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## PSYCHOLOGY

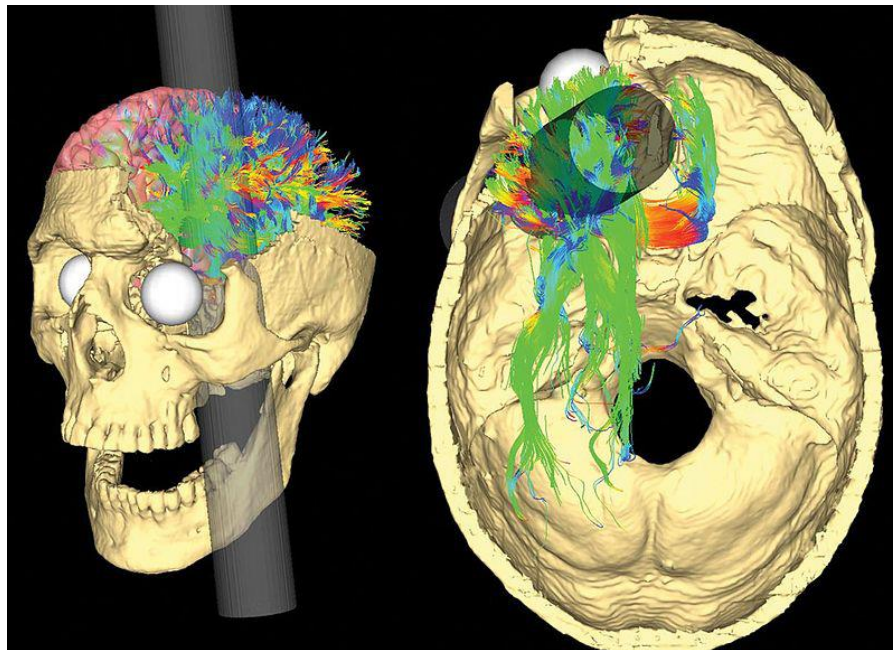
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Psychology is the study of mind and behavior. Its subject matter includes the behavior of humans and nonhumans, both conscious and unconscious phenomena, and mental processes such as thoughts, feelings, and motives. Psychology is an academic discipline of immense scope, crossing the boundaries between the natural and social sciences. Biological psychologists seek an understanding of the emergent properties of brains, linking the discipline to neuroscience. As social scientists, psychologists aim to understand the behavior of individuals and groups.

A professional practitioner or researcher involved in the discipline is called a psychologist. Some psychologists can also be classified as behavioral or cognitive scientists. Some psychologists attempt to understand the role of mental functions in individual and social behavior. Others explore the physiological and neurobiological processes that underlie cognitive functions and behaviors.

Psychologists are involved in research on perception, cognition, attention, emotion, intelligence, subjective experiences, motivation, brain functioning, and personality. Psychologists' interests extend to interpersonal relationships, psychological resilience, family resilience, and other areas within social psychology. They also consider the unconscious mind. Research psychologists employ empirical methods to infer causal and correlational relationships between psychosocial variables. Some, but not all, clinical and counseling psychologists rely on symbolic interpretation.

While psychological knowledge is often applied to the assessment and treatment of mental health problems, it is also directed towards understanding and solving problems in several spheres of human activity. By many accounts, psychology ultimately aims to benefit society. Many psychologists are involved in some kind of therapeutic role, practicing psychotherapy in clinical, counseling, or school settings. Other psychologists conduct scientific research on a wide range of topics related to mental processes and behavior. Typically the latter group of psychologists work in academic settings (e.g., universities, medical schools, or hospitals). Another group of psychologists is employed in industrial and organizational settings. Yet others are involved in work on human development, aging, sports, health, forensic science, education, and the media.



Psychologists generally consider biology the substrate of thought and feeling, and therefore an important area of study. Behavioral neuroscience, also known as biological psychology, involves the application of biological principles to the study of physiological and genetic mechanisms underlying behavior in humans and other animals. The allied field of comparative psychology is the scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of non-human animals. A leading question in behavioral neuroscience has been whether and how mental functions are localized in the brain. From Phineas Gage to H.M. and Clive Wearing, individual people with mental deficits traceable to physical brain damage have inspired new discoveries in this area. Modern behavioral neuroscience could be said to originate in the 1870s, when in France Paul Broca traced production of speech to the left frontal gyrus, thereby also demonstrating hemispheric lateralization of brain function. Soon after, Carl Wernicke identified a related area necessary for the understanding of speech.

The contemporary field of behavioral neuroscience focuses on the physical basis of behavior. Behavioral neuroscientists use animal models, often relying on rats, to study the neural, genetic, and cellular

mechanisms that underlie behaviors involved in learning, memory, and fear responses. Cognitive neuroscientists, by using neural imaging tools, investigate the neural correlates of psychological processes in humans. Neuropsychologists conduct psychological assessments to determine how an individual's behavior and cognition are related to the brain. The biopsychosocial model is a cross-disciplinary, holistic model that concerns the ways in which interrelationships of biological, psychological, and socio-environmental factors affect health and behavior.

Evolutionary psychology approaches thought and behavior from a modern evolutionary perspective. This perspective suggests that psychological adaptations evolved to solve recurrent problems in human ancestral environments. Evolutionary psychologists attempt to find out how human psychological traits are evolved adaptations, the results of natural selection or sexual selection over the course of human evolution.

The history of the biological foundations of psychology includes evidence of racism. The idea of white supremacy and indeed the modern concept of race itself arose during the process of world conquest by Europeans. Carl von Linnaeus's four-fold classification of humans classifies Europeans as intelligent and severe, Americans as contented and free, Asians as ritualistic, and Africans as lazy and capricious. Race was also used to justify the construction of socially specific mental disorders such as drapetomania and dysaesthesia aethiopica—the behavior of uncooperative African slaves. After the creation of experimental psychology, "ethnic psychology" emerged as a subdiscipline, based on the assumption that studying primitive races would provide an important link between animal behavior and the psychology of more evolved humans.

A psychology degree is a great starting point for a career in both science and the arts, as it equips you with a range of skills and opens up opportunities with many kinds of employers

## **Job options**

Jobs directly related to your degree include:

- Clinical psychologist
- Counselling psychologist
- Education mental health practitioner
- Educational psychologist
- Forensic psychologist
- Further education teacher
- Health psychologist
- High intensity therapist
- Occupational psychologist
- Psychological wellbeing practitioner

- Sport and exercise psychologist

Jobs where your degree would be useful include:

- Advice worker
- Border Force officer
- Careers adviser
- Chaplain
- Counsellor
- Dance movement psychotherapist
- Education consultant
- Human resources officer
- Life coach
- Market researcher
- Mediator
- Neuroscientist
- Play therapist
- Policy officer
- Psychotherapist
- Social researcher