

# Introduction to the History of Psychology

## *Psychology 3125 3.0A (Fall, 2011)*



“The historical *imagination*, surely, connotes many things.... High on my list is the imagination to believe that our lives, experience, and knowledge...do not circumscribe what it is possible to live, experience, or know.”

(Roger Smith, *The Historical Imagination*, 2000, p. 105)

“As an aid to understanding, history fulfills the related roles of providing totally new information and questioning the permanence of accepted knowledge.”

(N. D. Reppucci & J. T. Saunders, “History, action, and change,” *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 5, 399-412)



**Lecture Times:** Wednesdays, 11:30am-2:20pm  
**Location:** Vari Hall-B  
**Prerequisites:** AK/AS/SC/PSYC 1010 6.00 or AK/PSYC 2410 6.00, with a minimum grade of C.

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**Required Text:** Pickren, W. & Rutherford, A. (2010). *A History of Modern Psychology in Context*. New York: Wiley.

**Readings:** In addition to chapters from the Pickren & Rutherford volume, there are three additional readings available on-line at the Moodle

site for the course. These are listed in the course overview below. **You will be tested on all of the readings** and it will be preferable for you to consult the readings in advance of the class to prepare yourself for discussions and maximum understanding of lecture material.

**Description:**

This course will provide a selective overview of the history of psychology from the mid-1800s to the present, with earlier forays into the philosophical and practical underpinnings of psychological questions where appropriate. We will consider both the history of the discipline - Psychology - and the history of its subject matter – psychology – with the goal of exploring how these two histories are intertwined. Students will be encouraged to consider issues of reflexivity and subjectivity as they pertain to the development of psychology and its research practices. Students will also be exposed to important and relevant recent scholarship by historians of psychology, and will be asked to consider **historiographic**<sup>1</sup> issues that have influenced portrayals of psychology's past.

**Objective:**

The primary objective of this course is to teach students how to use history to critically assess what psychologists do and the knowledge they generate, in order to become more thoughtful consumers of and participants in the field. Students should emerge from the course with the ability to situate Psychology in its historical, cultural/global, and political contexts, and to more thoughtfully assess the work that psychologists do.

**Course Policies:**

Plan to attend all class meetings, since substantive material will be covered in lecture that is not in your readings. Please note that the professor will not lend out or post lecture notes; **it is your responsibility to borrow a classmate's notes or have someone audiotape the lecture if you must miss a class.**

Powerpoint slides will be posted on the course website in advance of the class meeting. If a student has a documented disability that

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<sup>1</sup> \*Main Entry: **his·to·ri·og·ra·phy**

Function: *noun*

Date: 1569

**1 a :** the writing of history; *especially:* the writing of history based on the critical examination of sources, the selection of particulars from the authentic materials, and the synthesis of particulars into a narrative that will stand the test of critical methods; **b :** the principles, theory, and history of historical writing <a course in *historiography*>

**2 :** the product of historical writing : a body of historical literature

(From the Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary)

requires accommodation involving notetaking, please contact the professor immediately to arrange accommodation.

Only documented illnesses or emergencies are considered appropriate excuses for missing an exam. Notification concerning an absence must be received within 48 hours of the missed exam (by e-mail to the professor and TAs), and appropriate documentation in the form of a note from your physician or campus health must be provided to justify your absence. **The doctor's note must be dated within 2 days of the missed exam.** A note dated a week later stating you were sick on the day of the exam will not suffice.

**If a student must miss a test because of illness, he/she will be required to write a makeup exam that may differ in format and content from the original exam, at a time and date to be determined near the end of term. If the student misses the makeup, he/she will receive a grade of 0 on that exam. If a student misses more than one regularly scheduled test, he/she will be required to write all of the missed tests on the makeup date at the end of the term. If the student has a documented disability, please contact the professor for accommodation.**

**Grading:**

Your final grade in this course will be weighted as follows:

Exam 1: 30%

Exam 2: 35%

Exam 3: 20%

Assignment: 15%

Exams will be comprised of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. The final exam will be administered during the final class period of the course. Details about the assignment follow the course schedule and are also posted in separate document on the course Moodle site.

Important information for students regarding the Access/Disability, Academic Honesty/Integrity, Student Conduct, and Religious Observance Days is available on the following webpage:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/>

Please consult the following website on Academic Integrity:

<http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity>

It is important that you are aware of the York University Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. Please consult the following website:

[http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69#\\_Toc89156096](http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69#_Toc89156096)

#### **Conversion Table for Final Letter Grades**

<b>From Percentage</b>	<b>To Letter Grade</b>
90-100	A+
80- 89	A
75- 79	B+
70- 74	B
65- 69	C+
60- 64	C
55- 59	D+
50- 54	D
(Marginally below 50%) Marginally failing	E
(Below 50%) Failing	F

## Course Schedule

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>Lecture Topic:</b>	<b>Readings:</b>
<b>Sept 7</b>	Introduction Origins of a Science of Mind	Pickren & Rutherford, Introduction Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 1
<b>Sept 14</b>	Everyday Life and Psychological Practices	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 2
<b>Sept 21</b>	Methods and the Making of a New Science	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 3 Danziger (1985)
<b>Sept 28</b>	Indigenization of Psychology in America	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 4
<b>Oct 5</b>	<b>EXAM 1 (30%)</b> Psychologists as Sorters: Applying Psychology, Ordering Society	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 6
<b>READING WEEK</b>		
<b>Oct 19</b>	American Psychological Science and Practice Between the World Wars  Psychology in Europe between the World Wars	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 7  Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 8
<b>Oct 26</b>	American Psychology's Golden Age	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 9  Rutherford (2003)
<b>Nov 2</b>	Internationalization and Indigenization of Psychology after World War II	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 10
<b>[Note that November 11<sup>th</sup> is the last day to drop this course without receiving a grade.]</b>		
<b>Nov 9</b>	<b>EXAM 2 (35%)</b> Brain, Behavior and Cognition since 1945	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 13
<b>Nov 16</b>	Psychology and the Politics of Gender	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 11 Bohan (1990)
<b>Nov 23</b>	American Psychology and Society in the late Twentieth Century	Pickren & Rutherford, Ch. 12
<b>Nov 30</b>	<b>EXAM 3 (20%)</b>	
<b>Dec 6</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT DUE (15%)</b>	

## **Readings**

- Bohan, J. S. (1990). Contextual history: A framework for re-placing women in the history of psychology. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 14, 213-227.
- Danziger, K. (1985). The origins of the psychological experiment as a social institution. *American Psychologist*, 40, 133-140.
- Rutherford, A. (2003). B. F. Skinner's technology of behavior in American life: From consumer culture to counterculture. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 39, 1-23.

**Assignment – due December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011  
3125A 3.0 F11**

### **Imagined Conversations: Women Past and Feminist Presence**

For this assignment, you will be required to write an imagined conversation between a psychologist you select from the Women Past section of the *Psychology's Feminist Voices* website (<http://www.feministvoices.com>), and a psychologist you select from the Feminist Presence part of the site. You are free to pick any two psychologists, but you must have a rationale for the pairing – that is, why would these two psychologists be interesting to put “in conversation”? You might decide on two psychologists who share a research interest, but studies it in two different historical/intellectual periods. You might decide on two psychologists who share an identity – such as being African-American, or Jewish, or feminist, but perhaps had different experiences because of their respective historical milieus. Or perhaps you might choose two psychologists who held very different views on a particular issue, such as nature vs nurture, or feminism, or their philosophy of science. Sometimes differences can make for more interesting conversations than similarities!

You should read all of the material about each psychologist that is available at

their respective profile pages, and any other secondary literature that you think is necessary for constructing this imagined conversation. Note that there are extensive lists of secondary sources that you could consult at the Resources link on both Women Past and Feminist Presence homepages. Note also that your textbook chapter on the science and politics of gender (Chapter 11) would also be a good source for background information, and there is a 40-minute video at the site entitled *The Changing Face of Feminist Psychology* that you can also consult.

Preface your conversation with a brief introduction in which you 1) identify and describe your two speakers (where and when do/did they work, in what area of psychology, on what topics), and 2) present the rationale for your pairing. Your elaboration of these two points should take up about 500 words.

Then, assume that the two speakers are located in their own historical period and place but can communicate across time. What would they each like to know about the other's experiences? What has changed in psychology, what has remained the same? Have they faced similar or different challenges and why? What observations might each have of the other's career and their specific lines of research or practice? Make sure the conversation is bi-directional (that information flows both ways) and is historically/contextually accurate.

**Practical Considerations:**

- Word limit is 2000 words (not including references or footnotes, if used)
- Please double-space, use 12-pt font, one-inch margins
- Be sure to include a title page that includes the name you have given to the conversation, *your* full name, and your student number

- To cite sources other than the site itself, include a reference list at the end of your paper using APA referencing style. Note: All of the reference lists on the site are constructed using APA referencing style, so you can use these as your models. Also, there is specific referencing information given for how to cite the oral history interviews that appear on the site on the first page of the oral history transcripts themselves.

- Submit by e-mail to your TA by midnight December 6th.

- Save your paper in MS Word (no .pdfs please!) using your lastname\_3125\_Essay as the file name format (e.g., Viswanathan\_3125\_Essay)

### **Marking Scheme:**

You will be marked relative to your peers on the thoughtfulness and creativity of your work. You will be expected to 1) demonstrate your knowledge of the impact of contextual factors on the lives and work of the psychologists you engage in conversation; 2) present a compelling rationale for why you chose these two psychologists; and 3) demonstrate substantive knowledge of each of the psychologists' approaches and contributions. Creativity and clarity of expression will also be evaluated. You will receive a letter grade on this assignment.

### **Senate Guidelines on Letter Grades**

A+     Exceptional: Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill or great originality in the use of those concepts, techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

A       Excellent: Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques with a high degree



of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

B+ Very Good: Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts, techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

B Good: Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

C+ Competent: Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

C Fairly Competent: Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

D+ Passing: Slightly better than minimal knowledge of required concepts and/or techniques together with some ability to use them in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

D Barely Passing: Minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

E Marginally Failing

F Failing