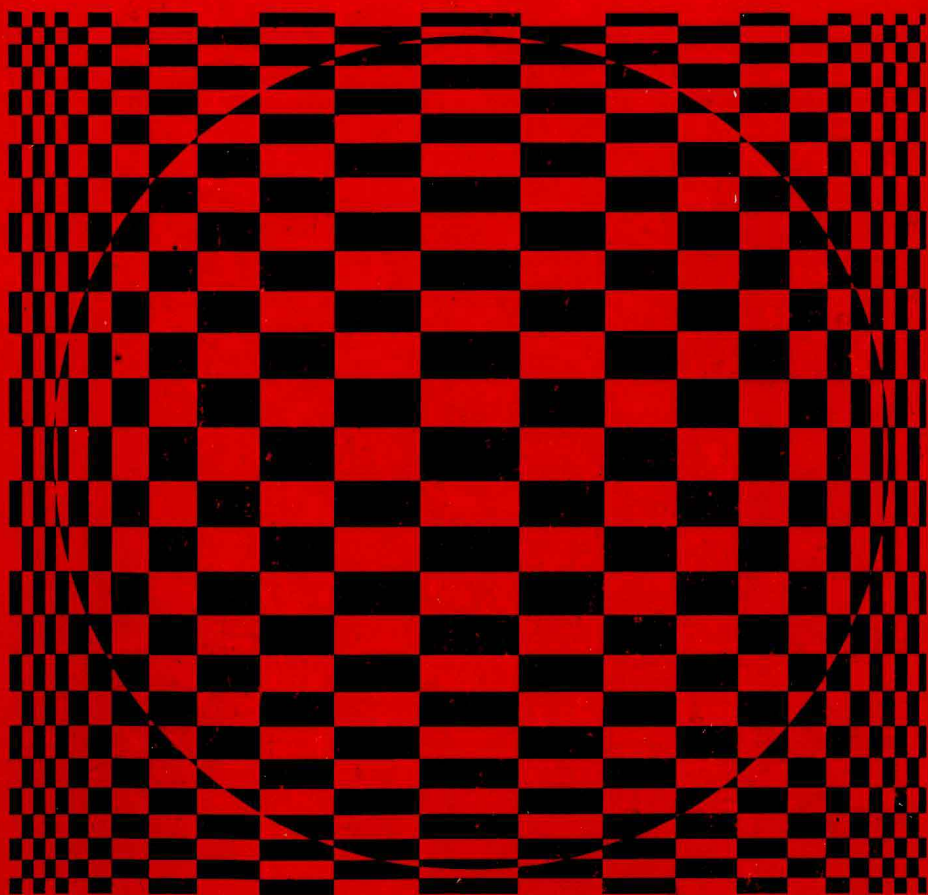


# READINGS IN INTRODUCTORY PSYCHOLOGY

Edited by *Richard C. Teevan*



*Major controversies in psychology covered accurately,  
interestingly, and readably.*

# READINGS IN INTRODUCTORY PSYCHOLOGY

Edited by *Richard C. Teevan*  
State University of New York  
at Albany

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# READINGS IN INTRODUCTORY PSYCHOLOGY

# *Preface*

THE ARTICLES IN THIS book were selected mainly for their interest and readability for students in the first course. I have also tried to make sure that most of the major controversies are covered and, of course, that the information conveyed is accurate and will not mislead the student. However, the major intent is to use articles which will interest the student and, hopefully, lead him into further readings in the field. Thus the focus of the articles is on motivating the student. Each article has a very short introduction which is designed to point out the major intent of the article or to lead the student into it in some way. I have tried to make sure that the introductions are not summaries of the articles.

I would like to express my indebtedness to Daniel Ceranski, Robert McKinstry, and Christian Parker, for their help in locating articles. I am also greatly indebted to Dr. Robert Birney with whom I edited a book of readings which led into this one, and to Carol Steinberg and Ron Cohen.

December 1972  
Albany

Richard C. Teevan

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READINGS	Ruch and Simbarido, <i>Psychology and Life</i> , Scott, Foresman, 1971	Sanford and Wrightsmen, <i>Psychology</i> Brooks/Cole, 1970	Silverman, <i>Psychology</i> Appleton- Century-Crofts, 1971	Stagner and Solley, <i>Basic Psychology</i> McGraw-Hill, 1970
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# I

## *Psychology as a Science*



*Abraham Maslow has long been a leader in what has been called "humanistic" psychology. This is an excellent statement of his position. This article is placed in the methodology section since Maslow feels that there has been too much stress on methodology in psychology and not enough stress on what the methodology is supposed to do. As you read this article, you will notice that Maslow is objecting not to the idea that empirical research must be the final arbiter of questions in psychology but to what he feels is preoccupation with experimental design at the beginning of research on any given idea.*

## A PHILOSOPHY OF PSYCHOLOGY: THE NEED FOR A MATURE SCIENCE OF HUMAN NATURE

ABRAHAM H. MASLOW

I WANT TO BEGIN my remarks with a credo, a personal statement, which admittedly sounds presumptuous, but is nonetheless necessary.

I believe that psychologists occupy the most centrally important position in the world today. I say this because all the important problems of mankind — war and peace, exploitation and brotherhood, hatred and love, sickness and health, misunderstanding and understanding, happiness and unhappiness — will yield only to a better understanding of human nature, and to this psychology alone wholly applies itself. Therefore I believe that medicine and physics, law and government, education, economics, engineering, business and industry, are only tools, though admittedly powerful. They are means but not ends; the end is human betterment.

The ultimate end to which they should all be bent, then, is human fulfillment, growth and happiness. But these tools produce such good and desirable results only when rightly used by good men. Wrongly and ignorantly

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used by evil men, they produce nothing but disaster. The wrong, the evil, lie in the men, not in the tools, and the only way to heal the sickness which displays itself as evil is to create good men by understanding the causes of the sickness and seeking the cures. Discovery of the nature of human good and evil, that is, of psychological health and psychological disease, is the job for which the psychologist tries to qualify himself.

Therefore I feel myself, as a psychologist, to be important as well as fortunate in being engaged in such a profession. Psychologists must be considered fortunate for several reasons. They deal with the most fascinating material in the world — human beings. They are, in a sense, their own studies, their own scientific work, and so can work out even their own personal problems more efficiently. But still more important, everything that one man may discover through psychological research will be magnified a million times. For the more we learn about human nature, the more we automatically discover about all the other sciences, as well as law, history, philosophy, religion and industry, since these are all essentially human products. Basic to the study of law or education or economics or history should be an improved study of the human beings who have made the law and the history. Paul Valery has said it well: "When the mind is in question, everything is in question."

It must be quite clear by now that I speak out of a special conception of the vocation of the psychologist. It seems to me that psychology imposes definite rules and responsibilities upon its practitioners. The most pressing and urgent problems which face us today arise out of human weaknesses: sorrow, greed, exploitation, prejudice, contempt, cowardice, stupidity, jealousy and selfishness. We know, however, that these are diseases which are intrinsically curable. Psychoanalysis, for example, is one process of deep therapy that can handle these problems if it has enough time and skill.

Death in another shooting war, or a tense, neurotic, anxious existence in an extended cold war will inevitably result if human beings continue to misunderstand themselves and each other. If we improve human nature we improve all, for we remove the principal causes of world disorder. But human improvement depends upon an understanding of human nature, and the simple and unavoidable fact is that we just don't know enough about people. It is for this reason that the world needs the insights that psychology can with time produce. More than bombs or new religions or diplomats or factories, more than physical health and the new drugs to win it, we need an improved human nature.

It is for these reasons that I feel a sense of historical urgency, as well as an increased awareness of the responsibility of the psychologist. This is a responsibility to the human race, and it should give the psychologist a sense of mission and a weight of duty beyond those of other scientists.

An important point I want to emphasize, however, is that my definition of psychologist is broad but specific. I mean to include not just professors of psychology but rather all those — and only those — who are interested in developing a truer, clearer, more empirical conception of human nature. This would exclude many professors of psychology and many psychiatrists, but would include some sociologists, anthropologists, educators, philosophers, theologians, publicists, linguists, business men, and so on.

There is one more qualification. Since psychology is in its infancy as a science, and so pitifully little is known by comparison with what we need to know, a good psychologist should be a humble man. Feeling his responsibility, he should be very conscious of how much he ought to know, and how little he actually does know. Unfortunately, too many psychologists are not humble, but are, rather, swollen with little knowledge. There is, in fact, no greater danger than an arrogant psychologist or psychiatrist.

With this preamble, I am going to cite below a number of “musts” which I feel are essential if psychology is to mature as a science and accept its full responsibilities.

## I

Psychology should be more humanistic, that is, more concerned with the problems of humanity, and less with the problems of the guild.

The sad thing is that most students come into psychology with humanistic interests. They want to find out about people; they want to understand love, hate, hope, fear, ecstasy, happiness, the meaning of living. But what is so often done for these high hopes and yearnings? Most graduate, and even undergraduate, training turns away from these subjects, which are called fuzzy, unscientific, tender-minded, mystical. (I couldn't find the word “love” indexed in any of the psychology books on my shelves, even the ones on marriage.) Instead the student is offered dry bones, techniques, precision, and huge mountains of facts which have little relation to the interests which brought him into psychology. Even worse, they try, often successfully, to make the student *ashamed* of his interests as somehow unscientific. Thus the fine impulses of youth are often lost, and with them, the creativeness, the daring, the boldness, the unorthodoxy, the sense of high mission, the humanistic dedication. Cynicism closes in, and the student settles down to being a member of the guild, with all its prejudices and orthodoxies. I am horrified to report that most graduate students in psychology speak guardedly of the Ph.D. as the “union card,” and tend to regard their dissertation research not as a privilege or an opportunity but as an unpleasant chore that must be done in order to get a job.

What cultivated man in his right mind would read a doctoral dissertation,



or an elementary textbook of psychology? The psychology books, approved by technical psychologists, which I could recommend to this audience are few. The only ones which would help you to understand man better are inexact and unscientific, coming more from the psychotherapeutic tradition than from the scientific psychologist. For instance, I recommend that you read Freud and the neo-Freudians, but I doubt that Freud could get a Ph.D. in psychology today, nor would any of his writings be acceptable as a doctoral dissertation. Only a few months ago, in a standard journal of psychology, a presidential address compared Freud with phrenology. And this for the greatest psychologist who has ever lived – at least from the point of view of nonmembers of the guild.

In exchange for Freud, Adler, Jung, Fromm and Horney, we are offered beautifully executed, precise, elegant experiments which, in at least half the cases, have nothing to do with enduring human problems, and which are written primarily for other members of the guild. It is all so reminiscent of the lady at the zoo who asked the keeper whether the hippopotamus was male or female. "Madam," he replied, "it seems to me that would be of interest only to another hippopotamus."

Psychologists are, or should be, an arm of the human race. They have obligations and responsibilities to everyone now living, and to the future. But they are not fulfilling them as they should.

## II

Psychology should turn more frequently to the study of philosophy, of science, of aesthetics, and especially of ethics and values. The fact that psychology has officially cut itself off from philosophy means no more than that it has given up good philosophies for bad ones. Every man has a philosophy, albeit uncriticized, unconscious and uncorrected. If it is to be made more realistic, more useful and more fruitful, its possessor must work consciously to improve it.

A philosophy of psychology, in the sense in which I am using the term, includes the study of values. A philosophy of science should inquire into the meaning and purpose of science: how does it enrich us? It should also include a philosophy of aesthetics, of creativeness, of the highest and deepest experiences of which a human being is capable – what I call the peak-experiences. This is a way of avoiding shallowness, and of setting a suitably high level of aspiration.

Too many psychologists have sought their philosophy in the physical science concepts of the 19th century, apparently merely because these sciences were successful. But psychology is in its infancy as a science, and