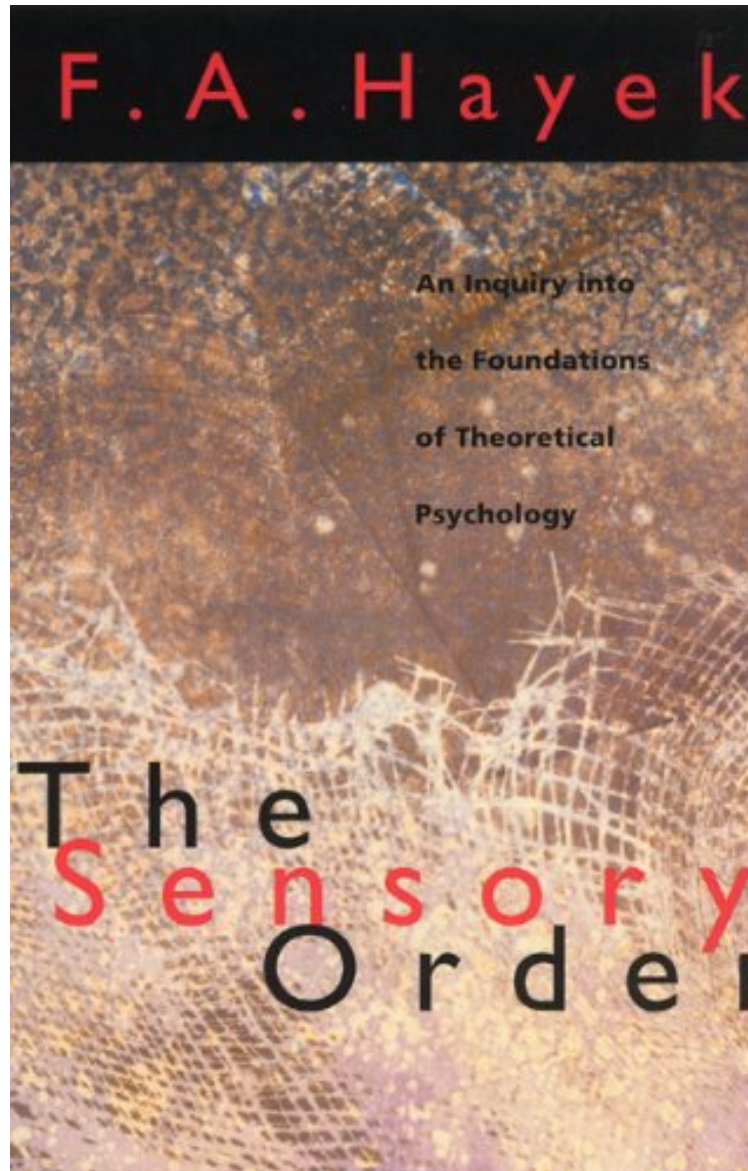


(Mobile ebook) The Sensory Order: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Theoretical Psychology

# The Sensory Order: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Theoretical Psychology

*F. A. Hayek*

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**F. A. Hayek : The Sensory Order: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Theoretical Psychology** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sensory Order: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Theoretical Psychology:

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review helpful. Neglected masterpiece  
By A Customer  
Although Hayek's influence on economics and political science has been profound, his work in psychology, of which this book is the sole product, is still relatively unknown. This is unfortunate, not only because Hayek is a great psychologist, in the same league as Helmholtz, Fechner, and Freud, but also because his more influential work is often based on the conceptual framework established in *The Sensory Order*. I can think of several reasons for the neglect of this book. First, it is not easy to read. Despite a lucid style, the ideas contained are so complex and expressed in so compressed a form that several readings are required to fully appreciate them. Second, the ideas are so revolutionary that we still fail to grasp their implications, though even Hayek himself, it should be said, failed to address them adequately. Hebb's *Organization of Behavior*, the first explicit proposal of Hebbian learning and cell assemblies, and Gallistel's *Organization of Action*, a compilation of classic works on motor coordination, contained similar ideas, but they are nowhere as original and profound as this book.  
4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Hayek's contribution to psychology (not merely a Nobel laureate in economics)  
By Gloria Zuacuta y Postigo  
The archives at the Hoover Institution in Stanford house the original manuscript in German that Hayek wrote when he was torn between pursuing psychology or economics. Decades later, that manuscript was published as *The Sensory Order*. Although this is the less known piece by Hayek among economists, it is considered by many pioneers in cognitive science (such as Gerald Edelman, see *Neural Darwinism*) as foundational in the development of this interdisciplinary study and the examinations into artificial intelligence. The principal thesis of Hayek's piece is that perception cannot be accounted for by means of physical laws, since the effect of sensory stimulus is the first aspect of the complex order of perception. Next, the mind maps the order of the external stimulus. This perceptual experience, however, is not identical to any other from a similar external stimulus since each has its own character in relation to the associations that the mind assigns to any particular sensory experience. Our perception of external objects are, Hayek writes, "never of all the properties which a particular can be said to possess objectively, not even only some of the properties which these objects in fact possess physically, but always on certain aspects, relations to other kinds of objects which we assign to all elements of the classes in which we place the perceived objects." This observation thus anticipates the monist framework presented by Maurice Merleau-Ponty in his *Phenomenology of Perception*. This fascinating book is a must read for anyone interested in the mind.

*The Sensory Order*, first published in 1952, sets forth F. A. Hayek's classic theory of mind in which he describes the mental mechanism that classifies perceptions that cannot be accounted for by physical laws. Hayek's substantial contribution to theoretical psychology has been addressed in the work of Thomas Szasz, Gerald Edelman, and Joaquin Fuster. "A most encouraging example of a sustained attempt to bring together information, inference, and hypothesis in the several fields of biology, psychology, and philosophy." — *Quarterly Review of Biology*  
F. A. Hayek (1899-1992), recipient of the Medal of Freedom in 1991 and co-winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics in 1974, taught at the University of London, the University of Chicago, and the University of Freiburg.

About the Author  
F. A. Hayek (1899-1992), recipient of the Medal of Freedom in 1991 and co-winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics in 1974, was a pioneer in monetary theory and the principal proponent of libertarianism in the twentieth century. He taught at the University of London, the University of Chicago, and the University of Freiburg.