

Critique on The Psychology Laboratory

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Research Question or Problem

The purpose of the article is clearly stated on page 318. The purpose of the article is to advocate the role of the laboratory that enabled the transition and separation of psychology from philosophy to science.

Introduction

The introduction paragraph presented in this article has been able to provide enough glimpses as to why the study was conducted. Fifteen references are cited, including one editor's note and one author's note. In this article, author Ludy Benjamin discussed the chronological development of the laboratories that spread all over the USA during 1880 to 1900. It also briefs the efforts of psychologists to change a common public perception of the laboratory as a public icon for natural science.

Methodology

The author collected a list of laboratories founded during 1883 to 1900 in the USA, including the year and the name of their founders, as presented in Table 1 (p. 319). The information has been taken from the study conducted by Garvey (1929) and Murray and Rowe (1979). A picture of a typical laboratory is also included to provide some clues to understand the physical environment of those laboratories. More than a dozen of relevant literatures have been reviewed and correctly used in the article.

Results

The findings are clearly mentioned to support the essence of the article. List of the 41 psychology laboratories are presented in the article. However, list of fewer than 50 laboratories that are opened outside United States, as mentioned in this article, has not been exhibited to support the author's claim that majority of the laboratories are in the United States.

Discussion

The author of the article explained sequential contributions to open psychology laboratory that conducted various experiments. The faces of laboratories have changed and “the icon of the laboratory and its attendant community of scholars has been replaced by an image of clinical psychologist (Benjamin, 2000, p. 321). Universities are taking incentives to open and decorate existing laboratories using advance computer and technology. Psychology Laboratory works has been added in the curriculum. “The discipline of psychology has changed in ways psychologists 100 years ago could never have imagined” (Benjamin, 2000, p. 321). These laboratories have been providing students to conduct varieties of qualitative and quantitative experiments to understand the mystery of human and animal brains, and its behaviors. It will help us to predict the future of these psychology laboratories. On the other hand, it would be helpful to conduct

similar research if the author included list of psychology laboratories opened outside the USA and the major experiments conducted in those laboratories, especially laboratories in the Germany where the psychology was formally born and laboratories in Canada where Baldwin established his first experimental laboratory (Weiten and McCann, 2007, p. 12).

List of References

All references mentioned in this article are cited, however, the format is not consistent, for example, page numbers cited for Benjamin (p.59), Danziger (p. 18) and Sokal (p. 89) are not mentioned in the references. Original page numbers for the table and picture are also missing. The references were from a variety of sources, ranging from 1895 to 1993. Latest reference was seven years older than the article itself.

Personal Reaction

After reading this well written article, I am able to understand the importance of the laboratory for the

beginning of the new psychology as a separate discipline. It is interesting to know how the fame of Wundt's laboratory quickly spread in the United States within the time period of twenty years as compared to less than 50 laboratories worldwide during the same period (observed by Popplestone and McPherson (1984) and referred in this article). As a computer technology student, I am very pleased with the use of computer technology that has replaced the heart and soul of those laboratories. In my

personal view, there should be more research to find out whether the computer technology alone is enough to support the fundamental objectives of the psychology laboratory in the future. We may still need variety of brass instruments and specimen jars that used to fill the ancient laboratory shelves. I also learnt the contribution of those pioneers who opened psychology laboratory to change its existing perception.

References

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