

1879 First psychology laboratory

Wilhelm Wundt opens the world's first experimental laboratory in psychology at the University of Leipzig, Germany. Credited with establishing psychology as an academic discipline, Wundt's students include Emil Kraepelin, James McKeen Cattell, and G. Stanley Hall.

1883 First American psychology laboratory

G. Stanley Hall, a student of Wilhelm Wundt, establishes first U.S. experimental psychology laboratory at Johns Hopkins University.

1886 First doctorate in psychology

The first doctorate in psychology is given to Joseph Jastrow, a student of G. Stanley Hall at Johns Hopkins University. Jastrow later becomes professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin and serves as president of the American Psychological Association in 1900.

1888 First professor of psychology

The academic title "professor of psychology" is given to James McKeen Cattell in 1888, the first use of this designation in the United States. A student of Wilhelm Wundt's, Cattell serves as professor of psychology at University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University.

1892 APA founded

G. Stanley Hall founds the American Psychological Association (APA) and serves as its first president. He later establishes two key journals in the field: American Journal of Psychology (1887) and Journal of Applied Psychology (1917).

1896 Functionalism

Functionalism, an early school of psychology, focuses on the acts and functions of the mind rather than its internal contents. Its most prominent American advocates are William James and John Dewey, whose 1896 article "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" promotes functionalism.

Psychoanalysis

The founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, introduces the term in a scholarly paper. Freud's psychoanalytic approach asserts that people are motivated by powerful, unconscious drives and conflicts. He develops an influential therapy based on this assertion, using free association and dream analysis.

Structuralism

Edward B. Titchener, a leading proponent of structuralism, publishes his *Outline of Psychology*. Structuralism is the view that all mental experience can be understood as a combination of simple elements or events. This approach focuses on the contents of the mind, contrasting with functionalism.

First psychology clinic

After heading a laboratory at University of Pennsylvania, Lightner Witmer opens world's first psychological clinic to patients, shifting his focus from experimental work to practical application of his findings.

1900 *Interpretation of Dreams*

Sigmund Freud introduces his theory of psychoanalysis in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, the first of 24 books he would write exploring such topics as the unconscious, techniques of free association, and sexuality as a driving force in human psychology.

1901 *Manual of Experimental Psychology*

With publication of the *Manual of Experimental Psychology*, Edward Bradford Titchener introduces structuralism to the United States. Structuralism, an approach which seeks to identify the basic elements of consciousness, fades after Titchener's death in 1927.

1904 First woman president of the APA

Mary Calkins is elected president of the APA. Calkins, a professor and researcher at Wellesley College, studied with William James at Harvard University, but Harvard denied her a Ph.D. because of her gender.

1905 IQ tests developed

Using standardized tests, Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon develop a scale of general intelligence on the basis of mental age. Later researchers refine this work into the concept of intelligence quotient; IQ, mental age over physical age. From their beginning, such tests' accuracy and fairness are challenged.

1908 *A Mind That Found Itself*

Clifford Beers publishes *A Mind That Found Itself*, detailing his experiences as a patient in 19th-century mental asylums. Calling for more humane treatment of patients and better education about mental illness for the general population, the book inspires the mental hygiene movement in the United States.

1909 Psychoanalysts visit Clark University

Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung visit the United States for a Psychoanalysis Symposium at Clark University organized by G. Stanley Hall. At the symposium, Freud gives his only speech in the United States.

1913 Behaviorism

John B. Watson publishes "Psychology as Behavior," launching behaviorism. In contrast to psychoanalysis, behaviorism focuses on observable and measurable behavior.

1917 Army intelligence tests implemented

Standardized intelligence and aptitude tests are administered to two million U. S. soldiers during WWI. Soon after, such tests are used in all U.S. armed forces branches and in many areas of civilian life, including academic and work settings.

1920 First African American doctorate in psychology

Francis Cecil Sumner earns a Ph.D. in psychology under G. Stanley Hall at Clark University. Sumner later serves as chair of the Howard University psychology department.

The Child's Conception of the World

Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget publishes *The Child's Conception of the World*, prompting the study of cognition in the developing child.

1921 Rorschach test created

Swiss psychiatrist Hermann Rorschach devises a personality test based on patients' interpretations of inkblots.

1925 Menninger Clinic founded

Charles Frederick Menninger and his sons Karl Augustus and William Clair found The Menninger Clinic in Topeka, Kansas. They take a compassionate approach to the treatment of mental illness, emphasizing both psychological and psychiatric disciplines.

1927 Menninger Clinic founded

First Nobel Prize for psychological research

1929 Electroencephalogram invented

Psychiatrist Hans Berger invents the electroencephalogram and tests it on his son. The device graphs the electrical activity of the brain by means of electrodes attached to the head.

1933 Nazi persecution of psychologists

After the Nazi party gains control of the government in Germany, scholars and researchers in psychology and psychiatry are persecuted. Many, including Freud, whose books are banned and burned in public rallies, move to Britain or the United States.

1935 Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is founded by Bob Smith of Akron, Ohio. AA's group meetings format and 12-step program become the model for many other mutual-support therapeutic groups.

Gestalt psychology

Kurt Koffka, a founder of the movement, publishes *Principles of Gestalt Psychology* in 1935. Gestalt (German for "whole" or "essence") psychology asserts that psychological phenomena must be viewed not as individual elements but as a coherent whole.

1936 First lobotomy in the United States

Walter Freeman performs first frontal lobotomy in the United States at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. By 1951, more than 18,000 such operations have been performed. The procedure, intended to relieve severe and debilitating psychosis, is controversial.

1937 *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*

Psychologist Karen Horney publishes *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*. Horney goes on to challenge many of Freud's theories, as have many later psychologists and scholars. Specifically, she questions Freud's theories on the Oedipal Complex and castration anxiety.

1938 *The Behavior of Organisms*

B.F. Skinner publishes *The Behavior of Organisms*, introducing the concept of operant conditioning. The work draws widespread attention to behaviorism and inspires laboratory research on conditioning.

Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) begun

Italian psychiatrist and neuropathologist Ugo Cerletti and his associates treat human patients with electrical shocks to alleviate schizophrenia and psychosis. ECT, while controversial, is proven effective in some cases and is still in use in 2019.

1946 *The Psychoanalytic Treatment of Children*

Anna Freud publishes *The Psychoanalytic Treatment of Children*, introducing basic concepts in the theory and practice of child psychoanalysis.

National Mental Health Act Passed

U.S. President Harry Truman signs the National Mental Health Act, providing generous funding for psychiatric education and research for the first time in U.S. history. This act leads to the creation in 1949 of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

1951 First drug to treat depression

Studies are published reporting that the drug imipramine may be able to lessen depression. Eight years later, the FDA approves its use in the United States under the name Tofranil.

1952 Thorazine tested

The anti-psychotic drug chlorpromazine (known as Thorazine) is tested on a patient in a Paris military hospital. Approved for use in the United States in 1954, it becomes widely prescribed.

1953 *APA Ethical Standards*

The American Psychological Association publishes the first edition of *Ethical Standards of Psychologists*. The document undergoes continuous review and is now known as APA's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.

1954 *Epilepsy and the Functional Anatomy...*

In *Epilepsy and the Functional Anatomy of the Human Brain*, neurosurgeon Wilder G. Penfield publishes results from his study of the neurology of epilepsy. His mapping of the brain's cortex sets a precedent for the brain-imaging techniques that become critical to biopsychology and cognitive neuroscience.

The Nature of Prejudice

Social Psychologist Gordon Allport publishes *The Nature of Prejudice*,

which draws on various approaches in psychology to examine prejudice through different lenses. It is widely read by the general public and influential in establishing psychology's usefulness in understanding social issues.

Biopsychology

In his studies of epilepsy, neuroscientist Wilder G. Penfield begins to uncover the relationship between chemical activity in the brain and psychological phenomena. His findings set the stage for widespread research on the biological role in psychological phenomena.

Psychopharmacology

The development of psychoactive drugs in the 1950s and their approval by the FDA initiates a new form of treatment for mental illness. Among the first such drugs is Doriden, also known as Rorer, an anti-anxiety medication approved in 1954.

Humanistic Psychology

In the wake of psychoanalysis and behaviorism, humanistic psychology emerges as the "third force" in psychology. Led by Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, who publishes *Motivation and Personality* in 1954, this approach centers on the conscious mind, free will, human dignity, and the capacity for self-actualization.

1956 Cognitive psychology

Inspired by work in mathematics and other disciplines, psychologists begin to focus on cognitive states and processes. George A. Miller's 1956 article "The Magical Number Seven, Plus or Minus Two" on information processing is an early application of the cognitive approach.

1957 *Syntactic Structures*

Noam Chomsky publishes *Syntactic Structures*, marking a major advancement in the study of linguistics. The book helps spawn the field of psycholinguistics, the psychology of language.

1960 FDA approves Librium

The FDA approves the use of chlordiazepoxide (known as Librium) for treatment of non-psychotic anxiety in 1960. A similar drug, diazepam (Valium), is approved in 1963.

1963 Community Mental Health Centers Act passed

U.S. President John F. Kennedy calls for and later signs the Community Mental Health Centers Act, which mandates the construction of community facilities instead of large, regional mental hospitals. Congress ends support for the program in 1981, reducing overall funds and folding them into a mental health block-grant program.

1964 First National Medal of Science to psychologist

Neal E. Miller receives the National Medal of Science, the highest scientific honor given in the United States, for his studies of motivation and learning. He is the first psychologist to be awarded this honor.

1964 FDA approves Lithium

The FDA approves lithium carbonate to treat patients with bipolar mood disorders. It is marketed under the trade names Eskalith, Lithonate, and Lithane.

1973 Homosexuality removed from DSM

After intense debate, the American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). The widely used reference manual is revised to state that sexual orientation "does not necessarily constitute a psychiatric disorder."

1974 PET scanner tested

A new brain scanning technique, Positron Emission Tomography (PET), is tested. By tracing chemical markers, PET maps brain function in more detail than earlier techniques.

1976

Evolutionary psychology

Richard Dawkins publishes *The Selfish Gene*, which begins to popularize the idea of evolutionary psychology. This approach applies principles from evolutionary biology to the structure and function of the human brain. It offers new ways of looking at social phenomena such as aggression and sexual behavior.

The Selfish Gene

Richard Dawkins publishes *The Selfish Gene*, a work which shifts focus from the individual animal as the unit of evolution to individual genes themselves. The text popularizes the field of evolutionary psychology, in which knowledge and principles from evolutionary biology are applied in research on human brain structure.

1979 Standardized IQ tests found discriminatory

The U.S. District Court finds the use of standardized IQ tests in California public schools illegal. The decision in the case, *Larry P. v. Wilson Riles*, upholds the plaintiff's position that the tests discriminate against African American students.

1981 AIDS and HIV first diagnosed

The epidemic of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection presents mental health professionals with challenges ranging from at-risk patients' anxiety and depression to AIDS-related dementia.

1984 Insanity Defense Reform Act passed

U.S. Congress revises federal law on the insanity defense, partly in response to the acquittal of John Hinckley, Jr. of charges of attempted assassination after he had shot President Ronald Reagan. The act places burden of proof for the insanity defense on the defendant.

1987 Homeless Assistance Act passed

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act provides the first federal funds allocated specifically for the homeless population. The act

includes provisions for mental health services, and responds, in part, to psychological studies on homelessness and mental disorders.

Prozac, Paxil, and Zoloft made available

The FDA approves the new anti-depressant medication fluoxetine, (Prozac). The drug, and other similar medications, acts on neurotransmitters, specifically, serotonin. It is widely prescribed and attracts attention and debate.

1990 Cultural psychology

In *Acts of Meaning, Four Lectures on Mind and Culture*, Jerome Bruner helps formulate cultural psychology, an approach drawing on philosophy, linguistics, and anthropology. Refined and expanded by Hazel Markus and other researchers, cultural psychology focuses on the influences and relationship among mind, cultural community and behavior.

2000 Sequencing of the Human Genome

Sixteen public research institutions around the world complete a "working draft" mapping of the human genetic code, providing a research basis for a new understanding of human development and disease. A similar, privately funded, project is currently underway.

DSM on PDA

The latest revision of the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is published in a version for personal digital assistants (PDAs). The manual, first published in 1954, outlines prevalence, diagnosis, and treatment of mental disorders. Only 132 pages on first printing, in 2000 it was 980 pages.