

History and systems of psychology research paper

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The leaders of philosophy in the United States focused on mental philosophy in the early and middle 1800s. They were educated in and then taught at some of the colleges that were founded during the colonial and federal periods of the United States. After receiving an undergraduate education and either teaching or continuing in their education, these philosophers frequently continued onto the only graduate level studies that were available, and the ministry. While earning graduate degrees, studies were not limited to the study of the Bible, but also included the classical languages, Hebrew, German, and training in rhetoric, logic, and philosophy. The main reason that German was taught was to be able to keep current with the literature being published in Europe about philosophy, as it was just spreading to the United States.

The most noted philosophers of this time were Joseph Haven, educated at Amherst College; Laurens Hickok educated at Union College; Thomas C. Upham educated at Bowdoin College; and Francis Wayland educated at Brown University. All proceeded to study for the ministry after college and then serve as professors.

In 1878, from Berlin, Germany, philosopher G. Stanley Hall described a new philosophy and introduced a philosophical laboratory. This was also the origin of psychology of experimental psychology that was based on philosophy. In Europe, this laboratory approach began to gain favor, where in the United States, the study of philosophy remained in the college classroom. After the Civil War, and full of vigor, some philosophical students traveled to Europe to see and study this new branch of philosophy. They returned excited and demanded that changes be made in the manner in

which philosophy was being taught, full of excitement with what they had encountered during their European adventure. Meeting in laboratories to gather facts as they had witnessed when in Europe, these students of philosophy challenged their professors and were determined to understand how the mind worked. The neat diagrams of the mind in the textbooks that had been previously used were set aside. This is where the work of William James became introduced, and the meeting of philosophy and psychology began to merge (Fuchs, 2000).

In American history, the most noted leader in psychology was William James. One of the main contributions that James made was the philosophy of the science of psychology. One of the conflicts that James tried to evaluate was how to measure the success of therapy. Some measure the amount of regression a subject makes and others attempt to judge the progress. This is one element that James used in his evaluation to categorize psychology as a mature academic discipline. James' main contribution to psychology was that it be equally considered by science and philosophy. He considered psychology to be a psychological science. He understood the limits of science and that the philosophical basis of psychology was necessary (Hoffman & Thelen, 2010).

The study of psychology and philosophy at the university level, and thus leading to professions, was an amicable relationship in the United States in the late 1800s. There was no competition for resources at the college and graduate level. The two main graduate institutions for both areas of study were at Harvard University and the University of Pennsylvania. At both schools, the educator was usually a reverend with religious credentials that

also filled the role of Vice Provost or Provost of the institution. As doctoral programs were added to the institutions at the close of the 19th century, the faculty became more specialized, but generally the same person or couple of people, and the field grew at the schools.

As early as the 1890s, the study of these fields spread into other institutions. Neither required expensive equipment. Schools were beginning to organize themselves into the departmental structures to which they still use today. In 1912, there were 39 psychology departments, 21 were their own department, some were coupled with philosophy, and a few were partnered in the education department. The study of philosophy remained focused on intellectual interchanges. Psychology followed the path of becoming a cognitive science.

Psychology has struggled to identify itself as a true science. This effort has been a battle for 150-200 years and the battle is not yet won. In the realm of science, there have been laboratory techniques, collection of experimental data, and an ongoing debate over whether psychology is a primary study of the mind or behavior. Psychology separated itself from philosophy as the 19th century ended. There are some that believe that it cannot stand on its own as a science, but needs to join neuroscience or cognitive science to remain recognized (Hatfield, 2002).

The western tradition has a variety of contributors that have helped shape psychology as a formal discipline, but perhaps none have been as significant as Buddha. Buddhism and the western psychological traditions share many of the same theories and practices. Some of these include phenomenological psychology, cognitive psychology, existential psychology, humanistic

psychology, and psychoanalytical psychotherapy. Few people outside of the field are aware of the similar backgrounds between psychology and Buddhism, but there are many correlations between the two despite one being a primarily religious tradition and the other a science, even though many believe that science and religion do not mix (Aich, 2013).

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