

Voices of Experience

*Memorable Talks from the
National Institute on the
Teaching of Psychology*

VOLUME ONE

EDITED BY

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THE PEOPLE BEHIND PSYCHOLOGY

Enliven Your Lectures With Biographical Vignettes

Lester M. Sdorow

Arcadia University

DURING MY FIRST 2 years as an undergraduate, I majored in English and was particularly enthralled by biographies and autobiographies of eminent people in all fields of endeavor. Reading their life stories, I learned the essentials of their accomplishments and contributions in a more lively way than by simply reading textbook presentations of what they did.

My particular interest in reading biographies and autobiographies of contributors to psychology came about when I was perusing Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud, 1900/1990) and came across a footnote mentioning empirical dream research done in the 1890s by Mary Whiton Calkins. I was surprised that anyone had conducted dream research before Freud — let alone empirical research, by a woman whose name I recognized but about whom I knew little. I proceeded to ask a librarian at the school where I was teaching, Lafayette College (which proudly displayed a photograph of its eminent alumnus, James McKeen Cattell, in its psychology wing), to brave the musty basement where it keeps its old journals. She returned with an ancient but intact volume of the *American Journal of Psychology* with a long article by Calkins (1893) describing dream research she had conducted with one of her mentors, Edmund Clark Sanford. I was impressed by her cleverness: She had done a substantial empirical study of the content of dreams using only a pencil, a pad of paper, and an alarm clock. Much of what she discovered (such as our tendency to dream more during the second half of the night) was only verified many decades later by sophisticated research done with modern physiological recording equipment.

I became intrigued by Calkins herself, so I proceeded to read everything I could about her, beginning with her contribution to *A History of Psychology in Autobiography* (Calkins, 1930). In it, she remarked that she could not understand why Freud believed there were deep meanings in dreams, given that she had found

that dreams typically were connected to mundane daily experiences. I proceeded to read brief biographies of Calkins in journal articles and collections of biographies, most notably those written by Laurel Furumoto, the leading Calkins scholar (Furumoto, 1979, 1980, 1990).

Becoming a fan of Mary Whiton Calkins also inspired me to read biographies of other eminent early female psychologists. I made periodic presentations about them at professional meetings, including the *National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology's* annual conference. Soon my interest broadened from the lives of female psychologists to the lives of male contributors to the field too. I felt compelled to incorporate what I was learning into my courses, and found that doing so enriched the material significantly, making it more interesting to my students and to me. This positive effect on my teaching inspired me to begin collecting biographies and autobiographies of psychology's guiding lights.

Over the years, I have acquired dozens of collections of biographies or autobiographies and hundreds of individual biographies and autobiographies of major contributors to psychology — some of which I have listed in Appendix B to this chapter. A few examples drawn from this material should illustrate the benefits of talking about the lives of psychologists in your courses.

WHERE IDEAS AND RESEARCH INTERESTS COME FROM

Students love learning about the unexpected origins of the great ideas and research projects in psychology. One of my students' favorites is the story of how Hans Berger originally developed his electroencephalograph (EEG) to study telepathic communication. When he was 19 years old and serving in the German army, Berger received a telegram informing him that his sister had been overcome by the feeling that he was in trouble. He received the telegram the evening of the day that he and his horse had slid down an embankment into the path of an oncoming piece of horse-drawn artillery and had narrowly missed being crushed to death. The scientist wondered if he and his sister — who were extremely close — had communicated by mental telepathy, so he set off to measure the energy that he believed might be passing between them (Stevens, 1971).

Students also enjoy hearing how in 1921 Otto Loewi was directed to conduct his crucial experiment on the chemical nature of neural transmission by a repeated dream. In accordance with the dream, Loewi placed the beating heart of a frog, along with a portion of the vagus nerve still attached to the heart, into a saline solution. By electrically stimulating the vagus nerve, he made the heart beat slower. He then put another beating frog heart into the same solution. Even though he did not stimulate its vagus nerve, the second heart immediately began to beat slower. Loewi concluded that stimulation of the vagus nerve of the first heart had released a chemical into the solution. It was this chemical, which he later identified as acetylcholine, that slowed the beating of the hearts (Loewi, 1960).

More recently, there is the example of Elaine Hatfield, a leading researcher on interpersonal attraction — particularly romantic love. Her interest in the subject was born during late-night conversations with other graduate students at Stanford University. She found that, almost without exception, her colleagues were distressed about their romantic lives — either finding it impossible to meet a romantic partner, having problems with their current romantic partner, or trying

to deal with an impending divorce. She met resistance to her research ideas from professors at Stanford because of the popular belief at the time that passionate love was a taboo and trivial topic, but her mentor, Leon Festinger, who was a prominent social psychologist, insisted that she be permitted to conduct her research (Hatfield, 2001).

Developmental psychology researchers likewise may get their ideas from everyday sources. Eleanor J. Gibson had several experiences that stimulated her interest in conducting research on depth perception using the visual cliff. As a child, she had developed a fear of heights after visiting the Grand Canyon and looking down from some of its steep overlooks. Later her colleague Richard Walk at Cornell University related his experiences working with parachutists learning to overcome their natural fear of jumping from heights by being trained to jump off the edges of high platforms. At Cornell, Gibson and Walk also were intrigued by the tendency of newborn goats to avoid walking over the edges of platforms (Gibson, 1980).

Consider, too, the story of Hans J. Eysenck. He got his inspiration to turn against psychoanalysis in favor of behavior therapy from an unknown psychoanalyst named Alexander Herzberg. Herzberg told Eysenck that he had been successful in directly removing patients' symptoms rather than relying on prolonged attempts to psychoanalyze them. One of Herzberg's favorite techniques was to expose fear-ridden patients to increasingly anxiety-inducing situations, which he found alleviated their fears (Eysenck, 1990). Years later, Joseph Wolpe formalized and publicized this technique as a component of systematic desensitization. As a result, Wolpe — and not Herzberg, who was simply an obscure refugee from Germany — received credit as its creator.

INFLUENTIAL LIFE EXPERIENCES

Students are always interested in the possible role of life experiences, particularly childhood experiences, in shaping the views and careers of giants in the field. An amusing example is that of Hermann Rorschach. During his childhood, he was given the nickname Klecks (from the German for “inkblot”) because he enjoyed Klecksography, a game in which children would drip ink on a piece of paper, fold it, and tell each other the things they saw in the inkblot (“Who Named It?: Hermann Rorschach,” 2001).

Then there's Eleanor Maccoby, best known for her research on child development and gender differences, who, growing up in Tacoma, Washington, had one of the most unusual childhoods of any psychologist. Her parents, vegetarian Theosophist folksingers who were interested in Eastern religions and philosophies as well as ESP, astrology, and the supernatural, were part of what we would call the alternative culture of the early 20th century. Given this, as a teenager in the 1930s Maccoby felt free to write to leading parapsychologist J. B. Rhine, who corresponded with her and sent her Zener cards so she and her friends could conduct their own research. After finding that she could see the symbols through the backs of the Zener cards, she lost faith in ESP and decided that a skeptical, scientific approach was essential in assessing all claims (Maccoby, 1989).

Many contributors to psychology have been influenced by emotionally painful experiences too. After watching his kindly mother die an agonizing death from

cancer, William McDougall, best known for championing instincts as factors in human behavior and for trying to make parapsychology a legitimate field of scientific research, lost his faith in God and insisted that only science can help improve the lot of human beings (McDougall, 1930). Ernest Hilgard, who later became a leading hypnosis researcher and psychology textbook writer, intended to become a physician, but recoiled from it after his physician father was killed while serving during World War I (Hilgard, 1974). Wilder Penfield, after being grievously wounded when a U-boat attacked and sunk his ship during World War I, believed that God had permitted him to survive in order to serve humanity. This event led him to become a physician and physiology researcher; he developed a surgical technique for treating intractable epilepsy and mapped the sensory and motor areas of the cerebral cortex (Lewis, 1981).

Erik H. Erikson, famous for his theory of life-span development, suffered a powerful identity crisis of his own while growing up in Germany. Erikson, blonde and blue eyed and decidedly Nordic looking, was reared by Jewish parents and felt that he did not fit in with either Jewish or Christian children. In school, many of the other students considered him a Jew. In synagogue, many in the congregation considered him a Gentile. His confusion was heightened when, before reaching adolescence, he learned that his father, whom he believed throughout childhood was his biological father, was actually his stepfather and that his probable biological father was a Danish Christian (Friedman, 1999). This probably contributed to the emphasis that Erikson put, in his theory of psychosocial development, on the individual's search for an identity during adolescence.

Perhaps the most powerful example of the relationship between a psychologist's life and professional outlook can be gleaned from the painful early life and war experiences of Frederick "Fritz" Perls, the founder of Gestalt therapy (Shepard, 1975). Perls was reared in a Jewish ghetto in Germany. His father was a wine salesman who rarely came home and often cheated on his wife. When he was home, he belittled Fritz unmercifully. (Years later Perls refused to attend his funeral.) After Perls had enrolled at the University of Berlin to study medicine, World War I intervened and he became a medical volunteer for the Red Cross, later enlisting in a Zeppelin battalion. He won a medal for continuing to unload ammunition while under intense Allied bombardment. On another occasion he was wounded when a shell exploded near him during trench warfare. On still another occasion he suffered lung damage from a gas attack. Throughout his adulthood, Perls was haunted by the memory of a gas attack during which many of the gas masks failed and suffocating soldiers clung to him, begging for air as he passed the few functioning gas masks from one soldier to another.

One evening while on furlough, Perls attended the opera *Figaro*. The stark contrast between the beauty of the opera and the horror of the trenches made him run out of the theater and burst into tears. During this period of his life, Perls also was overcome by the loss of his closest friend, Ferdinand Knopf, who was killed in action.

After the war, Perls became emotionally numb and socially detached for years, apparently suffering from what we now call posttraumatic stress disorder. His experiences with the ugly underbelly of humanity during his childhood and in WWI led him to spend a lifetime supporting humanitarian causes and opposing

senseless wars. However, his experiences also made him wary of getting too close to people, which might account in part for his rather callous “Gestalt prayer” — which appalled even his own children:

I do my thing and you do your thing. I am not in this world to live up to your expectations, and you are not in this world to live up to mine. You are you and I am I and if by chance we find each other, it’s beautiful.

WHO INFLUENCED WHOM?

During the more than a century of psychology’s existence as an independent intellectual discipline, major contributors have been influenced by other individuals — sometimes psychologists themselves. Some of these relationships are obvious, given their mutual interests. Others are not obvious — or are even surprising. William James was so impressed with Clifford Beers, for example, that he urged him to publish a book about his experiences in Connecticut mental institutions and even helped secure him a publisher (Dain, 1980). This relationship led to the publication of one of the bestselling autobiographies ever, *A Mind that Found Itself* (Beers, 1908/1981). G. Stanley Hall, a protégé of James, convinced African American Francis Sumner to pursue his PhD at Clark University. Sumner went on to develop the psychology program at Howard University and write abstracts in English of more than 3,000 articles written in French, German, and Spanish for the *Psychological Bulletin* and the *Journal of Social Psychology* (Guthrie, 2000). Sumner, in turn, influenced the careers of Kenneth B. Clark and Mamie Phipps Clark, who majored in psychology at Howard and conducted research on African American children’s self-esteem — research that influenced the landmark 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (Guthrie, 1990).

Clark Hull, a prominent learning researcher, welcomed Eleanor J. Gibson as his doctoral student at a time when women found it difficult to find a mentor. She recalled him as a kindly man who reminded her of her father (Gibson, 1980). William Dement served as an assistant in Nathaniel Kleitman’s sleep research laboratory and went on to become an eminent sleep researcher himself (Dement, 1974). The year that Stanley Milgram spent with Solomon Asch doing postdoctoral research is clearly shown in his classic research on obedience. (In fact, Milgram initially wanted simply to replicate Asch’s line judgment study with a more socially meaningful design; Evans, 1980). More recently, Richard Davidson’s undergraduate advisor at New York University, Judith Rodin, who became a leading researcher on eating and obesity, convinced him that it was possible to use the experimental method to study cognitive processes. He went on to become the leading researcher on hemispheric differences in emotional processing (“Distinguished Scientific Contributions: Richard J. Davidson,” 2000).

PSYCHOLOGISTS’ OTHER LIVES

Many famous contributors to psychology led lives outside of the laboratory that never make it into textbooks but that students love hearing about. Consider Wilder Penfield, perhaps the giant of 20th-century neuroscientists. He was an imposing person — personally, intellectually, and physically. An athlete, he played

varsity football while at Princeton and then worked as an assistant coach. Princeton lost a potential head coach and the world gained a prominent brain researcher when he turned down a coaching promotion to accept a Rhodes Scholarship. Less well-known than his work on the brain is his work on motion sickness. During World War II, the Canadian government called upon him to run a crash program to find a treatment to aid sailors and soldiers on voyages to Europe. So, with the help of his associates, Penfield went on various rides at a Montreal amusement park to find the ones that best mimicked the nausea-inducing movements of a ship at sea, and then built a “ride” that best replicated that motion in a squash court at McGill University. He tested the effects of various drugs on riders until he found one that worked: thiobarbiturate (Lewis, 1981).

Santiago Ramón y Cajal, Penfield’s scientific hero, is now best known for demonstrating that neurons had gaps between them rather than being physically connected in a network. However, he also was one of science’s true Renaissance men. For one thing, he was an outstanding gymnast and an early proponent of bodybuilding. In fact, his stimulating autobiography, *Recollections of My Life* (Ramón y Cajal, 1937/1989), includes a photo of the author posing shirtless and flexing his biceps. His strong — yet extremely appealing — ego is revealed in the caption: “The photo does not do justice to my monstrous development.” Cajal also was an accomplished artist who drew beautiful pen-and-ink drawings of the nervous system that are still used in textbooks today. On top of this, he was an expert photographer who wrote one of the first books on the subject, and a wonderful writer who produced eloquent poetry. He also was a championship chess player. But it almost ruined Cajal’s life when, for a period, he began to devote more time to reading and playing chess than to his professional and personal commitments.

Even statistics can be made less dry by presenting aspects of the unusual lives of its major figures. Consider the story of William Sealy Gosset (1876-1937), also known as “Student,” who invented the t test. Students are surprised to hear that Gosset was not only an eminent statistician but a career brewmaster for the Guinness brewery in Dublin. He created the t test to help him improve the ability of Guinness Stout to retain its taste after being shipped. Gosset would compare several batches of stout treated one way to several batches treated another way, using the t test to determine whether there was any statistically significant difference in quantitative measures related to the taste of the beer (Pearson, 1990).

A number of more recent contributors to the field of psychology have led interesting lives too. Love researcher Elaine Hatfield has become a successful novelist (Hatfield, 2001) whose works include *Rosie* (with Richard Rapson) and *Darwin’s Law*. Sandra Scarr, a well-known psychologist who pursued diverse research interests in human development and behavioral genetics, retired to a beach house in Hawaii, where she grows orchids and even became a rescue scuba diver (Scarr, 2001). Like Cajal, Leon Festinger became so engrossed in chess that his academics suffered, as he haunted chess clubs instead of studying (Cohen, 1977). Howard Gardner was such an outstanding musician (relevant to one of his multiple intelligences) that he gave music lessons while still a child, and toyed with the idea of becoming a professional pianist (Doorey, 2004). Paul Ekman and Richard Davidson have been befriended by the Dalai Lama, who asked Davidson to help

create a dialog between Buddhism and neuroscience and Ekman to do research on the effects of meditation on emotion (Kreiser, 2004).

Perhaps the most bizarre anecdote about the “dark side” of eminent psychologists concerns the possible role of Henry Murray in provoking Ted Kaczynski, the so-called Unabomber, to go on his 17-year vendetta against scientists and modern technology. During World War II, Murray had worked for the OSS, running its assessment program for selecting spies. From 1959 to 1962, Kaczynski had participated in a study of personality manipulation that Murray conducted at Harvard University — a study that involved the use of techniques similar to those used in brainwashing, including repeated personal humiliation. Some observers wonder if this traumatic experience contributed to Kaczynski’s murderous rage against academic researchers (Chase, 2003). In all, he planted 16 bombs that killed three people and wounded 23.

APPRECIATING PSYCHOLOGY’S CULTURAL CONTEXT

Another interesting aspect of psychologists’ biographies is how many of them have been affected — often negatively — by their political and cultural situation. As with other sciences, racism, anti-Semitism, and sexism have affected our field. For many decades, for example, few African Americans pursued careers in psychology because they could not get the necessary education, and academic positions were not available outside of traditionally Black colleges. Robert Guthrie’s book, *Even the Rat was White*, presents the stories of major African American contributors to psychology during the 20th century (Guthrie, 1998).

Anti-Semitism has also played a role. Wolfgang Köhler, a Christian and known for his research in Gestalt psychology, regularly stood up for his Jewish colleagues against the Nazis even after they invaded his classroom to intimidate him. After refusing to sign an oath of allegiance to Hitler, he fled to the United States in 1935 and took a position at Swarthmore College (Sherrill, 1991). In 1938, Otto Loewi, who shared the Nobel Prize for his discovery of the chemical basis of neural transmission, was arrested with two of his sons and imprisoned with hundreds of Jews. As ransom for their being permitted to leave Germany, he had to give up all of his possessions — including the money he received from his Nobel Prize, which he had to send to a Nazi bank in Stockholm (“Nobelprize.org: Otto Loewi,” 2004). Also in 1938, the Nazis removed EEG inventor Hans Berger from his post as head of his academic department for being a Jew. He fell into a deep depression and eventually hung himself (“Who Named It?: Hans Berger,” 2001).

For decades, anti-Semitism also was pervasive in the lives of American Jewish psychologists. For example, as a young man, Edwin Shneidman — who later became the world’s foremost suicidologist — wanted to enroll in UCLA’s doctoral program in clinical psychology. His hopes were dashed when the openly anti-Semitic chairman of the department refused to accept him, claiming that he would not be able to find an academic position for a Jewish graduate. Ironically, many years later, Shneidman was actively recruited by the same university to be a professor of suicidology in its Neuropsychiatric Institute (Shneidman, 1991).

Perhaps the oddest example of the role of anti-Semitism in the lives of eminent psychologists is that of Harry Israel — better known to the world as Harry

Harlow. Though Israel was a protestant, he changed his name at the suggestion of Lewis Terman, one of the pioneers in intelligence testing, whose associate Walter Miles informed him that Israel would be unlikely to find a faculty position with such a Jewish-sounding last name (LeRoy & Kimble, 2003).

Another theme throughout the first century of psychology was male antipathy toward women psychologists. The case of Mary Whiton Calkins is worthy of a full-length biography, and is probably the best known. Her contemporary, Margaret Floy Washburn, was told by James McKeen Cattell that, as a woman, she would have a better chance of receiving a PhD at Cornell University than at Columbia University, so she enrolled in Edward Titchener's graduate program and earned her doctorate there. Yet, Titchener, whose graduate psychology program was perhaps the most open to female students, banned female psychologists from his Society of Experimental Psychologists — allegedly because of “man talk” and cigar smoking (Benjamin, 2005).

Christine Ladd-Franklin, a well-known color vision researcher, became Titchener's nemesis, accosting him at professional meetings and accusing him of hypocrisy for admitting men who were not experimentalists and excluding women who were. She also noted that she could handle man talk and enjoyed an occasional cigar. Titchener vowed to her that a woman would be admitted to his society only over his dead body. He was correct. Shortly after his death, Washburn became the first woman to gain admission (Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987).

In more contemporary examples, Eleanor J. Gibson recalled her distasteful experience at Yale University when she asked Robert Yerkes if she could be a research assistant, only to have him abruptly show her to the door, saying he did not accept women in his laboratory (Gibson, 1980). More recently, prominent personality researcher Gordon Allport told Sandra Scarr that he opposed her being in the graduate program at Harvard (where she obtained her PhD in 1965) because she would probably get married, stay home to raise children, and never pursue an academic career (Scarr, 2001). Scarr went on to become an influential researcher on the effects of daycare on children and the relative influence of heredity and life experiences on intellectual development. Linda Bartoshuk turned to psychology after being dissuaded from pursuing her first love, astronomy, because she was a woman. Even so, Carl Pfaffman, the prominent chemical senses researcher, told her that he did not accept women in his laboratory at Brown University. But Bartoshuk persevered, Pfaffman became her mentor and friend (Bartoshuk, 2001), and she went on to become a noted chemical senses researcher in her own right.

A tragic story is that of Christiana Morgan, who co-created the Thematic Apperception Test with Henry Murray. Her tale is told in the eye-opening biography, *Translate This Darkness* (Douglas, 1993). Morgan was known for both her great beauty and her great intellect. Eminent philosopher Alfred North Whitehead called a statue of Morgan the most magnificent one he had ever seen of a woman. The famous critic Lewis Mumford, who socialized with the best and the brightest, noted that Morgan had one of the three greatest minds he had ever encountered. (After Murray's death, his manuscripts were found to contain Morgan's comments throughout them.) But she became an alcoholic and spent her life as little more than Henry Murray's intellectual helper and mistress. After his wife's death, Murray promised Morgan he would marry her if she stopped drinking. She did so,

but he chose to be with a woman 20 years younger than her instead. In deep emotional pain, Morgan then committed suicide. She went to a beach, neatly folded her clothes, removed the ring that Murray had given her years earlier, wrapped it in a small beach bag, and placed it on the sand — and walked out into the sea and drowned herself.

Some contributors to our field, like Harry Stack Sullivan, bore the brunt of several social stigmas. Sullivan was born to poverty-stricken parents who had emigrated from Ireland to escape the devastating potato famine. They had lost their other two children during childbirth. Sullivan endured a lonely, unhappy childhood, continually faced with his father's aloofness and his mother's criticisms. These stressful experiences were compounded by the anti-Catholic hostility he encountered in his largely Protestant hometown. In adulthood, many of Sullivan's friends and colleagues knew that he was gay but the times in which he lived forced him to hide his sexual orientation. Though Sullivan became a renowned psychiatrist who helped many people, he lived his own life in chaos, drinking too much and finding himself in constant financial trouble. Sullivan fought a constant battle against depression, and his longtime colleague, psychoanalyst Edith Weigert, recalled an occasion when Sullivan suddenly put a hand on her shoulder and said, "Edith, you do not know how lonely I am" (Chatelaine, 1991, p. 340).

SERENDIPITY

Albert Bandura (1982) has noted that many of our life choices are governed by serendipity involving chance events and chance encounters. He recalled that the primary reason he changed from majoring in biology to majoring in psychology was that an introductory psychology course fit perfectly in his schedule one semester. Among many other examples of the role of serendipity in career choices is that of Hermann Ebbinghaus, who accidentally came upon a used copy of Fechner's *Elements of Psychophysics* while working in a Paris bookshop. Reading it inspired him to apply the scientific method to the study of memory (Boneau, 1998). Hans J. Eysenck, who became one of the most influential psychologists of the late 20th century, intended to major in physics at the University of London but lacked the prerequisite courses, so he majored in psychology instead, simply because it was the only science major that did not have those prerequisites (Eysenck, 1990). Donald O. Hebb, who became a renowned brain researcher, didn't know what course of study to pursue in graduate school. But when his sister Catherine, who just happened to be a doctoral student in physiology at McGill University, informed him of a graduate fellowship there, he applied for it and wound up studying under the neuroscience giant, Wilder Penfield (Hebb, 1980).

One day, while attending Vassar College, Mary Cover (later Mary Cover Jones) was preparing to go to a play, when a friend convinced her to attend a lecture at Columbia University instead. The speaker, John B. Watson, discussed research that he and his graduate student Rosalie Rayner had conducted on conditioning fear in their child test subject, Little Albert (Jones, 1975). Cover became interested in psychology after attending the lecture, going on to do an experiment in which she used a similar approach to alleviate the fear of rabbits in a little boy named Peter. (One also wonders whether her friendship with Rayner, when they were students together at Vassar, influenced her becoming a psychologist.) In another

case, one of young Roger Sperry's parents returned from the local public library with a copy of William James's *Principles of Psychology*, intending to read it. Roger spied the book and, though he was only 12 years old, read it from cover to cover. This stimulated his lifelong interest in the relationship between mind and brain (Puente, 2000).

PUTTING LIFE INTO LECTURES

Why spend any of your valuable time hunting down biographical information on eminent contributors to psychology and reading it? And why include such material in your lectures when it will necessarily reduce coverage of the “content” of psychology? By carefully integrating a modest amount of material about the lives of the field's eminent figures — both historical and contemporary — you can make your courses more engaging and rewarding, both to your students and to you. Life stories make lectures richer than when they are limited to the communication of facts, theories, and research studies. You might even find yourself becoming more enthusiastic about the course content you present when you can tie it to interesting information about relevant contributors. This would be particularly beneficial when you find yourself covering the same dry topic for the umpteenth time.

Also, biographical material gives necessary context to the material you are teaching. The June 1991 issue of *American Psychologist*, which was devoted to undergraduate education, noted that psychology students should be provided with an appreciation of the historical context of their field. They should also come to realize that psychology was not developed by intellectuals working in ivory towers isolated from outside influences. Students become more appreciative of the human context of psychology by learning about contributors' other interests and the intimate relationship between their life experiences and their professional work. Even great scientists are not immune from the vagaries of life. Their life experiences might make them gravitate to certain intellectual pursuits or affect their ability to conduct their work. Their childhoods, relationships, educational background, culture, gender, religion, and ethnicity — as well as just plain serendipity — each can play a role in their work. Many intellectuals have persevered despite awful childhoods, emotional difficulties, relationship problems, or prejudice directed at them. Vivid anecdotes about the lives and struggles of contributors to our field not only give historical context, they connect the course content to more distinctive and easily recalled information, helping your student remember it better.

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APPENDIX A: TRIVIAL PURSUIT SCAVENGER HUNT

Biographical material can enliven your lectures, but a more interactive way to work it into your courses is to conduct "trivial pursuit scavenger hunts." Make a deck of index cards, each one containing a question about an eminent psychologist — a question that can't be answered without obscure information your students won't find in their textbook. Have students blindly select a card, and give them a time limit (whether hours or days) in which to find the answers and share their answers in class. The exercise provides a welcome break from academic routine for students and helps hone their library and Internet research skills. The following are some possible psychology trivia questions, with the answers given in brackets. (A longer list of questions is available from the author.)

1. Which psychologist became the first female president of an Ivy League school when she assumed that position at the University of Pennsylvania in 1994? [*Judith Rodin*] (Dube & Sherman, 2003)

2. What eminent 19th-century German physicist-physiologist's mother, Caroline Penne, was a descendant of William Penn? [*Hermann von Helmholtz*] (Adler, 2000)

3. What giant of 20th-century neuroscience was nicknamed "Ramón" by his colleagues because of his great admiration for Santiago Ramón y Cajal? [*Wilder Penfield*] (Lewis, 1981)

4. Which pioneer in intelligence research conducted research on projective tests long before Hermann Rorschach, conservation of number long before Piaget, and conformity to line-length judgments long before Solomon Asch? [*Alfred Binet*] (Fancher, 1991)

5. Which leading researcher in the psychology of love had ancestors who were on one side of the violent Hatfields versus McCoys feud? [*Elaine Hatfield*] (Hatfield, 2001)

6. Which prominent neuroscientist criticized Pavlov's theory at the 1929 International Congress of Psychology in New Haven, as Pavlov fumed in the audience? [*Karl Lashley*] (Bruce, 1991)

7. Who won a Nobel Prize that recognized his invention of prefrontal lobotomy to treat mental illness while ignoring his invention of brain angiography, which revolutionized the detection of brain abnormalities? [*Egas Moniz*] ("Nobelprize.org: Egas Moniz," 2004)

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APPENDIX B: FINDING THE INFORMATION

My first years as a collector of psychologists' biographies came before the advent of sophisticated computer search engines for used and antiquarian books. So I haunted used bookstores and enlisted the aid of a crack book finder who lived in Queens, New York, to track down volumes for me that I could not locate myself. Now I search for my own books on the Internet, which is more efficient — but much less sociable!

To make sure that I don't miss anything, I periodically search the Library of Congress online catalog for all books, Barnes and Noble (www.bn.com) for new books, and AddALL (www.addall.com) for used and antiquarian books. (AddALL is a metasearch site that combines the power of a number of powerful book-search engines that can comb the holdings of thousands of book dealers. You can search AddALL in a variety of ways, including by author, by title, by price, and by publication date. AddALL's listings also describe the condition of the books. I have found remarkable bargains in which a book in near fine condition is priced much lower than the same title in merely good condition.)

To avoid doing the same work over and over, I keep a master list of major contributors to the field that I continually update. There is no foolproof way to identify all of the relevant books, given that their titles often do not provide a clue to their subject. Nonetheless, I rarely find that I miss an important book. Once I obtain a book, I peruse its bibliography for relevant biographical or autobiographical books that I might have missed. I generally do a complete book search during the summer and in January, when teaching responsibilities do not overwhelm me.

I have learned to refrain from trying to collect all of the biographical works about the few major figures, such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, who continue to have book after book written about them. In those cases, I try to make sure that I find the most important ones. Here is a list of collections of biographies and autobiographies that are not included in this chapter's reference list, followed by a list of useful individual biographical and autobiographical works.

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