knowledge of the increased funding of psychology, the growth of clinical psychology, and the popularization of psychology. It seemed to us that the students gained in the course not so much an awareness of which events were important as an awareness of what aspects of events made them important (e.g., they saw that the three developments just stated were interrelated and together provided social support for the development of the field).

In conclusion, it seems that our results give more comfort to those who emphasize breadth than to those who emphasize specificity of knowledge. Although there was evidence for specific learning about Wundt, there was no evidence for an increased ability to evaluate the accuracy of “facts”; this is an unfortunate finding, which indicates a need to devote more attention to this area. However, these students became more likely to believe that philosophical and general methodological issues were important, as indicated by the fact that they mentioned them more often at posttest.

The goals of liberal education may be realized by many traditional courses, although considerable ingenuity may be needed to demonstrate what students gain from such courses. More research should focus on general outcomes and on the acquisition of skills and attitudes that are helpful in fields and situations far from those in which they were learned. Although this is admittedly difficult, the type of technique used in this study can be modified to assess any number of changes that occur in almost any course. The key feature of all such modifications should be that students generate their own responses with a minimum of direction. The success of such efforts at evaluation will itself need evaluation.

References


Note

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Involving Students and Faculty in Preparing a Departmental History

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This article describes researching and writing institutional histories and focuses on preparing a psychology department history. Topics discussed include time requirements for the research, project formats, sources for historical information, methods for doing historical research, and the benefits to students and faculty derived from these projects.

Scientific psychology in the United States has entered its second century, and centennial celebrations occur each year. Some focus on the founding of psychology laboratories, for example, the University of Wisconsin (1988), University of Nebraska (1989), and Columbia University (1990); others focus on significant publications, such as James's Principles of Psychology (1990). These celebrations take various forms (e.g., special conferences and commemorative publications), but they have a common aim of discovering the history of notable events.

Although centennials are an important impetus, historical research can be initiated at any time. A subject of investigation and some knowledge about how to find and use relevant sources of information are required. This article presents ideas about institutional histories and describes sources for data. Such research can unite students and fac-
ulty in a cooperative learning venture as a regular course assignment or as a special independent research project. Research related to the college or university or some other local entity or event generates high student interest (Grieg, 1974; Raphelson, 1979). In addition to gaining knowledge, rediscovered or new, students enhance their library skills, learn about important resources in historical research, learn about historical research techniques and issues of interpretation, acquire some group coordination skills, and develop a better appreciation of their institution's past.

Time Requirements of the Project

A first decision concerns the time required to complete a project. If the research is part of a course, then the time frame is obviously dictated. Some projects can be continued from one class to another, but this procedure precludes the completion of the task. Institutional histories are often too complex to complete in a single term. One solution to this problem is to restrict the subject matter. By dividing it into separate units, the entire project might be completed during several school terms while allowing each group of students to experience closure on its particular unit. A second solution is to restrict the time period (e.g., look only at the first 10 years of an institution's history).

Nature of the Project

Historical research projects on institutions, such as colleges or universities, can range from preparing a departmental scrapbook to writing a comprehensive departmental history. The research can stand alone or be part of a larger institutional history project.

A comprehensive departmental history should answer a number of questions about curriculum, faculty, students, facilities, and departmental events (see Table 1). Although portions of these histories can be assigned to different groups of students, someone should serve as editor to ensure a coherent product. Publishing these extensive projects can be costly. If institutional or private financial support is unavailable, desktop publishing is an economical alternative for producing an attractive final product.

Less formal histories can take many forms. A timeline can be used to portray faculty, curriculum, or psychology major requirements as they change over time. For a faculty timeline, available photographs might be included. Timelines can be reproduced for individual distribution, but they also make excellent displays for bulletin boards. Timelines provide a "time map" on which events are placed in time locations, typically progressing from left to right. Interest in timelines for departments or institutions can be enhanced by adding external events of national or international significance.

The chronology is related to the timeline but uses no spatial display. Chronologies simply list items in historical order (e.g., the founding date of a laboratory, the arrival of a particular faculty member, or the introduction of a new course). Chronologies are sometimes constructed in two columns: One lists events of the institution's history (internal history), and the other lists events outside the institution (external history). Sahakian (1981, pp. 445–483) provided an example of a history of psychology chronology. Sahakian's items can be used in conjunction with institutional chronologies to illustrate happenings elsewhere in the psychological world.

Another historical project is the preparation of complete faculty genealogies (Weigel & Gottfurcht, 1972). Each student is assigned a particular faculty member, present or past, and is asked to determine that faculty member's academic genealogy (i.e., who was the faculty member's major professor, who was the major professor's major professor, etc.). These genealogies make nice bulletin board displays. They highlight the youth of scientific psychology and the fact that most lineages are traceable to a few psychologists, principally Wilhelm Wundt, William James, and Carl Stumpf. Hillix and Broyles (1980) provided an excellent example of

Table 1. Questions to Ask in a Departmental History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. When were the first psychology courses offered? What were their titles? What was their content? What texts did they use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How has the psychology curriculum evolved? When did particular courses first appear? Disappear? How did the catalog course descriptions change over time? What requirements have existed for the psychology major? How have those changed? What psychology courses have been required for nonmajors? What parts of the curriculum might have served other departments?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. When did laboratory instruction begin in psychology? What was the nature of research in the laboratory? Were students involved in the research? What published research came out of the laboratory?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In what department(s) were psychology courses offered? When was the psychology department formally established?</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What faculty members have taught psychology? Where did they receive their training and in what fields? What faculty titles did they hold?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Can you locate former faculty members for oral histories?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Can you locate published research or other writing by former faculty members?</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did student psychology clubs exist? Was there a Psi Chi chapter?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What careers did the early graduates of the program pursue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What eminent persons did their undergraduate work in psychology?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What was the psychology program like from a student perspective? Can you locate former students in psychology for oral histories? Do they have class notes from their student days?</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What laboratory facilities existed and how long were they used? What equipment was acquired and when?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Were on-campus facilities used by the psychology program (e.g., for field work, training, or community service projects)?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Departmental Events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did famous psychologists speak on your campus at some time? Can you locate information about those talks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Were any meetings, symposia, or other special activities related to psychology held on your campus?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sources of Historical Information

After deciding on the time course and nature of your research project, where do you find the information you need? Sources are basically of two kinds: published and unpublished.

Published sources can be found in libraries, rare book rooms, archives, state historical societies, and newspaper publishers. They include faculty and student publications, college yearbooks and catalogs, student newspapers, notes and news listings in journals (see Benjamin et al., 1989), newsletters (e.g., faculty, alumni, and Psi Chi), and local newspapers.

Unpublished materials are more difficult to locate and, for departmental histories, include such items as class and laboratory notes, syllabi, lectures, correspondence, and oral histories. Although these materials are more scattered, the sources listed for published materials may be a good place to begin. Department and/or institutional archives usually contain correspondence, annual reports, self-study documents, alumni records, grant proposals (for instruction, research, or program development), and personal papers of former faculty and students. Locating former faculty and students provides the opportunity for collecting oral histories. If the department has had a Psi Chi chapter, contact the Psi Chi National Office, which maintains correspondence files for each chapter, some dating back to the 1930s.

The State Department of Education may have files on all state and private colleges and universities within the state. The official state archives is another source to check, and if the college or university is or was affiliated with a particular church, then check the church archives for your district.

Relevant information may exist in other archival collections (e.g., in the extensive collections of the Archives of the History of American Psychology in Akron, OH). More than 650 individuals and organizations have deposited materials at that archive (see Benjamin, 1980; Popplestone & McPherson, 1976). An annotated listing of more than 500 relevant manuscript collections in the United States was compiled by Sokal and Rafail (1982). It is an excellent source for checking the papers of a particular individual or organization.

Many archives have an index system for names of individuals and institutions that appear in their collections. They may even send you copies of pertinent documents, for a nominal sum, if the number is small and their search time short. However, if the holdings related to your project are extensive, then you will need to visit that archive. If you are researching a particular individual, then make some educated guesses about persons with whom your subject might have corresponded. If you locate relevant papers, contact the appropriate archive.

The alumni office can provide addresses of former students. Students who took classes with particular faculty members, and thus have memories of those earlier days (and perhaps even class notes), may be located by advertising for them in a local newspaper. Another way to get information on an earlier faculty member, who is perhaps deceased, is to locate that faculty member's children. Often those children attended the institution where the parent taught, and the alumni office should be able to help you find them. These children may have important materials for your research.

Some sources of information will be obvious. Others will develop from hunches pursued, exhaustive search, and serendipity. Part of the enjoyment of historical research is tracking down obscure, but often important, information.

Doing Historical Research

The projects suggested in this article do not train psychology students or faculty to be competent historians. However, those involved should learn something about the methods of "doing" history as well as the inherent pitfalls and pleasures. Should you need information on historical research methods or approaches to writing history, books by Benjamin (1981, 1988), Brozek and Pongratz (1980), and Hoopes (1979) describe techniques such as citation analysis, content analysis, oral history, and archival research, and provide examples of biographical, descriptive, quantitative, and sociopsychological approaches to writing history. These sources will help you plan your historical research and train your students to do the project.

Before beginning, you might examine several published departmental histories (e.g., Benjamin & Berelson, 1975; Capshew & Hearst, 1980; Freed & Roberts, 1988; Morawski, 1986; Raphelson, 1980). These will provide some models for your own research and may suggest possibilities that you had not considered. The history of psychology reference book by Viney, Wertheimer, and Wertheimer...
Benefits (and Costs) of Doing Historical Research

Costs for the projects described are quite modest, usually involving only photocopying, photographic work, cassette tapes, and long-distance telephone charges. Travel to archival collections can be expensive but is usually not necessary for most local history projects. Modest funds are often available from the institution for these kinds of projects.

Although costs are small, benefits can be large. Besides the benefits mentioned earlier, the final product can be added to the archival records of the institution. Indeed, at least one copy should be bound and placed in the institution's library. Information gathered in these exercises can be used in future classes, particularly in the history of psychology class. Students and faculty can better understand changes in the department over time and relate those changes to events in the broader context of the institution, national psychology, or the world at large. Finally, these projects involve students and faculty in an exercise that is as much fun as it is educational. My students report a clearer sense of purpose in this kind of written assignment, compared to some of the papers they write for other classes, and they enjoy making a real contribution to their department. Instead of waiting for a centennial, get your students involved now.

References


Note

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