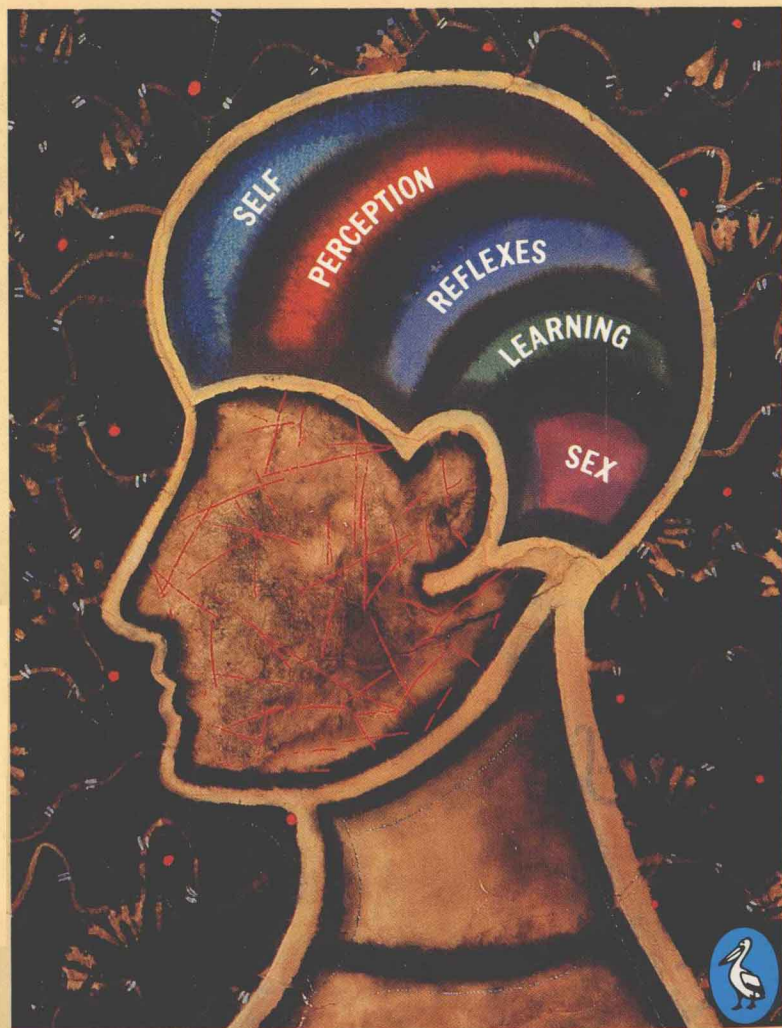


C. J. ADCOCK
FUNDAMENTALS
OF
PSYCHOLOGY



PELICAN BOOKS

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C. J. Adcock was born in England but reared on an 'out-back' farm in New Zealand where education was limited to a one-teacher school. He attended the Auckland Teachers' College and qualified as a primary-school teacher. He studied extramurally for his B.A., M.A., and Diploma of Social Science degrees. For several years he lectured on Psychology and Politics for the South-east District Workers' Educational Association, England. He obtained his Ph.D. in London after the war, and returned to New Zealand to a university appointment in Wellington. He officially retired as Acting Professor in 1970 but continues some teaching and research in an honorary capacity. He became a Carnegie Fellow when he visited United States and European universities in 1954-5. He was also a visiting Professor at the University of Illinois in 1962 and during 1963 visited other universities in Europe, India, and Japan. He is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society and an Honorary Fellow of the New Zealand Psychological Society. He is President of the New Zealand Esperanto Association, and Vice-President of the Wellington Workers' Educational Association and of the New Zealand United Nations Association.

He has published *Problems of Life and Existence*, *Factorial Analysis for Non-mathematicians*, *Psychology and Nursing*, and numerous papers.

He is married to a psychologist and has two daughters by a former marriage.

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WITH FOURTEEN TEXT FIGURES



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EDITORIAL FOREWORD

SOME twenty-odd volumes have been published in the Pelican Psychology Series (together with other books on psychology not included in this series). For good and sufficient reasons it has not been possible before now to offer a general introductory text in this series on the subject as a whole. J. C. Flugel's *A Hundred Years of Psychology* (1933) contains a chapter on 'The Great Textbooks, Brentano to James'. The story should be brought up to date. A review of the textbooks of psychology would illuminate the history of psychology itself and its spectacular emergence as, next to atomic physics, the most important advance in science in the twentieth century. No one in this century can claim to be educated if he has not at least a nodding acquaintance with modern physics and with modern psychology.

At the turn of the century there were two authoritative texts: William James's *Principles of Psychology* (still preserved in part in Margaret Knight's Pelican, *William James*, A229) and G. F. Stout's *Manual of Psychology*. When psychology, early in the present century, became an established science (as distinct from a branch of philosophy) a different kind of text was needed. In England new texts were provided by William McDougall (*The Outline of Psychology*), by R. H. Thouless (*General and Social Psychology*), and by Rex and Margaret Knight (*A Modern Introduction to Psychology*). All these have passed through many editions.

In the United States there has been a remarkable succession of new textbooks including those by R. S. Woodworth, by N. L. Munn, and by E. R. Hilgard. Most of these texts underwent changes in successive editions. Earlier textbooks and earlier editions of the latter texts mostly presented the subject on the general plan of proceeding from the simpler to the more complex forms of experience and behaviour. Later textbooks and later editions of textbooks often reversed the order of exposition or experimented

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with other arrangements. There was no harm in this. In exploring a new world there are many places from which to set out and many possible routes of exploration.

This text, the *Fundamentals of Psychology*, can be commended to the reader as providing both a convenient point of departure and an interesting itinerary. Dr Adcock, who obtained his first degree and his doctorate at London University, has also studied and carried out research in the United States. He is accordingly well acquainted with, and sympathetic to, the approaches and the slants characteristic of British and American psychology. While sympathetic with many standpoints in psychology this book is not just eclectic. It aims at a synthesis. Recently, Dr Adcock has been engaged in research at Professor Raymond Cattell's laboratory at Illinois. Cattell's psychology is less well known in England than in the United States. It will be better known after the publication of a forthcoming Pelican written by Professor Cattell himself – for which Dr Adcock's *Fundamentals of Psychology* provides useful preliminary reading.

The reader who wishes to carry his studies further can proceed to some of the standard British and American textbooks, or to the more specialized volumes cited by the author or referred to in the end pages of this volume. Other suggestions for further reading will be found in the Psychology Section of the Penguin *Reader's Guide*.

This book can be commended not only to the general reader but also to young people still at school who may be proceeding to the university or to some other form of further education, and who contemplate a course of study such as psychology which is not included in the school curriculum. Teachers who encourage their pupils to explore subjects outside this curriculum can safely recommend this book as a sensible and readable account of what psychology is about.

C. A. MACE

PREFACE TO THE PELICAN EDITION

EARLIER editions of this book were designed primarily for students of psychology in universities. It has been revised with the general reader's interest in mind, but it is hoped that it will still be of use as an introductory text for students. The technical terms used are those which the serious reader needs to know. They are explained as introduced but, to facilitate reference, are also listed at the end of the book.

The book should serve as an introduction to a number of important psychological concepts presented here within a comprehensive, integrated *schema* so that the reader should be able to see psychology as a unified science. For the general reader, faced with a plethora of popular books on the subject, it is hoped that this one will provide an insight into the basic principles of scientific psychology. For the college student it offers, within one small volume, a comprehensive grasp of the field as a whole which may easily be lost in the detailed exposition of larger texts.

The stress throughout is on systematization and, while this is based upon an eclectic approach ranging from neurology to psycho-analysis, no attempt has been made to cover the contributions of all schools of thought. That can come later. For the beginner a well integrated conceptual *schema* must have priority. He will want later to amend it in various ways in the light of more advanced reading but before he strides out for himself he should stand on firm ground. If the book omitted all controversial concepts there would be nothing to unify, but to include all possible conflicting views would cause confusion and bewilderment.

The author also hopes that the systematization of the subject, while presented in terms appropriate for the lay reader and the beginner, may also prove of interest in its theoretical implications to the more advanced student of psychology.

C. J. A.

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SECTION ONE
INTRODUCTION

I

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY?

REFERENCES to psychology in the daily press and in popular periodicals are now numerous, but the variety of ideas as to the nature of psychology is correspondingly extensive. The most popular notion is that psychology is concerned in some way with the study of the mind. This accords with the derivation of the word, the Greek root of which refers to mind or soul. This is also substantially the definition given by the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, but psychologists themselves prefer to avoid any assumption about the nature of the mind. Most of them would prefer a definition in terms of behaviour rather than of mind. Behaviour is objective and observable; mind is an assumption and, even if a justifiable assumption, not the primary object of our study.

The existence of so many varied conceptions of the nature of psychology is no doubt related to the many aspects of psychological work. The psychiatrist coping with 'mental' breakdown, the educator moulding human development, the vocational counsellor advising on the choice of jobs, the social scientist studying the prevention of crime, the personnel manager smoothing human relations in industry, the industrial psychologist streamlining industrial processes to suit the nature of human capacities: all these are concerned with psychology. Human behaviour is complex and varied, and the science which studies it must have many aspects. It may be useful for us to consider samples of psychological work in various areas.

A SIMPLE INDUSTRIAL PROBLEM

A large London catering firm became concerned about the

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excessive number of breakages by its employees. It therefore decided to impose a penalty to reduce carelessness. Strange to say, the system of fines led to an *increase* in breakages. Such is the perversity of human nature. The management decided the problem was more complex than they had thought, so they called in a psychologist to investigate and recommend appropriate remedies. The psychologist first posed the question as to when breakages occurred. He kept a record of the breakages occurring during half-hour periods over a number of days, and it soon became evident that most accidents occurred during the rush periods when the girls were worried by their inability to cope with the number of orders. It was now obvious why the system of fines had only made matters worse. They added to the anxiety of the already over-taxed girls and simply made them more nervous.

A CASE OF PHOBIA

A *phobia* is an abnormal fear. Often the feared thing is quite harmless and the victim knows this, but he cannot reason with himself about it and just feels intensely afraid. Bagby tells of a young woman who had been troubled by such a phobia since she was seven years of age. She could not bear the sound or sight of running water. On one occasion she fainted at school because of the sound of the drinking fountain. Any suggestion of running water was sufficient to give her a severe fright.

The explanation of this condition lay in an experience which she had in her seventh year. She had been taken for a picnic with her mother and her aunt and had remained behind with her aunt after her mother had to return home. Forgetting her promise to obey her aunt, she ran away alone in the woods and was later found by her aunt wedged between two rocks of a small stream with water splashing