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What contribution has Titchener's structuralism made to psychology and what criticisms have been made of his work?

Titchener's work involved precise self-observation. He looked at the researchers who participated in observation as reporting machines. They were to make reports on their experiences. They were to be trained to do this with great precision. Titchener made a distinction between the object of observation itself (for example a chair) and the subjective experience of the observer (for example the color of the chair). Titchener was convinced that the only place for psychology was in studying the subjective experience of an object. This would include such experiences as sight and sound. The observer would simply be told to report on what they were experiencing at the moment. They were not to confuse their experience with the object itself, or vice versa. For example, they should not report that they have seen a chair, but rather they should describe any experiences they have in the moment that they are seeing the chair. They could describe the chair's color. If they confused the object and their experience of the object, Titchener would call this a stimulus error. In an excerpt of Titchener's writing provided in the book, he writes that subjective experiences exist only in the mind of the person experiencing them. This is true, in the sense that senses such as warmth and brightness are only used to describe what a person is experiencing, and not necessarily the object itself. Titchener's ideas about observation of mental processes made an impact on the world of psychology and are still in use. One criticism of this method of psychological research is that it is difficult to use the mind to observe the mind. Once the mind gets involved in the process of observation, then it is necessarily different than it was before it began the observation. Another criticism of

Titchener's structuralist psychology was that individual experience had to be looked at as a whole, rather than being broken down into parts. Yet another criticism of structuralism is that introspection can not be done to observe the unconscious mind.