

of the book is to provide a comprehensive overview of the current systems in psychology, and to discuss their historical development and their applications.

The book is divided into eight parts, each with a different focus. Part I discusses the history of psychology, and the development of the scientific method. Part II discusses the major theoretical systems in psychology, including behaviorism, psychoanalysis, and humanism. Part III discusses the major methodological systems in psychology, including experimental psychology, clinical psychology, and applied behavior analysis. Part IV discusses the major research areas in psychology, including cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, and social psychology. Part V discusses the major applications of psychology, including education, health, and industry. Part VI discusses the future of psychology, and the challenges it faces. Part VII discusses the role of psychology in society, and the ethical issues it raises. Part VIII discusses the author's conclusions and recommendations.

The book is written in a clear and concise style, and is suitable for both students and professionals. It provides a comprehensive overview of the current systems in psychology, and discusses their historical development and their applications. The book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in psychology, and is highly recommended.

Reviewed by
 Dr. [Name]
 [Institution]

Current Systems in Psychology: History, Theory, Research, and Applications,

*Noel W. Smith. Plattsburg, New York: Wadsworth Publishers, 2001.
 430 pages.*

This book is about systems in psychology. A system generally consists of theoretical propositions and their methodologies. Most systems of psychology, the author contends, have a theoretical orientation, but some do not have coherence and unity. As far as methodology is concerned, some systems use an eclectic approach, while others use a limited set of methods in their inquiry into human behavior and mental processes. The author defines a system as "an orderly and logical construction for dealing with data and theories of the subject in a unified and coherent manner; it uses a set of postulates (even if implicitly) and usually a single methodology" (p. 4). The book consists of eight parts with 14 chapters. Altogether,

ten major and six additional systems are described in various chapters that are packed with not only historical perspectives but a thorough and critical analysis as well. Additionally, an evaluative summary of each system, its contributions to psychology and relationship with other systems, is also given.

Part I covers an introduction to the systems, the historical background and the logic of science. After the introductory chapter, which is an overview of the whole book, chapter 2 presents a sketch of the older concepts in psychology, starting from the time of hunter-gatherers and herders to Hellenic Greeks. Together with the early and non-western civilizations (e.g., Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Chinese, and Indian), this chapter covers aspects of the Naturalistic Psychology of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The author examines the origin of mind-body dualism during these stages of developments. It is pointed out that in the western world, the mind-body phenomenon first appeared in the first or second century BC in Alexandria when the study of nature was abandoned. Aristotle emphasized the interaction of organism and environment, rather than internal factors, as determining forces for the individual. The term "psyche" was coined after this period, when the intellectuals and the Christian theologians turned inward, looking for explanations of human behavior, and this convention dominated throughout the middle ages. Although natural sciences freed themselves from theology, psychology remained bound to it until it got the attention of philosophy. The author says that the classical systems in psychology until early 1960s were primarily reactions to these age-old questions. He also briefly explains the concept of the "Logic of Science" while describing terms like mental constructs, its types, criteria, the mind-body dualism, and reductionism.

Part II covers the organocentric systems in psychology, which consist of cognitive psychology, humanistic psychology, and the psychoanalytic school of thought. Chapter 3 is devoted to the development of cognitive psychology, its major concepts, issues, and research. It is pointed out that cognitive psychology is very much like human information processing, where terms like internal encoders, decoders, retrieval mechanisms, attenuators, feedback loops, storage systems, etc. are described as the mechanisms of the human nervous system. This system is currently dominating the western psychological scene. The important thing to know is that cognitive psychology is not one system but many interrelated systems put together. For instance, topics such as psycholinguistics, anthropology, neuropsychology, and computer science are all a small part

of cognitive science and all receive varying degrees of attention by this system. The author predicts that many critics of the cognitive school will "form a seriously competing counter-force emphasizing cognition as interactional events consisting of an interdependent organism and environment, history of the organism, and the person as an adapting organism rather than as a computing brain." This would perhaps lead to a combination of new systems that would eventually become dominant over the cognitive system.

Chapter 4 describes humanistic psychology, in which the author opines that topics like self-actualization, creativity, love, choice, etc. obviously sound more relevant to real life than the conditioning principles based on animal behaviors; although a learning theorist would argue that all human behaviors including humanistic ones can be explained by principles of conditioning. The emergence of Transpersonal Psychology to foster spirituality and nurturance of "inner experience" is discussed. It is pointed out that humanistic psychology negates controlled lab research, as it undermines human sensitivity, but occasionally quantitative researches are used utilizing self-rating scales. Several controlled and quantitative studies are discussed and their applications examined in relation to client-centered, heuristic, strategic, experiential, rational-emotive, and gestalt therapies commonly used by humanistic psychologists. A major criticism of this system lies in the fact that an extreme position on autonomous self overlooks the multiplicity of factors which influence behaviors besides the individual. Empowering the individual client, while ignoring the totality of conditions, is simply irrational. The author suggests "self-psychology" as a name more suitable to the system now called humanistic psychology.

Chapter 5 deals with the psychoanalytic system as modified by the neo-Freudians. Most non-psychologists associate psychoanalysis with Freud and, at most, with Jung and Adler. However, many deviations from the original position of these early Freudians took place among the second-generation psychoanalysts. This chapter highlights the significant contributions of Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, Harry Sullivan, Erik Erickson, and Heinz Hartmann. It examines in detail the Object Relations theory, which emphasizes the client's relations with objects, e.g., parents and caregivers. It acknowledges that while psychoanalysis is highly institutionalized as a theory and therapy, the basic premise offered by Freud has largely changed and will change more in the coming years until it has little identity with "Freudian Psychology". The common criticisms that psychoanalysis is ponderous, lengthy in duration, and expensive are also highlighted.

Part III deals with envirocentric systems, which are broadly categorized into behavior analysis and ecological psychology. Chapter 6 addresses issues related to behavioral principles ranging from Pavlov and Skinner's conditioning theories to behavior therapies and rule-governed behaviors. The major feature of these systems is the principle of reinforcement, i.e., a belief that behavior is the result of its consequence. In other words, rewards will increase behavior and punishment will decrease it. The area of behavior analysis has grown as a special discipline within behavioral psychology; its applications in various settings like clinics, schools, and the work environment are discussed in detail and its relation to other systems is addressed. Emerging concepts within behavioral analysis, e.g. concept formation, self-control, emotions, social interactions, behavioral medicine, social validation and others are also dealt with, indicating that this branch is more likely to develop as an independent discipline and resemble psychology less and less in the future.

A relatively new system called "ecological psychology", emphasizing the role of physical settings on people's behaviors, is the subject matter of chapter 7. In ecopsychology, the constriction of a laboratory situation for studying behaviors is lifted. Indeed, the entire environment becomes a lab and many new findings about human behaviors are discovered that were not possible using the conventional research methods. Particular emphasis is given here to the application of its principles to behavior analysis and interbehavioral psychology. It is noted, however, that physical settings can affect people's behaviors only as long as they remain influential, as people also ignore or abandon settings that are not to their liking.

Part IV is comprised of chapter 8, in which the sociocentric systems of postmodernism and social constructionism are addressed. Although psychologists from the old schools may wonder why these concepts are brought up in this book, after reading the chapter one can see the relevance they have to human thinking patterns and behaviors. A major contribution of postmodernism to science is to show the value-laden characteristics and the cultural and gender biases of science and the need to take these into account. While postmodernism is prominently noticeable in women's studies, the sociology of social problems, and social and educational psychology, it is hardly accepted by mainstream psychology. Social constructionism also challenges the assumptions of mainstream psychology by pointing out that there is subjectivity in the planning and interpretation of research; the values inherent in research; the limitations of "objective" methodologies in experimental psychology; the authoritarian role of the therapist taken by some psychotherapies; biological

reductionism, etc. This chapter is indeed a breath of fresh air, as it adds an entirely new and much needed perspective to modern psychology.

Part V consists of chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12, which focus on the interaction context systems in psychology. Chapter 9 addresses yet another new system known as dialectical psychology. This system proposes that the ongoing interaction between the individual and the world is a never-ending developmental process. Each exchange brings further changes to both the individual and the world. This process precludes static states and connotes opposites or bipolarities in interaction. Resolution of opposites leads to new conflicts and more change in the dialectical process. However, the strength of dialectics lies in its bidirectionality or mutual exchange of effects. Interestingly, the author covers dialectical issues in cultural perspectives both from theoretical and treatment points of view.

The interbehavioral system described in chapter 10 rejects traditional constructs, including biological reductionism, and uses no analogies from other sciences. It relies largely on methods of observing overt behaviors, and emphasizes a functional relationship between the individual, his/her developmental history, settings, events, etc. Its emphasis on a "field" is explained through interrelationship of events rather than linear chains of cause and effect. This approach, the author believes, is paralleled by similar directions in physics (e.g. relativity and quantum field theory); however, a major criticism of the system is lack of empirical research. Another problem noted is that the proponents do not give as much attention to human-human interactions as they do to human-objects/events interactions. The reader would wish to know why the author does not comment on the relatively poor success of interbehavioral psychology especially on the clinical side. This system appears to be weighed more on the theoretical side than to be practically useful.

Chapter 11 deals with a system in psychology called "operant subjectivity". The proponents hold the view that subjectivity is not a private event, but a behavior that can be measured by a method called Q-sorting, revealing what views people share and do not share in various combinations. This system, introduced by Stephenson in the 1950's, is referred to by the author as "quantum subjectivity", since it parallels quantum mechanics in physics. Although the Q methodology is sparingly used in clinical psychology, this system is apparently not too well understood, hence its lack of popularity.

Chapter 12 is about phenomenological psychology, its meaning, consciousness, and relationships to the world. The author says that this system "investigates meanings of things to us and of us to them, rather

than using the impersonal mode of the physical sciences that much of psychology has adopted." Objects and persons have an ongoing interrelationship and this knowledge is consciousness, which replaces mind-body dualism and biological reductionism. With the drug addict, for example, we need to understand the experience and meaning of drug usage first, before we venture into any psychological explanation. Existential psychology is the counterpart of phenomenological psychology on the clinical side, and has shown impressive results with many clientele populations.

Part VI consists of chapter 13 and is a summary of "additional systems" that are newer, not so well known, yet important in psychology. Different areas like community psychology (treats the situation as well as the person), the school of direct realism (treats cognition as behavior), ecological psychology (perception of world is important as opposed to internal representations), environmental psychology (changes the environment to fit people's needs), evolutionary psychology (behavior as determined by the attempt to perpetuate genes), probabilistic epigenetic psychology (non-linear influence of biological and environmental interactions; probabilistic referring to the fact that such mutual interactions are probable but not certain) are covered in this chapter.

Part VII is a retrospective chapter looking back and sorting out all the systems described thus far. Four major categories are identified: organocentric, envirocentric, sociocentric, and noncentric systems. A summary of their theories, research, and applications is given using symbolic representation of causality. The author quotes some reviews of research in psychology using mainstream methods, and indicates that several areas have major problems, for instance, despite a lot of research on memory, little progress is apparent and there is little agreement among researchers on what is important in this field. There is minimal if any advancement in the area of physiological psychology and research in social psychology is not always meaningful and relevant to ordinary everyday behaviors. The author points out that a number of systems have called for abandoning traditional methodologies or substituting them with observation in natural settings, interviews, and Q-sorting methods.

Part VIII is an appendix, which briefly describes the postulates of each system. Postulates are assumptions about the system's subject matter. Both implicit and explicit postulates for each system are given. Also presented are the protopostulates, which are the guiding assumptions of a system and metapostulates, the supportive assumptions. The author is absolutely right

in saying that after reading this book, the readers will be in a better position to make "informed judgments" about a particular system. At the end of the book, there is a nineteen-page author and subject index.

This is certainly one of those books which is inclusive and up to date. It covers the entire history of psychology in a concise yet critical manner and is unique in its presentation of the postulates, allowing the reader to do a direct comparison of each system. The comprehensiveness may however pose a problem of confusion for those not well versed in the systems and for non-serious readers. It should prove helpful to teachers and researchers of social sciences as a whole, and of psychology in particular, who want to keep in touch with almost all the systems and models of psychology in the modern West, particularly North America. It could be used as a primary textbook for an advanced history and systems of psychology course. Although intended for upper level undergraduate students, it could serve as a reference handbook for postgraduate students as well.

Amber Haque
Department of Psychology
International Islamic University
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia