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Week 9 Essay

Around the first quarter of the second decade of the twentieth century, there was somewhat of a movement away from Wundt's psychology which was all about consciousness, introspection, and mental elements. While very influential, it was not without its critics. Those who strictly followed structuralism, such as Titchener, were very rigid in their views, not very accepting of opposing or slightly different perspectives on the new field of psychology. This rigidity prompted more and more scholars to be opposed to these traditional views of psychology and other, newer schools of thought were more easily accepted for being different. Functionalism was somewhat different from structuralism, but they only scratched the surface, as they only added on to or slightly changed from what structuralism already had in place. However, this sparked an interest in having psychology break away from structuralism entirely.

Watson introduced behavioral psychology and he sought to go completely against functionalism and structuralism, as he was against ideas such as consciousness. Watson Presented his ideas on behaviorism; while they were not all original, they were presented with simple terms and were using ideas that were already accepted into the scientific zeitgeist. He combined forces of animal psychology, functional psychology, and the philosophical tradition of objectivism and mechanism.

Another aspect of the zeitgeist is that positivism was in high regard. In positivism, knowledge that is considered true is also capable of being proven scientifically. This also implies that things focused on structuralism such as consciousness, mind, and soul were not as accepted. Positivism was very accepting of behaviorism.