

AP Psychology



History and Approaches

Christopher Dunn
Spalding High School

Psychology's Roots



Prescientific Psychology
Is the mind connected to the body or distinct?
Are ideas inborn or is the mind a blank slate filled by experience?

Psychology's Roots



Philosophy or Science?

TABLE 1

DEBATES AMONG PSYCHOLOGY'S PREDECESSORS

Mind and body are connected	vs.	Mind and body are distinct	Some ideas are inborn	vs.	The mind is a blank slate
The Hebrews		Socrates	Socrates		Aristotle
Aristotle		Plato	Plato		Locke
Augustine		Descartes			

Psychology's Roots



- Psychological Science Is Born
 - Empiricism
 - Knowledge comes from experience via the senses
 - Science flourishes through observation and experiment

Psychology's Roots



- Wilhelm Wundt opened the first psychology laboratory at the University of Leipzig (c. 1879)



Psychology's Roots

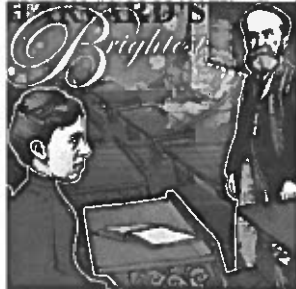


- Structuralism used introspection (looking in) to explore the elemental structure of the human mind



Psychology's Roots

- Functionalism focused on how behavioral processes function- how they enable organism to adapt, survive, and flourish



Psychology's Roots

- Psychological Science Develops
 - Wundt--German philosopher and physiologist
 - James--American philosopher
 - Pavlov--Russian physiologist
 - Freud--Austrian physician
 - Piaget--Swiss biologist



Psychology's Roots

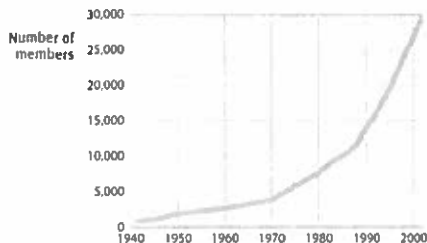


Figure 1- British Psychological Society membership



Psychology's Roots



- Definition of Psychology
 - The science of behavior (what we do) and mental processes (sensations, perceptions, dreams, thoughts, beliefs, and feelings)

Prologue: Contemporary Psychology



- Psychology's Big Issues
 - Nature-nurture controversy
 - the relative contribution that genes and experience make to development of psychological traits and behaviors

Contemporary Psychology



- Natural selection
- principle that those inherited trait variations contributing to survival will most likely be passed on to succeeding generations

Contemporary Psychology



- Psychology's Subfields
 - Basic Research
 - Personality psychologists investigate our persistent traits
 - Social psychologists explore how we view and affect one another

Contemporary Psychology



- Psychology's Subfields
 - Applied Research
 - Industrial/organizational psychologists study and advise on behavior in the workplace
 - Clinical psychologists study, assess, and treat people with psychological disorders

Contemporary Psychology



- Psychiatry
 - A branch of medicine dealing with psychological disorders
 - Practiced by physicians who sometimes use medical (for example, drug) treatments as well as psychotherapy
