NARRATOR: The Enlightenment period was certainly an important influence on psychology. Now, let's look at another key figure, Charles Darwin.

An image of John appears and says, “That name sounds familiar.”

An image of Wanda appears and says, “I'm sure it does! Let's find out how he influenced psychology.”

NARRATOR: Darwin was born in England in 1809. His interests began in medicine and then he became a clergyman. He was very interested in entomology, the student of insects. He took an unpaid position as a naturalist on the Beagle and left England for five years!

The ideas of evolution were growing and naturalists realized that species changed over time. The question of how this happened remained unanswered.

While traveling as a naturalist, Darwin was intrigued by his observations on the Galapagos Islands. He noticed that finches had evolved different beak types depending on the different types of food available.

Darwin named the concept he and Wallace described natural selection. In 1859, Darwin published Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection which was an instant success. Despite the success of the book and his ideas, there was some disapproval because of how his ideas conflicted with traditional religious views.

Darwin published other works such as The Descent of Man. He also published Selection in Relation to Sex which was a book on sex selection based on his observations of the coloring of birds and attraction. This application of evolutionary psychology is still discussed in social psychology courses.

End Darwin video