The Origins of Psychology

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During the 1800s, A German psychologist [Wilhelm Wundt](https://www.verywellmind.com/who-is-the-father-of-psychology-2795249),  used scientific methods of research to study reaction times. His book “Principle of physiological psychology” was published in 1874. In this book, he outlined many links between physiology science and human study behavior and thoughts. In 1879, he opened the first psychology laboratory at Leipzig University. From here, psychology started as one of the separate scientific discipline. Wundt uses a process of introspection that is seen as unscientific and unreliable today.

**Structuralism**

[Edward B. Titchener](https://www.verywellmind.com/edward-b-titchener-biography-2795526), who was one of the most renowned students of Wundt, considers psychology as one of the main schools of thought. In the point of view of structuralists, the consciousness of humans can be divided into smaller parts. By using an introspection process, subjects who are trained can attempt to breakdown their reaction and responses to the most basic perceptions and sensation. Although structuralism is known for its main emphasis on scientific research, its method was subjective, limiting and unreliable. Structuralism died with the death of Titchener.

**William James Functionalism**

In the United States, during the late 1800s, psychology flourished. During this period, William James appeared as one of the most famous psychologists of America and known as the father of American psychology. The book written by him becomes a standard text in psychology and his ideas served as a basis of functionalism. The main focus of this was on the behavior that worked to support people in their lives and environment. Functionalists use different methods to study human behavior and mind. The main emphasis of both school of thoughts was on the human consciousness but conceptions were different significantly.

**Psychoanalysis Emergence**

Early psychologists stressed on the conscious experience of humans. Sigmund Freud has dramatically changed the psychology face and proposed a personality theory that emphasizes on the importance of the unconscious mind. The clinical work of Freud with hysteria and other patients, made him consider that early childhood experiences and unconsciousness impulses enhances the adult behavior and personality development. Sigmund Freud in his book ‘Psychotherapy of Everyday life” stated how unconscious impulses and thoughts are conveyed. According to him, the psychological disorder occurs when unconscious conflicts become unbalanced and extreme. The psychoanalytical theory that is proposed by Sigmund Freud had a great impact on thoughts of the 20th century, influencing a field of mental health and other areas such as literature, art and popular culture.

**The Rise of Behaviorism**

During the early 20th century, another school of thought known as behaviorism arises. Behaviorism was changed from a previous theoretical perspective. This theory rejected the importance of both the unconscious and conscious mind. Behaviorism focuses mainly on the behavior, thus making the psychology a more focused discipline. The early start of behaviorism comes with the work of Ivan Pavlov who was a Russian physiologist. The research of Pavlov on the dog's digestive system led to the invention of the classical conditioning process. In this, he stated that behavior can be learned through conditioned association. John B. Watson, an American psychologist became one of the strongest behaviorism advocates. The behaviorism impact was huge and this school of thought dominates for more than fifty years. BF. Skinner further elaborated the behaviorism perspective in which he demonstrated the effect of reinforcement on behavior (King, Woody, & Viney, 2015).

During the second half, humanistic psychology emerged as a new school of thought. It emphasized mainly on conscious experiences. Carl Rogers is known as a founder of this school of thought. Abraham Maslow developed the famous theory known as the hierarchy of need. According to this theory, people are motivated by their complex needs. Once the basic needs are fulfilled, then the people were motivated to get high-level needs. By the end of 1960, the cognitive theory replaced the behaviorism and psychoanalysis theory. Today cognitive theory is one the dominant areas in psychology and linked to memory, perception, problem solving, decision making, language and intelligence.

**References**

King, D. B., Woody, W. D., & Viney, W. (2015). *History of Psychology: Ideas and Context*: Routledge.