition avoids fixing a permanent meaning of the discipline when viewing it historically.
 - No single definition of psychology would apply in the history of the discipline.
 - Historically psychology was defined as study of the *psyche*, or mind; the spirit; consciousness; behavior.
 - Historically, psychology has involved different activities historically than it does now.
 - Professional psychological activity has included examined responses to inkblots to identifying bumps on the head.

II. IMAGE OF PSYCHOLOGY

C. Professional Diversity

- The definition acknowledges the range of backgrounds, approaches, and activities of psychologists.
- What do you think it means that we can not agree about what is interesting, exciting or important?
 - Does it mean that psychology is in trouble because of the diversity of ideas?
 - Guess how many divisions that there are in American Psychological Association? ([Divisions](#))
 - Guess how many journals American PA publishes? ([APA Journals](#)).

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| 1. Society for General Psychology | 27. Society for Community Research and Action |
| 2. Society for the Teaching of Psychology | 28. Psychopharmacology and Substance Abuse |
| 3. Experimental Psychology | 29. Psychotherapy |
| 4. There is no Division 4 [more info] | 30. Society of Psychological Hypnosis |
| 5. Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics | 31. State Psychological Association Affairs |
| 6. Behavioral Neuroscience and Comparative Psychology | 32. Humanistic Psychology |
| 7. Developmental Psychology | 33. Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities |
| 8. Society for Personality and Social Psychology | 34. Population and Environmental Psychology |
| 9. Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) | 35. Society for the Psychology of Women |
| 10. Society for the Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity and the Arts | 36. Psychology of Religion |
| 11. There is no Division 11 [more info] | 37. Child, Youth, and Family Services |
| 12. Society of Clinical Psychology | 38. Health Psychology |
| 13. Society of Consulting Psychology | 39. Psychoanalysis |
| 14. Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology | 40. Clinical Neuropsychology |
| 15. Educational Psychology | 41. American Psychology-Law Society |
| 16. School Psychology | 42. Psychologists in Independent Practice |
| 17. Society of Counseling Psychology | 43. Family Psychology |
| 18. Psychologists in Public Service | 44. Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues |
| 19. Military Psychology | 45. Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues |
| 20. Adult Development and Aging | 46. Media Psychology |
| 21. Applied Experimental and Engineering Psychology | 47. Exercise and Sport Psychology |
| 22. Rehabilitation Psychology | 48. Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence |
| 23. Society for Consumer Psychology | 49. Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy |
| 24. Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology | 50. Addictions |
| 25. Behavior Analysis | 51. Society for the Psychological Study of Men and Masculinity |
| 26. History of Psychology | 52. International Psychology |
| | 53. Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology |
| | 54. Society of Pediatric Psychology |

<p>General Topics</p> <p>American Psychologist APA Monitor Contemporary Psychology Dreaming European Psychologist History of Psychology Journal of Psychotherapy Integration Psychological Assessment Psychological Bulletin Psychological Methods Psychological Review Psychology, Public Policy, and Law Review of General Psychology</p> <p>Basic Research</p> <p>Behavioral Neuroscience Emotion Journal of Abnormal Psychology Journal of Comparative Psychology Journal of Experimental Psychology: Animal Behavior Processes Applied General Human Perception and Performance Learning, Memory, and Cognition Psychological Methods</p>	<p>Applied & Practice</p> <p>Clinician's Research Digest Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice & Research Dreaming Experimental and Clinical Psychopharmacology Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice Health Psychology International Journal of Stress Management Journal of Applied Psychology Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology Journal of Counseling Psychology Journal of Educational Psychology Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied Journal of Occupational Health Psychology Neuropsychology Professional Psychology: Research and Practice Psychoanalytic Psychology Psychological Assessment Psychological Services Psychology of Men and Masculinity Psychotherapy: Theory/Research/Practice/ Rehabilitation Psychology Prevention & Treatment</p>
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<p>Social/Personality, Development Education</p> <p>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology Developmental Psychology Emotion Health Psychology Journal of Educational Psychology Journal of Family Psychology Journal of Personality & Social Psychology Psychology and Aging Psychology of Men and Masculinity</p> <p>Professional Issues, Public Policy</p> <p>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry Consulting Psychology Journal Int. Journal of Stress Management Journal of Counseling Psychology Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psych Professional Psych: Research & Practice Psychological Assessment Psychological Services Psychology, Public Policy, and Law Prevention & Treatment</p>	<p>Theory, Reviews, Methodology</p> <p>American Psychologist Contemporary Psychology Dreaming Journal of Psychotherapy Integration Psychological Assessment Psychological Methods Psychological Review Psychotherapy: Theory/Research/Practice/</p>
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[RETURN](#)

II. IMAGE OF PSYCHOLOGY

D. Science and Conceptual Change

- How and why do psychological ideas about human nature change?
 - What caused *Psychodynamic* views of human nature rise and wane from 1920s to 1940?
 - *Behaviorist* views of human nature quickly rose and fell as the scientific account for the discipline. Why?
 - Why led to the rise and fall of *Humanistic* view of human nature from the 1960s to 1980s?
 - What triggered the present pervasiveness of *neuro-science* account of human nature? Will it last?

II. IMAGE OF PSYCHOLOGY

D. Science and Conceptual Change

- What process would you expect to underlie conceptual change?
 - **The Scientific Approach:** New ideas emerge out of evidence of the inadequacy of old ideas.
 - **The Fashion Approach:** New ideas emerge because, like fashion, novelty is intrinsically good.
 - **The Death and Replacement Approach:** Old ideas fade away as proponents of those ideas die.
 - **The Premium of the New:** New ideas in psychology are valued, even if not (yet) supported.

III. Why Study the History of Psychology

A. Reasons

- Text's Reasons to study History of Psychology
 - Perspective: Appreciate how ideas evolve.
 - Deeper understanding: Realize the broader ideas underlying current issues in psychology
 - Recognition of fads or fashions: Distinguish ideas valued for their social relevance rather than truth.
 - Avoiding repetition of mistakes: Understand unproductive intellectual avenues.
 - A source of valuable ideas: Value old ideas which can become new again (e.g., unconscious)
 - Curiosity: Identify with one's discipline's past.

III. Why Study the History of Psychology

A. Reasons

- But there may be a 7th Reason not in the textbook.
 - Studying the history of psychology will make you more aware of the myths of the discipline.
 - Like any institution socializing its young, undergraduate Psychology courses propagate of myths about the discipline.
 - One myth may be the extent to which psychology is a pure science, not different than physics
 - Underlying diversity in psychology is an uniformity of accepting the discipline as scientific.
 - As we will see in the class, the history presents a different story of this.

III. Why Study the History of Psychology

B. Keith Stanovich

- Stanovich's *How to Think Straight about Psychology* is a defense of the discipline as scientific.
 - Psychologists share the common value of science.
 - Science is a way of thinking about and observing the universe that leads to a deeper understanding of its workings (Stanovich, p. 8).
 - Stanovich discusses three characteristics of science
 - Systematic Empiricism: Evidence-based.
 - Publicly verifiable: Ideas are open to scrutiny.
 - Deals with solvable problems: Only testable ideas.

III. Why Study the History of Psychology

B. Sigmund Koch

- Koch authored a respected history of the discipline then denied it was scientific.
 - "Characteristically, psychological events are multiply-determined, ambiguous in their human meaning, polymorphous (multiformed), contextually envired or embedded in complex and vaguely bounded ways, evanescent (temporary) and labile (unstable) in the extreme."
 - "Psychology has been misconceived as a science or as any kind of coherent discipline devoted to the empirical study of human beings.

IV. THE COURSE

A. Features

- This course is designed to help students understand the discipline in new ways
 - Students will learn about the assumptions underlying modern ideas in psychology (the Systems part) by exploring the conceptual origins and evolution of those ideas (the History part).
 - The course runs backwards, tracing back contemporary ideas to previous ideas of earlier times and ultimately to a Greek!
 - It is my hope that the course will arm you will skills to perform an “archeology of psychological knowledge” and sharpen your critical thinking about the discipline.