

held by the Cambridge University Library. This settles a historical question, for Stokes is not otherwise well known for expanding on his own role in the Royal Society.

If this were not all, the book provides a link to the Web pages of the University of St Andrews that allow free access to much of the authors' original data – lists of editors, printers, publishing staff, pricing, print runs by year are all made available for research, and some of this material continues to be updated and processed by Fyfe and her team.

I did say that I would make some comparison between the print and electronic versions of this book. Some will prefer (as I do) the look, feel and durability of the book on the shelf. It should be admitted, however, that the electronic form possesses certain advantages, not limited to lightness, price and searchability for any word or phrase, together providing a powerful incentive for any researcher. To this add the clarity of figures. Take, for example, Figure 4.2 (p. 136), which shows an image of the imprimatur and title page of John Lowthorp's abridged version of *Phil. Trans.* In the printed version the fine print will defeat most bespectacled eyes, while readers of the electronic version may easily enlarge that same image to find the finest detail easily legible. The same may be said of any example of an engraved figure (of which there are several reproduced in this work) that can be enlarged to admire the fine detail of the engraver's work but which, in the printed version, does little more than provide a non-text ornamental space.

Overall, then, a tour de force of a book that will provide much for historians of science, of the early modern period, of publishing, of materials science, of social interactions and gentlemanly behaviours, of peer review and of the finances of the Royal Society. And much more besides. Recommended.

doi:10.1017/S0007087423000444

## **Robert J. Sternberg and Wade E. Pickren (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of the Intellectual History of Psychology***

**Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. 533. ISBN 978-1-1084-1869-0. \$210.00 (hardback).**

Roger Smith

Independent scholar

Quite a number of texts address the student audience for the history of psychology, an audience very much located as part of a professional training in psychology. This volume differs as it is not a chronologically arranged history but an anthology of thematic essays introducing key areas, such as perception, memory, attention, creativity, development, gender, abnormal psychology, decision making, social psychology, health psychology and so on (in all, nineteen topics). Psychologists' interests and categories are thus up-front from the start, and this is reinforced by the choice of authors, who are experts in current research and understand history as the immediate background to what they do in a particular sub-area of psychology. Where there are comments that refer to activity before recent decades, it is superficial and based on not necessarily reliable secondary texts. Jeremy Burman, indeed, in the chapter on 'Development', makes the provocative suggestion that it is only the major expansion of psychology since the Second World War that

has significant influence in the present. The historical content is overwhelmingly tied to contemporary North American knowledge and practice. The book will serve, then, to give accessible overviews of contemporary psychological topics, showing awareness of the factors that shape their current form. Psychology is so vast and diverse a profession that this kind of overviewing is very necessary. The editors are eminent – Robert J. Sternberg is a past president of the American Psychological Association (APA) and Wade Pickren was the founding director of the APA archives.

The title of the *Handbook* needs comment, referring as it does to ‘intellectual history’ (not even to ‘modern’ intellectual history). The heading denotes content given by scientific knowledge in the fields discussed, rather than by conceptual-historical analysis of the shaping of the fields as fields or of the categories that the fields take for granted. Psychology itself (whatever it is) and its divisions have standing as ‘natural’ objects for these authors, and they are promoters for and not critics of what they do. ‘Intellectual’ here means a focus on knowledge and methods for acquiring it, in contrast to a focus on social, institutional and cultural context. Elsewhere, Pickren is the joint author (with Alexandra Rutherford, a contributor to the present volume, on gender) of a ‘history of modern psychology in context’, which ably covers the social dimensions. Also elsewhere, Pickren has taken something of a lead in exploring what it may mean to practise psychology in the world beyond North America.

The authors were asked to write at a level accessible to students without previous knowledge. It is a goal easily fulfilled by casual historical statements but equally easily confounded by the introduction of concern with statistical methods, probabilistic reasoning, test analysis and so forth. It is a puzzle to me why description of such methods is thought accessible and questions with a philosophical character are thought not to be. Early on, in a chapter on ‘Neuroscience in psychology’, a passing reference to Descartes thus cites his well-known illustration of a boy withdrawing a foot from a fire, conventionally cited as an illustration of a reflex; of the Descartes who established a dualism that still haunts neuroscience there is no mention. Similarly, in the chapter on ‘Personality’ there is a discussion of studies concerned with testing, but no mention of Kurt Danziger’s classic history of the introduction of the category into experimental psychology in the first place. The discussion of ‘gender’, in contrast, does informatively inquire into the category.

Once again, the volume poses the question of the relationship between the history of science and contemporary science. My concern is that books such as the present one reinforce the view that history can have only decorative value in the academic universe, though it is the editors’ intention to demonstrate history’s value in explaining why people think as they do, to recover past contributions and to learn from mistakes. It would be interesting to know how this strikes students, presented here with an enormous amount of information, which may indeed help them locate their areas of interest, but which all too easily can be read as treating that information’s historical nature as secondary.

It is noticeable that it is three chapters dealing with health – chapters on ‘abnormal psychology’, ‘psychotherapy’ and ‘health psychology’ – which read differently, since here the authors’ deal with people and their diverse experiences in the early as well as late twentieth century and the writing is closer to the style of historians. There is evidently something about the nature of therapeutic values that brings both psychological practice and writing overviews of that practice into a more humanistic mode.