History of Psychology Essay 3

Who do you find most interesting, Weber, Helmholz or Fechner and why did you choose them?

Out of the three people listed, I find Weber the most interesting. He was the first person alive to do research out of them all so some of what he found was then built on by the others. This means he was the origin of information and therefore a person of great importance as Fechner and Helmholz may not have discovered and contributed what they did without having Weber's initial work to interpret. This is why Weber's Law is also known as the Weber- Fechner Law as Fechner later offered a formal theoretical perspective to it.

Weber was one of the first people to approach the study of the human response to a physical stimulus in a quantitative fashion. I find him most enthralling because of his two main contributions: The Two-Point Threshold and The Just noticeable Difference. He did an experiment where a person had to report whether they thought there was one or two things touching their skin. Weber found the exact point in which the two separate sources could be differentiated. I found this interesting as I thought it was much more obvious than it actually is to see whether one or two sensations are touching your skin. His other main contribution, The Just Noticeable difference, was built upon the Two- Point Threshold. He studied how muscle sensations contributed to a person's distinction between two weights. The Just Noticeable Difference between the weights was a constant ratio. He found that people could discriminate more accurately when they lifted the weights verses having the experimenter put the weights in their hands. This was new to me as I thought it would have been the other way around. It was the first quantitative law in psychology, stating the smallest difference that can be detected by two stimuli further showing the level of importance of Weber's work.