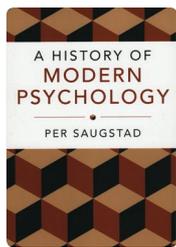


**A History of Modern Psychology**  
Per Saugstad  
Cambridge University Press  
Hb £115

**Our Minds, Our Selves: A Brief History of Psychology**  
Keith Oatley  
Princeton University Press  
Hb £24



## Textbook histories

Per Saugstad and Keith Oatley, neither specialists in the history of psychology, both wrote their books in retirement. There is a long tradition of psychologists taking an interest in the history of psychology after they retire, presumably because they have become aware of the passage of time. There is also a long tradition of amateur historians of psychology that dates back to Boring (1929) and beyond.

While Saugstad's book is described on the cover as a 'global' and 'comprehensive' history of psychology, it covers only a few European countries and the United States (Brock, 2006), featuring the usual figures such as Helmholtz, Wundt, Galton, James, Pavlov, Binet and Freud. Oatley's book, on the other hand, differs from other textbooks. It is organised around topics rather than psychologists and their theories, and takes an interdisciplinary approach. Oatley suggests that 'psychology is better not kept as a separate science, but rather that it needs to be integrated with other disciplines'. He puts this view into practice by incorporating discussion of artificial intelligence, anthropological research, and the work of literary figures like

Shakespeare, Coleridge and Chekhov.

There is a market for this non-specialist literature because, as surveys have shown (e.g. Brock & Harvey, 2015), most psychologists who teach the history of psychology are not specialists either and can more easily identify with a textbook written by someone in a similar position. The authors tend to present broad overviews of psychology that reflect their particular approach to the subject. Non-specialist books often contain the same mistakes (Thomas, 2007) because they are based mainly on other textbooks rather than historical research. This is why historians of science like Kuhn (1970) refer to a specific genre of 'textbook history' that is different from historical scholarship.

There are alternatives. Textbooks by respected historians of psychology in North America include those by Fancher and Rutherford (2016), Pickren and Rutherford (2010) and Walsh, Teo and Baydala (2014). As for British authors, there are the textbooks of Richards (2010) and Smith (2013) – the latter an eminent historian of science. These books meet the professional standards that are taken for granted in other areas of psychology, yet

sometimes neglected in the history of psychology.

**Reviewed by Adrian C. Brock,**  
honorary research associate at the University of Cape Town

### References

- Boring, E.G. (1929). *A history of experimental psychology*. New York: Century.
- Brock, A.C. (2006). Introduction. In A.C. Brock (Ed.), *Internationalizing the history of psychology* (pp. 1-15). New York: New York University Press.
- Brock, A.C. & Harvey, M. (2015). The status of the history of psychology course in British and Irish psychology departments. *European Yearbook of the History of Psychology*, 1, 13-36.
- Fancher, R.E. & Rutherford, A. (2016). *Pioneers of psychology* (5th ed.). New York: Norton.
- Kuhn, T.S. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Pickren, W.E. & Rutherford, A. (2010). *A history of psychology in context*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.
- Richards, G. (2010). *Putting psychology in its place: Critical historical perspectives* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Smith, R. (2013). *Between mind and nature: A history of psychology*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Thomas, R.K. (2007). Recurring errors among recent history of psychology textbooks. *American Journal of Psychology*, 120, 477-495.
- Walsh, R.T.G., Teo, T. & Baydala, A. (2014). *A critical history and philosophy of psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## 'I can name the women I see...'

Katherine Hubbard (University of Surrey) introduces an online extract from her new book *Queer Ink: A Blotted History Towards Liberation* (published by Routledge).

“An old Victorian oil lamp. The shape of the lamp. Two girls – at each side going to kiss each other. Big breasts, very slim, high heads, only one leg. Red lipstick.” These are the responses to Rorschach ink blot Card number 3 by a woman 'who was deeply involved in a homosexual relationship' while at her stay in a psychiatric hospital in London in the late 1960s (Barker, 1970). Similarly, in my own testing experience in 2015, as another woman 'deeply involved in a homosexual relationship' I reported:

Two figures, two women, stirring a big cooking pot, they're wearing tiny high heeled shoes, like old Victorian boots that are pointed. Their boobs and bums are sticking out. The red bit in the middle looks like lungs, with the bit joining them in the middle.

I also claimed to see two women in Card number 7 who both looked rather 'serene'. What strikes me now



as I look at these cards is that not only do I still see these two women, much like the woman in the 1960s, but I can name the women I see. Now when I look at this card, I 'see' Evelyn Hooker and June Hopkins. Hooker's research was absolutely pivotal in the depathologisation of 'homosexuality' as a mental illness in the US and Hopkins' work, comparatively, was the only Rorschach research used for queer affirmative ends in Britain.'

Read more on our website in the full chapter – <https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/queer-approaches-depathologisation>

