Gestalt psychology was strongly opposed by the traditional psychologists of German academia, and Koffka, as the public advocate for Gestalt, encountered many obstacles to advancement in Germany. Therefore, he spent 1924-1925 as a visiting professor at Cornell University and 1926-1927 at the University of Wisconsin. In 1927, Koffka was offered a five-year appointment as the William Allan Neilson Research Professor at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. The non-teaching position included an equipped and funded laboratory staffed with assistants. He continued his research on visual perception, and his results were published in the four-volume Smith College Studies in Psychology (1930-1933), as well as in the German Gestalt journal that he continued to edit. Koffka remained a professor of psychology at Smith until his death. In 1928, he was divorced again and he remarried his second wife, Ahlgrimm.

Koffka undertook a research expedition to Uzbekistan in 1932, with funding from the Soviet Union. However an attack of relapsing fever, an infection transmitted by lice and ticks, forced him to return home. On the way back, he began writing his classic contribution to psychology, Principles of Gestalt Psychology, published in 1935. Drawing on his lifetime of experiments, he extended Gestalt theory to many areas of psychology, including memory and learning. In his later lectures and writings, Koffka applied Gestalt principles to a wide range of political, ethical, social, and artistic subjects. In 1939, as a visiting professor at Oxford, he worked with brain-damaged patients at the Military Hospital for Head Injuries. There, he developed the widely adopted evaluation methods for such patients. Although heart disease began to restrict his activities, Koffka continued teaching at Smith until a few days before his death in 1941 from coronary thrombosis.

Further Reading

Lawrence Kohlberg
1927-1987
American psychologist whose work centered in the area of the development of moral reasoning.

Lawrence Kohlberg was born in Bronxville, New York, and received his B.A. (1948) and Ph.D. (1958) from the University of Chicago. He served as an assistant professor at Yale University from 1959 to 1961 and was a fellow of the Center of Advanced Study of Behavioral Science in 1962. Kohlberg began teaching at the University of Chicago in 1963, where he remained until his 1967 appointment to the faculty of Harvard University, where he has served as professor of education and social psychology. Kohlberg is best known for his work in the development of moral reasoning in children and adolescents. Seeking to expand on Jean Piaget’s work in cognitive development and to determine whether there are universal stages in moral development as well, Kohlberg conducted a long-term study in which he recorded the responses of boys aged seven through adolescence to hypothetical dilemmas requiring a moral choice. (The most famous sample question is whether the husband of a critically ill woman is justified in stealing a drug that could save her life if the pharmacist is charging much more than he can afford to pay.) Based on the results of his study, Kohlberg concluded that children and adults progress through six stages in the development of moral reasoning. He also concluded that moral development is directly related to cognitive development, with older children able to base their responses on increasingly broad and abstract ethical standards.

In evaluating his research, Kohlberg was primarily interested not in the children’s responses themselves, but in the reasoning behind them. Based on their thought processes, he discerned a gradual evolution from self-interest to principled behavior and developed a chronologi-
Kohlberg, progress from one level or stage to the next involves an internal cognitive reorganization that is more complex than a mere acquisition of precepts from peers, parents, and other authorities. Kohlberg’s most famous book is *The Philosophy of Moral Development: Moral Stages and the Idea of Justice*, the first volume in a series entitled *Essays on Moral Development*. The second volume, *The Psychology of Moral Development*, was published in 1984.

See also Cognitive development

Further Reading

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**Kohls block test**

Intelligence test.

The Kohls block test, or Kohls block design test, is a cognitive test for children or adults with a mental age between 3 and 19. It is mainly used to test persons with language or hearing handicaps but also given to disadvantaged and non-English-speaking children. The child is shown 17 cards with a variety of colored designs and asked to reproduce them using a set of colored blocks. Performance is based not just on the accuracy of the drawings but also on the examiner’s observation of the child’s behavior during the test, including such factors as attention level, self-criticism, and adaptive behavior (such as self-help, communication, and social skills). The Kohls block test is sometimes included in other tests, such as the Merrill-Palmer and Arthur Performance scales.

Further Reading

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**Wolfgang Köhler**

1887-1967
German psychologist and principal figure in the development of Gestalt psychology.