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Chapter 6: Functionalism: Antecedent Influences

Darwin evolved the idea of revolution. Even though the idea was around before he presented his ideas, his theories were the first to have well organized data and evidence about the matter. Darwin spent 22 years writing his theory. He was afraid because of the controversy it would provoke with religious people. He became ill from the anxiety and fear of showing his work. In his theory of evolution, he describes the survival of the fittest, which was a process of natural selection among organisms that were able to better adapt to their environment. An example he gave were finches that he studied for years. Their environment kept changing and their beak sizes changed along with it. Those that did not adapt, did not survive. Darwin also wrote about the relationship and similarities between humans and animals.

Francis Galton was a genius. He believed that intelligence was inherited. Galton is responsible for introducing eugenics because he felt that those that are unfit should not procreate, only the most intelligent or wealthy. He believed that no matter how hard someone from a less intelligible or famous family tried to exceed their genetic capabilities, they would not be able to. Only those that have inherited intelligence could accomplish greater things.

George Romanes created and organized the study of animal intelligence that could be compared to human intelligence. He believed that animals had the same mental capabilities as humans.

Chapter 7- Functionalism: Development and Founding

Herbert Spencer, famous philosopher, promoted Darwinism that allowed his theory to continue to grow influence. Spencer used Darwin's theory of survival of the fittest in social affairs. He developed social Darwinism and believed that if society left everyone to their own demise, the fittest would survive. Spencer also developed synthetic philosophy that made a great impact among philosophers and psychologist.

Machines kept evolving during Darwin's time. Samuel Butler proposed that machines would continue to evolve like humans and animals have and that they would be able to develop intelligence like humans as well. An engineer names Henry Hollerith developed punch cards that would be able to count the census in significantly less time than when it was previously done by hand.

William James set the precedent for functional psychology. He was not interested in psychology but his ability to clearly explain his ideas and organize theories related to functional psychology. He also challenged William Wundt's popular ideas. Stanley Hall contributed with his ideas as well. He worked with William Wundt but was not influenced by his ideas. He found the American Journal of Psychology, Journal of Genetic Psychology, Journal of applied Psychology. He emphasized the study of education and childhood development.

Women were not given same opportunities as men and were hindered from obtaining their degrees. It was believed that women did not have higher mental processes like men did and granting them privileges would only weaken them physically and mentally. Helen Woolley studied this idea and discovered they were not accurate. She published her conclusions, but it was not welcomed or accepted as truth or factual. Leta Hollingworth piggy backed on this study and gave further evidence. She had more contributions to psychology in areas like education, school, and clinical psychology.

John Dewey and James Angell are credited for founding functional psychology, even though they resisted the name of the movement they were teaching. The goal for them was to study the mental processes that occur to help us adapt to our environment and survive. Harvey Carr is known for taking functionalism to its formal system.

Chapter 8- Applied Psychology: The legacy of Functionalism

In America, psychologists started to reframe psychology to focus on not what the mind is but what it does. There were economic influences that encouraged psychology to be used practically in the world. Psychology was used in marketing and advertisement to promote products. In addition, there was an urgency to reveal the effectiveness of psychology due to funding and usefulness. Psychologists ventured to apply psychology to real life problems.

James Catell studied under Hall and Wundt. He developed the order-of-merit ranking method and was the first to teach statistical analysis of experimental results, which became an important feature in American psychology. Catell coined the term Mental tests and tested on his students, sensorimotor responses and reaction times, etc. However, Alfred Binet, developed the first psychological test and determined that Catell's approach of measuring intelligence was not accurate or focused on the right thing. He focused on attention, memory, comprehension, and imagination. He also introduced the concept of mental age, that reflected the milestones of children as they grew and learned.

Mental tests were used to discriminate and judge immigrants or other ethnic groups. Scientists administered these tests to immigrants entering from Ellis Island and found that more than half of each country's refugees were "feeble-minded." However, interpreters explained that they were not doing well because they did not know American culture and the language. Discrimination was taking place for black people as well until Horace Bond, holding a doctorate in education, argued that the mental tests or IQ tests were culturally biased and emphasized that environment played a role in how well individuals did on the test, for example blacks in the North did better than whites in the south. Since the nature of applied psychology included child study, clinical work, counseling, school study, women were able to attain jobs in these fields and they made significant contributions to the field.

Lightner Witmer started clinical psychology and opened the first psychology clinic to assess and treat behavior problems kids were having in school. He had an interest in abnormal behavior. While, his focus was on treating children early before behaviors could persist into adulthood, WWII, introduced a new clientele. Soldiers were presenting anxiety, depression, and other disturbances. This changed the way clinical psychology was used.