
History and Development of Psychology

— HUL261: Tutorial 1 —

What are we going to do?

A quick quiz to help us recall the key figures and ideas in psychology.

Clarification of doubts/revisiting the word cloud on muddiest points.

Who am I?

Although I was originally a philosopher and a physiologist, you may know me as the father of psychology.

In 1879, I founded the world's first experimental psychology laboratory at the University of Leipzig, Germany.

I founded a school of thought that focused on examining the structure of the human mind- that is, the most basic unit of human thought.

I am...

Wilhelm Wundt

School of thought: Structuralism



Image from:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Wilhelm_Wundt.jpg

Who am I?

Unlike those before me, I argued that our behaviour is also guided and motivated by forces unknown to us; my concept of unconscious mind captures these unknown motives.

I questioned the meanings of dreams and argued that conflicts within our unconscious mind find expression via dreams. Perhaps you have read my book *The Interpretation of Dreams*?

I am associated with the iceberg model of the human mind: the biggest part of the iceberg, which also remains outside of one's view, represents those thoughts, feelings, motives, etc. that we are unaware of.

I am...

Sigmund Freud

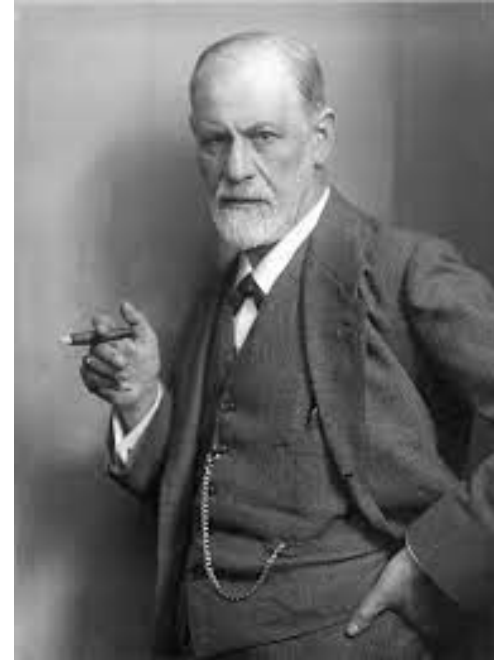


Image from:
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sigmund_Freud,_by_Max_Halberstadt_\(cropped\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sigmund_Freud,_by_Max_Halberstadt_(cropped).jpg)

Which school of thought?

“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

Proponents of this school of thought opposed the reductionist approach adopted by structuralists and argued that we perceive our world as a whole, as an organized pattern, rather than a mere collection of individual components/sensations.

Key figures within this school of thought were Max Wertheimer, Kurt Koffka, and Wolfgang Kohler.

Gestalt school of thought

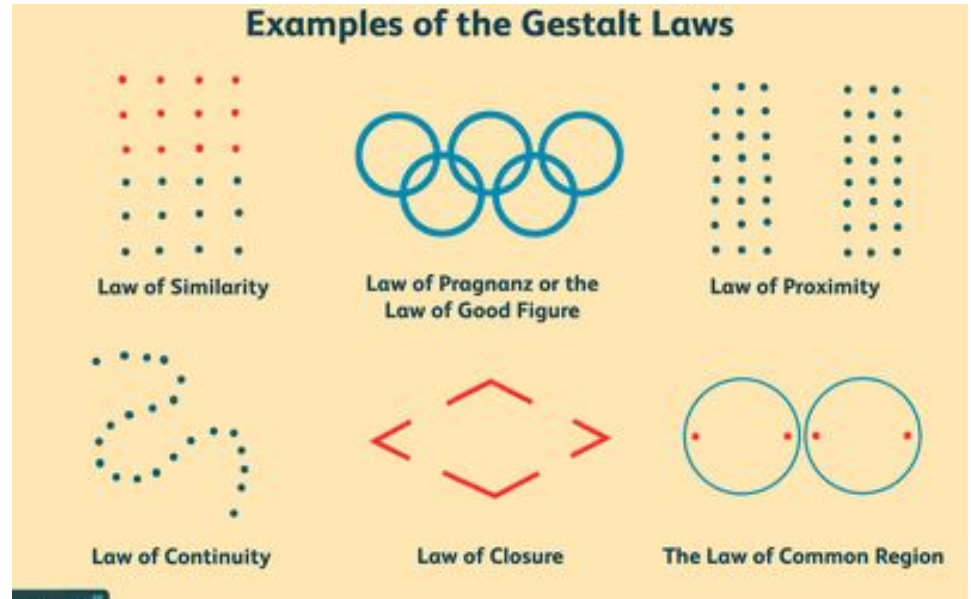


Image from: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-gestalt-psychology-2795808>

Who am I?

I wrote what is considered the first textbook of psychology- *Principles of Psychology*.

While those before me wanted to understand the structure of the mind, I chose to focus on its functions: what does the mind do? What is its utility and purpose? How does it help us adapt to our environment?

I argued that a better way to study the human mind and consciousness is to study it as a continuous whole instead of reducing it to smaller components.

I am...

William James

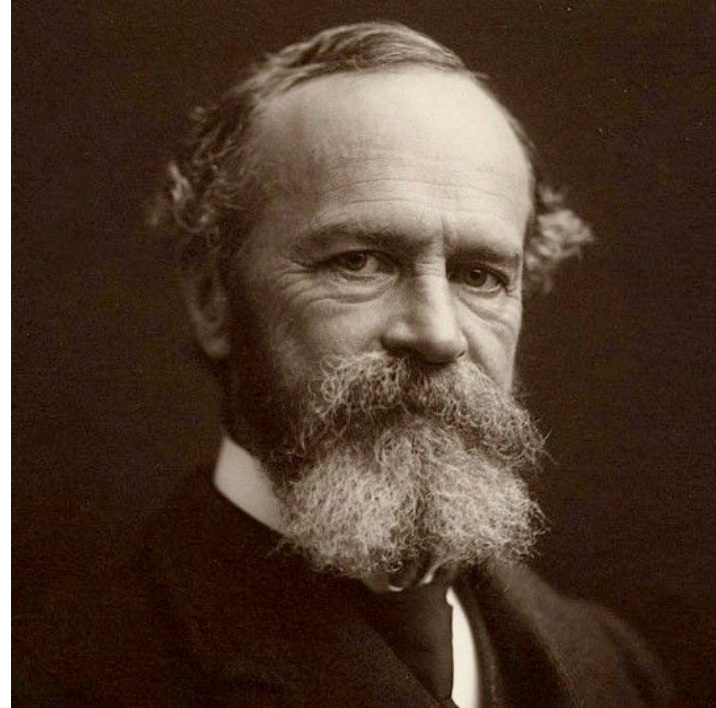


Image from:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:William_James_b1842c.jpg

Who am I?

If you asked me what psychology is, I would define it as the scientific study of observable behaviour only, not of internal mental processes.

I was one of the key proponents of the behaviorist school of thought.

An infamous quote of mine: "Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select- doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors."

I am...

John Watson



Image from:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:John_Broadus_Watson.JPG

Which school of thought?

This approach to theory and therapy developed out of Freud's work with his patients, most of whom suffered from disorders of the nervous system and whose problems could not be explained only in terms of physical causes.

This school of thought places emphasis on unconscious and early childhood influences on our behaviour and overall personality.

An image popularly associated with this approach to therapy shows a client lying down on a couch and their therapist sitting behind them and facing the other way.

Psychoanalysis



Image from: <https://www.shutterstock.com/search/psychoanalysis>

Muddiest points



Muddiest point 1: Empiricism

Who were the key figures? John Locke and Thomas Reid.

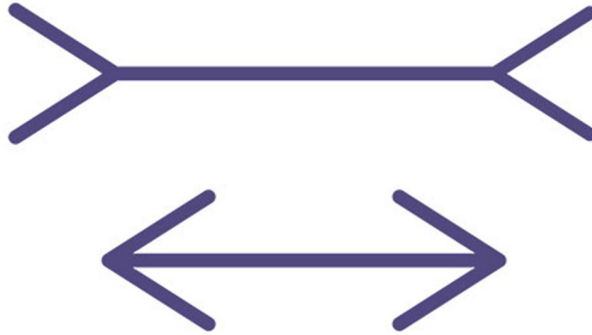
What was their major inclination: Nature or Nurture? Nurture. They advocated for the role of Experience and called it Empiricism.

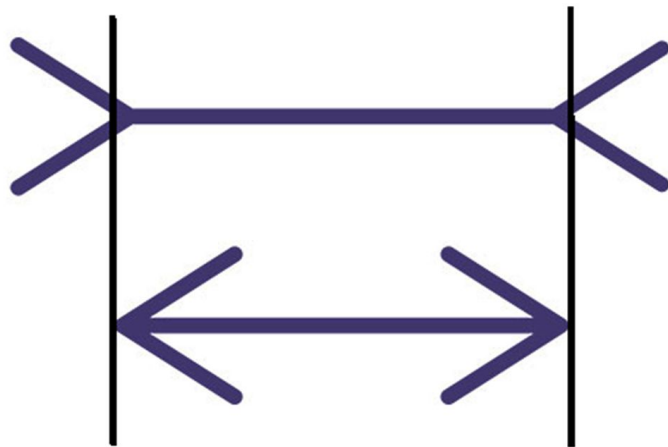
What is empiricism? The view that knowledge originates in experience and that science should, therefore, rely on observation and experimentation.

What is Tabula Rasa? John Locke believed that children were born into the world with minds like “blank slates” (*tabula rasa* in Latin) and that their experiences determined what kind of adults they would become.

Major critiques: Plato and Rene Descartes, who believed that some knowledge was inborn. Our senses are not always a reliable means of experiencing our world (visual illusions).

Müller-Lyer illusion





Muddiest point 2: Structuralism

Who are its key figures? Wilhelm Wundt, Edward Titchener.

What was the subject matter of psychology for structuralists? Human consciousness and its structure, studied scientifically using laboratory experimentation and trained observers.

How did structuralists study consciousness? Introspection.

What is introspection? Well-trained observers reported their experiences while engaging in an activity. Their reports were used to arrive at general theories about the human mind.

Why was structuralism criticized? Introspection was not a reliable method; overall approach was reductionist.

Muddiest point 3: Functionalism

Who are its key figures? William James, John Dewey, James Angell.

What was functionalists' opposition to structuralism? Functionalists saw consciousness as a continuous and dynamic process, not as something that can be broken down into discrete elements.

What was the subject matter of psychology for functionalists? Function, rather than structure, of consciousness; mental *operations* rather than mental *elements*.

How did functionalists study consciousness? Introspection, observation.

Why was functionalism criticized? Structuralists did not like functionalism's shift from pure to applied psychology. Behaviourists simply did not accept the study of internal mental states as the subject matter of psychology.

Muddiest point 4: Behaviourism

Who are its key figures? John Watson, B. F. Skinner.

What was the subject matter of psychology for behaviorists? Only that which is observable and measurable (such as overt behaviour, physiological activity). Behaviourists did not concern themselves with the study of the (unobservable) mind.

What methods did behaviorists use? Rejected introspection. Used controlled experiments, observation, testing, objective reports of physiological activities, data from research on animals like rats and pigeons.

Why was behaviorism criticized? The major critique pertained to behaviourists' mechanistic view of human nature (S-R), which failed to explain complex human behaviours and did not leave room for mediational processes (S-O-R) like memory, thinking.