

Jason Ronda

Chapter 6

According to chapter 6, Charles Darwin's work changed the way we looked at psychology. According to most contemporaries, animal psychology wasn't considered real psychology until his research. His theory of evolution raised several questions; if people and animals evolved from simpler minds, was it plausible that animals and humans had comparable mental functioning. The structuralist school of psychology insisted that consciousness and its elements were the most important part of psychology. Darwin's work inspired psychologists to look more into how humans and animals adapted to their environment rather than investigating those structures as well as how consciousness can function rather than what it was built from. Darwin's research also introduced other methods for how to collect data that are not only from a lab. Lastly, Darwin's research inspired psychologists to look into differences in individual's minds, specifically individual differences, like how Darwin found variations within the same species of animals.

Galton believed that we humans had inherited our intelligence from our genes that were passed on by our parents and by hereditary means because he noticed that families of geniuses tended to also have geniuses, and that this tendency happened too often for it to be defined by environmental factors. At some point, we will hit a certain glass ceiling where a person was physically incapable of getting better at a certain intelligence. There are likely to be others who are better and are capable of surpassing your abilities. Galton also believed in eugenics, where humans, like animals, are able to pass down certain desirable traits and, theoretically should be mated with other people of desirable traits, via artificial selection, to make people more likely to pass down those traits to their children, and thus humans would be "improved."

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Chapter 7 on Functionalism

According to chapter 7, William James offered a different way at looking at psychology which contrasted with Wilhelm Wundt's increasingly less popular structuralist view, which was more of a functionalist view. While he did acknowledge that consciousness was important, they were not the goal. He also believed that Wundt is wrong that breaking them down was the main priority because he believed that consciousness should be experienced as is, in its natural form and that observing, especially by a trained observer through introspection doesn't exactly do it justice; he called it a stream of consciousness. He also thoroughly believed that there was a biological use for consciousness, because there would have to be a reason for it to have survived over time. That reason would have to help us adapt to our environment by giving us the ability to choose things. To support this theory, he used two terms, conscious choice and habit. In contrast to conscious choices, habits are involuntary and are not conscious behavior.

Functionalism was not originally started with the goal of starting a new school of thought. The scholars involved with the founding of functionalism were more against the rigidity of Wundt and Titchener's views on structuralism. They all wanted more of an emphasis on the functions of consciousness. Not all scholars had the same views, but they shared an interest in functions of consciousness. Functionalism led to the growth of applied psychology as people were becoming more and more interested in the practical uses of psychology and applications of it in everyday problems. The establishment of functionalism was also accidentally helped by Edward B. Titchener, who actually started to give functionalism a name and compared it to his views of structuralism. Despite writing against functionalism in favor of structuralism, he accidentally gave it a status that it wouldn't have had otherwise.

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Chapter 8 Essay

Chapter 8 is about applied psychology and how it evolved from the zeitgeist. As stated in an earlier chapter we went over, there was a boom in the field of psychology. More people were getting degrees in the field, many labs were popping up, and it eventually got to a point where there were not enough lab jobs to go around for everyone. Now everyone could have just gone into debt with a useless degree when no laboratory jobs were hiring. Fortunately for them, that was not the case. Psychology was becoming increasingly popular even outside the realm of scholarly work. Business owners, executives, and even the military were interested in practically applying it to their situations. After Walter Dill Scott contributed to the military by way of job evaluations, many businesses wanted to incorporate psychology into their workplaces. When World War II started, there was more complex machinery and psychological tests were utilized to see who was the best fit for the more difficult jobs. They were the ones willing to fund the research, so all of those jobs went to them.

In terms of the workplace, there were the Hawthorne studies. These studies were utilized to help organize the workplace. One part of the studies was to select the right person for the right job. Other uses for these studies related to other problems that can be faced, like human relations, motivation during the job, and morale. They did studies on contributing factors that could have been costing workplace efficiency, one of which was lighting and temperature of the room. It also showed that the upper management cared about their workers. These studies showed off a lot of research about social psychology and working climate.

Psychology was also being used to help people mentally, be it in clinics or the new psychotherapy. Lightner Witmer noticed a kid having difficulty learning and made a makeshift clinic from that. The goal initially was to help those who had trouble learning, but progressed to those with learning disabilities. He did research which was some of the first for assessing and treating some mental disorders. Munsterberg was a pioneer in psychotherapy. In contrast to believing that mental illnesses had something to do with the unconscious, he believed that they were due to behavioral maladjustment problems. He used his lab as a clinic and never charged anyone anything. While Muinsterberg and Witmer disagreed on how it went, both were pioneers in the field of psychotherapy. Munsterberg also did studies on forensic psychology and other psychological factors that could contribute to how trials went.