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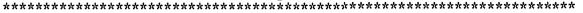   Development; Higher Education; *Psychology; *Textbook
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ABSTRACT
              Although a history and systems course in psychology
should provide a valuable forum for organizing the discipline, no
current texts consistently provide enough coverage of the context in
which the discipline emerged to anchor developments throughout the
history of psychology. To test the validity of this observation, 10
undergraduate history and systems texts were reviewed in terms of
their coverage of 5 significant psychological developments: Freud and
the birth of psychoanalysis, Pavlov's systematic examination of
classical conditioning, Gestalt psychology's loss of cohesion, the
rise in popularity of IQ testing, and the post-World War II
acceptance of the scientist-practitioner model of clinical training.
The review sought to determine the extent to which the developments
were addressed within broad philosophical/scientific,
social/political, and/or psychological/personal contexts and found
that the texts generally emphasized the history of the major systems
of psychology rather than applied implications. As a result, efforts
were undertaken to revise a history and systems course at State
University of New York's College at Buffalo to provide more complete
coverage of the development of psychological applications, the need
for greater emphasis upon socio-political influences, and the
philosophical/scientific and psychological/personal contexts.
Includes a list of texts examined and a table of survey results.
(TGI)

TEACHING THE HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY IN CONTEXT

or

DEPTH WITHOUT BREADTH LEADS TO 'SHALLOW' LEARNING

by

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A substantial consensus exists among Psychology faculty and undergraduate majors that a history and systems course provides a valuable perspective for organizing the discipline. However, even a cursory examination of current texts reveals a variety of similarities and differences in approach among them. One of the most obvious is that there are two dominant perspectives on when the review of antecedents of our discipline should begin. One extends their review back to Greek Philosophy (e.g. Brennan) while the other begins with a review of 17th century science and philosophy as their point of origin (e.g. Schultz and Schultz). Once either review reaches the formal founding of Experimental Psychology with Wundt, however, most texts then proceed with a "systems" or "schools" orientation (e.g. Functionalism, Psychoanalysis, etc) that culminates in a discussion of the "breakdown" of the schools/systems and updates the reader on the "current" state of Psychology. Some texts attempt to provide the reader with a substantial amount of information on the "context" in which the antecedents of the discipline emerged (e.g. "the Age of Reason") and early schools developed (e.g. "Scientific" psychology as originating in universities while applied psychologies such as Freudian Psychoanalysis emerged in a more clinical setting). No current texts, however, appear to consistently provide enough coverage of context to anchor developments throughout the history of psychology in a way that helps the student identify, organize, and remember key developments, theories, etc.

To test the validity of this observation, we reviewed ten undergraduate history and systems texts' (Table 1) coverage of five significant psychological developments to determine the extent to which they are discussed within a broad philosophical/scientific, social/political, and/or psychological/personal context. The five developments were: Freud and the birth of Psychoanalysis, Pavlov's systematic examination of classical conditioning, Gestalt Psychology's loss of cohesion, the rise in popularity of IQ testing and the post

WWII acceptance of the scientist - practitioner model of clinical training. Each text's coverage of the context of these five areas was rated on a four-point scale (very complete, adequate, minimal or non-existent) for each of three dimensions of coverage of context (philosophical/scientific, social/political, and psychological/personal). These results are summarized (across the ten texts) in Table 2. Though the texts' coverage varied substantially, of the five developments examined, we judged the overall level of contextual information supplied to be relatively strong for both "Freud and the birth of psychoanalysis" as well as for "Gestalt Psychology's loss of cohesion". The coverage of "Pavlov's systematic examination of classical conditioning" was considerably weaker and only minimal contextual information was provided for the "rise of IQ testing" or the "post WWII acceptance of the scientist-practitioner model of clinical training". In fact, we found that a number of texts did not even address the issue of clinical training. It appears, therefore, that the selected texts generally emphasize the history of the major systems of psychology rather than applied impacts/implications.

An examination of Table 2 also permits some conclusions to be made concerning the areas of context which are being emphasized across the texts which were reviewed. For the five developments which were chosen, overall coverage of psychological/personal and philosophical/scientific contexts was judged to be "adequate". For "Freud and the birth of psychoanalysis" as well as "Gestalt Psychology's loss of cohesion" this coverage was quite strong. The coverage of socio-political influences was, overall, much weaker across texts. In fact, only in the case of "Gestalt Psychology's loss of cohesion" did the ratings approach the "adequate" level.

Our efforts to revise the teaching of history and systems are being piloted in a class this semester and are centered upon providing more complete coverage in the areas of weakness identified in our survey: the development of psychological applications, the need for greater emphasis upon socio-political

influences, as well as strengthening, in a selective way, coverage of the philosophical/scientific and psychological/personal contexts. For example, when covering Pavlov's contributions, the relationships between his research in learning, the rise of communism in Russia and the importance of his international status as a Nobel prize recipient will be explored. The parallel discoveries of the American, Twitmeyer, will be noted, as well as the contextual reasons which led to his research being ignored. Similarly, we are stressing the role practical concerns and applied problems, as well as the contributions of such social/political issues as the eugenics movement, in our class discussion of the "rise of IQ testing".

In addition to revising and reorganizing lecture/discussion to reflect these varied contexts, we are developing a variety of handouts, timelines, class assignments/projects, revised exams, etc. designed to strengthen students' understanding of contextual factors. One hoped for consequence is that students would no longer view the history of psychology as being substantially divorced from the concurrent developments which occurred in 20th century science, politics, and philosophy.

Finally, we recognize that this incorporation of additional breadth of material raises an issue concerning whether the same depth of coverage can also be accomplished. We do not anticipate that this will be a major issue in history and systems since this course is specifically designed to provide an overview rather than in-depth coverage. Nevertheless, it is recognized that students will now not have as much reinforcement of text material in the lectures. We anticipate, however, that the additional contextual information will provide a much needed perspective for our students, the advantage of which will greatly outweigh any reduction in depth of coverage during the lecture.

TABLE 1

HISTORY AND SYSTEMS TEXTS
RATED FOR COVERAGE OF CONTEXT

Author	Title	Date of Publication
Brennan, James F.	History & Systems of Psychology, 2nd ed.	1986
Bolles, Robert C.	The Story of Psychology: A Thematic History	1993
Hergenhahn, B.R.	An Introduction to the History of Psychology, 2nd ed.	1992
Hothersall, David	History of Psychology, 3rd ed.	1995
Kendler, Howard H.	Historical Foundations of Modern Psychology	1987
Leahey, Thomas H.	A History of Psychology, 3rd ed.	1992
Lundin, Robert W.	Theories & Systems of Psychology, 5th ed.	1996
Murray, David J.	A History of Western Psychology, 2nd ed.	1988
Schultz, Duane P. & Schultz, Sydney E.	A History of Modern Psychology, 5th ed.	1992
Viney, Wayne	A History of Psychology: Ideas and Content	1993

TABLE 2

**Mean Rating of Coverage of Context
Across Ten Selected History of Psychology Texts**

Issue/Topic	Area of Context			
	Philosophical/ Scientific	Social/ Political	Psychological/ Personal	Mean of Row Ratings
Freud and birth of Psychoanalysis	3.4	1.9	3.5	2.9
Pavlov and Classical Conditioning	2.6	1.6	2.7	2.3
Gestalt Psychology's Loss of Cohesion	3.2	2.7	3.0	3.0
Rise of IQ Testing	1.9	1.6	2.3	1.9
Scientist-practitioner model of clinical training	1.6	1.6	2.1	1.8
Mean of column ratings	2.5	1.9	2.7	

Note: 1 = no context provided
2 = minimal context provided
3 = adequate context provided
4 = very complete context provided

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