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Professor Flavin
History of Psychology

Essay 3

Within the many prominent figures in Psychology history that were presented to us, the one I found the most interesting was Gustav Theodor Fechner. The reason I found him the most intriguing was because he was able to relate the mind and the body, the physical and the mental. This topic he invented is described as psychophysics which is the study between how physical and mental processes work in relation to one another. I as well have the same interest and am drawn towards psychological concepts regarding the metaphysical. What interests me most about Fechner is his story where he fell into a depression and it caused him to be ill. He tried various methods but nothing worked until he started developing a routine which included eating wine soaked ham. He then dreamt he would recover in seventy-seven days, which he did and accredited God for his recovery. Regarding his contributions to psychology, I am most interested in the relationship he proposed of mental sensation and material stimuli. He described two ways in which one can measure sensation. One was the absolute threshold which is described as the the point in one's sensitivity where one cannot detect sensations and the point over where sensations can be experienced. The other differential threshold, which is described as the point in sensitivity at which the stimulus changes the least and causes a change in the sensation. What also interested me was Fechner's experiment in how heavy a particular weight feels to a person. They were able to measure a person's sensation based upon measuring the amount of weight decreased in intensity before the person can tell the difference and then lessening the weight. Experiments like this play a part in the mind-body connections in activities I am interested in such as weight lifting and sports.