

**University of Alberta
Department of Psychology
September 2010**

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Course: Psychology 304 (# 48309)
Title: History of Modern Psychology
Time: Thursday 6:00 – 9:00 pm
Place: NRE 1 001

Instructor: Dr. Leendert (Leo) Mos
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Teaching Assistant: TBA

Textbook:

Benjamin, John G. (2010). *A history of psychology* (3rd edition) Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press. (ISBN 978-0-19-543021-9)

Lectures notes on my website.

Course content:

This course is intended to serve as a continuation of Psychology 303, *History of ideas in psychology*, offered in alternate years. Psychology 304 is a *new* course introduced four years ago. The Department of Psychology's history course, Psychology 301, *History of Psychology*, was divided into two courses: Psychology 303, *History of ideas in psychology*, beginning with the ancients and culminating in the 17th century, and Psychology 304, *History of modern psychology*, beginning in the 17th c. and culminating in the present. The reason for this division is simply that attempting to cover 2500 years of history in one semester proved impossible and it made sense to divide the pre-modern from the modern eras.

This year I decided to use John Benjamin's, *A history of psychology* (2010, 3rd edition) which has a chapter on the origins of psychological thought among the ancients (Ch. 2) following an introductory chapter (Ch. 1) dealing with the question of what history has to do with psychology. Chapter 3 deal with the philosophical precursors of Psychology in the 16th century and Chapters 4 -16 deal with the origins of psychology in the 19th century to its current status as an academic discipline, science, and profession. I urge you to read Ch. 1 and Ch.2 as quickly as possible as I will not lecture on these two chapters (see below).

The establishment (i.e., the “founding”) of psychology as an academic discipline, formally taught in universities, dates from the last quarter of the 19th c. (usually dated from when Wilhelm Wundt founded the first psychology laboratory at the University of Leipzig, Germany, in 1879). In the North American context, the academic discipline of psychology was established by William James whose 2-volume publication of *Principles of Psychology* (1890) is usually cited as having established psychology as an experimental science at Harvard University. Ironically, perhaps, neither Wundt nor James, the “founding fathers”, was a psychologist. Wundt was a physiologist who worked with, among others, Hermann Helmholtz, the renowned 19th c. physicist, and James studied medicine and is usually thought of as a philosopher and one of the originators of the philosophy of pragmatism, a philosophical movement that was deeply influential in American thought, including psychology. In any case, neither “father” is read much if at all today (on the continent or in North America) and the discipline of psychology changed considerably from that envisioned by the founding “fathers” (see, E. G. Boring’s *A history of experimental psychology*, 1929/1950, probably still the most authoritative text in the historiography of psychology).

In dividing the department’s history course into two courses, pre-modern (from the ancients to the 17th c.) and modern (from the 17th c. to the present), I heeded Boring’s caution that we must distinguish between the *short history* of the discipline of psychology (barely 120 years) and its *long past* (dating in the Western tradition at least to Homer). That is, we must distinguish between ideas having to do with the intellectual and practical concerns with *psyche*, soul, mind, person, and society and concepts and explanations/theories that properly belong to the academic endeavor entitled “psychology” both as a science and as a profession. Like other academic disciplines, the concepts, theories, and explanations that adhere to the discipline of psychology find their origins in the history of ideas, in philosophy and traditional specializations of philosophy dealing with answers to questions such as “*what there is* (metaphysics and ontology)?”, “*how we know* (epistemology)?”, “*what we ought to do* (ethics, political, social, and moral thought)?” and “*what we aspire to or may hope for* (aesthetic and religious thought)?”. In philosophical reflection belonging to psychology’s *long past*, the *psyche* has always had a central place in the history of ideas, one that complements philosophy’s reflection on the nature of the universe, society, and God. The modern history of psychology as an academic discipline is closely bound up with these and other perennial concerns even as the 19th c. saw increasing *fragmentation* of these traditional philosophical concerns with “*wholeness*” and the emergence of the biological and social sciences in an increasing *specialization* of knowledge that first began in the 17th and 18th centuries with Isaac Newton’s “new science” and was subsequently formulated by both rationalist and empiricist philosophers to the present.

As is evident from the title of Boring’s textbook, *The history of experimental psychology*, published only some fifty years following Wundt’s founding of the first laboratory of psychology, Boring distinguished between “experimental psychology” (or what Wundt called “*physiological psychology*” since the methods of psychology were modeled on those in physiology) and, more broadly, psychological ideas,

notions, and concerns that predate the founding of the discipline perhaps by some 2000 years or more. Psychology, like other academic disciplines founded in the 19th c., acquired the status of an academic discipline, if you like a “science”, a legitimate intellectual discipline and administrative unit in a university, when its practitioners began to investigate psychological phenomena “experimentally” (I will spend considerable lecture time on the formation of psychology as an *experimental* discipline). While it is tempting indeed to omit anything prior to 1879 (for one thing it would reinforce our - political - notion that psychology is indeed an autonomous “science”) this would constitute an intellectual amnesia, satisfying to some, but entirely unwarranted from a historical perspective. Indeed, the adjective “experimental” used to qualify contemporary psychology itself finds its origins in the 17th c. Enlightenment “*world-view*” (in German, *Weltanschauung*) that serves to characterize much of what we today might term “modernity” (or modern era).

In re-designing our department’s two courses in history, I invoked the concept of *world-view*, borrowed from Wilhelm Dilthey, the late 19th c. historian and philosopher of the human sciences at the University of Berlin – and a contemporary of Wilhelm Wundt, who was at Leipzig) and *transformations of world-views* to discuss the history of ideas important to psychology. Implied in this conception of *world-view* is the sense that every era is self-sustaining and must be understood and evaluated on its own terms even as it admits of transformations to a new or another era. In this way I avoided the suggestion, so frequently encountered, that “history” is only of antiquarian interest, merely a wallowing in old and erroneous ideas and explanations, and that what really matters is “*what we know today*”. In Psychology 303, I discussed (1) the *Greek world-view* and, (2) its transformation to the (3) *Christian world-view* and, (3) its transformation to the *medieval world-view* and, (4) its transformation to the *modern world-view* of the 17th century.

In Psychology 304 we will dwell entirely on the *modern world-view* (era) in preparation for what I expect to touch on briefly as the *post-modern world-view* (still very controversial but coming into its own). The history of modern psychology, and since its founding as an academic discipline, “experimental” psychology, clearly finds its origins in the *modern world-view* (there is plenty of disagreement as to what the word ‘modern’ signifies but I take it to mean the picture of the world that Rene Descartes articulated in the 17th c.). Hence we will have to consider at some length (mostly in my lectures since the text only covers it in Ch. 2) the origins of “modernity” since presumably the discipline of psychology is a “late-comer” (for reasons we will examine) as an academic discipline to this era (even as in some ways psychology was a very successful discipline for reasons which we will also examine).

We have 13 weeks and 13 (3 hr.) lectures (see below) in which to cover the course content. The reading for this course is not excessive but since some of you will not have completed Psychology 303 you will have to quickly but carefully read Chapters 1-2 as background especially since I will extensively lecture on Chapter 3 in the first four weeks. Subsequent lectures should follow or anticipate my recommended textbook readings (see below).

You need not have completed Psychology 303 in order to benefit (and do well) in this course. The two history courses are fairly independent from one another. Unlike Psychology 303 which relied large on my lectures, Psychology 403 will by and large follow the text even as my lectures will stress ideas whereas the text focuses concretely on theories, facts, people, and dates. It is essential that you attend lectures!

The course is concerned with a critical examination of the ideas and issues that are an integral part of the history of “psychology as a science”. Psychology has become in the 20th c. a enormously influential and fashionable discipline yet it is also one where neither the phenomena nor the methodologies are agreed upon....it has been suggested repeatedly that the discipline notwithstanding its success remains “pre-paradigmatic” (a phrase coined by Thomas Kuhn in 1962/1970 to characterize disciplines that are not unified in their conception of “what the discipline is about”). That is, the discipline of psychology remains in an important sense fragmented despite its rallying point around the adjective “experimental”. Especially in recent years influences from the other social sciences, history, humanities, and the arts have begun to make inroads into the discipline in contrast to most of its 120 history when it was the natural sciences, notably the biological sciences, which provided the discipline with its concepts and models. The putative “crisis” in which psychology was born remains today even as the enormous advances in the neurosciences, genetics, and the computing sciences during the past forty years continue to set the pace for its development.

The course is intended to shed perspective; enjoy it as an opportunity to read, think and reflect.....

Course requirements:

I have scheduled three different “examinations” as follows:

1. A paper on a topic discussed in chapter 3 (*Touchstones: from Descartes to Darwin*) or 4 (*The nineteenth-century transformation*). Due: Oct. 14
2. A paper on a topic discussed either in chapter 5 (*Wundt and his contemporaries*) and chapter 6 (*William James*) or chapter 7 (*Freud and Jung*). Due: Nov. 18
3. A paper on a topic discussed either in chapter 9 and 10 (*Behaviorism and Theories of Learning*) or chapter 14 (*Humanistic psychology*) Due: Dec. 2

Each paper should be no less than 8 and no more than 10 pages, have references, and a title page. The papers should follow APA format (the textbook references will give you examples of APA format). *I will further discuss the paper assignments in class.*

Other matters:

I will be available by appointment but do not hesitate to email me if you have any concerns or just to voice opinions about any matter pertaining to the course content or your enrollment in the course. I appreciate that some of you will have more time to spend on this course than others; but it is a course that allows for such variability. It is not intended to be a difficult course but it is one that engages you in thinking through the issues and concepts (of which there are not as many as might first appear). For some of you this course will be a strange mixture of facts/theories and historical narrative (“historiography”); you will learn some history but I hope you would learn to think about the challenges and opportunities the psychology presents as a “discipline”, a form of practice and “control” in our thinking about the phenomena that we deem to be “psychological”.

Recommended textbook reading schedule:

Sept. 8, 16	Psychology and history Ch. 1) Origins of psychological thought Ch. 2	
Sept. 23, 30	Touchstones: from Descartes to Darwin Ch. 3)	
Oct. 7	The Nineteenth Century transformation Ch. 4	
Oct. 14, 21	Wundt and his contemporaries Ch. 5 William James Ch. 6	Due date first paper
Oct. 28	Freud and Jung Ch. 7	
Nov. 4.	Behaviorism Ch. 9. Gestalt psychology and the social field Ch. 10	
Nov. 11	Remembrance Day Research methods Ch. 11 Theories of Learning C. 12	
Nov. 18	Developmental point of view Ch. 13 Humanistic psychology Ch. 14	Due date second paper
Nov. 25	Cognitive psychology Ch. 15 The future of psychology Ch. 16	
Dec. 2	Synopsis	Due date third paper

Selected reference readings:

Classic “history of psychology” texts

Baldwin, J. A. (1913). *History of psychology: a sketch and an interpretation*. London: Watts & Co. (A very early history of ideas in psychology by a renowned developmental psychologist.)

Peters, R. S. (Ed) (1953/1965). *Brett's history of psychology* (abridged). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. (An abridged edition of Professor G. S. Brett's 3-volume *History of Psychology*) London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1912, 1913, 1921.

Boring, E. G. (1929/1950). *A history of experimental psychology*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts. (The authoritative text on the history of the discipline of psychology from mid 19th c. to mid 20th c. by renowned psychologist of perception)

Heidbredder, E. (1933). *Seven psychologies*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts. (Reviews structuralism, functionalism, behaviorism, dynamic psychology, Gestalt psychology and psychoanalysis)

Leahey, T. H. (2000/1980). *A history of psychology: main currents in psychological thought* (6th edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson-Prentice-Hall. (Perhaps the most respected history of psychology text in use today – usually at the graduate level.)

Robinson, D. N. (1981/1976). *An intellectual history of psychology* (revised edition). New York: Macmillan Co. (A very fine philosophically oriented volume by an Aristotelian scholar and psychologist.)

Source books in the history of psychology

Ellis, W. D. (Ed.). (1938). *A source book of Gestalt psychology*. Norwich, England: Jarrold & Sons. (Excellent compilation of English translations of 34 early and classic Gestalt articles)

Hernstein, R. J. and Boring, E. G. (1965). *A source book on the history of psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Excerpts and 116 articles on all aspect of psychology ranging from 17th to 20th centuries).

Brozek, J. & Pongratz, L. J. (1980). *Historiography of modern psychology: aims, resources, approaches*. Toronto: C. J. Hogrefe, Inc. (Global perspective by 14 contributors on the origins of psychology)

Bringmann, W. G. & Tweney, R. D. (Eds.) (1980). *Wundt studies: a centennial collection*. Toronto: C. J. Hogrefe. (Twenty-five contributors discuss the life and times of Wilhelm Wundt.)

Hilgard, E. R. (1987). *Psychology in America: A historical survey*. New York: Harcourt Brace Javanovich. (A thorough review of American psychology by an author who lived through it)

Watson, R. I. (1971). *The great psychologists*. Philadelphia: Lippincott. (An overview by the founder of the *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*)

Boring, E. G. (1963). *History, psychology, and science: selected papers* (R. I. Watson & D. T. Campbell, Eds.). New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

Ash, M. G. (1983). The self-presentation of a discipline: history of psychology in the United States between pedagogy and scholarship. In L. Graham, W. LePencies, & P. Weingart (Eds.), *Functions and uses of disciplinary histories* (Vol. 7 of *Sociology of the sciences* (pp. 143-189). Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing.

Koch, S. & Leary, D. E. (Eds.) (1985). *A century of psychology as a science*. New York: McGraw-Hill. (Forty-two essays on psychology by a wide array of scholars.)

Danziger, K. J. (1990). *Constructing the subject: historical origins of psychological research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Already a classic in the social origins of research methods in psychology)

Autobiographies by psychologists

Murchison, C. A. Boring, E. G. & Lindzey, G. (Eds.) (1930/1952) *History of psychology in autobiography* (4 volumes). Worcester, MA: Clark University Press. (Short autobiographies by numerous psychologists about their lives and careers)

Murchison, C. A. (1929/1932). *The psychological register* (3 volumes). Worcester, MA: Clark University Press. (Basic information on hundreds of psychologists: education, appointments, publications etc.)

Watson, R. I. (1974/1976). *Eminent contributions to psychology* (2 volumes). New York: Springer Verlag. (List of 500 people historically influential on psychology, along with their important writings (volume 1) and citations to their works (volume 2)

Zusne, L. (1975). *Names in the history of psychology*. New York: Wiley. (Information on hundreds of psychologist (education, appointments, publications)

Mos, L. P. (Ed.) (2010). *History of psychology in autobiography*. New York: Springer. (Seven autobiographies written into the history of psychology by its authors)

Some selected writings on different “psychologies”

Gay, P. (1988). *Freud: A life for our time*. New York: Norton. (Already a classic and standard reference work on Freud and psychoanalysis by a renowned historian.)

Fancher, R. E. (1973). *Psychoanalytic thought: the development of Freud's thought*. New York: Norton. (A major history of psychoanalysis by a Canadian psychologist.)

O'Donnell, J. M. (1985). *The origins of behaviorism: American psychology 1870-1920*. New York: New York University Press. (Socio-political influences that led American psychology to reject Wundt.)

Mills, J. A. (1998). *Control: A history of behavioral psychology*. New York: New York University Press. (A fine history of behaviorism and behavioral psychology by a Canadian psychologist.)

Baars, B. J. (1986). *The cognitive revolution in psychology*. New York: Guilford. (Excellent introductory chapter by the author along with 17 interviews with the major "cognitivists")

Flanagan, O. J. (1984). *The science of the mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (The best philosophically informed history of psychology from a cognitive science perspective – sociobiology, artificial intelligence, and Piaget.)

History and theory journals in Psychology

Journal of the history of the behavioral sciences (quarterly journal). Clinical Psychology Publishing Co. Inc. (since 1965)

History of psychology, Quarterly Journal of Division 26 of the *American Psychological Association* (since 1999).

History and philosophy of psychology bulletin (quarterly journal). Official journal of the History and Philosophy Division of the *Canadian Psychological Association*

Theory & Psychology (monthly journal). London: Sage (since 1990).

Philosophical Psychology. (Journal of the *Society for Philosophy and Psychology*.)

Mos, L. P. (Ed.), *Annals of theoretical psychology* (vols. 1-10, 1984-1994). New York: Plenum.

Recent trends in theoretical psychology (vols. 1-3, 1988-1993). Published by Springer in New York

Challenges in theoretical psychology (vols. 1-6, (2001-2007). Published by Captus Press in Toronto.

Tolman, C. W. (1992). *Positivism in psychology*. New York: Springer.

University policies:

Grading system

The university grading system is a letter system wherein instructors submit letter grades as final grades in the course, and where the Office of the Registrar transforms those letter grades into numerical grades for determining your GPA and course averages.

The following categories apply (borrowed from the university grading system).

Descriptor	Letter grade	Point value	Percentage 3yr courses
Excellent	A+	4.0	6%
	A	4.0	9%
	A-	3.7	14%
Good	B+	3.3	16%
	B	3.0	18%
	B-	2.7	14%
Satisfactory	C+	2.3	9%
	C	2.0	6%
	C-	1.7	4%
Poor	D+	1.3	2%
	D	1.0	1%
Fail	F	0.0	1%
Mean		3.0	
Median	B		

The recommended distribution, above, is only a guideline, and I usually do not assign grades based on a fixed distribution.

I will assign percentage grades to the examinations and term paper, then average these at the end of the term and convert the percentages into a letter grade. You will have a fairly good idea based on percentage grades during the term as to your letter grade at the end of the term.

Academic integrity

1. Policy about course outlines can be found in paragraph 23.4(2) of the *University Calendar*.
2. The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behavior (on line at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behavior which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

LPM/August, 2010