Unit 1: Psychology’s History and Approaches
Psychology’s Roots - The Prescientific Stage

In the early 1800s there was no distinct science of psychology. The word ‘psychology’ was used to label a branch of philosophy that concerned itself with human consciousness.

Two questions emerged →

1) Is the mind connected to the body or distinct?
2) Are ideas a blank slate filled by experience?
First ‘Psychologists’ - The Ancient Greeks

- **Main Greek players** →
  - Socrates - Mind continues after body dies
  - Plato - Socrates student, knowledge innate, born into us
  - Aristotle - used observations, knowledge not pre-existing.

- **Emphasising Connections:**
  - Mind and body are connected - the Hebrews, Aristotle, Augustine
  - Mind and body are distinct - Socrates, Plato, Descartes
  - Some ideas are inborn - Socrates and Plato
  - The mind is a blank slate - Aristotle and Locke
Next Stage - 1600s

- **Major 1600s players**
  - Rene Decartes - primitive nerve pathways, dissected animals, ‘animal spirits’
  - Francis Bacon - scientific method, minds ability to perceive pattern in random events
  - John Locke - mind at birth is a ‘Tabula Rasa’ (blank slate).

- Bacon and Locke’s ideas merged to form *empiricism* → the view that knowledge originates in experience and that science should, therefore, rely on observation and experimentation.
Ancestors of Scientific Psychology

- **Phrenology** was a theory based on the assumption that bumps on the skull reflects a person’s character or personality traits. These bumps could grow, like muscles. The shape of the skull should reflect the size or development of the underlying brain tissue, and a bump on the skull might indicate well-develop brain tissue. The skull was mapped and numbered. While phrenology may have been a false science, it foreshadowed modern psychology where it is believed that different brain regions have distinct skills or functions.

- **Psychophysicists** were interested in how information from the physical world (light and sound) was translated into mental experiences (brightness and loudness). This was the beginning of experimental psychology.
Psychological Science is Born!

- **Major Early Players**
  - Wilhelm Wundt - First true psychology lab at the University of Leipzig
  - Edward Bradford Titchener - introspection to search for the mind’s structural elements
  - William James - evolved functions of thoughts and feelings
  - Mary Whiton Calkins - first woman president of APA (James’ student)
  - Margaret Floy Washburn - 1st woman to receive psychology Ph. D.
Wilhem Wundt

- Believed that if psychology were to be a science, then psychologists would have to collect data about experience.
- Gathered information about how quickly people responded to a stimulus and what they experienced.
- Reaction time experiment: One person controls the presentation of stimuli while the other "reacts" by depressing a telegraph key. First professional to call himself a psychologist.
- Wundt thought that careful scientific observers could simply look inside themselves to see the mind in action. The technique of “looking inside” to gather data about the mind is called introspection. Introspection was the dominant technique in psychology for several decades. The problem with it was there was no way to resolve differences of opinion about what people saw when they looked inside. There was no way to arrive at a consensus about the nature of the human mind.
Edward Bradford Titchener

- **Structuralism** → an early school of psychology that used introspection to explore the structural elements of the human mind.
- Structuralists tried to understand the structure of conscious experience by analyzing the intensity, clarity and quality of its basic parts. Successful descriptions were the building blocks of consciousness. The focus was on the “what” of mental processes or thinking, not the “why” or “how”.
- For example, picture a blade of grass. A structuralist would focus on the intensity of the green color, the type of texture of the blade and the roughly rectangular shape. This would determine the conscious experience.
William James

- Regarded the mind as a process, a function of the organism.
- Relatable to Darwin’s theory that humans had evolved from simpler animals.
- Argued that consciousness must have evolved because it was useful for something - it had a function. For James, the goal of psychology was to study the functions of consciousness, or the ways consciousness helps people adapt to their environment.
- For example, with our blade of grass, functionalists would be interested in why or how we interpret the blade of grass.
- Functionalism—a school of psychology that focused on how our mental and behavioral processes function – how they enable us to adapt, survive, and flourish.
Mary Whiton Calkins

- James admitted her to his graduate seminar at Harvard.
- Rest of class (all males) left the class in protest, so he tutored her privately.
- Outscored all other male classmates on exams.
- Denied degree from Harvard, was instead given the degree from Radcliffe College, all female branch - refused the degree.
- Accomplished researcher.
- First female president of APA.
Margaret Floy Washburn

- 1st female Ph. D., second female president of APA.
- Studies were not acknowledged by the experimental psychology (the study of behavior and thinking using the experimental method branch).
Further Development of Psychology

- Major Later Players →
  - Sigmund Freud - psychoanalytic theory of personality
  - John B. Watson - studies of observable behaviour
  - Rosalie Rayner - worked with Watson - ‘Little Albert’
  - B.F. Skinner - modern behaviorist
Sigmund Freud

- Sigmund Freud was a mid-century psychiatrist from Vienna.
- He believed that psychological problems could often be traced to childhood sexual conflicts over such issues as breastfeeding, toilet training, and sexual jealousy centered on the parents.
- Oral and Anal fixation
- In 1900 he introduced the first complete theory of personality, which he called *psychoanalysis*.
- It focused on abnormal behaviour and relied on personal observation and reflection instead of controlled laboratory experimentation.
John B. Watson

- Believed that psychology should be defined as the study of behavior or **behaviorism** = the view that psychology (1) should be an objective science that (2) studies behavior without reference to mental processes. Most research psychologists today agree with (1) but not with (2).

- He would completely eliminate introspection (looking inside to gather data about the mind) from psychology and rely on scientific method.

- This would mean studying only things that could be observed and measured.

- For Watson, studying the unconscious, or anything that you can’t see, was of little value.
Little Albert Experiment - ‘John B. Watson, after observing children in the field, was interested in finding support for his notion that the reaction of children, whenever they heard loud noises, was prompted by fear. Furthermore, he reasoned that this fear was innate or due to an unconditioned response. He felt that following the principles of classical conditioning, he could condition a child to fear another distinctive stimulus which normally would not be feared by a child.’

- Shown rat, no fear
- Loud startling noise, fear
- Shown rat with loud startling noise, fear.
- Shown rat, fear.
B.F. Skinner

- Modified behaviorism
- Rejected introspection and studied how consequences shape behavior.
- Today behaviorism focuses on learning through rewards and observation.

- Operant Conditioning

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_ctJqjlrHA
Humanistic Psychology

- By the end of the 1970s, extreme forms of behaviourism were disappearing and humanistic psychology became a dominant perspective.

- Humanistic Psychology → historically significant perspective that emphasized the growth potential of healthy people and the individual’s potential for personal growth.

- Goes against Freud’s ideas, rather than focusing on meaning of early childhood memories, emphasized current environmental conditions/influences on growth potential.

- Focuses on needs for love and acceptance being fulfilled.

- Maslow and Rogers are pioneers
Abraham Harold Maslow (April 1, 1908 - June 8, 1970) was a psychologist who studied positive human qualities and the lives of exemplary people. In 1954, Maslow created the Hierarchy of Human Needs and expressed his theories in his book, Motivation and Personality.

Self-Actualization - A person’s motivation to reach his or her full potential. As shown in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, a person’s basic needs must be met before self-actualization can be achieved.
Cognitive Neuroscience

- **Cognitive Neuroscience** → the interdisciplinary study of the brain activity linked with cognition (including perception, thinking, memory, and language).
- Importance of how our mind processes and retains information.
- Explore scientifically the ways we perceive, process and remember information.
- Used in treatment of depression.
And finally we have... PSYCHOLOGY!

- **Psychology** → the science of behavior and mental processes.
- Behavior— anything an organism does – observable and recordable.
- Name some observable behaviors…
- Mental Processes – internal, subjective experiences we infer from behavior – sensations, perceptions, dreams, thoughts, beliefs and feelings.
- Remember, it is a SCIENCE!

- HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY VIDEO
The most prevalent question in psychology has always been the Nature versus Nurture issue. 

**Nature- Nurture Issue** → the longstanding controversy over the relative contributions that genes and experience make to the development of psychological traits and behaviors.

Do traits develop through experience or are we born with them?

**Major Players in the Nature-Nurture Issue:**
- Greeks – character and intelligence inherited
- Rene Descartes – some ideas inate, mind not just a blank slate
- Charles Darwin
Natural Selection → the principle that, among the range of inherited trait variations, those contributing to reproduction and survival will most likely be passed on to succeeding generations.
Nature-Nurture Issue Questions to Discuss - Partners

1. How are we humans alike/diverse? – Is it because of our common biology and evolutionary history? Differing environments?
2. Are gender differences biologically predisposed or socially constructed?
3. Is children’s grammar mostly innate or formed by experience?
4. How are differences in intelligence and personality influenced by hereditary and by environment?
5. Are sexual behaviours more ‘pushed’ by inner biology or ‘pulled’ by external incentives?
6. Should we treat psychological disorders - ex. Depression - as disorders of the brain, of thought or both?
Psychology’s 3 Main Levels of Analysis

- Levels of Analysis → the differing complementary views, from biological to psychological to social-cultural, for analyzing any given phenomenon

1. Biological
2. Psychological
3. Social-cultural
Psychology’s Three Main Levels of Analysis

Behavior or mental process
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**Biological influences:**
- Natural selection of adaptive traits
- Genetic predispositions responding to environment
- Brain mechanisms
- Hormonal influences

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- hormonal influences

**Psychological influences:**
- learned fears and other learned expectations
- emotional responses
- cognitive processing and perceptual interpretations

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- cognitive processing and perceptual interpretations

**Behavior or mental process**

**Social-cultural influences:**
- presence of others
- cultural, societal, and family expectations
- peer and other group influences
- compelling models (such as in the media)
When the 3 levels become integrated, we get the **Biopsychological Approach** — an integrated approach that incorporates biological, psychological, and social-cultural levels of analysis.
Psychological Approaches/Perspectives

1. Biological psychology
2. Evolutionary psychology
3. Psychodynamic psychology
4. Behavioral psychology
5. Cognitive psychology
6. Humanistic psychology
7. Social-cultural psychology
Psychological Approaches/Perspectives – The Big 7! – Table 1.1 – Page 11 – LEARN TO LOVE IT

Referring back all the time… how would a ___________ psychologist approach this….
1. Biological Psychology

- **Biological psychology** → a branch of psychology that studies the links between biological (including neuroscience and behavior genetics) and psychological processes.

- Anger = Might study brain circuits that cause us to be ‘red in the face’ /’hot under the collar’ and how experiences might influence our individual differences in temperament.

- Biological - genetic, brain structure, neural, neurochemical, endocrine
2. Evolutionary Psychology

- **Evolutionary psychology** → the study of the roots of behavior and mental processes using the principles of natural selection.
- Anger = Study how anger facilitated the survival of our ancestor’s genes.
- Evolutionary/Sociobiological - adaptation, survival of the fittest - amalgam of bio and behaviorism
3. Psychodynamic psychology

- **Psychodynamic psychology** → a branch of psychology that studies how unconscious drives and conflicts influence behavior, and uses that information to treat people with psychological disorders.
- Anger = May view a reaction, such as an outburst, as an outlet for unconscious hostility.
- Psychodynamic - psychoanalytic - FREUD - unconscious motivations - childhood experiences
4. Behavioral psychology

- **Behavioral psychology** → the scientific study of observable behavior, and its explanation by principles of learning.
- Anger = which external stimuli trigger angry responses or aggressive acts.
- Behavioral - learning, conditioned, rewarded/punished, observed, modeled, environment - look at behaviors
5. Cognitive psychology

- Cognitive psychology → the scientific study of all the mental activities associated with thinking, knowing, remembering, and communicating.

- Anger = How our interpretation of a situation affects our anger and how our anger affects our thinking.

- Cognitive - thoughts, the way you think, how you frame your world
6. Humanistic psychology

- **Humanistic psychology** → (more historic approach, not used today) How we meet our needs for love and acceptance to achieve self-fulfillment.

- Anger = How do angry feelings affect a person’s potential for growth and personal fulfillment.

- Humanistic - you choose to, free will, free choice - if it is to be, it is up to me...people are good
7. Social-cultural psychology

- **Social-cultural psychology** → the study of how situations and cultures affect our behavior and thinking.

- Anger = How expressions of anger vary across cultural contexts.

- Sociocultural - multicultural - global perspective v. ‘whitey’ - anthropology studies
The Hand Tool

- Thumb - Unconscious, separate
- Pointer - Cognitive, Finger on head, thought
- Middle - Behaviour, middle finger up
- Ring - Humanist, wedding ring
- Pinky - Biological - all we know we can fit in our pinky
# Psychological Approaches/Perspectives

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### Psychology's Approaches

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Why Do People Help?
Explaining Behavior

Length: 5:25

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Subfields of Psychology

- Psychometrics
- Basic Research
  - Developmental psychology
  - Educational psychology
  - Personality psychology
  - Social psychology
How do you know what you know? You know because a friend told you, you read about it, or it just seems obvious. While this may be correct, it may also be wrong.

Psychologists rely on knowledge gained by using the scientific method.

Research in psychology is conducted by looking at two main types of research strategies - quantitative and qualitative.

The strategies include observation, case studies, correlational studies, surveys, longitudinal and cross-sectional studies and experiments.
Psychometrics \(\rightarrow\) the scientific study of the measurement of human abilities, attitudes, and traits.

Basic Research \(\rightarrow\) pure science that aims to increase the scientific knowledge base.
Developmental Psychology

- Developmental Psychology → the scientific study of physical, cognitive, and social change throughout the life span.
- Study our changing abilities from ‘womb to tomb’.
- Large branch is geriatric – getting older… wanna make money?
Educational Psychology

- Educational Psychology → the study of how psychological processes affect and can enhance teaching and learning.
- Study influences on teaching and learning.
- Test administration - severe cases
Personality Psychology

- Personality Psychology → the study of an individual’s characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling, and acting.
- Investigate our persistent traits.
Social Psychology

- Social Psychology → the scientific study of how we think about, influence, and relate to one another.
- Exploring how we view and affect each other.
- Prejudice and stereotypes - group behavior
Psychology Subfields

- Applied Research
  - Industrial/organizational psychology
  - Human factors psychology
  - Counseling psychology
  - Clinical psychology
  - Psychiatry
Applied Research

- **Applied Research** → scientific study that aims to solve practical problems.
- Psychometric (Quantitative)psych - test designers - statistics
Industrial-Organizational (I/O) Psychology

- Industrial-Organizational (I/O) Psychology → the application of psychological concepts and methods to optimizing human behavior in workplaces.
- workplace/human - human factors
- VIDEO
Human Factors Psychology

- **Human Factors Psychology** → the study of how people and machines interact resulting in the design of machines and environments.
- Tied with I/O Psychology
- Human Factors Arch Lab Rap
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJMpajaLEeY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJMpajaLEeY)
Counseling Psychology

- **Counseling Psychology** → a branch of psychology that assists people with problems in living (often related to school, work, and marriage) and in achieving greater well-being.

- less severe disorders - anxiety, low-level depression, phobias
Clinical Psychology

- **Clinical Psychology** → a branch of psychology that studies, assesses, and treats people with psychological disorders.
- diagnose and treat severe disorders
- Not related to clinical psychology, but 2 new branches have emerged - sports psychology and forensic psychology
Psychiatry vs. Psychology

- **Psychiatry** → a branch of medicine dealing with psychological disorders; practiced by physicians who often provide medical (for example, drug) treatments as well as psychological therapy.

- Look back to your definition of psychology.... What are the major differences between the 2 branches?
Tips for Studying Psychology

- **SQ3R** → a study method incorporating five steps; Survey, Question, Read, Rehearse, Review.

- Study Tips
  - Distribute your study time
  - Learn to think critically
  - In class, listen actively
  - Overlearn
  - Be a smart test-taker
Quick Assignment

Choose 2 of the fields or subfields discussed.
1 should be a field you would be interested in going into.
1 should be a field you would NOT be interested in going into.
Find 3 basic facts about each:
- What do you do?
- Typical patient types
- Where do you work?

Summarize into 2 paragraphs about each. Total 4 paragraphs... NO GARBAGE!