

THE HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY: A Survey and Critical Assessment

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KEY WORDS: Psychology, History, Historiography, Teaching of History

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past three decades the discipline of psychology has undergone intense self-scrutiny. Simultaneously the history of science, as a field of scholarly research, has broadened its domain to include the history of the social and behavioral sciences. Both trends have contributed to the development of the history of psychology as a field of considerable interest and vitality. Because modern scientific psychology is about 100 years old, several departments in America have in the past few years celebrated their centennials (e.g. Capshew (1988) on Indiana University) and others are about to do so. The American Psychological Association, now in the midst of celebrations of its own centennial, to culminate in 1992, has been encouraging departments (and regional societies—e.g. Bartlett et al 1988) to publish their own histories in forms that may become part of the permanent record of psychology's history.

Besides its evolution as an area of scholarly research, the history of psychology has continued to be a topic widely represented in the typical psychology curriculum. Although more up-to-date information is needed, Riedel (1974) has documented the prevalence of courses on the history of psychology and/or the history and systems of psychology in the undergraduate curriculum. More recently, accreditation stipulations (American Psychological Association 1979) have assured that the history of psychology will remain a feature of graduate training in psychology for some time to come.

Paralleling and supporting the development of the history of psychology has been the establishment of institutional structures that provide the resources, training, means of communication, encouragement, and direction necessary to the maturation of the field. These structures, with the dates of their establishment, include the American Psychological Association's Division of the History of Psychology (1965), the Archives of the History of American Psychology in Akron, Ohio (1965), the *Journal of the History of the Behavioral and Social Sciences* (1965), the graduate program in the History and Theory of Psychology at the University of New Hampshire (1967), the Cheiron Society for the History of the Behavioral Sciences (1968), and more recently the Italian *Storia e Critica della Psicologia* (established in 1979), the Spanish *Revista de Historia de la Psicologia* (1980), the graduate program in the history and theory of psychology at York University in Canada (1981), the European Cheiron Society (1982), the historical sections of the British, Canadian, and German psychological associations (1984, 1988, 1989, respectively), the British *History of the Human Sciences* (1988), the German *Psychologie und Geschichte* (1989), and the History of Science Society's Forum for the History of the Human Sciences (1989).

Perhaps the most tangible sign of the emergence of the history of psycholo-

gy as a field of academic interest has been the publication of textbooks in the field: More than half of the history-of-psychology textbooks written in or translated into English in this century have been published in the past three decades. Just as tangible and even more important for the field as a professional area of scholarship has been the explosion of the nontextbook secondary literature on the history of psychology. Since the classic “call to arms” issued by Watson (1960) and reinforced by Stocking (1965) and Young (1966), there has been an astonishing increase in well-grounded scholarship on delimited historical topics. This scholarship has become more and more self-conscious and deliberate as scholars, whether trained as psychologists or historians, have responded to the distinctive opportunities and challenges in this domain of research. The development of what has been called the “critical history” of psychology—historical scholarship whose probing questions and demanding methodology evince little interest in affirming or legitimating the assumptions of contemporary psychology—has been the seemingly natural result of this increasing historical sophistication as well as of the particular psychological concerns that have motivated many scholars in the field.

Given the expansion and maturation of the field over the past three decades and its continued—and perhaps increased—relevance to the teaching of undergraduates and graduates, it is reasonable for the *Annual Review of Psychology* to offer its first review on the history and historiography of psychology [except for an earlier historical chapter by Mueller (1979)]. The treatment of the topic, which we hope will be particularly useful to teachers and students of the history of psychology, is rather straightforward. After a discussion of authors and texts on the general history of psychology, we highlight some of the important issues and developments in the historiography of psychology and then review some of the resources that will aid students, teachers, and scholars of the history of psychology.

REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORS AND BOOKS ON THE GENERAL HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY

For the teacher about to teach a course on history for the first time, or the student who is refreshing himself or herself on the history of psychology, the initial step in orientation is often to find out something about the available comprehensive history books. Later on we give a little more information useful to the teacher, for too much dependence on a single textbook is not a practice to be preferred.

Numerous histories of psychology have appeared right along. Early in the 20th century the American sources began with three significant books. One of these brought together selections from classical psychologists from Anaxagoras to Wundt (Rand 1912). Another, by Hall (1912), presented in book

form six lectures he had given on six eminent German scholars with whom he had studied. In the same year a Canadian philosopher-psychologist published the first volume of a massive 3-volume history (Brett 1912; later volumes 1921). Brett's large books were too massive to be used conveniently as ordinary textbooks, but they served as excellent sources for the history of psychology from the earliest times, particularly for psychology in its philosophical and ecclesiastical contexts. More convenient access was provided by a one-volume abridgment by Peters (1953; revised 1962), who edited and added to the original while condensing it, at the same time also updating it by adding a chapter on 20th-century psychology. Baldwin (1913) published in two small volumes the first textbook history by an American writer in the 20th century.

A great many textbooks on the history of psychology appeared in English and in other languages over the years. A bibliography prepared by one of us lists 180 textbook titles in English through 1988, provided that edited books of readings on history and systems are counted (McGuire 1990). Limitations of space forbid our characterization of many of these except to note that of those books that appeared before 1935, the only strictly general histories to be kept alive through revised editions were those of Boring (1929, revised 1950), Brett, as revised by Peters (1953), Flugel (1933, 1947, 1964), and Murphy (1929, revised 1949; Murphy & Kovach 1972).

The Role of Edwin G. Boring (1886–1968)

Edwin G. Boring, already a prominent psychology professor at Harvard, established himself as a historian with the appearance of his history of experimental psychology (Boring 1929). Through this book, his later historical writings and a revision of the original book in 1950, he began to occupy a special role in the development of the history of psychology in America. He derived satisfaction as he began to feel himself responsible for continuing to call attention to psychology's past. For many years his book did indeed stand as the principal text in the history of psychology. A survey published in 1962 indicated his special influence by finding that 75% of the undergraduate psychology curricula that presented a course in the history of psychology used his book as the principal text (Nance 1962).

In his first edition Boring stated clearly where he stood in relation to experimental psychology: "Naturally the words 'experimental psychology' must mean, in my title, what they meant to Wundt and what they meant to all psychologists for 50 or 60 years—that is to say, the psychology of the generalized, human, normal, adult mind as revealed in the psychological laboratory" (Boring 1929:viii). He went on to say that this was no doctrinaire position and acknowledged that animal psychology and mental tests are in a way experimental, and he had included some treatment of them in his exposition. There were many changes in the second edition including the

incorporation of dynamic psychology—foreshadowing a treatment of learning and motivation that he contemplated writing as a separate volume but never completed.

In the preface to a later book on sensation and perception (Boring 1942), written between the two editions of the other book, he remarked that the title of his first book was somewhat inapt, since he had not treated the experimentation in experimental psychology. This second book dealt directly with the experiments in their theoretical contexts in the areas of sensation and perception, and proved to be a masterful exposition. In his preface he also announced the possibility of another book, referred to above, in which he might recount the experimentation in other fields—feeling, emotion, learning, attention, action, and thought.

We note that Boring himself recognized limitations in his historical books, softening somewhat the criticisms that later were offered against his conception of history. The later objections tended to be directed at several targets. One target was the limitations posed by the narrow definition of experimental psychology, derived from Titchener's misinterpretation of Wundt (Blumenthal 1975; Danziger 1979a). Another target was the interpretation of the past as simply a cause of the present. Conversely, the tendency to use the present as a framework for understanding the past, now characterized by historians as "presentism," came to be looked upon unfavorably (Stocking 1965; Young 1966). Two other issues entered into these later critical discussions. One was the "great man" theory, shown by the prominence in his text of the biographies of the influential psychologists; the other was the importance given to the *Zeitgeist* or "spirit of the times," as allowing little room for the inventiveness, creativity, and initiative of those who advanced psychological knowledge and theory (Rosenzweig 1970; Ross 1969). While the *Zeitgeist* was more prominent in the second edition, it had been somewhat implicit before, and had been explicitly supported in a paper that appeared before the first edition of the history (Boring 1927). Various other discussions have attempted to explain why some of the difficulties occurred (e.g. Friedmann 1967; O'Donnell 1979; Samelson 1980). Cerullo (1988) has argued that the criticisms of Boring as a historian fail to do justice to his role as a discipline builder and have been overdrawn. His analysis suggests that Boring still merits further objective consideration.

Boring did not confine his historical writing to books. His major historical papers were republished in a book edited by Watson & Campbell (Boring 1963).

The Role of Robert I. Watson, Sr. (1909–1980)

The years of World War II and the early postwar years saw a slackening in the publishing of new history textbooks, but a new surge of interest and publication began in the 1960s. One of the first books to become prominent in the

years after 1960, and to reappear in four editions prior to its author's death, was Watson's *The Great Psychologists* (1963, 4th ed. 1978). The book was dedicated "To E. G. B., my teacher, under whom I have never studied." Boring had assisted in its preparation, and in some sense he saw Watson as his successor.

In a symposium held at the 1981 annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, eight contributors paid tribute to Watson's role in making the history of psychology a profession in its own right. The symposium was published in the *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* that Watson had founded and of which he served as editor from its first issue in 1965 to 1974. The account of the symposium was introduced by Eugene S. Mills, who had been the president of the University of New Hampshire while Watson taught there (Mills 1982).

Watson's interest in history had developed by 1960, while he was still Professor of Psychology and Director of the Graduate Training Program in Clinical Psychology at Northwestern University in Evanston (Watson 1960). From that date he became an initiator, organizer, and promoter, as well as an active contributor through his many books and journal articles. He left Northwestern in 1967 to accept a professorship in psychology at the University of New Hampshire, where, upon invitation, he took a leading role in developing a special PhD program in the History and Theory of Psychology, said to be the first of its kind (Evans 1982). His initiative was also apparent in his promotion of three organized programs that have furthered the development of the history of psychology as an area of scholarship. One of these was the establishment of Division 26: History of Psychology, of the American Psychological Association, of which he became the first president in 1966, after Boring had deferred to him by accepting the designation as Honorary President to indicate his support of the new division (Hilgard 1982). The second was his strong interest in the founding and continuation of the Archives of the History of American Psychology at the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio. While the on-site founding was the work of John Popplestone as Director and his wife, Marion White McPherson, as Associate Director, Watson played a role in convincing the administration at Akron that it was a good idea. He was considered to be a co-founder, and served as the chairman of the Advisory Committee from the founding in 1965 until August 1975 (Popplestone & McPherson 1982). A third promotional activity had to do with the founding of an international society for the history of the behavioral and social sciences, which took the name of Cheiron, the wise centaur in Greek mythology who was knowledgeable in arts and science and liked to share his knowledge. It took form in 1968, after a summer institute on the teaching of the history of psychology co-directed by Josef Brozek and Watson at the University of New Hampshire (Goodman 1982).

While these promotional steps deserve recognition, in the long run Watson will be remembered especially for his scholarly books and articles. After the history book already mentioned, he published his major opus, a massive two-volume work. In the 470 pages of the first volume (Watson 1974), he gathered as primary source material the major writings of 538 individuals, previously identified as eminent by a panel of nine raters (Annin et al 1968). The only other source at all comparable had been the *Psychological Register* (Murchison 1932a), which listed nearly complete bibliographies for some 2400 living psychologists from all over the world. (These were not selected for eminence, although the editor had sought advice on whether or not they were psychologists rather than “just interested in psychology.”) Watson’s second volume (Watson 1976), in some ways more unique and more ambitious, brought together in 1158 pages the “secondary sources”—that this, the references by others to the works of those in Volume 1. These volumes deserve the praise reviewers (e.g. Brozek 1978) have given them, as resources that should remain valuable over the years (e.g. Brozek 1982).

Watson published two additional volumes to serve as scholarly resources for those interested in the history of the behavioral sciences—a bibliographical guide (Watson 1978) and a source book on the history of psychology (Watson 1979). In the latter he reproduced selections from the writings of 50 psychologists from Galileo to B. F. Skinner. He also participated in editing a volume of Boring’s collected papers, as previously mentioned (Boring 1963), and a selection of his own journal papers was published by Brozek & Evans (1977).

It may be noted that Watson was influenced by Boring in choosing to base his history text on great men, which led to a chronological treatment. This does not mean that he did not attend to problems of theory. The nearest thing to a theory of his own was his proposal that psychological orientations could be judged according to 18 “prescriptions” consisting of polarities: determinism-indeterminism, empiricism-rationalism, monism-dualism, and so on, Watson 1971. A psychologist’s system could be understood according to his or her position on these prescriptions. Watson’s own position was somewhat elaborated in the fourth edition of his textbook, but not sufficiently to clarify how prescriptions could be used to organize a system of psychology.

Other Contributors and Books

There have, of course, been careful reviews of individual books on the history of psychology and at least two collective reviews, both of which are informative.

The first of these, by Erickson (1955), considered 28 books appearing between 1912 and 1953, plus five relevant journal articles that appeared between 1941 and 1953. He discussed in some detail histories written by

Americans—Boring (1950), Murphy (1949), and Roback (1952). Roback's book supplemented the others by treating the history of American psychology prior to William James (in this connection, note also Fay 1966).

As books by British historians, Erickson selected Peters' (1953) abbreviated version of Brett, Flugel (1933), and Spearman (1937). For the German contributions, although he noted the earlier prominence of the translated histories of Dessoir (1912) and Klemm (1914), he relied more on Mueller-Freienfels (1935), which, although originating in Germany, was published in English in America, and never appeared in a German version at home. From the French there was one book on contemporary psychology in French by Foulquié & Deledalle (1951). Erickson also gave some attention to books on psychological systems, such as Heidebreder (1933) and Woodworth (1948), later revised as Woodworth & Sheehan (1964). He also reviewed the edited volumes on systems by Murchison (1926, 1930a), and the initial three volumes in the series on autobiographies of psychologists (Murchison 1930b–1932). The autobiographical volumes of this series have continued to be published intermittently, with other editors and publishers. The latest is Volume 8, edited by Lindzey (1989). These were supplemented by three autobiographical volumes in another series (Krawiec 1972, 1974, and 1978).

The second review mentioned was a collective review of a selected number of recent books that appeared a quarter of a century later (Littman 1981). He featured six American books, although earlier ones entered into his treatment. The six given special attention were: Chaplin & Krawiec (1979), the fourth edition of a book that appeared first in 1960; Leahey (1980), a new book that was subsequently revised in 1987; Lowry (1971), a first edition; and Lundin (1979), a second edition that followed the first of 1972 and preceded the third of 1985. Robinson (1979b) and Watson (1979) were also reviewed. Littman's paper was listed as a Special Review and called *An Essay Review* in its title. It is indeed a very scholarly and thoughtful interpretative and evaluative review. Other books were appearing during the same period, and while he mentioned some "as histories students are likely to be studying" and lists them in his references, he did not review them, perhaps because they were not included in his assignment. We note the lack, for example, of some others that had appeared but were not listed, or appeared too near in time to the review: Lawry (1981), Misiak & Sexton (1966), Robinson (1976, rev. ed. 1981), and Schulz (1969, 4th ed. 1987). Schulz's 3rd edition of 1981 was buttressed by an associated handbook for teachers of psychology geared to it (Benjamin 1981). There was no review of Wertheimer (1970, 3rd ed. 1987), another of those books the student was "likely to have been studying." Robinson (1977/1978) had also completed the mammoth task of republishing with commentary 28 volumes of historical significance that had appeared between 1750 and 1920. In the meantime an edited book by Hilgard (1978)

gave such perspective as might be gained from republishing, in context, a number of the addresses of the presidents of the American Psychological Association, 1892–1977; and a book edited by Hearst (1979) had chapters by many authors recounting the 100 years since the founding of Wundt's laboratory. The topics were selected as those conventionally associated with experimental psychology, but coverage was extended to include developmental psychology, social psychology, and psychopathology.

Several substantial new books appeared in the next few years.

Three major books appeared in the same year: Buxton (1985), Kimble & Schlesinger (1985), and Koch & Leary (1985). Buxton contributed the introductory and concluding chapters to his book, as well as two other chapters. There are 12 topical chapters by various authors; two critical chapters on Wundt and the shaping of the experimental tradition, followed by two on functionalism, then two on behaviorism, two on psychoanalysis, and chapters on cognitive psychology. Gestalt, biological contributions, and the relations between psychology and philosophy.

The Kimble & Schlesinger book appeared in two volumes. After an introductory chapter, the first volume contains seven chapters on standard substantive topics or subfields in psychology, each by an expert or teams of experts in the specific field. The second volume also begins with an orienting chapter, and continues with ten more subfields. While some attention is given to subfields with an applied flavor (psychological testing, psychotherapy) there is nothing specific about such applied areas as educational and industrial–organizational psychology.

The Koch & Leary volume is a massive book of 42 chapters divided into four major subsections: the systematic framework of psychology; the special fields of psychology; psychology and intersecting disciplines; and psychology in relation to society, culture, and sensibility. Each chapter seeks to take a serious look at the present state of psychological theory with due regard to what has happened over the past century.

The next, in order of publication date, is Hilgard's (1987). It differs from the books mentioned just above in that it is a single-author book and insofar as it focuses on American psychology in the modern period. Furthermore, the coverage of substantive topics is very broad, including applied topics such as clinical, educational, and industrial-organizational psychology; it also gives attention to professional problems such as the organization of psychology nationally and internationally. The attention to American psychology is not parochial, and due attention is given to British and European influences. The organization is topical: the number of topics treated in its 21 chapters makes it more like Chaplin & Krawiec (1979) and Kimble & Schlesinger (1985), rather than the other books mentioned. Kendler (1987) also published a single-author book, with its 13 chapters devoted largely to major systematic

viewpoints. After an introductory chapter, there are chapters on the influence of Wundt and James, on the major schools, including, along with Watsonian behaviorism, two neo-behaviorisms (Tolman vs Hull; Skinner and Hebb), and on the more recent developments of cognitive psychology and humanistic psychology. The final chapter treats of legacies of the past and projections into the future.

Hilgard (1988) also edited a small multi-author historical book on the last 50 years of psychology, with each of the ten topical fields that were covered represented by contributions from a recognized authority in that area. Hilgard contributed an introductory chapter reflecting on the recurrent themes within psychology during that period.

In addition to books such as these, there are many specialized books that space restraints prevent our listing. Mention should be made particularly of the source books and books of readings that continue to find their places. Illustrative examples are those of Dennis (1948), Diamond (1974), Herrnstein & Boring (1966), and Sahakian (1968). One that was revised during the 1980s is that of Marx & Cronan-Hillix (1987), now in its fourth edition, having first appeared in 1963. Benjamin (1988) published a history of psychology that is essentially a source book in a new style that combines primary and secondary sources. There are 13 selections from significant primary contributors, from Descartes to Skinner, and 37 secondary articles in which the contributions of each primary author have been discussed by others. Benjamin himself writes introductory sections of three to five printed pages for each of the sections, including references that supplement the primary and secondary selected passages, so that the book is designed to be used as a text in the history of psychology.

There are many more specialized histories by topic or subfield of psychology, of which Boring (1942) produced a good example for sensation and perception. Then there are histories of psychology for applied areas, as, for example, the multi-author volume by Glover & Ronning (1987) on educational psychology. There are histories of psychology in different countries of which Joravsky's (1989) history of Russian psychology is a recent example. Watson (1978) and Viney et al (1979) provided useful bibliographic sources for earlier specialized histories, categorized in several ways. The source materials for teachers and others interested in the history of psychology are discussed further in a later section of this chapter.

That the interpretation of psychology in history remains a source of controversy is illustrated by two feature reviews on transitions in psychological theory by Bolles (1990) and Kendler (1990), each dealing with the same two books from his own perspective: Amsel (1989) and Marx & Cronan-Hillix (1987).

Kendler views Amsel's book as a complaint by "an angry young senior

citizen” against the distorted attacks on neo-behaviorism by the cognitivists, and suggests that the vigor of the attack might help the cognitivists put their house in order. He notes how Amsel reflects his training at Iowa under Spence and Bergmann, and, similarly, how Marx & Cronan-Hillix reflect a functionalist orientation that derives from Harvey Carr by way of Marx’s study with Carr’s student, Marion Bunch, and Cronan-Hillix’s training under Marx. By contrast with Amsel, Marx & Cronan-Hillix are more tolerant, less harshly critical, and more willing to emphasize similarities than differences among the theories they treat.

Bolles entitles his review of the same two books “Where did everybody go?” He begins with Marx & Cronan-Hillix, whose 4th edition is “nicely polished, a good new edition.” It is a good treatment of the early spring days of the schools and systems, but what Bolles misses is an adequate treatment of their autumn days and decline. As an illustration, there is much about Freud and the neo-Freudians, but the reader is left without a feeling for what has happened to psychoanalysis. The issues raised during the height of the controversy over S-R theories, as by Tolman & Hull, remain frozen where they stood about 20 years ago. Amsel, according to Bolles, attributes the decline of the S-R theory to the attacks by the cognitivists, but Bolles believes the trouble was with the reductionism of the S-R unit as revealed by attacks on reinforcement theory, an inheritance from the golden age of learning theory, not the influence of the cognitive interpretations.

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF PSYCHOLOGY

As useful as general texts are for the student, teacher, and scholar of the history of psychology, the professional advancement of the field over the past three decades—as predicted by Stocking (1965) and Young (1966)—has been associated in important ways with an increase in attention paid to historical methodology and to more narrowly defined topics of research. Guided by previous discussions on the theories and methods of historical research (e.g. Beringer 1978; Carr 1961; Fischer 1970; Hughes 1964; Kuhn 1968), historians of psychology have produced their own reflections upon the ways their craft should be plied (e.g. Ash 1983; Danziger 1984; Furumoto 1989; Morawski 1984; Woodward 1980). The central issues raised by these discussions, as well as examples of historical research resulting from their implementation over the past three decades, are the major topics of this section. Here we hope to convey some of the intellectual excitement and identify the scholarly contributions that have been generated by this field of research.

Of the many historiographical issues that have preoccupied historians of psychology over the past decades, perhaps the most pressing and useful have

revolved around (a) continuity vs discontinuity; (b) presentism vs historicism; (c) internalism vs externalism; (d) "great men" vs "the *Zeitgeist*"; and (e) ceremonial legitimation vs critical history. These general issues are far from independent of one another, but for the sake of clarity we treat them separately.

Continuity vs Discontinuity

Certainly one of the great inspirations of interest in the history of science over the past three decades has been Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). Not surprisingly, its treatment of preparadigmatic science, "normal science," and the role of theory and method in the emergence of paradigmatic science stimulated a great deal of reflection and research on the history of the social and behavioral sciences (e.g. Barnes 1982; Buss 1978; Palermo 1971; Peterson 1981); and these applications of "Kuhnian analysis" elicited a corresponding set of critical responses (e.g. Briskman 1972; Koch 1976; Lipsey 1974; Suppe 1984).

Of the many facets of Kuhn's influence on the field, the question of the continuity vs discontinuity of historical development has been central. Have there been scientific revolutions—truly radical ruptures—in the history of psychology, as Kuhn's theory would suggest to some, or has psychology evolved over time in a more or less consecutive fashion?

The salience of this question has been reinforced by Michael Foucault (1965, 1970, 1975), whose work has challenged historians to look for disjunctures that may have occurred as one historical period, with its distinctive conceptual framework and associated patterns of behavior, yielding to another. Although historiographical practice must presume some sort of continuity between past and present (Leary 1976), Foucault (along with Kuhn) has made historians more aware of the possibility of discontinuities in the history of psychology.

The most radical implication of this issue is conveyed by Roger Smith's recent query, "Does the history of psychology have a subject?" In an article that bears careful reading and consideration by anyone who is serious about the history of psychology, Smith (1988) concludes that "*the* history of psychology should be abandoned. It does not seem possible to conceptualize a continuous and unitary subject" for such a history (p. 162). What is needed, Smith suggests, are multiple studies that reveal the variety of ways "psychology" and its kindred theories and practices have been constituted over time. In a similar vein, Danziger (1990b) has questioned the assumption that psychological terms (sensation, association, motivation, stimulation, and so forth) have meant the same thing in different historical periods. Such cautions deserve the attention and comprehension of teachers, students, and scholars alike, even if some (e.g. Brush 1974) may wonder about their possibly

negative impact on potential recruits to the field. Although these cautions suggest limits on what historians (and psychologists) may realistically hope to accomplish, they also point toward exciting new possibilities for historical research and writing. How was the past different from the present and different from how we are accustomed to representing it? What new aspects of the past might we see if we were to shine a new light or take a new perspective on it?

Presentism vs Historicism

The major contention at the heart of discussions about presentism and historicism is that historical research should strive to portray the past in its own terms, through the categories and concerns of *those* times and places rather than of *our* time and place. Building on Butterfield's (1959) work, Stocking (1965) directed the attention of historians of the social and behavioral sciences to the need for more richly and accurately modulated historical analyses, written from the vantage point of the actors involved and with minimal reliance upon the knowledge we have as citizens of a later time.

On the other hand, Stocking and others (e.g. Buss 1977; Marx 1977) have pointed out the opportunity and need for historians to address issues of present concern. This suggests the estimable challenge of pursuing a finely balanced approach to history that is both honest to the past and useful, in some way, in the present. The tensions generated by such a balancing act are well known to historians of psychology sensitive to the role historical research can play in legitimating and/or in critically assessing the past and present status of the discipline and profession. As noted above, some of these historians have been critical of apparent failures of balance in the past—for example, in Boring's (1950) analysis of Wundtian psychology (Blumenthal 1975; Danziger 1979a). Many of the chapters in such edited volumes as Morawski's (1988) and Sokal's (1987) attempt to walk the fine line between historicist objectivity and presentist concerns.

Internalism vs Externalism

Traditional history of science focused primarily on the so-called internal development of scientific thought and procedure—how one idea and method led to other ideas and methods in a more or less progressive fashion, with relatively little influence from “nonscientific” factors (see Kuhn 1968). The initial calls for a more externalist approach (e.g. Hessen 1971, 1st ed., 1931; Merton 1970, 1st ed., 1938) emphasized the need for historians of science to attend the nonideational and nonprocedural factors pertaining to the social, cultural, economic, and political foundations and dimensions of science. Although such calls generated considerable controversy up to fairly recent times, their general point has now been made, and most historians grant that

the boundaries of scientific work are more difficult to define than once seemed the case (see Buss 1979). Even historians who attend primarily to the intellectual history of science now routinely grant that scientific theories and method draw upon and influence other social and cultural realms.

Relatedly, the intellectual history of psychology is now typically approached with greater sensitivity to the "external" (extra-disciplinary) origins and significance of scientific ideas. Hence, over the past decade, much of the interesting and innovative work in the history of psychology has been on "the social history of ideas" (Ash 1982). Exemplary works include those of Ash (1987), Leary (1982), and Smith (1986). Although the latter two works provide an almost exclusively intellectual (rather than social) account of their different subject matters, they clearly convey the linkage between psychology and "external" fields of scholarship. Burnham (1987), Fuller (1982), and Young (1985) persuasively illustrate the vital connection between psychology and other domains of society and culture.

"Great Men" vs the Zeitgeist

As noted earlier, Boring (1950) posed a distinction between "great men" and the *Zeitgeist*. Both concepts are now problematic—in ways worthy of review. "Great men" are no longer considered to "stand alone" in the history of science, either as "great" or as "men." To historians now alerted to the dangers of assuming continuity of influence insulated from external factors, eminence is a concept to be ascribed and understood with care. Furthermore, recent social and intellectual developments, coupled with groundbreaking research on the role of women (Furumoto 1989) and minorities (Guthrie 1976) in psychology, have somewhat relieved the exclusive focus upon the role and contributions of white, middle-class male psychologists. The demographic characteristics of effective and/or historically noticed psychologists have become important topics of research, and the elucidation of the contexts within which career advancement and other rewards have been allocated in the history of psychology has opened up new and significant areas of scholarship, in which historicist approaches are unearthing information and giving rise to interpretations that are of considerable interest and value.

It is not that individuals are now thought to be less significant as historical actors. Rather, the understanding of what constitutes and shapes individual lives and careers has grown in recent years, so that our understanding of eminence in science has been considerably enriched. Recent biographical studies have become much more subtle as a result, and the scholarly literature—even on such "male greats" as Freud (Sulloway 1979), James (Feinstein 1984), Hall (Ross 1972), Thorndike (Joncich 1968), and Watson (Buckley 1989)—has clearly surpassed earlier work. At the same time, as suggested above, studies of female psychologists (e.g. O'Connell & Russo 1983, 1988;

Scarborough & Furumoto 1987; Stevens & Gardner 1982) have made it clear that we have yet to realize fully the historical significance of women and other neglected populations within psychology.

As for the *Zeitgeist* or spirit of the time, Ross (1969), Rosenzweig (1970), and others have vigorously and successfully attacked simplistic notions about the existence of a rigidly coherent and unified culture that can supposedly override individual variations and efficacy. Although so-called “strong programs” for the sociology of science are still being proposed, more permeable and variable approaches to the social as well as cultural dimensions of science seem by and large to be in the ascendancy. Such works as those of Danziger (1979b), O’Donnell (1985), and Sokal (1981) have attempted to integrate respect for both individual and social factors into a more dynamic and multifaceted approach to history. Leary has tried to highlight the larger rhetorical context within which American psychologists have operated. This context, as more amply illustrated in a recent volume edited by him (Leary 1990), extends well beyond psychology into the broader social and cultural realm.

Ceremonial Legitimation vs Critical History

It is probably obvious, even to the relatively uninitiated that all of the foregoing issues—continuity vs discontinuity, presentism vs historicism, internalism vs externalism, and “great men” vs the *Zeitgeist*—overlap in significant ways. Furthermore, although our brief discussions have repeatedly suggested that historical practice should be subtle and complex, avoiding simplistic commitments to either of the bipolar extremes that define each of these issues, it may not surprise many readers that the lefthand poles in these historiographical dilemmas—which is to say, an assumption of continuity between past and present, a reading of the past through present categories of analysis, a focus on the internal logic of historical developments, and an emphasis upon the more eminent contributors to psychology—have often been associated with attempts to construct historical accounts that serve in one manner or another to underscore and legitimate aspects of contemporary psychology.

One way of marking historical figures and events as related to current interests is to create an “origin myth,” a story that purports to clarify how these persons and events served as founders and precedents of some current theory, practice, or field (Samelson 1974). Harris (1980) has characterized such historical accounts as “ceremonial,” and he has contrasted them with accounts that are more “critical” in nature. Ceremonial histories have also been called “monumental” (Nietzsche 1949) and “justificationist” (Weimer 1974), and as the latter term implies, they serve as a sort of apologetics for current theory and practice. Examples typically take the form of accounts that

trace contemporary developments back to their “predecessors” and even further back to “anticipations” and “foreshadowings.” Most historians have become suspicious of such ventures, not because they are without any value, but because they reduce historical scholarship to a kind of point-to-point linedrawing that ignores more significant and interesting details that surround and contextualize these points.

Critical history, on the other hand, although it can be equally “committed” (Woodward 1985), is more analytic and less apologetic in orientation. It seeks to cut through illusions and myths in order to reveal the practical factors involved in psychology’s history. Despite its apparent disengagement, however, critical history can “take a stance,” not just *against* the taken-for-granted aspects of psychology’s history, but *for* the notion that history is created and constituted in the dynamic interaction between human actors and social situations. Although there is no necessary connection (see Woodward 1980), it has become common for “critical historians” to be committed to one or another form of social constructionism (Danziger 1984). To this extent, critical historians have a good deal in common with some of their psychologist colleagues (e.g. Gergen 1985; Sampson 1983). Works in this mode include those of Danziger (1990a), Finison (1976), Harris (1979b), Lewin (1984), Morawski (1985), Rose (1985), and Samelson (1985).

Models and Methods

Having reviewed five central issues in the historiography of psychology, we conclude this section by noting that, in addition to being reflective about these issues, many active historians are also self-conscious about the model of science and the mode of historical interpretation and narration they use (see Richards 1981). In addition, we want to underscore that historians have access to many different methods—archival, quantitative, biographical, textual/analytical, psychohistorical, and so on (see Brozek & Pongratz 1980; McAdams & Ochberg 1988). In view of these many methods, it is important to emphasize that, from our perspective, the historian’s subject, question, or concern should come first, dictating which methods are most appropriate at any given time, not vice versa: method should not dictate the topics of research. A decade or two ago, as historians of psychology passed a milestone of self-reflectiveness, this was not always the case.

For the nonhistorian, we would also like to conclude this section by emphasizing what should now be obvious: Historians do not simply read texts and write history. Decisions about topical or thematic focus, the nature of relevant data, the means of gathering this information, the appropriate mode of analysis and interpretation, and the construction of narrative or other genres of presentation are all at issue, each and every time an historical project is undertaken. For many contemporary historians of psychology, it is exciting to face these intellectual and methodological challenges.

TEACHING THE HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY

The history and systems of psychology course has become a standard component of most undergraduate psychology programs (Brozek 1966; Nance 1961, 1971; Raphelson 1982; Riedel 1974; Watson 1966). Lyman (1970) has detailed an example of what might prove to be the next logical progression in this overall trend, a program in which the standard introductory psychology course is taught from an historical perspective. Although the number of publications on the history of psychology has increased dramatically over the last 25 years, a parallel development in the number of publications concerned with the effective teaching of the history of psychology has, until more recently, been rather modest.

New sources to aid the teacher include Benjamin's handbook (1981), which contains an extremely useful yet abbreviated bibliography of pre-1980 publications. McGuire (1990) compiled an annotated bibliography of various approaches to teaching the history of psychology. It covers a wide range of historiographic approaches to psychology, including archival sources, bibliographic sources, biography and psychobiography, content and/or discourse analysis, international perspectives in the historiography of psychology, the application of Kuhn's history of science model to psychology, oral history, the role of origin myths in the history of psychology, philosophy of science influences, psychoanalytic approaches to historiography, psychological interpretations of historical developments, the importance of social factors and the sociology of knowledge tradition, quantifiable measures originating within the sociology of science, the social organization of science, and textbook histories (McGuire 1990).

On a more specific level, several authors recently attempted to examine the teaching of the history of psychology from a single historiographic approach: see, for example, the books and the recent collections of articles devoted to psychohistorical methodology and the teaching of the history and systems course (Adams 1988; Eicholz 1988; Elovitz 1988; McAdams & Ochberg 1988; Runyan 1982, 1988; Shneidman 1988).

The intent of the following section therefore is to survey published resources specifically devoted to the teaching of the history of psychology.

Reflecting the rather slow initial development and acceptance of the history of psychology as an autonomous area of research within psychology, publication outlets for articles and advice on teaching the history of psychology have been limited. Prior to 1977, only an occasional letter or short report referring to teaching the history of psychology appeared in the *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* or *American Psychologist*. Almost without exception, these brief notes detail one individual's experiences with one particular approach to teaching historical research in psychology. After this date, these brief notes are complemented by occasional articles in the journal *Teaching of*

Psychology. This is typified by the inclusion in 1979 of an entire symposium on teaching the history of psychology. Unfortunately, there have been very few published attempts to integrate the various short reports and articles. As well, the nature of these short reports and correspondence notes has meant that individual authors have seldom had the opportunity to discuss the implications of different approaches to teaching the history of psychology in the kind of detail these questions deserve.

Fostering Student Interest in Historical Research

Yet, for the patient and persistent scholar, there is an abundance of published resources, suggestions, experiences, and criticisms of potential use in introducing historical material into everyday classroom activities. A fair number of these articles have been conceived in response to the oft-stated contention that it is difficult to maintain student interest and enthusiasm regarding the history of psychology course. For example, Weigl & Gottfurcht (1972, 1976) presented innovative approaches to teaching history through participatory projects specifically designed to maintain the interest of students. Similarly, Coffield (1973: 624) briefly discussed the need to address the “dread . . . apathy, boredom, etc” of the typical student in the history of psychology course. This perception of the inherently uninteresting nature of the history and systems of psychology course has been refuted by several authors, including Raphelson (1979) and Benjamin (1979). Most interestingly, Nance (1961, 1971) has twice published surveys of history of psychology students that would appear to contradict this pessimistic outlook, and instead indicates a relatively high level of student interest in this course.

A Reference Shelf as a Resource for Students

If students are to learn how to use historical materials, the course in the history of psychology can have this as one of its objectives. The availability of sources supplementary to the textbook is essential. To be sure, a secondary book of readings based on original sources has its place, and good ones are available; but the additional resources to be found in the library should be accessible. For general reference purposes, including guides to other books and the journal literature, the following books are to be recommended as a representative shelf of books for the history class. Note that the usual textbook histories and texts on systems and theories are not included, for they do not serve the same purposes. Here is a suggested shelf list, arranged alphabetically by author and date, with full citations included in the literature cited section at the end of this chapter: Baldwin (1913), Benjamin (1981, 1988), Boring (1963), Brett (1912, 1921) (but see also Peters 1953), Krawiec (1972, 1974, 1978), McGuire (1990), Murchison (1930b–1932) (and the successive volumes of the *History of Psychology in Autobiography* with other editors;

see Lindzey 1989), Murchison (1932a), Peters (1962), Rand (1912), Viney et al (1979), Watson (1974, 1976, 1978), and Zusne (1975, 1984). These may not all be available locally, but the serious history student should nevertheless be aware of them all. An effective history of psychology course might be one that is evenly divided between basic textbook material and additional readings on different approaches to historical research.

Evaluating Existing Textbooks and Planning New Ones

Looking specifically at the textbooks themselves, several authors offer suggestions and/or frameworks for analyzing various characteristics of history of psychology texts. These comments and suggestions are of potential use both for the evaluation of existing texts and for the planning of future textbooks in the history of psychology. On the level of specific detail, the studies by Buys (1976), Finison (1983), and Harris (1979b) surveyed the wide range of interpretations of a specific historical event as portrayed in a variety of different textbooks. The degree to which these events are differentially recounted and evaluated can only emphasize the importance of considered evaluation in choosing a suitable text.

A particularly important argument was set forth by Ash (1983), who argued that history of psychology texts have played a deliberate and vital role in the self-presentation of psychology as a discipline, provided they have been designed to serve this purpose. Ash traced historical research in psychology in terms of attempts to deal with specific problems of progress, such as writing scientific history, moving away from linear continuity, and the development of historical research as an area of specialization. More recently, several authors have moved beyond the question of choosing the best history of psychology text to considering how most effectively to write and organize a textbook that addresses some of the above concerns (Cherry 1989; Danziger 1989; Dunbar 1989; Langlotz & Lubek 1989; Lubek 1989; McGuire 1989). Sullivan (1973), in addition to providing a framework for evaluating the history text, pointed to the necessity of an increased emphasis on cross-disciplinary research and comparison, a suggestion supported by others (e.g. Carlson & Simpson 1970; Statt 1976; Woodward 1982).

Raphelson (1979) described the necessity of highlighting historical context in understanding the history of psychology. Epstein (1981) has suggested that one of the most efficient means of accomplishing this goal is to focus on one narrowly defined historical period to be explored in some detail, as opposed to a comprehensive overview of a wide-ranging historical period.

Origin Myths as a Point of Reference

One of the most vital considerations in any attempt to teach the history of psychology is the necessity of highlighting and fostering a critical approach to

historical research among students (Harris 1984). One way of accomplishing this goal is through an examination of what Samelson (1974) has called "origin myths" in the history of psychology, as discussed above. Students are often fascinated and surprised to learn that celebrated events in the history of psychology are not always accurately portrayed by historians, and that distortions or inaccuracies in historical narrative may reflect a hidden agenda. Watson & Rayner's (1920) Little Albert study has become a classic case study for this sort of revisionist approach to history, with Harris (1979b), LeUnes (1983), and Prytula et al (1977) all exploring the varied historical depictions of "the rat-rabbit" problem in emotional conditioning and the implications of this diversity for teaching the history of psychology.

Winton (1987) performed a similar analysis of the differing historical portrayals of the Yerkes-Dodson Law in various psychology textbooks, and Samelson (1974) developed the term "origin myth" in his examination of Allport's possible misattributions of various comments and accomplishments to Comte. Other illustrations include Misceo & Samelson's (1983:447) demonstration of "how the conditioned reflex discovered Witmer," and descriptions by Furumoto (1985), Scarborough & Furumoto (1987), and Bernstein & Russo (1974) of the role accorded female psychologists in various aspects of the history of psychology. Guthrie (1976) made a similar analysis of the role accorded to black psychologists in the history of psychology. Haines & Vaughan (1979) reexamined Allport's designation of Triplett's dynamogenesis research as the first example of experimental social psychology.

Two lesser known examples of possible origin myths offer similar instructional possibilities: Littman's (1971) criticism of French claims that Piéron was the true founder of behaviorism, and the short note by Wertheimer & Meserow (1980) refuting the often-mentioned claim that Piaget could have worked directly with Binet. A somewhat disappointing impact of this origin-myth research has been pointed out by Finison (1983), who examined introductory psychology texts in the years immediately following the publication of the report by Haines & Vaughan (1979) mentioned above. Finison concludes that the demonstration by Haines & Vaughan of the possible errors or qualifications of Allport's original historical research had little or no impact on the way the foundation of modern social psychology was subsequently depicted in textbooks.

Varied Approaches to Substantive Issues

Several authors have recounted personal experiences with specific approaches to addressing substantive issues in the history of psychology. Many instructors of the history and systems of psychology course have discussed the use of individual and/or group exercises, such as term papers (Capretta 1976;

Furumoto 1985; Harris 1979a) and research projects (Grigg 1974). Caudle (1979) proposed the importance of individual research efforts in helping to foster and demonstrate continuity between earlier and present-day psychology. Benjamin (1976, 1979) emphasized the need to develop research projects and programs that put the accent on sources of historical information and where this information is located, as opposed to limiting consideration to the research topic itself.

One of the best means of encouraging student interest in the history of psychology, while at the same time helping to put historical developments into context, is the employment of realistic demonstrations of classical experiments and research projects drawn from the past. Cogan & Cogan (1984), for example, outlined an inexpensive and easy-to-run demonstration of classical conditioning, and Caudle (1979) provided several striking but relatively simple reproductions of classic experiments from psychology's early history.

Biographical Approaches

Benjamin (1979) suggested that most students find it much more difficult to perform comprehensive historical research on a specific individual than on a particular topic area. Many instructors nevertheless adopt the "great psychologist" approach when assigning research projects for the history and systems of psychology course. Over the past few years, Boice (1975), Furumoto (1984), Kellogg (1981), and Smith (1982) have emphasized what might best be called the biographical approach to the student term paper or project. (For an extensive overview of biographical approaches to the history of psychology, see McGuire 1990.)

Raphelson (1979) and Smith (1982) discussed applying the biographical approach to all aspects of the history of psychology course, including lectures and reading material. A more specific attempt to introduce students to active, participatory biographical research is set forth in faculty genealogy research projects. Each project is a limited exercise examining the personal and theoretical influences on individual psychologists (McGuire 1988; Mindness 1988; Terry 1980; Weigl & Gottfurcht 1972, 1976).

Several authors have emphatically argued for the effectiveness of role-playing debates between prominent individuals in the history of psychology course (Benjamin 1981; Brooks 1985; Shaklee 1957). Similarly, Coffield (1973) described an exercise in which students adopt the perspective of a particular school of psychology and debate as representatives of that school throughout the course. More specifically, Cole (1983) outlined a similar program in which students recreate the potential debates of a specific APA convention. From the other extreme, Vande Kemp (1980) argued for the effectiveness of teaching historical and biographical material through an in-depth examination of specific case studies.

History Teachers as Historians

The individual research and writing of many present-day historians of psychology are often motivated by a reevaluation of earlier historical accounts, yet many teach history in the way they first encountered it. Most historians of psychology today were not trained as historians but have instead moved into the field through a combination of personal interest and professional considerations. Yet the individual moving into historical research and instruction has until recently had access to little information that might serve to orient initial research and teaching strategies. A more consistent effort on the part of the historian of psychology to discuss teaching resources and approaches will not only improve the general level of historical instruction in psychology, but it may also lead to a greater historical sensibility throughout the field of psychology.

FINAL COMMENTS

We hope that this introductory review, the first of its kind on the topic in the *Annual Review of Psychology* will assist the teacher, student, and scholar of the history of psychology. We also hope that it conveys some of the intellectual excitement and potential relevance of this field of scholarship.

While the reasons for studying the history of psychology are varied (Bernstein & Russo 1974; Henle 1976; Milar 1987; Raphelson 1982; Robinson 1979a; Watson 1966; Wertheimer 1980; Woodward 1980), the history of psychology occupies a distinctive position in relation to the discipline and profession it attempts to scrutinize. Perhaps more than any other science or profession, psychology has become reflective about its history. Unlike most other professional scientific organizations, many regional and national psychological societies sponsor divisions and programs devoted to historical self-scrutiny and interpretation. In addition, psychology curricula, particularly in the United States, reserve a larger place for historically oriented courses than do the curricula of other scientific disciplines.

We believe that this is no mere happenstance. Although its full comprehension will require careful historical study, it seems likely that this unique situation is due in large part to a sense of crisis and challenge that has characterized the field over the past three decades. This sense of crisis, now abating, stemmed from the downfall of behaviorism and positivism as the dominating influences on the ethos of the discipline; the sense of challenge, now growing, is focused upon the need to understand the fractionating tendencies within the discipline and profession.

As the diversity and specialization within psychology continue to increase, the historical perspective may be even more important, as the only vantage point from which we might maintain some sense of coherence in the field.

The plethora of current developments are linked temporally, if in no other single way. At the same time, a broader historical perspective that reaches beyond the narrow confines of psychology may prove particularly helpful in clarifying how the seemingly centrifugal tendencies within psychology are part of a larger transdisciplinary set of ongoing developments.

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