

# MARGARET F. WASHBURN, PH.D

July 1871 - October 1939

Margaret Floy Washburn was the first woman to be awarded a Ph.D. in psychology. From beginning her college journey at the age of 16, auditing courses at Columbia and even being admitted and enrolling at Cornell University, Washburn dug the path for her Ph.D. Her work in psychology took place in a time when women were often denied positions in academia based on their gender. Despite this, she became a well-respected researcher, writer, and lecturer. Washburn's research interests included areas of animal cognition and basic physiological processes. As Washburn delved into these interests, she strongly influenced comparative psychology and developed a motor theory of cognition suggesting that the animal's body's movements influenced thought. Without Washburn, we would have never been able to understand that mental states should be studied alongside their behavior.

