

Proposed Changes in the American Psychological Association
J. McKeen Cattell (1943)

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Our place of birth was Clark University; the day, July 8, 1892; G. Stanley Hall was our Socrates and mid-wife. The original members numbered twenty-six. It may be worth while to call the roll. Frank Angell, then as now of Stanford University, a lost angel to us, for he is no longer among the fellowship of the saints. J. Mark Baldwin, then of the University of Toronto, whose contributions to psychology have been so notable, also one of the few whose name is absent from our rolls. William Lowe Bryan and Edmund C. Sanford, pioneers in experimental research, now fallen to "that bad eminence," where they bear the load Atlantean of our humbler fates. W. H. Burnham and Benjamin Ives Gilman, the one in a fundamental branch of education, the other in the fine arts, carrying on work somewhat apart from ours, but related to it. William Noyes, recently lost to us, and Edward Cowles, distinguished alienists. Cattell -- ad sum. John Dewey, John the Baptist of democracy, teacher of teachers, modern master of those who know. E. B. Delabarre, then as now at Brown University. W. O. Krohn, then at Clark; Herbert Nichols, then at Harvard; E. W. Scripture, then at Yale, no longer climbing the steep stairs and eating the bitter bread of academic life. James Hyslop, now following the mystic grail. J. G. Hume, of Toronto University, who saved us from a narrow nationalism and with E. H. Griffin, dean and scholar of the Johns Hopkins University, saved us from a narrow empiricism. Joseph Jastrow, our first secretary, who this afternoon is here to tell us of the work in which he himself has been such a great part. George H. Fullerton, my first professional colleague and comrade, acute thinker, one of our early presidents, now far away. Lightner Witmer, my first student and my successor [p. 62] at Pennsylvania, where he leads in an important field of research. G. T. W. Patrick, of Iowa, and H. K. Wolfe, of Nebraska, influential as teachers and in their work in psychology and philosophy. Last and most honored of the living, G. Stanley Hall and George T. Ladd, our first two presidents, then seeming to be veteran leaders, but now having become my contemporaries, men to whom we owe so much in so many ways, founders not only of our association, but also of psychology.

To the twenty-six original members, five were added by election at the preliminary meeting. Death has taken from us T. Wesley Mills, of McGill, early worker in animal psychology, and H. T. Ormond, of Princeton, distinguished philosopher. Edward Pace seems to be sheltered from us by the wings of the church in the educational work in which he is engaged. Then there were two men elected not only into the association, but selected from the whole world, because they were those whom we wanted and needed, E. B. Titchener and Hugo Münsterberg.

I once wrote: "Harvard with James, Münsterberg, Royce ... surpasses every other university in the world in its opportunity for psychological study and research." Now they all await us "where beyond these voices there is peace." -- Hugo Münsterberg, always my friend since our student days in Leipzig, who with the hand of genius threw prodigally broadcast the diverse endowments of his great nation and his great race; William James, "the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands"; there is none like him, none, nor will be; and Josiah Royce, his friend and ours, the well-beloved disciple, who leaves the world darker, now since his light is quenched.[1]

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The second laboratory of psychology[2] was organized by G Stanley Hall at the Johns Hopkins University early in the year [p. 63] 1883. I was there before Hall, holding a fellowship in philosophy, this award for a thesis on Lotze having been made by the professor of Latin, who knew even less about philosophy than I did, or the fellowship would have been given to John Dewey. He was there as a student, as were also Joseph Jastrow and H. H. Donaldson. We helped Hall set up a modest laboratory in a private house adjacent to the center of the ugly little brick buildings and great men that formed the university. The small group of professors working there included Remsen, Rowland, Sylvester, Gildersleeve, Haupt, Adams, Brooks and Martin.

It is a curious fact that neither of the founders of our first two psychological laboratories was a laboratory worker. Hall's chair, like Wundt's, was not limited to psychology; he lectured on philosophy and he also conducted courses in pedagogy. The range of his interests was large, but it was the human aspects of life that he cared for rather than abstract quantitative measurements. Like James he was a man of literary genius swayed by the emotions, which are such a large part of life and as yet such a small part of our science. Minot, the distinguished Harvard embryologist, once said that he envied my occupation with a science concerned with human interests. My reply was that my experiments had as little to do with such things as his had with love and children. Hall wrote about children, adolescence and senescence, religion and sex, the drama of life. He and James were giants in the land, overtowering their descendants of a work-a-day world.

As Wundt established the Philosophische Studien to publish the work from his laboratory, and his own articles on psychology and philosophy, so Hall established the American Journal of Psychology. The early volumes give a survey of the work done in Baltimore, which was largely physiological and psychiatric. Hall was much interested in insanity and other pathological aspects of psychology and we used to go regularly to the Bayview Hospital for the Insane. These interests were maintained and in the last conversation I had with him in his lonely house at Worcester he wanted especially to know why orthodox American psychologists cared so little for Freud and [p. 64] psychoanalysis. He showed me a mass of publications and notes that he had collected on the subject. Hall was called upon to organize Clark University in 1888 and gathered there a group of outstanding scientific men, including Michelson, Webster, Bolza, Neff, Whitman, Mall, Donaldson, Lombard, McMurrich and Boas. The financial support of the university by Mr. Clark was less liberal than had been anticipated and Dr. Harper took over in a body a large part of these men for the faculty of the new University of Chicago. In his "Life and Confessions" Hall remarks: "I felt his act comparable to that of a housekeeper who would steal in at the back door to engage servants at a higher price." Sanford went with Hall from the Johns Hopkins to Clark and became director of the laboratory of psychology which was opened in 1889. The Johns Hopkins laboratory was closed and the apparatus dispersed until it was reestablished by Professor Baldwin and Professor Stratton. Hall and Clark University long maintained a dominant position in psychology and the psychological side of education. In his death there ends the romantic and heroic era of our science.[3]

Footnotes

[1] From the address of J. McK. Cattell on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the American Psychological Association, Our psychological association and research, Science, 1917, 45, 275f.

[2] The first formal research laboratory was Wundt's at Leipzig, founded in 1879. Hall's was the first formal laboratory in America, but there has been, of course, some controversy as to where to place James' room for demonstrational experiments at Harvard somewhere around 1876. -- ED.

[3] From Cattell's address at the opening of the Wittenberg laboratory, Early psychological laboratories, Science, 1928, 67, 546f.

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