

Women's History Month Spotlight

MARY W. CALKINS

March 1863 - February 1930

After receiving a philosophy degree from Smith College in 1884, Mary W. Calkins wanted to pursue a psychology degree.

During this time, women were not permitted to receive a degree in the field, but with much hesitation, the Harvard president allowed her to sit in psychology classes as an unofficial student. She worked under William James, and further established the first women's psychology lab at Wellesley College. She was offered a teaching position at the college, and developed theories in memory and self-identity. Despite her achievements and popularity, she was denied the ability to receive a doctorate degree from Harvard due to discrimination. However, she continued in the field without a degree, and published four books and over 100 papers in psychology. She was also elected the first female president of APA in 1905.

