



Mary Whiton Calkins: A Woman Pioneer in Psychology



Emily Culligan
Lauren Clark
Lindsay A. Phillips

Abstract

This history of psychology poster celebrates the first woman president of the American Psychological Association, Mary Whiton Calkins (1863-1930). She studied at Harvard under William James but was denied her Ph.D. because it was a male institution at the time. She proceeded to establish one of the country's first psychology laboratories at Wellesley College. Calkins studied the conscious self and is best known for developing the paired-associate experimental paradigm.

Research

- Calkins identified **four major interests**, which guided much of her work:
 - Studying associations
 - The conception of the psychic element
 - The concept of relational elements of experience
 - Her view of psychology as a science of the self
- Calkins developed a **theory of personalistic introspective psychology** which examined the conscious, functioning, and experiencing selves existing in relation to others
- She is best known for developing the **paired-associate experimental paradigm**
 - This involves pairing two items (typically words) – a stimulus and a response – which is theorized to be a prime method of learning
 - The paradigm was popularly used in studies of memory and forgetting.



Biography

- Birth: March 30, 1863 in Hartford, CT
- Death: February 26, 1930 in Newton, MA
- She was a **first-generation** American psychologist
- Calkins studied under William James at Harvard University
- She was **denied her Ph.D.** from Harvard University because it was an **all-male institution** at the time
 - She was later offered her Ph.D. from Radcliffe College, but she did not accept it
- She established one of the **country's first psychological laboratories** at Wellesley College in MA
- Calkins was elected as the American Psychological Association's 14th president (and first woman president) in 1905.



Some American Psychologists at Cambridge, Mass. Dec. 29, 1919

Dodge	Calkins	Ogden	Hollingsworth	Baldwin
Warren	Woodworth	Seashore	Scott	Langfeld