

Psychology 1: General Psychology

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Module 1

Discovering Psychology

INTRODUCTION

- J. Marie Hicks, M.A., M.A., A.B.D. (UCR)
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- Office hours available by arranged appointment
- Access to Blackboard is through Open Campus
- You will need to have internet access, check your email frequently, and attend class

INTRODUCTION

- **BLACKBOARD**
 - How to find it, how to use it, and why!
- **SYLLABUS**
 - We all know how to read, but let's take a gander...
- **PARTICIPATION**
 - Will require Minute Papers, Note Study, Think/Share/Pair
- **EXTRA CREDIT**
 - Explained in the Syllabus – but in a nutshell...

WHY STUDY PSYCHOLOGY AT ALL?

- Growing up in a strange world
- One question psychologists have studied involves a problem of interest: autism
- Autistics are characterized specific behaviors
- Age of diagnosis

TEST ANXIETY

- Another question psychologists have studied involves a problem of interest: test anxiety
- Test anxiety refers to a combination of physiological, emotional, and cognitive components
- Stress of taking exams
- Interferes with one's concentration, planning, and academic performance

DEFINITION OF PSYCHOLOGY

- What do psychologists study?
 - Psychology
 - Behaviors
 - Mental processes

GOALS OF PSYCHOLOGY

- Describe
 - First goal of psychology is to *describe* the different ways that organisms behave
- Explain
 - Second goal is to *explain* the cause of behavior
- Predict
 - Third goal is to *predict* how organisms will behave in certain situations
- Control
 - Fourth goal is to *control* an organism's behavior
 - Why?

ANSWERING QUESTIONS

- How do psychologists answer questions?
- Approaches to understanding behavior include
 - biological
 - cognitive
 - behavioral
 - psychoanalytic
 - humanistic
 - cross-cultural
 - evolutionary

ANSWERING QUESTIONS (CONT'D)

- *Cognitive* approach
 - Examines how we process, store, and use information and how this information influences what we attend to, perceive, learn, remember, believe, and feel
 - Cognitive neuroscience
- *Biological* approach
 - Focuses on how our genes, hormones, and nervous system interact with our environments to influence learning, personality, memory, motivation, emotions, and coping techniques
- Example: autism
- Example: test anxiety

ANSWERING QUESTIONS (CONT'D)

- *Behavioral* approach – Pavlov, Skinner, Watson
 - Studies how organisms learn new behaviors or modify existing ones, depending on whether events in their environments reward or punish these behaviors
- *Social cognitive* approach – Bandura, Tolman, others
 - Behaviors are influenced not only by environmental events and reinforcers but also by observation, imitation, and thought processes
- Example: autism
- Example: test anxiety

ANSWERING QUESTIONS (CONT'D)

- Psychoanalytic approach – Freud, Erikson, others
 - Maintains that childhood experiences greatly influence the development of personality traits and psychological problems
 - Emphasizes the influence of unconscious fears, desires, and motivations on thoughts, behaviors, and the development of personality traits and psychological problems later in life
- Humanistic approach – Maslow, Rogers, others
 - Emphasizes that each individual has great freedom in directing his or her future, a large capacity for personal growth, a considerable amount of intrinsic worth, a craving for unconditional regard, and enormous potential for self-fulfillment
 - Because of its free-will concept of human nature and lack of experimental methods, many behaviorists regard the humanistic approach as more of a philosophy of life than a science of human behavior
 - Example: autism
 - Example: test anxiety

ANSWERING QUESTIONS (CONT'D)

- Cross-cultural approach
 - Studies the influence of cultural/ethnic similarities and differences on psychological and social functioning
 - Differences in how countries diagnose autism: US
 - Differences in how countries diagnose autism: South Korea
 - Test anxiety: Individualistic vs. Collectivist societies
- Evolutionary approach
 - Studies how evolutionary ideas, such as adaptation and natural selection, explain human behaviors and mental processes
- Eclectic approach
 - Uses a combination of different approaches to study the same behavior

ANSWERING QUESTIONS (CONT'D)



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HISTORICAL APPROACHES

- How did psychology begin?
- Structuralism: elements of the mind
- Functionalism: functions of the mind
- Gestalt approach: sensations versus perceptions
- Behaviorism: observable behaviors

HISTORICAL APPROACHES (CONT'D)

- Structuralism
 - Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920)
 - Studied the most basic elements, primarily sensations and perceptions, that make up our conscious mental experiences
 - The first scientific Psychology lab
 - Introspection
 - method of exploring conscious mental processes by asking subjects to look inward and report their sensations



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HISTORICAL APPROACHES (CONT'D)

- Functionalism
 - William James (1842-1910)
 - Studied the function rather than the structure of consciousness; was interested in how our minds adapt to our changing environment



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HISTORICAL APPROACHES (CONT'D)

- Gestalt approach
- Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Kohler, and Kurt Koffka



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Emphasized that perception is more than the sum of its parts and studied how sensations are assembled into meaningful perceptual experiences

HISTORICAL APPROACHES (CONT'D)

- Behaviorism
 - Emphasized the objective, scientific analysis of observable behaviors
- John Watson; 1913, “Psychology as a Behaviorist Views It”
 - Psychology should be considered an objective, experimental science – Changed the direction of psychological research
 - Goal: the analysis of observable behaviors and the prediction and control of those behaviors
 - John Watson; 1913, “Psychology as a Behaviorist Views It”



HISTORICAL APPROACHES (CONT'D)

- Behaviorism
 - 1920s to 1960s; behaviorism was the dominant force in American psychology
 - Due to work of B.F. Skinner and other behaviorists
 - Expanded Watson's ideas in modern-day behavioral approach
 - 1970s to present; behaviorism challenged by cognitive approach (now surpasses behaviorism)



CAREERS IN PSYCHOLOGY

- Psychologist versus psychiatrist
 - **Psychiatrists** are medical doctors (MDs) who have spent several years in clinical training, which includes diagnosing possible physical and neurological causes of abnormal behaviors and treating these behaviors, often with prescription drugs
 - **Psychologists** have completed four to five years of postgraduate education and have obtained a PhD, PsyD, or EdD in psychology
 - Psychologists are NOT neurologists
 - Mostly cannot prescribe prescription medications

thermometer....

GOES WHERE?!?!

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CAREERS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Psychologist vs. Therapists/Counselors

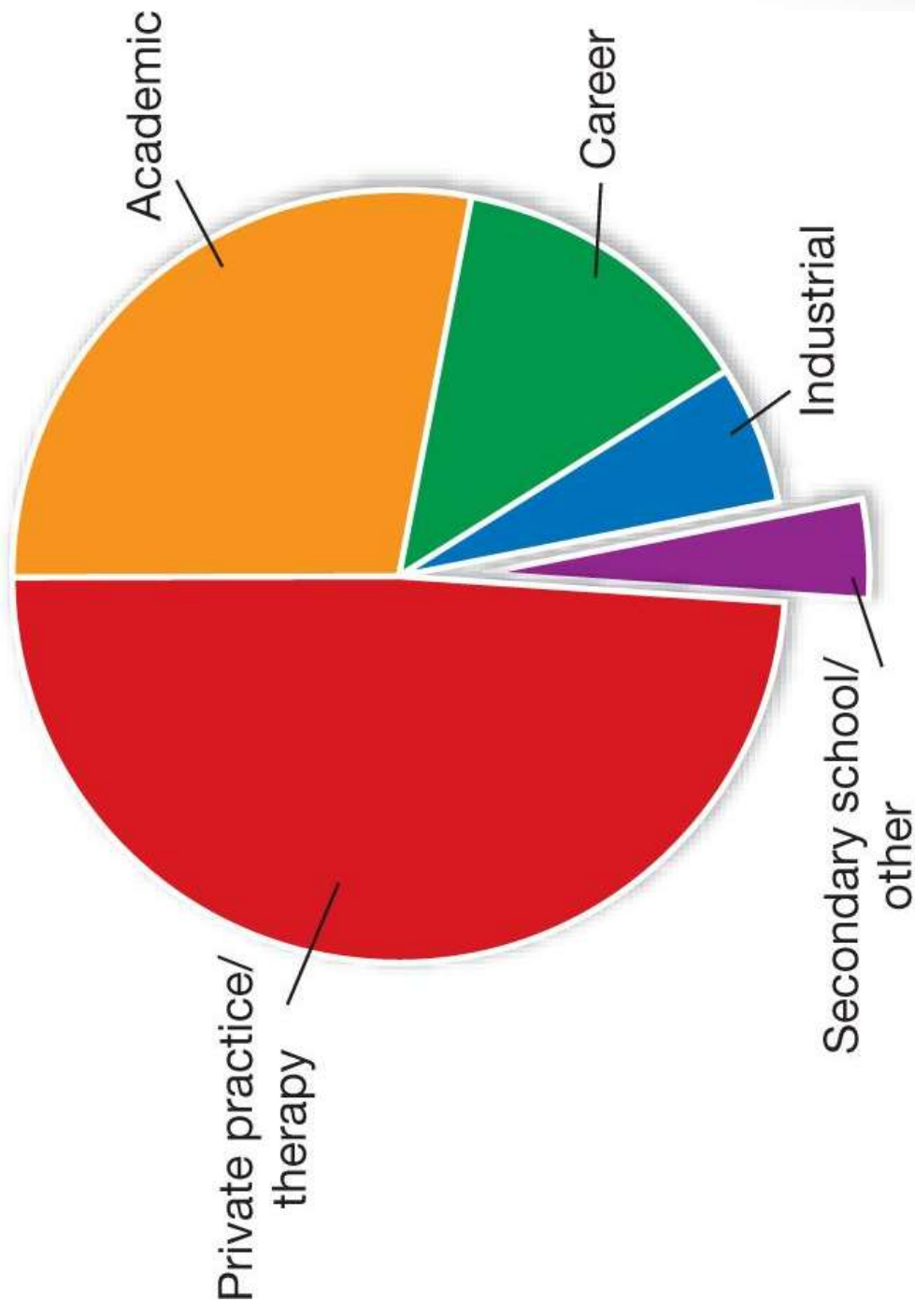
- **Research Psychologists** have completed four to five years of postgraduate education doing research in psychological fields (cognitive, biological, social, etc.)
- **Clinical psychologists** have specialized in a clinical subarea, and spent an additional year in a supervised therapy setting to gain experience in diagnosing and treating a wide range of abnormal behaviors
- **Counseling psychologists** provide many of the same services as clinical psychologists, but usually work with different problems, such as those involving marriage, family, or career counseling
- **Therapists** have a Masters degree or Certification in a specific, specialized area of counseling (drug, marriage, family...)

CAREERS IN PSYCHOLOGY (CONT'D)

- Many career settings – diverse opportunities
 - 49% of psychologists work as clinical or counseling psychologists in private practice or therapy settings
 - 28% work in college/university settings
 - 13% work in a variety of other kinds of jobs and career settings
 - 6% work in industrial settings
 - 4% work in secondary schools and other settings



CAREERS IN PSYCHOLOGY (CONT'D)



RESEARCH AREAS

- Areas of specialization
 - Clinical and counseling psychology
 - Social
 - Developmental
 - Experimental
 - Biological
 - Cognitive
 - Psychometrics
 - Industrial/organizational

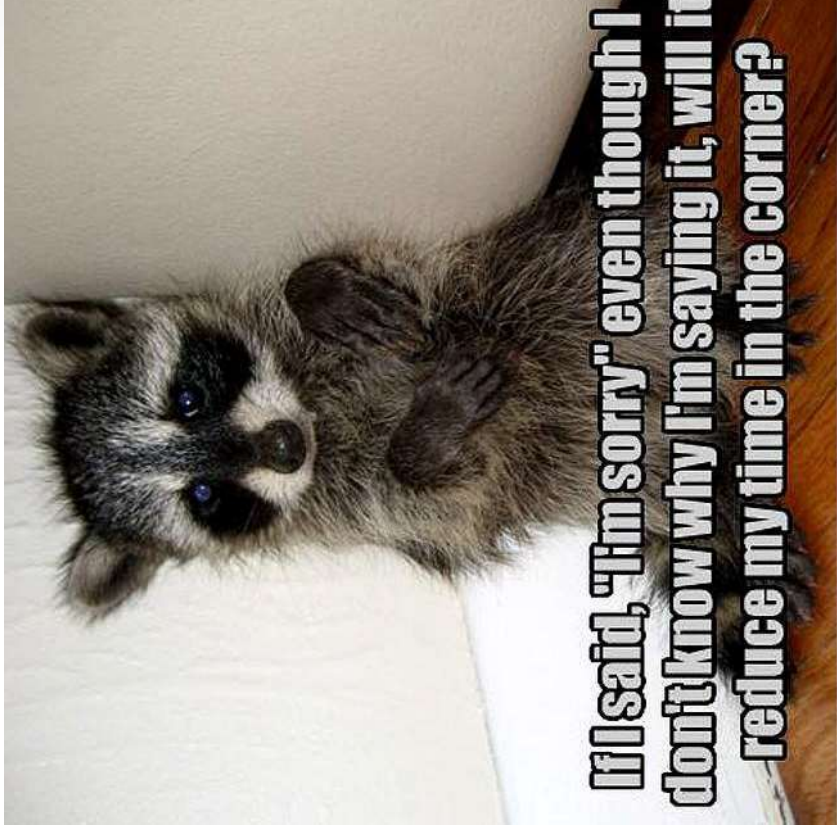
RESEARCH AREAS (CONT'D)

- Areas of specialization
 - Clinical and counseling psychology
 - includes the assessment and treatment of people with psychological problems, such as grief, anxiety, or stress
 - Social psychology
 - involves the study of social interactions, stereotypes, prejudices, attitudes, conformity, group behaviors, and aggression



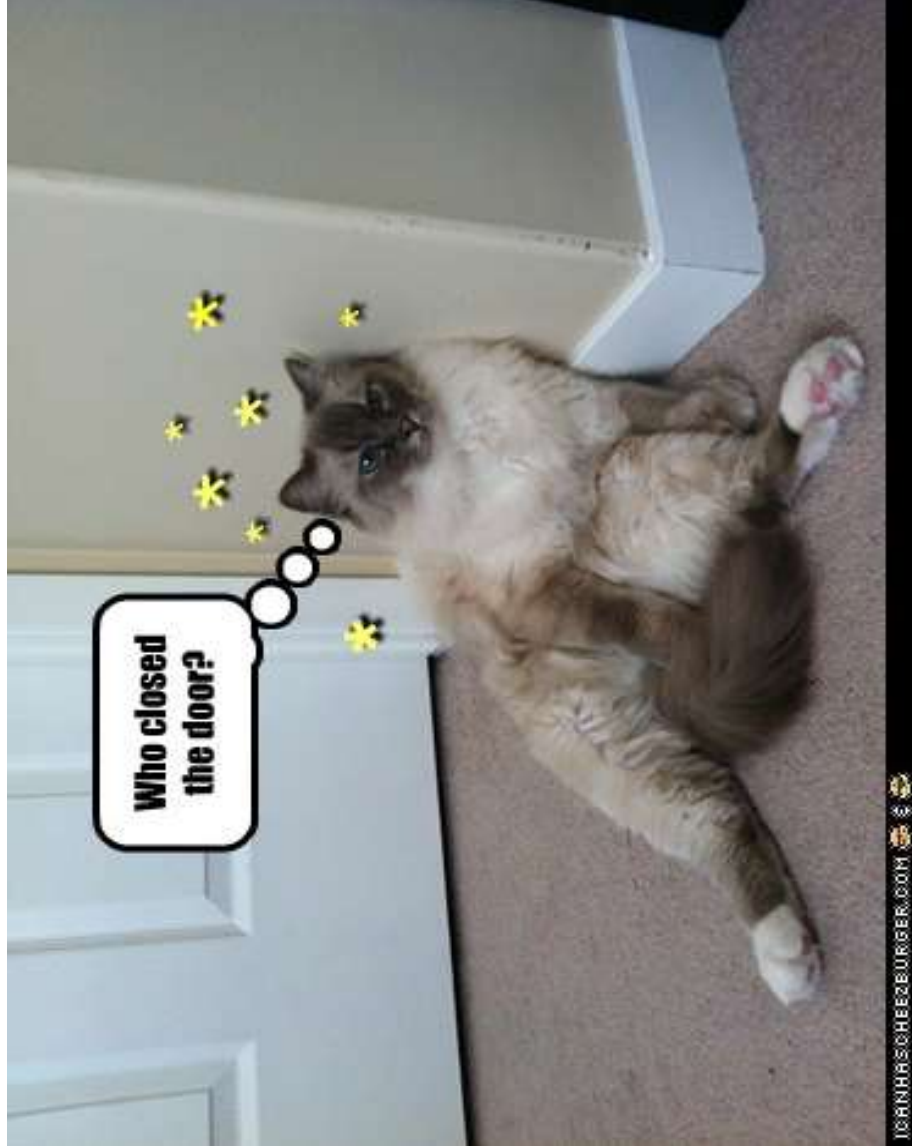
RESEARCH AREAS (CONT'D)

- Areas of specialization
 - Developmental psychology
 - examines moral, social, emotional, and cognitive development throughout a person's entire life
 - Experimental psychology
 - includes areas of sensation, perception, learning, human performance, motivation, emotion, and forensic psychology



RESEARCH AREAS (CONT'D)

- Areas of specialization
 - Biological psychology
 - also called psychobiology or neuropsychology
 - involves research on the physical and chemical changes that occur during stress, learning, and emotions, as well as how our genetic makeup, brain, and nervous system interact with our environment and influence our behavior



RESEARCH AREAS

- Areas of specialization
 - Cognitive psychology
 - involves how we process, store, and retrieve information and how cognitive processes influence our behaviors
 - Psychometrics
 - focuses on the measurement of people's abilities, skills, intelligence, personality, and abnormal behaviors



RESEARCH AREAS (CONT'D)

- Areas of specialization
- Industrial/organizational psychology
 - Examines the relationship of people and their work environments
- Forensic psychology
 - Jury decision making
 - Eyewitness identification decisions and eyewitness memory



- Profiling of criminal behavior
- Risk of recidivism (how likely is someone to commit another crime)
- Judgments of sanity