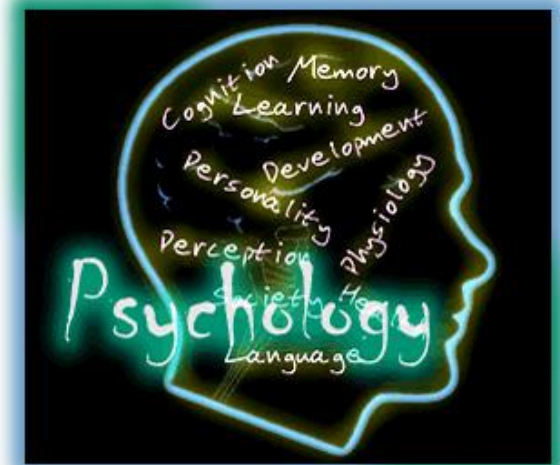


LECTURE ONE:

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY?



Module outline

- Objectives:
 - To introduce the historical and conceptual background to the discipline of Psychology
 - To introduce the multiple perspectives in Psychology
 - Provide students with an awareness of how multiple perspectives can be used to explain certain human behaviours

Module outline

- Semester One module
- Ten x 2 hour weekly lectures
- Ten x 2 hour weekly seminars
 - List of seminar groups will be available on Moodle

Assessment for Introduction to Psychology

Two assessments:

1500 word written assignment

- Title & submission date will be available on Moodle soon

2 hour combined exam:

Section A: multiple choice

50 multiple choice questions – required to answer all questions

Section B short answer

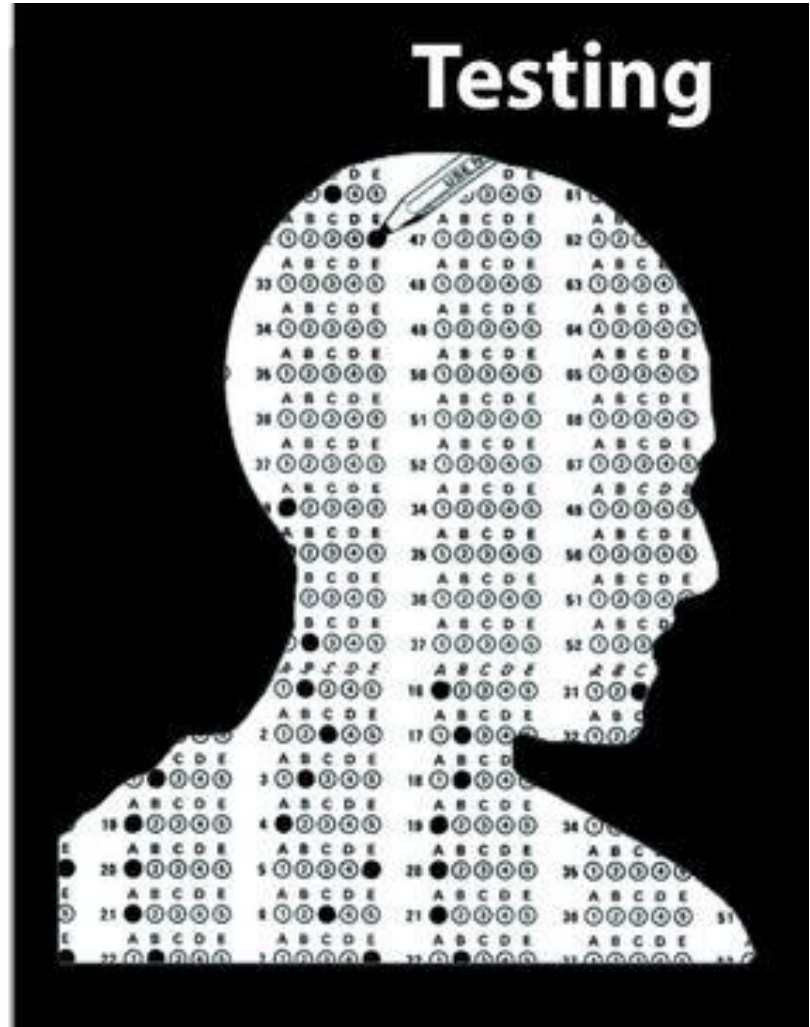
10 short answer questions – required to answer 5 questions

Exam: after Christmas break

Learning



Testing



Lecture One

- What is Psychology?
- Historical and conceptual background
- Psychology as a science

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY?



The overall aims of Psychology:

To:

DESCRIBE how people and other species behave

UNDERSTAND the causes of these behaviours

PREDICT how people (and animals) will behave under certain circumstances

INFLUENCE behaviour through the control of its causes

APPLY psychological knowledge in ways that enhance human welfare and quality of life

(Passer et al., 2009)

So...

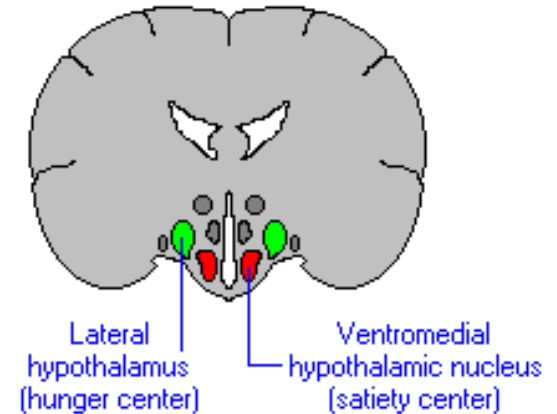
the field of psychology is concerned with...

**the scientific study of directly observable behaviours
and internal states and processes**

Levels of Analysis

- **Biological** level – brain processes, genetic influences
- **Psychological** level – thoughts, feelings, motives, intentions
- **Environmental** level – past and current physical and social environments

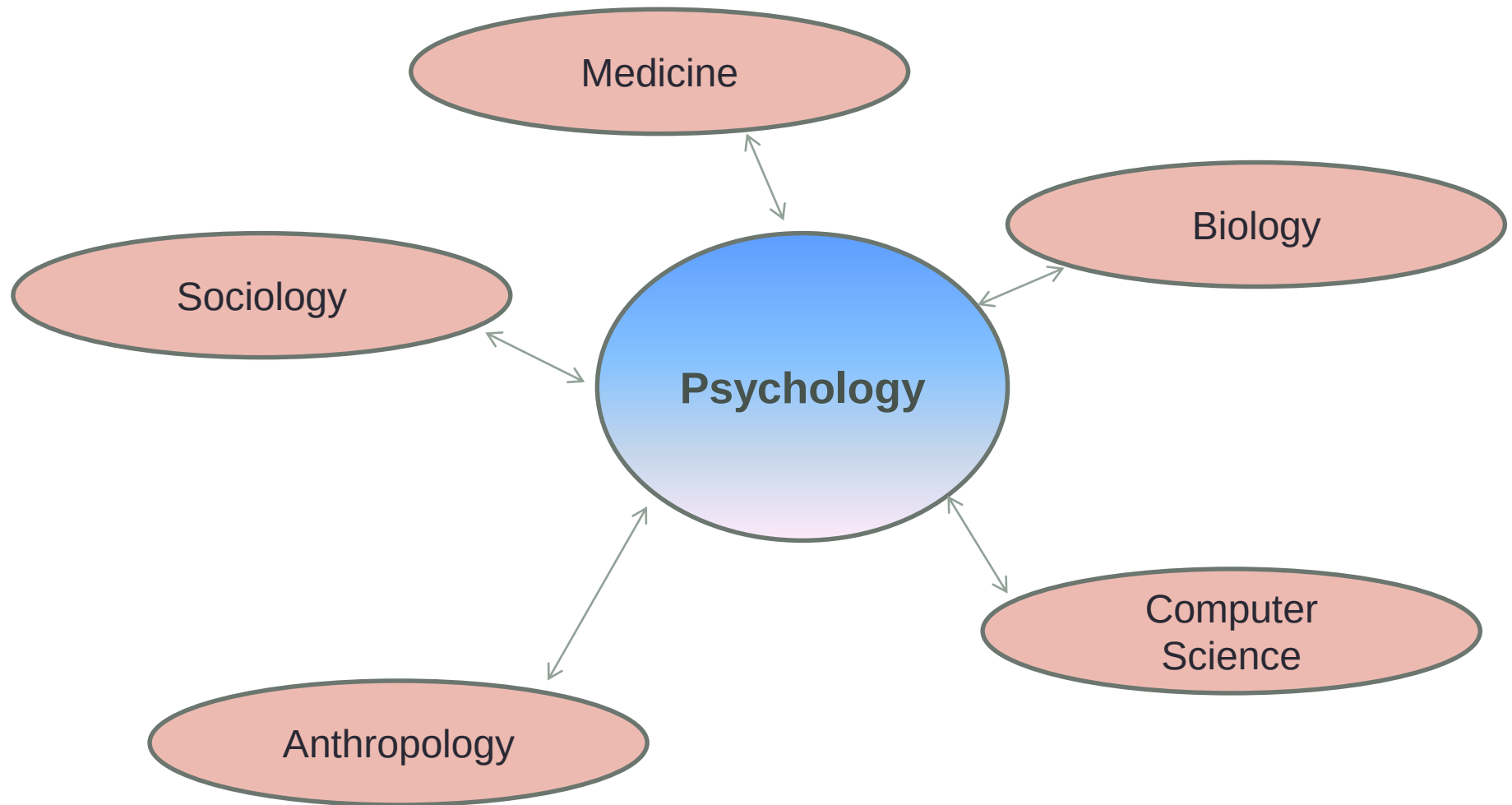
- Example: Eating (see *Holt et al, 2012*)
- **Biological** – chemicals, neural circuits, brain structures that regulate intake of food
- **Psychological** – mood (happy, bored, stressed...), preferences (chocolate, pizza....)
- **Environmental** – social stimuli (adverts, others eating, smell of cakes baking....).



Cultural differences.....



Psychology and its link with other sciences



British Psychological Society (BPS)

Psychology

“The scientific study of people, the mind and behaviour. It is both a thriving academic principle and a vital professional practice”

Is psychology a science?

Philosophical roots of psychology

- **John Locke and Empiricism (17th-18th Century)**
 - Knowledge is acquired through our senses i.e., experiences
 - This idea turned into a method of enquiry that used careful observation and experiments to gather facts and evidence

Philosophical roots of psychology

- Kuhn (1970) argues that a scientific revolution of a field of study involves a **paradigm shift**.
 - “the practices that define a scientific discipline at certain point in time.”
- Psychology has multiple theories/perspectives/schools of thought
 - A number of paradigm shifts over time

Psychology timeline – examples of paradigm shifts

Freud first published his psychoanalytic theory of personality

Focus upon the unconscious mind and the role it has on our behaviours

Gestalt Psychology

“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts”

Humanistic Psychology emerges as the ‘third force’ in psychology.

Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow

1879

1900

1913

1920

1954

1956

The emergence of Psychology as a separate discipline

Wilhelm Wundt opened the first Psychology lab

John Watson and the birth of behaviourism

Psychology should be concerned with studying behaviour

The Cognitive Revolution

Humans as information processors

Psychology as a Science

The major features of a science:

- A definable subject matter
 - What are you interested in?
- Theory construction
 - An explanation of a particular behaviour/cognitive process
- Hypothesis testing
 - A testable statement which makes a prediction about the behaviour/cognitive process
- Empirical methods
 - Ways of collecting data to see if your **hypothesis/prediction** is correct and if your **theory** is supported

Issues regarding the 'science' of psychology

- Objectivity
 - Impossible to achieve?
 - The social nature of what we study = subjective
- Experimenter bias
 - We are influenced by our own expectations and beliefs
 - We may act in a certain way that influences the thing we are studying
- Demand characteristics
 - Participants are problem solvers
 - Will try and act in a way they think is expected of them – may not be their normal behaviour

Issues regarding the 'science' of psychology

- Representativeness
 - Can we really 'generalise' from small samples to the wider population?
- Artificiality
 - Is the way people behave in a laboratory experiment the same as they would behave normally?
- Reliability
 - Can we ensure that the research is reliable – that it will test the same thing across studies?
- Validity
 - Ecological/external validity
 - Internal validity

So... is psychology a science?

- Psychology tries to be as scientific as possible, but must always acknowledge the limitations of what it can and cannot do.

Useful reading :

Gross, R. D. (2010). *Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour*. (6th ed.) London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Chapter 3: Psychology as a Science, pp. 37 – 48

BREAK



10 MINUTES!

PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

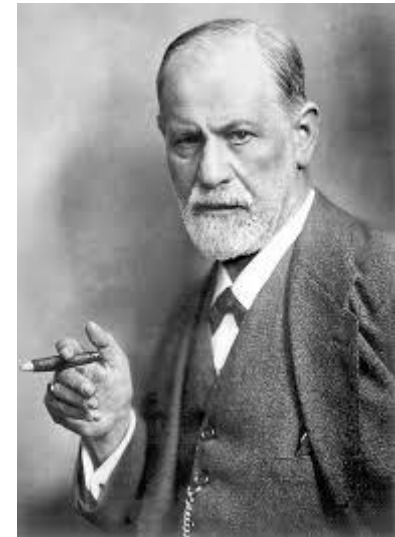
Psychodynamic perspective

Behaviourism

Psychodynamic Approach

Focus on the forces within the personality that motivate behaviour

- Stemmed from **Freud's** psychoanalytic theory
- **Determinism**: all behaviour has a cause
- Freud's approach **deterministic**:
 - internal '**drives**' - the forces within the personality motivate (determine) behaviour



Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory

1. Most of our thoughts and ideas are in the pre-conscious or unconscious, so a **focus on unconscious processes**
2. Behaviour is determined by **unconscious** thoughts and desires
3. Use of psychoanalytic techniques to bring such thoughts to consciousness
 - hypnosis, free association, dream interpretation, transference
4. Theory of infantile sexuality and defence mechanisms
5. Impact of early experience on later personality

Psychodynamic Approach



How many everyday terms can you think of that have stemmed from Freud's Psychoanalytic theory?

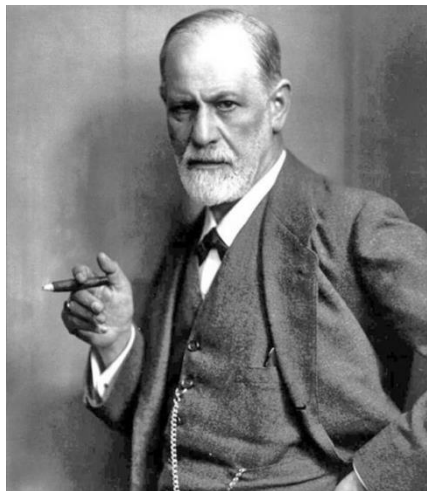
Psychoanalytic approach

Defence
mechanisms

Libido

Being 'anal'

In denial



Making a
'Freudian
slip'

Repression

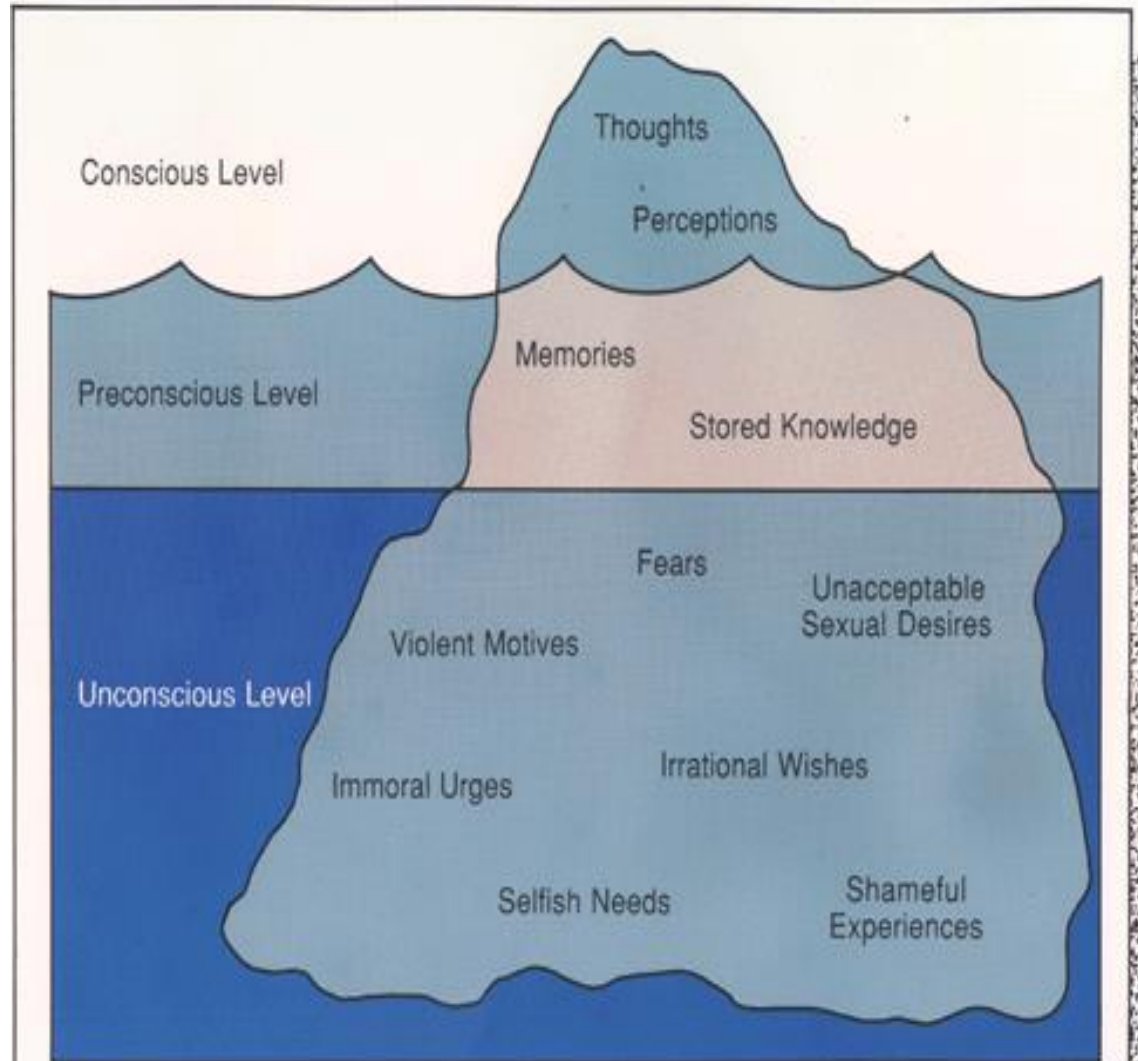
'Neurotic'

Interpreting
dreams

The 'Iceberg' metaphor

- Conscious mind
 - awareness
- Subconscious mind
 - preconscious
 - unconscious
- Thoughts and ideas underpinned by pre-conscious or unconscious
- Behaviour determined by unconscious thoughts and desires

PERS 5 Freud's View of the Human Mind: The Mental Iceberg



Freud's models of Motivation

The driving forces behind human behaviour

- Pleasure v Unpleasure (Pleasure Principle)
- Sexuality v Aggression (to explain sadism and masochism)
- Eros v Thanatos (Greek: Love/Death)

Freud's Psychodynamic Model of Personality

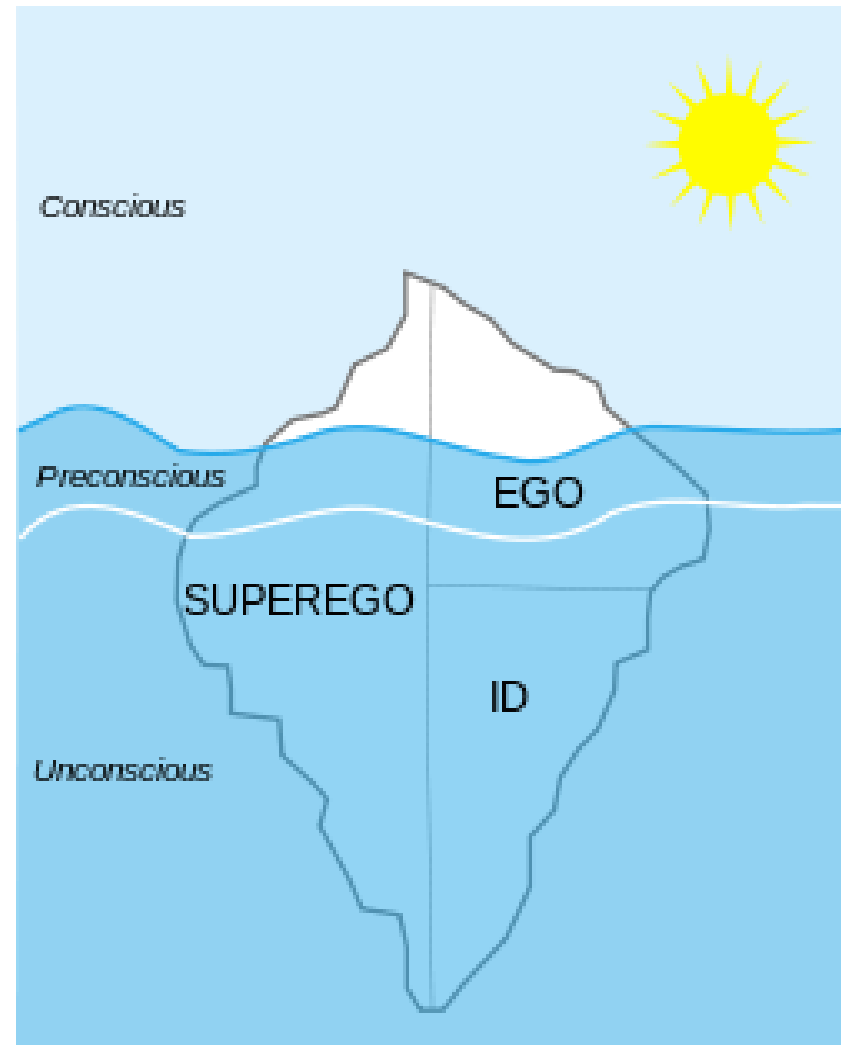
Id

Governed by the pleasure principle

Reduction of tension
Immediate gratification

Chaotic; No conception of reality

Adults – demands of id in
unconscious



If all our behaviour was determined by the id we would not last long!

Superego

Governed by moral constraints

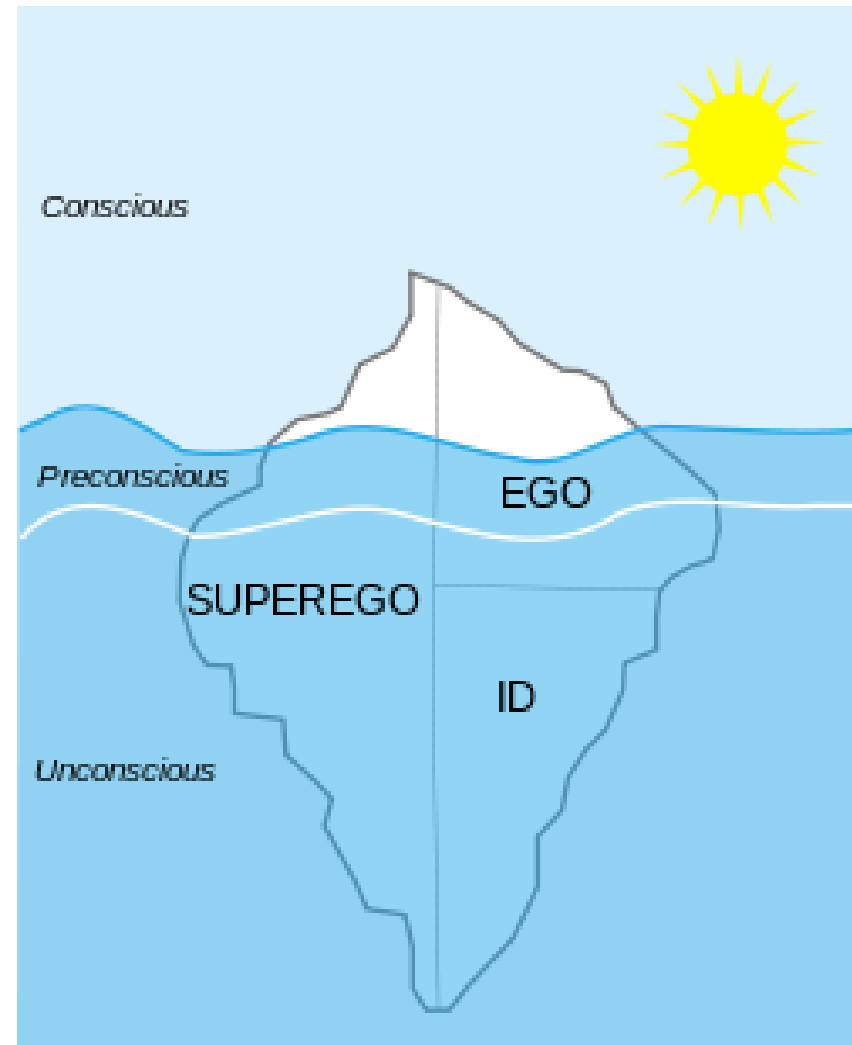
Conscience

Conflict with the id

Ego (executive mediator)

Governed by the reality principle

Mediates between id and superego
– manages demands of both



Freud's Psychosexual Stages

Stage	Age	Main pleasure & influence on adult personality
Oral	Infancy	Pleasure from food/breast feeding/thumb sucking Deprivation or overindulgence = fixation on oral themes, self-indulgence and dependency
Anal	2-3 years	Pleasure from the process of elimination – toilet training Harsh toilet training = cleanliness, obsessiveness, rigid rules Lax toilet training = messy, negative, dominant
Phallic	4-5 years	Pleasure from sexual organs Oedipus complex in boys = sexual love for mother/ hostility towards father Electra complex in girls = blame mother for not having a penis and desire their father
Latency	6-7 years	Sexuality becomes dominant
Genital	Adolescence	Sexuality re-emerges through sexual relationships

Defence Mechanisms

Defence mechanism	Description	Example
Repression	An active defence process that pushes anxiety-arousing impulses or memories into the unconscious mind, and seeks to stop them becoming conscious	A person who was abused during childhood develops amnesia for the event
Denial	Refusing to acknowledge anxiety-arousing events. If a situation is too much to handle, the person just refuses to experience it.	A man who is told he has terminal cancer refuses to consider the possibility that he will not recover
Displacement	An unacceptable or dangerous impulse (e.g. aggression) is repressed, and then directed at a safer substitute target	A woman who is harassed by her boss experiences no anger at work but then goes home and abuses her husband
Projection	Attributing unacceptable thoughts, feelings or impulses which have been repressed onto other people	A woman with a strong repressed desire to have an affair continually accuses her husband of being unfaithful

Defence mechanism	Description	Example
Rationalisation	Constructing a false but plausible explanation/excuse for an anxiety-arousing behaviour that has already occurred	A student caught cheating in an exam justifies the act by stating that the test was unfair and, besides, everyone else was cheating too
Reaction formation	An anxiety-arousing impulse is repressed, and its energy is released in an exaggerated expression of the opposite behaviour	A mother who harbours feelings of resentment towards her child represses them and becomes overprotective of the child
Sublimation	Satisfying a repressed impulse (e.g. aggression) in the form of a socially acceptable or even admired behaviour	Sport is an example of putting emotions into something constructive
Regression	A movement back in time – a psychological retreat to an earlier psychosexual stage	A child may begin to suck their thumb again or wet the bed when they need to spend time in hospital
Intellectualization	Problems are analysed in intellectual terms, while emotion, affect and feeling are ignored	A person may discuss the concept of anxiety, rather than disclosing how anxiety manifests for them

Evaluation of the Psychodynamic approach

Much criticism of Freud's emphasis on childhood sexuality

Unscientific: unfalsifiable - individual case studies cannot be replicated

- Subjective interpretation
- Theory built upon a small sample
- Specific type of initial sample (initially middle class women)
- The theories are 'unscientific' as they can't be disproved – they are unfalsifiable
 - Freud believed clinic observations to be more valid than laboratory experiments

Evaluation of the Psychodynamic approach

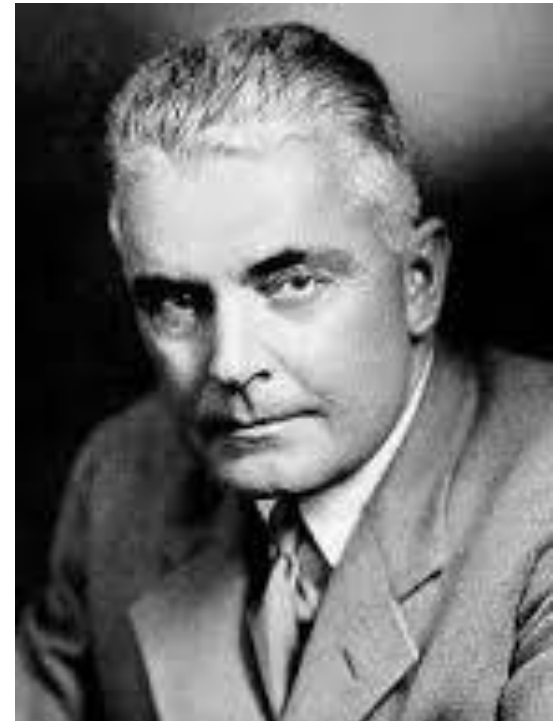
- + Psychologists generally agree that consciousness is only 'the tip of the iceberg'
- + Introduced the 'clinical interview'
- + Elements of Freud's theory have improved thinking about the human mind
- + Does provide an explanation for deeper mental processes and how we access these
- + Some evidence from other areas of psychology that behaviour is influenced by non-conscious processes e.g., information-processing approaches

Psychodynamic Approach

- Alternative theories are derived from Freud but are Psychodynamic **not** Psychoanalytic.
- De-emphasize the role of childhood sexuality and focus on how early family relationships and other factors shape our personalities:
 - Anna Freud
 - Erikson
 - Jung
 - Adler

The Behaviourist Approach

- Focuses on the role of the external environment in governing our actions
- John Watson (1913) – The Behaviourist Manifesto
 - Focus on observable behaviour
 - Focus on learning/conditioning
 - Stimulus-Response/associative learning
- **Determinism**: all behaviour has a cause
- We respond to our environment, thus the external world shapes (determines) our behaviour

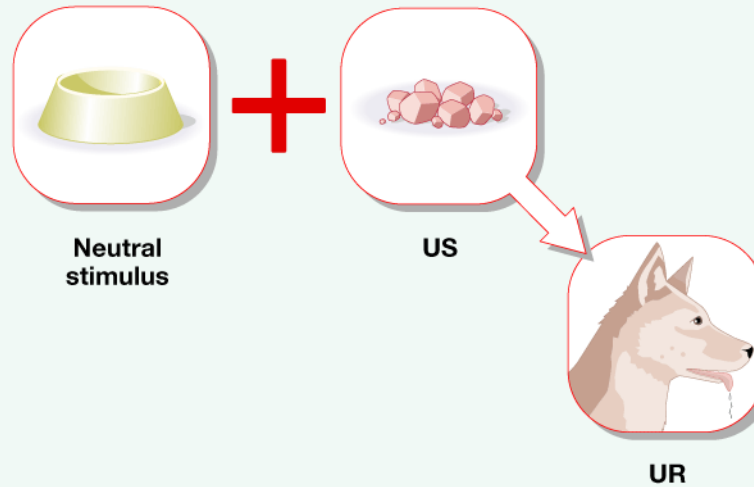
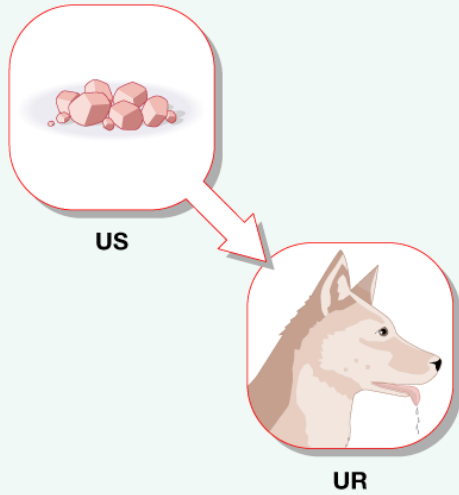


Classical Conditioning

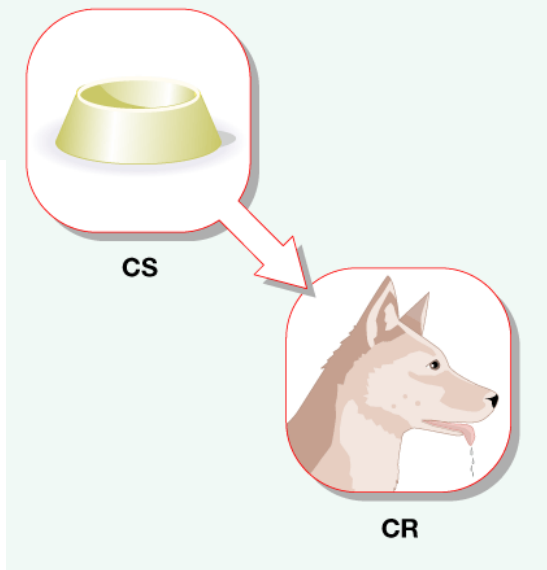
- Ivan Pavlov (1900's) – Pavlov's dogs
 - Managed to condition dogs to salivate to the sound of a bell through repeated association of the sound of the bell and food.



Unconditioned stimulus
Unconditioned response



Conditioned stimulus
Conditioned response



Classical Conditioning

Watson (1920) – ‘Little Albert’

Aim

- To test whether fear was an innate or a conditioned response.

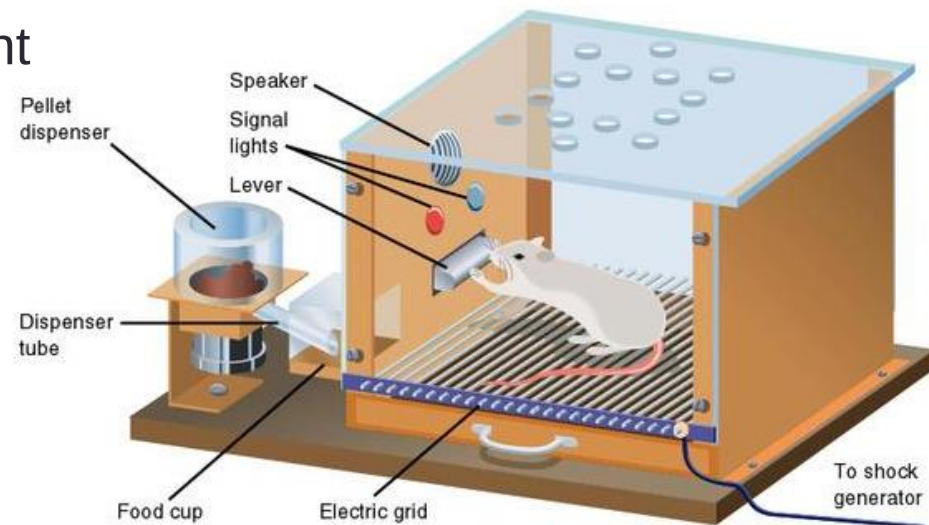
Procedure

- 9 month old Albert was exposed to a series of objects for 2 months without any conditioning.
- Albert showed no fear of the rat until he learned to associate the rat with a loud noise.
- Little Albert experienced stimulus generalisation to other objects.
- Watson concluded that fear could be learnt through classical conditioning.



Operant Conditioning

- **Skinner (1904-1990) – Radical behaviourism:**
 - Cannot consider emotions, sensations etc. to explain behaviour, as cannot be observed and measured
- Operant condition based on **reinforcement theory**
- Basic principles of learning apply in all organisms
- Principles of reward and punishment
- Behaviour occurs for a reason:
 - **positive** reinforcement
 - **negative** reinforcement
 - **punishment**



Skinner box

The Behaviourist Approach

- Behaviourism has been used for:
 - Behaviour therapy/modification
 - Biofeedback
 - Learning techniques

Evaluation of Behaviourist Approach

- + Huge contribution to psychology - e.g. scientific methods
- + Contribution to educational practices
- + Contribution to many non-medical treatments/therapies
- Reliance on frequency of behaviour as measurement (no. of words in essay?)
- Generalisation of animal study findings to humans?
- Laboratory-based studies
- Ignores other possible explanations

The Behaviourist Approach

- Do you think human behaviour can be controlled in the same way as non-human animal behaviour?
- In what way are humans different from non-human animals and why?
- What about the role of language and thought?
 - What we say and think influences what we do
- Creativity? – cannot account for our skills in music, art, dance, etc.

So how do Psychodynamic and Behaviourist approaches differ?

- Does one explain certain behaviours or processes better than the other?
- Does either approach offer an 'all encompassing' or 'perfect' account of the psychology of mind and behaviour?
- Is one more 'scientific' than the other?



Summary

- Psychology is the science of mind and behaviour
- Psychology has multiple schools of thought or perspective so has been described as a *pre-science*
- The psychodynamic approach focuses on the forces within the personality that motivate behaviour.
- Behaviourism focuses on the role of the external environment in governing our actions

Reading

Gross, R. D. (2010). *Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour*. (6th ed) London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Passer, M., Smith, R., Holt, N., Bremner, A., Sutherland, E., & Vlieg, M. (2009). *Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour* (European Edition). London: McGraw-Hill.

- Make clear notes on these approaches.
- Be prepared to discuss approaches in the seminar

Avoidance of seminars: a BAD idea that you are highly likely to regret

Next week...

- Psychological approaches continued:
 - Humanistic
 - Cognitive
 - Socio-cultural
 - Evolutionary
 - Biological