Jason Ronda

I find the work of Hermann von Helmholtz to be the most interesting. Born in Germany, Helmhotz was a man of many talents. He is a multi-talented scientist, having studied in physics, math, physiology, and eventually psychology. One of his main contributions to psychology is the concept of nerve impulses. Back before his research, it was commonly believed that nerve impulses were instantaneous, or that nerve impulses were too fast to actually be properly measured. Helmholtz did an experiment on a motor nerve of a frog leg, he recorded the delay between the nerve and the muscle, and kept doing this for nerves that were further away from the muscle. Eventually, he was actually able to get a concrete number, nerve impulses were not instantaneous, nor were they too fast to be recorded; he got 90 ft/s as a result. He did a similar experiment with humans, but the results were so different from person to person, he just quit. It's actually pretty funny that he didn't exactly care about the psychological implications, he supposedly just wanted the number; like he wanted to know a fact about something specific, but did not really care about the psychological implications, as the same research was used in experiments about reaction time.

Helmholtz also did research on perception. When it comes to vision specifically, he did research on how the eye worked, how eyes focus on objects, and helped revise a theory on color vision which was renamed to include his work.

A trait I find incredibly admirable about Hermann von Helmholtz is that he wanted to make his research applicable and beneficial to other people; it wasn't about learning, he wanted to be able to solve problems with his discoveries. He wasn't exactly a psychologist, but his research did pave the way for more information about the senses and sensations.