

HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY
FALL 2003
COURSE OUTLINE

Course: PSYC85H History of Psychology

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Text: Leahey, T. H. (2003). *A History of Psychology: Main Currents in Psychological Thought*. Prentice-Hall: New Jersey.

Evaluation: Midterm and final multiple choice exams (50 items each) plus 20 page term paper each worth one-third of the grade.

Goals of the course: The course offers an overview of developments in psychology both as a profession and as a discipline. Special attention is given to:

- a. The philosophical contributions of the ancient Greeks.
- b. The emergence of science during the Renaissance.
- c. French, English and German contributions to psychology.
- d. Major developments related to psychology in the 19th century.
- e. The founding of experimental psychology.
- f. Schools of psychology including: behaviourism, structuralism, phenomenology, existentialism, functionalism, and cognitivism.

(1) General Introduction

Basic problems in psychology:

1. Mind-body
2. Epistemology (science of knowledge)
3. Motivation and ethics

Psychology as a profession and as a discipline.

Reasons for studying the history of psychology.

Resistance to its study in America.

The role of intellectualism in the development of psychology.

(2) Early Developments

1. Animism and prescientific explanation in primitive society; adaptive value of magical and religious behaviour.
2. The Ancient Greeks.
The Olympic and Orphic traditions.

A. The Origins of Naturalism

Developments in Asia Minor (6th Century B.C.).
What conditions favoured these developments?
The beginning of metaphysics and speculation.
Ionian physicists: Thales, Heraclitus.
Atomists and the "natural law" (moral order).
Naturalism and the Materialist Doctrine -
Democritus (ca. 460 - ca. 370 B.C.).

B. The Origins of Antinaturalism

A perspective on transformation and vitalism.
The Sophists and the Doctrine of Relativism
(Protagoras, ca. 500 - ca. 410 B.C.).
The Doctrine of Idealism (Plato, 427-347 B.C.).
The Doctrine of Teleology (Aristotle, 384 - 322 B.C.).

(3) Some Important Concepts

1. Paradigm, normal science, revolutionary science
The Kuhn-Popper controversy on scientific development.
2. Prescriptions (Watson).
3. Piaget's model of intellectual development.

(4) Scholasticism and the Medieval Spirit (ca. 500-1200 A.D.)

1. The role of authority.
2. The role of revelation.
3. The church and science.

(5) The Renaissance and the Re-emergence of Naturalism:

Lemnius (1574): natural causes explain all events.
Background factors: exploration, secularized scholarship, etc.

1. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642).
The role of the experiment in science.
Critique of Aristotelian metaphysics.
The problem of motion.
2. Francis Bacon (1561-1626).
A strong statement about the inductive method.
Utilitarian approach to science.
The problem of creativity in science (a critique of Bacon).
3. Rene Descartes (1596-1650).
Contribution to the mind-body problem (dualism).
Analysis of the reflex.
Theory of emotions.
Emphasis on the rational method.
Contribution to the physical sciences: analytical geometry.
Innate knowledge.

(6) Science as an Institution.

Italy Scientific societies as court ornaments in Renaissance Italy (1603 and 1657).

France Salons, Academie Royale des Science (Louis XIV)
Tradition of French statism.
Journal (Memoires, 1666).

England The Royal Society (1660).
Journal (Philosophical Transactions, 1665).

The problem of scientific communication.
The artist and the scientist.

(7) English empiricism and content psychology.
The mechanical model of knowledge.

1. Issac Newton (1642-1727).
A comprehensive theory of forces.
2. John Locke (1632-1704).
A cognitive theory: the IDEA as a basic unit.
Primary and Secondary qualities.
Representative realism.

3. Bishop George Berkeley (1685-1753).
To Be Is To Be Perceived - Subjective idealism.
The synthetic role of the mind.
A precursor of Piaget's sensorimotor theory.

4. David Hume (1711-1776).
Associationism.
Psychological aspects of causality.
Early positivism.

Critique: Relation of empiricism to modern information theory.
Passive aspects of the theory.
Relation to Brunswik's lens model.

- (8) The Scottish School.

A critique of empiricism from a unity-of-the-soul viewpoint.
Faculty psychology.
Object constancy and feedback from muscle movement.

- (9) German Rationalism and Act Psychology.

The role of ACTIVITY in the mind as opposed to CONTENT.
The development of national scholarship in Germany.

1. Leibnitz (1646 - 1716).
The monadology and levels of consciousness.
The unconscious.
Apperception and the importance of clarity in thought.
2. Wolff (b.1679).
The first psychology texts: Psychologia empirica (1734)
Psychologia rationalis (1754)

Redintegration and memory.

3. Kant (1724 -1804).
The structuring of knowledge.
Banishing the soul.
Time and space are innate.
Three mental processes: intellect, feeling, will.

(10) Important physiological developments in the 19th Century.

1. Sensory and motor nerves functionally and anatomically discrete.
2. Reflex action.
3. Electrical nature of the nerve impulse.
4. Velocity of the nerve impulse.
5. Phrenology and the brain.

(11) The emergence of experimental psychology.

1. The personal equation (reaction time).
2. Role of physiology.
3. Gustav Fechner (1801-1887).
The measurement of sensory experience.
4. Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920).
The first experimental psychologist.

(12) The Schools of Psychology.

1. Behaviourism.
2. Phenomenology and existentialism.
3. Structuralism.
4. Functionalism.
5. Gestalt.
6. Cognitivism.