* Introduction and History of Psychology  
  Chapter 1  
    
  **What is Psychology?**
* Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes.  
  “Psychology” has its roots in the Greek words of “psyche,” or mind, and “-ology,” or a field of study.”
* **Scientific Method**
* The science of psychology is based on objective, verifiable evidence obtained using the scientific method.  
  What is the scientific method?
* **The Empirical Approach**
* Much like scientific method, the empirical approach uses a set of standards to conduct a study which emphasizes careful observation and scientifically based research.
* Why is it important to use the empirical approach?
* **What is Real Psychology and   
  What is Pseudo-psychology?**
* Pseudo-psychology is the phony or unscientific psychology which pretends to be the real thing.

**Negative Effects of Pseudo-psychology:**

* People believe the fake psychology and miss out on real psychological insights which are more helpful and interesting.
  + - Ex. Confirmation bias: Only paying attention to the events and evidence which confirms our desired beliefs.
* Also, pseudo-psychology can produce a lot of fraud.
  + - With increased incidents of fraud in the field of psychology, there is diminished public support for legitimate psychological science.
* **Facilitated Communication**
* Another example of pseudo-psychology was an autism treatment called Facilitated Communication.
* After applying the scientific method to the practice, it proved to be no more accurate than Cleaver Han’s math calculations.
* **3 Ways of Doing Psychology**

**1. Experimental Psychologists:**

* These are the psychologists who do the basic research in psychology. Most are faculty members at a college or university.
* This is the smallest group of the three major branches of psychology.
* 3 Ways of Doing Psychology

**2. Teachers of Psychology:**

This group overlaps with the experimental research group because most researchers also teach, but there has been an increase in the hiring of psychology teachers.

* 3 Ways of Doing Psychology

**3. Applied Psychology:**

* This group uses the knowledge developed by experimental psychologists to address human problems such as training, equipment design and psychological treatment.
* **Psychology vs. Psychiatry**
* Psychiatry is a specialty in the medical field, not a part of psychology.
* Psychiatrists hold MDs and have specialized training in the *treatment* of mental and behavioral problems.
* Psychology is a much broader field which has many different specialties.
* **When and Where did Psychology Start?**
* While the Greeks get much of the credit for first identifying ideas about consciousness, other societies were also developing their own ideas.
* Although both Asian and African cultures had ideas about psychology, it was the Greeks and later the Roman Catholic church which had the most influence on western psychology.
* **A Change in Perspective**
* For hundreds of years medieval Christian churches felt the human mind, like that of God, was an unsolvable mystery.
* In the 17th C. the French philosopher Rene Descartes argued that human sensations and behaviors were based on activity in the nervous system.
* He believed:
* Mind and body interact – mind controls body
* Interaction occurs in the pineal gland at the top of the brain stem
* Reflexes not controlled by the mind
* **Psychology Becomes a Science**
* Despite Descartes arguments and scientific breakthroughs at the time, psychology didn’t become a recognized science until the mid 1800s.
* **Modern Psychology Rooted in History**
* Modern psychology developed from several conflicting ideas including structuralism, functionalism, Gestalt psychology, behaviorism and psychoanalysis.

**Structuralism**

* Wilhelm Wundt (Voont) was the first to declare himself a psychologist.
* He believed in structuralism.

**Wilhelm Wundt**

(Father of Psychology as a science) opened the first psychology laboratory at the University of Leipzig (c. 1879)

* **Structuralism:** devoted to uncovering the basic structures that make up mind and thought-looking for the elements of conscious experience.
* Structuralism relies on introspection, or the process of reporting one’s own conscious mental experiences.
* What would be the strengths/weaknesses of introspection?
* **Critics of Wundt and Structuralism**
* Like most new theories, people began to dispute and refute structuralism.
* William James (the first U.S. psychologist) believed that psychology should look at function and not just structure.
* **Functionalism-** A theory that emphasized the functions of consciousness and the ways consciousness helps people adapt to their environment.
* James thought that psychology should explain how people adapted-or failed to adapt-to everyday life outside the laboratory.
* James’ Functionalism
* James’ criticism of Wundt’s structuralism was that it was boring and inaccurate because it was only done in the laboratory.
* James wanted to see how people functioned in everyday life, not just in contrived situations.
  + Also he believed that mental process were not static. He described them as a “stream of consciousness.”
* **Gestalt Psychology**
* Gestalt psychology was the opposite of structuralism. Instead of looking at the individual parts, it wanted to examine the whole.
* Gestalt psychology looked at how the brain works by studying perception and perceptual thinking.
  + - Ex. Recognizing a person’s face.
* **Behaviorism**
* John B. Watson argued that a true and objective science of psychology should only deal with observable events: stimuli from the environment and the organism’s response to that stimuli.
* These psychologists thought of the mind as a black box which could not be opened or understood. Since we could not understand it, we should not try to guess what role it has in our actions.
* **Psychoanalysis**
* Psychoanalysis is the brainchild of Sigmund Freud and his followers.
* Psychoanalysis said that mental disorders resulted from conflicts of the unconscious mind.
* Freud thought that behavior came from unconscious drives, conflicts and experience that we may not even have a memory of.
* **Psychology Today**
* Psychology today arises from 9 main perspectives:
  + Biological
  + Developmental
  + Cognitive
  + Psychodynamic
  + Behavioral
  + Sociocultural
  + Evolutionary
  + Trait views
* **Psychology and Perspectives**
* The historical perspectives were much easier to identify and explain, as they were cut and dry. The modern perspectives are more convoluted and confusing and all have merit.
  + Necker Cube: Two key lessons for psychology
    - Introspection
    - Multiple Perspectives
* Psychology’s Subfields

Basic Research

* **biological psychologists** explore the

links between brain and mind

* **developmental psychologists** study
* changing abilities from womb to tomb
* **cognitive psychologists** study how we
* perceive, think, and solve problems
* **Biological View:**
* The biological view looks at how our physical make up and the operation of our brains influence our personality, preferences, behavior patterns, and abilities.
* According to biological view, our behavior is a result of heredity, the nervous system and the endocrine system and environmental impacts (insults) such as disease.
* Within the biological view is the theory of evolutionary psychology. This theory arises from the ideas of Charles Darwin.
* Like Darwin, evolutionary psychologists see behavior and mental processes in terms of their genetic adaptations for survival and reproduction…survival of the fittest.
* **Developmental View**
* The developmental view emphasizes changes that occur across our lifespan.
* This is the question of nature vs. nurture. What has a bigger impact on us, heredity or environment?
* **Cognitive View**
* According to the cognitive view, our actions are a direct result of the way we process information from our environment.
* Cognitions are thoughts, expectations, perceptions, memories and states of consciousness.
* Cognitive psychologists are a combination of the best of structuralists, functionalists and gestalt traditions and ideas.
* Modern cognitive psychologists have also borrowed theories from linguists and believe that our most basic language skills are prewired into our brains from birth.
  + L.A.D -language acquisition device
* **Psychodynamic View**
* The term psychodynamic comes from the thought that the mind (psyche) is a reservoir of energy (dynamics).
* Psychodynamic psychology suggests we are motivated by the energy of irrational desires generated in our unconscious minds.
* Sigmund Freud
* The best known psychodynamic psychologist is Sigmund Freud who said the mind is like a mental boiler which holds the rising pressure of unconscious sexual and destructive desires, along with memories of traumatic events.
* **Humanistic Psychology**
* A viewpoint which emphasizes human ability, growth, potential and free will.
* Much like the psychoanalytic perspective, it emphasizes our mental thoughts and process as the root of our behavior.
* It, however, emphasizes the positive side of human nature. It has received a lot of criticism because it is not the most “scientific.”
* **Behavioral View**
* A viewpoint which finds the source of our actions in the environmental stimuli, rather than in inner mental processes.
* B.F. Skinner..rats.
  + Can you prove that you have a mind?
  + “The crucial age-old mistake is the belief that…what we feel as behave is the cause of our behaving.”

~B.F. Skinner

* **Sociocultural View**
* This view emphasizes the importance of social interaction, social learning and a cultural perspective.
  + Culture: a complex blend of beliefs, customs, values and traditions developed by a group of people and shared with others in the same environment.
* **Psychology’s Blindness**
* For many years, psychology was blind to the influence of culture on people’s behavior. Why might this be?
* One possible explanation is that as recently as 30 years ago, 90% of psychologists were Caucasians from the U.S. and European university systems… groups with strikingly similar cultures.
* **Evolutionary/  
  Socio-biological**
* This view of psychology looks at individuals’ behaviors through the lens of natural selection.
* Behavior is adaptive *and* hereditary *and* cultural!
* In this theory, genetics are not used a way to show how people are different, but rather the ways in which we have evolved.
* **Evolutionary Psychology**
* Evolutionary psychology is based on the arguments of Charles Darwin and his theories of evolution.
  + - We will discuss Darwin in much more detail later on
* Natural selection is the idea that characteristics of a species evolve in the direction of characteristics that give the fittest organisms a competitive advantage.
  + - **Controversial, but valid:** While evolutionary psychology is valid, strict evolutionists are controversial saying that even the most destructive behaviors grow out of genetic tendencies.
* **Trait View**
* A psychological perspective that views behavior and personality as the products of enduring psychological characteristics.
* Accordingly, the view says that behavior results from each person’s unique combination of traits.
  + - Ex. Introversion or extroversion vs. mood swings
* **Changes in Psychology**
* In recent years, biological, cognitive and developmental perspectives have been gaining supporters.
* In that time, behaviorism, and psychoanalysts (Freudians) have been losing supporters
* **What to Study From this Chapter**

The table on page 19 (Table 1.1) has all 9 modern perspectives along with an explanation and definition.

The best way to study the 9 perspectives is to make note cards.