

Prologue

PSY1101

What is psychology?

Psychology's Roots

- William Wundt
 - Established the 1st psychology laboratory at the University of Leipzig, Germany
 - Before long, this new science of psychology became branched into 2 categories
- Structuralism
 - Uses introspection to define the mind's makeup; consciousness and emotion
- Functionalism
 - Focuses on how the mental processes enable us to adapt, survive and flourish
- Introspection (looking inward)
 - Experiences looking, smelling, hearing something
 - Your immediate sensations/images/feelings
 - How did these relate to one another?
 - Failed: people's self-reports varied
- William James
 - Explored the functions involved in our thoughts and feelings
 - WHY does the brain/nose DO this?
 - Assumed thinking/smelling/hearing was adaptive and meant for survival
 - Mentored Mary Witon Calkins on psychology; finished all her Harvard requirements, outscored every male but was still denied by Harvard and offered her a degree from 'Radcliffe University', the sister school for females. She went on to become the first president of the APA
- Margaret Washburn
 - 1st woman to receive a psychology degree

Psychological Science Develops

- Psychology was defined as ‘the science of mental life’ for the longest time
- B. F. Skinner and John B. Watson (Behaviourists)
 - Dismissed introspection and refine psychology as ‘the scientific study of observable behaviour’
 - You cannot observe a sensation/feeling/thought, but you can observe behaviour
- Sigmund Freud (Freudian psychology)
 - Emphasizes how our thought processes/responses to childhood memories affect our behaviour
- Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow (humanistic psychologists)
 - Found Freudian psychology and behaviourism too limiting
 - Focused on how current environmental influences can nurture/limit our growth potential, and the importance of having our needs for love/acceptance satisfied
 - Now known as the cognitive revolution
- Cognitive neuroscience
 - Links brain activity with mental activity
 - Helps treat things like depression
- Psychology: the science of behaviour and mental processes

Contemporary Psychology

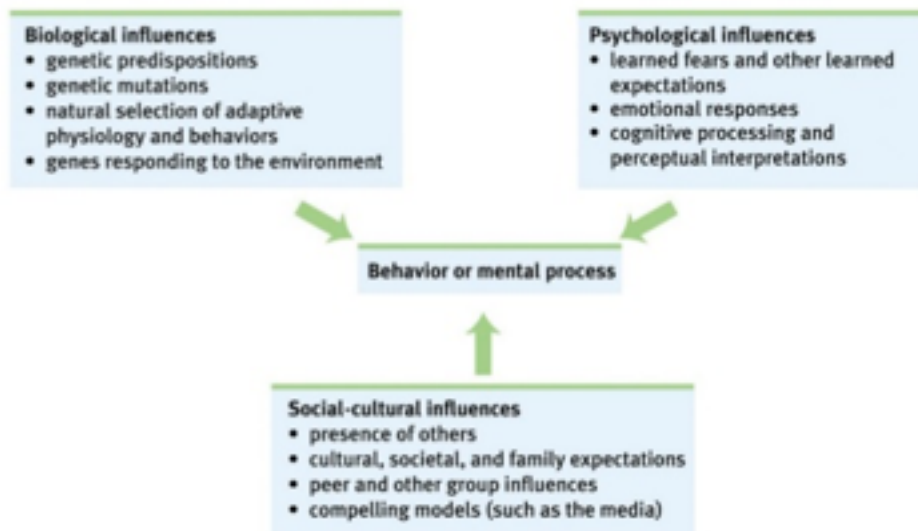
Psychology’s Biggest Question

- Are our human traits present at birth, or do they develop through experience?
- NATURE VS. NURTURE
- Plato: assumed that we inherit character and intelligence, and that certain ideas are present at birth (nature)
- Aristotle: nothing in the mind does not come in from the influences of the external world (nurture)

- Charles Darwin
 - Argues that natural selection shapes behaviours and bodies
 - Natural selection: Among the range of inherited traits, only the ones that contribute to reproduction and survival will most likely be passed on
 - Explained a lot about animal structures AND behaviours
 - Contemporary psychology: both

Psychology's 3 Main Levels of Analysis

- Biopsychosocial approach: Considers influences of biological, psychological and social-cultural factors



- Advantages: By incorporating different levels of analysis, it provides a more complete view

Psychology's Subfields

- Basic research: pure science
- Applied research: scientific study that aims to solve practical problems
- Counselling research: help people cope with challenges/crisis' (marital) to help improve their personal life

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- Clinical research: Treat mental, emotional and behaviour disorders
- Psychiatry: Medical doctors licensed to prescribe drugs and treat physical causes of psychological behaviour
- Positive psychology: Study of human functioning, with goals of discovering things that help the individual and community thrive
- Community psychology: work to create social and physical environments that are healthy for all; training kids to cope with bullies/seek to change to bullies