



Department of Psychology
Psychology 601 (L01) - History and Systems of Psychology
Fall 2008

Course Outline

Instructor:	Hank Stam	Office:	Admin 251C
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E-mail:	stam@ucalgary.ca	Lecture Day/Time:	Thu. 09:00-11:50
Location:	EDC 152		

Overview

This course will examine (a) the history of psychological concepts in Western culture, (b) major theoretical systems and research approaches of twentieth-century psychology, and (c) the foundational assumptions of contemporary perspectives in psychology. We will focus on selected topics both in the *intellectual* as well as the *institutional* and *social* history of the discipline. The relationship between these two forms of history (assuming they can be separated) remains contentious, as is the question of "history" itself.

Historical research on psychology by historians of science and psychologists has altered dramatically in the past twenty years and become contested terrain. Institutional history is no longer "celebratory" or a chronology of the "great" minds of the past who forged the way to some valued present understanding of the topics that have created the current discipline. Instead, historians have sought to understand how important research questions have come to be asked in the discipline as a consequence of social practices and forces, institutional priorities and the social arrangements of the discipline itself. This has been linked with historians' of science concern with the social and institutional foundations of science itself. This does not in any way deny the importance of those whose ideas and work has changed the discipline, but this remains to be understood in a broader context.

As a consequence of these directions taken in the history of psychology, and the interest shown in psychology by historians themselves (not just psychologists-turned-historians), the historical literature has grown substantially over the past decades making it impossible to simply teach an "overview" of the history of psychology. Therefore, we shall be focusing on the rise and decline of "schools" and "systems" of psychology in the early twentieth-century and the developing research fields traditions past WWII. In addition, the history of twentieth century psychology is inevitably bound up with disputes and movements in the philosophy and sociology of science. We will examine these along the way by focusing on what kind of science psychology might reasonably be and what models of science sacrifice psychological phenomena to a standard of inquiry unattainable in the discipline. Finally, the recent fractionation of the discipline raises questions about the existence of central or core psychological phenomena and how these

are parsed within the disciplinary institutions designed to study these phenomena. Confronted with the historical constitution of human action and cognition, the core question confronting any serious consideration of psychological phenomena is how such physical beings as we are can also be such thoroughly historical and meaning making beings.

Required Readings:

1. Benjamin, L. T. & Baker, D. (2003). *From Seance to Science: A History of the Profession of Psychology in America*. Wadsworth. (available in the book store, or on line for about \$20 less).
2. Wertheimer, M. (2000). *A Brief History of Psychology* (4th ed). Forth Worth: Harcourt. (available in the bookstore)
2. A series of historical papers, a list of which is attached. Most of these will be web-based.

Recommended Reading

1. Sklansky, J. (2002). *The soul's economy*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
2. Danziger, K. (1990). *Constructing the subject: Historical origins of psychological research*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Danziger, K. (1997). *Naming the mind: How Psychology Found Its Language*. London: Sage.
4. Richards, G. (2003). *Putting Psychology in Its Place : An Introduction from a Critical Historical Perspective* (2nd edition). Routledge.

Class notes: I will be using powerpoint and will make these notes available on Blackboard.

Note about the readings. There is no traditional text for this course – the Benjamin and Baker book is a specialized history that focuses on the history of applications of psychology. In the past I have used Leahey's *History of Modern Psychology* and thereafter used Thorne & Henley's *Connections in the History and Systems of Psychology* but found both deficient on a number of points. What I have opted for this year is the use of a slim introductory volume by Michael Wertheimer (a member of a famous psychological family) that will give you some overview of the discipline.

Danziger's books (neither of which are required this year but parts of which will be in the readings) and Richards' book are a good example of the "new" history which is now coming to have a strong influence on how we understand the discipline. They take seriously the notion that knowledge is the outcome of both individual and socially

negotiated processes and institutional factors. They demonstrate this by taking such common terms as intelligence, motivation, personality, learning, stimulation, behavior, and attitude and show how these come to take on their contemporary meaning within the discipline. Richards' book on the other hand debunks the traditional linear understanding we have of psychology as a direct descendant of philosophy and/or 19th century physiology and contextualizes a set of important developments in the institutional formation of the discipline. Sklansky's book is an important example demonstrating how psychology did not emerge in some pristine isolation but carries within it the marks of the world in which it is practiced.

Requirements

1. Paper: Your major requirement for the course will be to write a paper on a topic in the history of psychology. The topic will be of your own choosing but must fall within the time period from 1860-1975. It could fall within only a selected aspect of that time period or you may choose to cover the entire range. For examples of the kind of paper I am looking for see articles in the Journal of the History of the Behavioural Sciences, Isis, History of the Human Sciences, Journal of the History of Ideas, occasional historical papers in Theory & Psychology and the American Psychologist as well as the APA journal, History of Psychology. Your paper should cover some particular aspect of the history of psychology in depth (e.g., "the concept of evolution in late nineteenth-century thought"), or compare two or more individuals on a topic (e.g., "Wundt and James on consciousness") and should not be a superficial coverage of some broad historical topic or period (e.g., "the history of learning"). You should use original sources to construct your argument and rely on secondary sources only where they amplify or clarify the material at hand or in cases where secondary sources have come to lead us to see the primary material in an entirely different light (such as Danziger's book). Your paper is not a chronology but an historical interpretation of people, events, contexts, communities and ideas. As such it is an attempt to both re-construct a time and place as well as an opportunity to argue for a particular interpretation of that time and place. As a rough guideline, aim for a paper of 6,000 to 7,000 words - but circumstances may dictate a paper of different length. A paper must include an abstract.

It is likely that you may already know that the Web has changed the work of historians everywhere in a way that is different from the web's impact on professions such as psychology. Because historians work primarily with original or rare documents, archival material is being placed on the web at an increasing rate and because copyrights expire on classic materials there are more of these important historical documents appearing on the web. For example, begin your search at the York University website "Classics in the History of Psychology" maintained by Chris Green. This one is at <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/> and contains the full texts of many older articles and chapters. The site also contains links to hundreds of other relevant works posted at other sites as well as original articles by historians of psychology. Once you begin searching you will discover others including links to many important archives where original material is sometimes placed on the web, making it available in a way that would be impossible to access otherwise.

Chris Green also has a [This Week in the History of Psychology](#) - a 30-episode podcast series produced last year. Each show is about 25 minutes in length, and features an interview with a working historian of psychology on a featured topic in his or her area of expertise -- available at iTunes as well if you know where to look in iTunes. I think these are extremely good, and not just because I was interviewed for one of them. You can hear historians of psychology discuss up to date issues in a summary fashion that quickly gives you a sense of the issues. You can find this here:
<http://www.yorku.ca/christo/podcasts/>

Before you write your paper you should discuss the topic with me as well as the major sources you will use to write the paper. You will decide by the class of **October 9** (week 5) what your topic will be and hand in a one page outline. This outline should include a brief description of the proposed topic, its relevance to the course and the major reference sources you will be using. In most cases I would expect to see an outline of at least 300 words.

The paper itself is due on December 8, the Monday after the last class. If you find that after committing to a topic you are in fact unable to write the paper for reasons that might include the availability of resource materials, you may change your topic. However, you must check with me first and discuss your new topic with me before going ahead and writing your essay. Value of the essay – 40%.

2. Presentation: Since you are going to become an expert on some topic in the history of psychology by writing a paper about that topic, you will present your research in seminar form to the class. You will have about half an hour to present your research. You should integrate your topic with that of the course material, present the background and give us an overview of your research and your argument, especially the importance of your argument to understanding some period or problem in the history of psychology. Make sure you prepare a one page outline for your seminar. By the class of **October 23** (week 7) you will have chosen a date for your presentation in one of the last weeks of class – depending in part on your topic and your negotiation with your peers. Total value of presentation: 20%.

3. Journals: Each week you will write a brief summary statement about the readings along with reflections and comments and hand them in to me at the beginning of class. This is meant to be a critical analysis, not just a summary. This paper must be at least 600-700 words and should indicate something of the major content of the papers as well as your critical comments. Value: 9 @ 4% = 36%. You will note that this will add up to 104% for the term. Hence I will count only the best 8 out of 9 reports (for 32%). However, in order to complete the work for this course you must complete all assignments. That means handing in all 9 reports.

4. Attendance: I take it as a given that for graduate students attendance is not optional. As always, in the event of illness or emergency please let me know that you are not going to be able to make it to class.

5. **Participation:** Your participation is worth 8% of your final grade. Participation is meant to include not just class discussions (where some people are less talkative than others) but overall involvement in the course.

Grading Scale

The final percentage obtained in the course will be assigned according to the following scale:

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavorable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for

formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course and still receive a fee refund is **September 19, 2008**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **December 5, 2008**.