The History Corner



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The historian's job is to preserve the history and record of the Society, making sure important documents are preserved so that future historical researchers can use them to try to figure out why we made such curious decisions. Beyond that, I would like to use this space in *TIP* to promote interest and excitement in historical research.

Too often history is viewed as necessary but boring, important but not intellectually stimulating. A SIOP reviewer a couple of years ago rejected a panel discussion on historical figures saying that he or she would not want to attend such a session at the conference, though it would be neat to have as a book to place on his or her coffee table.

I have found historical research to be both exciting and intellectually stimulating. Probing the vast historical record can stimulate current research ideas (the old timers were usually much more advanced in their thinking than we give them credit for in our brief literature reviews). Historical research can allow one to critically view today's field by seeing how it existed in other eras. In addition, it helps provide stimulation for the right side of the brain, which is important for a field dominated by left-brain activities.

In this column, I want to document neglected figures in I-O's history and to record historical anecdotes and stories that might not warrant a complete journal article.

Andrew Vinchur's article provides a nice antidote for the neglect of non-U.S.-based I-O psychologists in historical research. People think of the early important figures in I-O psychology as Bingham, Münsterberg, Cattell, and Scott. Myers, a British psychologist, certainly belongs in that pantheon and a good case could be made for Lipmann. Vinchur's article provides a nice overview of these two important I-O psychologists. I hope you enjoy it.

If you have a story to tell or an idea to contribute, send me an e-mail (mzickar@bgnet.bgsu.edu).

Charles Samuel Myers and Otto Lipmann: Early Contributors to Industrial Psychology

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In her first issue as editor of *The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist (TIP)*, **Laura Koppes** (2004) advocated using *TIP* as "an avenue to cultivate an

international community in the society and to broaden our perspective of the world" (p. 9). This worthwhile sentiment can also apply to our efforts to understand the history of our discipline. Although there are exceptions (e.g., Landy & Conte, 2004), the brief history overviews presented in I-O textbooks generally summarize developments only in the United States and may leave the unfortunate impression that the early development of I-O psychology was solely an American phenomenon. The early 1900s saw the new discipline of industrial psychology evolving in many countries around the globe, including Germany, France, England, Russia, Poland, and Japan (see Warr, in press, for a summary).

Although communication was slower and travel more difficult than today, the early 20th century American industrial psychologists were aware of work done outside the United States to a remarkable degree. One can speculate on possible reasons for this. Certainly the pool of individuals applying psychology to work situations was smaller and the volume of work produced was proportionally less. In adddition, important pioneers in American industrial psychology were educated abroad. For example, Walter Dill Scott, James McKeen Cattell, and Hugo Münsterberg all received doctorates at the University of Leipzig under Wundt. Other early industrial psychologists traveled abroad. For example, after Walter Van Dyke Bingham earned his PhD at the University of Chicago, he traveled extensively in Europe where he interacted with German psychologists including Koffka, Köhler, Rupp, and Stumpf and English psychologists such as Burt, Spearman, and Myers (Bingham, 1952). Morris Viteles spent a year in Europe in the early 1920s where he was strongly influenced by Myers (Viteles, 1947). American industrial psychologists, in particular Viteles, were active in international associations, such as the International Association of Psychotechnics (later the International Association for Applied Psychology) founded in Geneva in 1920 (Warr, in press).

Journals (e.g., *Journal of Personnel Research, Journal of Applied Psychology*) and textbooks (e.g., Viteles, 1932) offered summaries of work done abroad. Viteles and others published reviews of industrial psychology in Great Britain (Fryer, 1923–24; Kornhauser, 1929–30; Viteles, 1923), Germany (Hartmann, 1932; Kornhauser, 1929–30; Viteles, 1923), Russia (Hartmann, 1932), France (Fryer, 1923–24; Viteles, 1923), and Switzerland (Heller, 1929–30). Summaries of developments abroad were also included in journal reviews of industrial psychology (e.g., Link, 1920; Viteles, 1926; 1928). Reports of international conferences (e.g., Bingham, 1927–28; Holman, 1927; Kitson, 1922) were also published. Of the many individuals whose work was discussed in these reviews and reports, I would like to briefly describe the lives and work of two influential individuals, Charles S. Myers of Great Britain and Otto Lipmann of Germany. Both Myers and Lipmann were pioneers in applying the new psychology to the problems of industry.

Charles Samuel Myers (1873–1946) earned medical (1901), AB (1895), AM (1900), and ScD (1909) degrees from Cambridge University. Similar to

the career of industrial pioneer Hugo Münsterberg, Myers' career can be divided into two major periods: an early stage focusing on experimental psychology in the laboratory and a later stage devoted to applied psychology. Among Myers's notable achievements as an academic at Cambridge was his *Textbook of Experimental Psychology* (1909), the first standard British textbook on the subject (Burt, 1947).

Myers served as consultant psychologist to the British Armies of France during World War I. In addition to treating shell shock, he did research on selecting individuals for submarine detection, kindling in him an interest in applying psychology (Myers, 1936). After the war, businessman H. J. Welch heard Myers lecture on applied psychology. Myers was finding Cambridge unsupportive of his applied interests, and Welch was interested in applying Münsterberg's techniques in England (Burt, 1947). Together in 1921, the two men founded the National Institute of Industrial Psychology (Welch & Myers, 1932). The Institute received its support from investigation fees and grants from individuals and firms (Viteles, 1947) and conducted work in a number of areas, including teaching, applied work, and research. Research areas included selection, test construction, improving productivity, vocational guidance, and fatigue.

In 1906, some 15 years before Myers cofounded the National Institute of Industrial Psychology in Great Britain, Otto Lipmann founded his Institute for Applied Psychology in Berlin (Stern, 1934). A year later, Lipmann and William Stern founded the journal *Zeitschrift für angewandte Psychologie* (*Journal for Applied Psychology*; Viteles, 1932). Born in Breslau in 1880, Lipmann studied with William Stern and Hermann Ebbinghaus at the University of Breslau, earning his doctorate in 1904. Lipmann had sufficient means to work as a scholar independent of university affiliation and to provide financial support for his institute. Like many psychologists of this era, Lipmann was a generalist who contributed to a number of areas of psychology. His industrial contributions included the first selection tests for aviators in Germany and selection tests for typesetters, industrial apprentices, and telegraphers. In addition, Lipmann introduced the principles of vocational guidance to Germany (Baumgarten, 1934) and did much to advance applied psychology through his long editorship of the *Journal of Applied Psychology* (1907–1933).

Unfortunately, Lipmann's later years were tragic ones. Due to declining finances, he was forced to seek a university appointment. The rise of the National Socialist party, however, prevented him from accepting an offer from the University of Berlin in 1933 (Stern, 1934). Lipmann was also discharged as editor from the *Journal for Applied Psychology* on October 1, 1933. He died on October 7, 1933. Although Baumgarten's 1934 tribute delicately referred to the cause of death as unexpected "heart failure," Viteles (1974) stated the cause of death was suicide.

Myers and Lipmann had a number of characteristics in common. Viteles (1974) admired both psychologists for their efforts to relate industrial applications of psychology to laboratory experimental psychology research and theory. Both were active in international psychology societies. And perhaps most significantly, both Lipmann and Myers viewed industrial psychology as broader and richer than advocates of the scientific management or test-based selection approaches prominent at the time. Lipmann's "Science of Work" (Arbeitswissenschaft) distinguished capacity-to-work (an individual's maximal performance under ideal conditions) from preparedness-to-work. Preparedness-to-work provides evidence for willingness-to-work, which encompasses worker motivation and satisfaction, and can be fostered by fair promotion and compensation systems, profit sharing, and provisions to reduce dissatisfaction and increase a feeling of community between workers and management. Lipmann believed too much attention was paid to capacity-towork through efficient selection and not enough attention to willingness-towork (Hausmann, 1931). Lipmann (1928–29) was also concerned that technical advances and innovations were decreasing worker satisfaction by severing the link between the work and the worker. Not surprisingly, Lipmann was a critic of the scientific management approaches of Frederick Taylor and Lillian and Frank Gilbreth, noting that gains in efficiency are often lost by lack of worker interest (Hausmann, 1931).

Myers (1925) was also critical of the scientific management approach, stating bluntly that in industrial work, "There *is* no 'one best way" (p. 27, italics in original). Myers, like Lipmann, valued an individual approach and was concerned that the approaches of Taylor and the Gilbreths would discourage worker initiative. Myers' approach to increasing output focused on removing obstacles that prevent the worker from optimal performance, thereby gaining the confidence of the worker. Although increasing output is important, for Myers (1929) it is secondary to giving the worker greater physical and mental "ease." Myers' and Lipmann's concern for the worker and recognition of the importance of worker attitudes, motivation, and satisfaction were in marked contrast to much of the early industrial psychology in America, where the emphasis was on employee selection and testing.

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¹ Myers (1925) noted that "sometimes the mere presence of the Institute's investigators and the interest they have shown in the employees' work have served to send up output before any actual changes have been introduced." (p. 28). This is an early recognition of what later came to be termed the *Hawthorne Effect*.

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