

# William james and stanley hall contributions to functionalism

[Philosophy](#), [Personal Philosophy](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

This school of thought arose as a comeback to structuralism. It aims at the study of consciousness. It lays stress on function rather than structure of consciousness.

Functionalism conjointly includes the approach by which human beings adapt to their environment.

## **William James**

William James is referred to as founder of “ Functionalism” and is 2nd satisfactory psychologist after Wilhelm Wundt. He wrote about stream of consciousness, emotions, self-habit formation and mind body link. He offered a unique methodology to look at mind.

## **Stream of consciousness**

It refers towards the continuous amendment of thoughts. For William James it is personal for every individual and for every man and woman it keeps on converting. He also stated that consciousness cannot be cut up into factors for evaluation.

## **Study of emotions**

William James was interested in emotions. He also developed a theory of emotions.

Prior belief of the folks was that we see a bear, we get frightened and then we run due to that sensation of fear however in line with William James physical response occur before the manifestation of emotions. For example: if we are walking down a scary path at night and we hear the sound of foot steps behind us, we firstly start trembling and then we get frightened.

<https://assignbuster.com/william-james-and-stanley-hall-contributions-to-functionalism/>

## **Study of self (empirical self)**

William James described three types of self:

- Material self, that includes your family and your possessions and belongings.
- Social self, that includes your friends and self-known by others.
- Spiritual self, that includes your opinions, beliefs and one own's individual reality.

## **Pragmatism**

William James also introduced a new term ' Pragmatism'. According to this, the validity of a concept must be judged on the basis of its consequence. He states that intellectual truth of an idea cannot be proven so we should contemplate the helpfulness of an idea. If an idea works then it is valid. For example: Behavior ought to be judged on the basis of the outcome or effect.

## **Habit formation**

Frequently occurring actions are called habits. According to William James environment plays a crucial role in maintaining healthy habits and avoiding immoral ones. A healthy environment should be selected for the development of a decent character because of that fact that these habits become concrete after the transitional age.

## **G. Stanley Hall**

G. Stanley hall was the contributor of functionalism. He developed the 1st psychology laboratory at Johns Hopkins University.

G. Stanley hall was an early proponent of psychoanalysis, giving American psychologists initial look at psychoanalysis. He usually had individuals at his home for presenting studies.

## **Recapitulation theory**

He became greatly motivated by Darwin's and Haeckel's theory of development. Recapitulation theory states that development of advanced species passes through phases represented by grown-up organisms.

## **Adolescence**

He wrote a complete book on adolescence that gave people a clear concept about its stages. He gave people the concept that adolescence is an essential level for shaping the entire life. The young ones get moody and develop conflicts during this stage. They may commit crimes as well and may develop bad habits. It is important to maintain good environment for the development of healthy habits because teen agers seek new things and are risk takers. His book on adolescence received much criticism.

## **Child development**

He developed people's interest towards child development. He studies child mentality thoroughly. He also studied fears of children through questionnaires. His efforts and studies on child's mentality were not appreciated by other psychologists.