

Psychology Ch. 1

- Psychology—the science of behavior and mental processes
 - We understand by examining all levels, not just one
- Challenges:
 - All actions are multiply determined
 - Psychological influences rarely independent
 - Individual differences
 - Reciprocal (humans influence each other)
 - Determinism
 - Culture
- Individualist vs. collectivist cultures
 - Personal identity
 - Major goals
 - Criteria for self esteem
 - Sources of success and failure
 - Major frame of reference
- Common Sense
 - Most of us trust our gut intuitions about how the world works
 - Not all common sense is wrong
 - Should serve as a generator for hypotheses, which can be tested
 - Thinking like a scientist—when to use and when not to use common sense
- Barriers
 - Naive realism—“seeing is believing”—seeing the world like it is
 - Confirmation bias—neglecting or distorting contradicting evidence
 - Belief perseverance—sticking to what we believe, despite contradicting evidence
- Principles of critical/scientific thinking
 - Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence
 - Replicability
 - Ruling out rival hypotheses
 - Occam's razor
 - Parsimony: simpler is better
 - Falsifiability
 - Correlation is not causation
- Pseudoscience
 - Set of claims that seem scientific, but aren't
 - Testable beliefs that are not supported by the evidence
 - Seven Deadly Sins:
 - Overuse of ad hoc immunizing hypotheses
 - Lack of self-correction
 - Exaggerated claims
 - Overreliance on anecdotes
 - Evasion of peer review
 - Absence of connectivity
 - Psychobabble
 - Logical Fallacies:

- Emotional reasoning/affect heuristic—using emotions as a guide
 - Bandwagon fallacy
 - Either-or fallacy
 - Not me fallacy—everyone else, but not me
- Pseudoscience and Popular Opinion
 - Psychobabble—pseudoscience and quackery covered by a veneer of psychological and scientific-sounding language
 - Why does belief in psychobabble persist?
 - We need control
 - Predictability
 - No challenge
- Brief History
 - Began in 1879 with William Wundt
 - What makes us human
 - Psychology used to be indistinguishable from philosophy
 - Always asked, just without answers
- 3 Historical Movements:
 - Structuralism—William Wundt and Edward Bradford Titchener—aimed to identify the basic elements of psychological experience (what?)
 - Used introspection—observers carefully reflected and reported on their mental experiences
 - Functionalism—William James (influenced by Darwin)—aimed to understand the adaptive purposes of psychological characteristics (why?)
 - Psychoanalysis—Sigmund Freud—focuses on internal psychological processes of which we're unaware
- Debates:
 - Nature-Nurture
 - Mind-body
 - Manism-dualism
 - Free will vs. Determinism