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## Eastern Psychologies

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### Introduction

Psychology is an identity fraught with contradictions. It claims to be concerned with universal laws like physics, on the one hand; and yet on the other, it is inextricably embedded in history and culture in terms of both its subject matter as well as its method of investigation. Deepening this split in consciousness is the increasing interest in the "other" psychologies outside Europe and North America, such as African, Latin-American, Indian, Chinese, and other Eastern psychologies.

### Definition

The term "Eastern psychologies" cannot easily be found in online encyclopedias. Instead, the more common terms are "Asian psychology" and "indigenous psychology." Asian psychology (AP) refers to a "movement" in which Asian psychologists strive to have an expanding role in the science of psychology, which is dominated by the Western influence. Predominant figures in Asian psychology are Quicheng Jing in China, Hiroshi Azuma in Japan, Ku-Shu Yang in Taiwan, and Durganand Sinha in India. Some of these Asian leaders also play an important role in another movement, generally known as "indigenous psychology" (IP). IP (Kim, Yang, & Hwang, 2006; see also online resources) calls attention to the importance of local context in scientific investigations of human behavior and to the problems generated by rampant exportation of Western psychologies to other parts of the world. Eastern psychologies may be defined as psychology with an identity split between IP and AP, each with its unique response to the hegemony of the West. Continued bifurcation or better integration between IP and AP will have far reaching ramifications for not only Eastern psychologies but also the discipline of psychology as a whole.

### Keywords

Asian psychology; indigenous psychology; orientalism; genuine culture; global psychology

### History

The consciousness of Eastern psychologies has a history – or not, depending on which of its split identities, IP or AP, prevails. The difference in historical consciousness between AP and IP falls along the divide between the traditional and critical perspectives in psychology.

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## Traditional Debates

Sharing with traditional psychology an ahistorical, scientific neutrality, AP has a simple and straightforward goal – to have an expanding role in mainstream psychology. And as the proverbial model Asian, AP is reaching this goal through hard work and perseverance. In an essay entitled "Asian psychology coming of age," Kitayama (2007) reports that Asian psychology has contributed greatly in the last two decades to the theories and database of psychology.

## Critical Debates

From the perspective of critical psychology, assimilation into mainstream psychology falls short of the true potentials of Eastern psychologies. Central to the greater potential of Eastern psychologies is a historical consciousness which takes into consideration the fact that Eastern is not synonymous with Asian since East is not confined geographically to the Far East. Historically the East constitutes "one of . . . [the West's] deepest and most recurring images of the Other" (Said, 1978, p. 1). As such, the notion of Eastern psychologies captures the potentials for AP to play an important role in global psychology, above and beyond the stereotypical image of Asian psychologists as a model minority that has a fast track record of successful assimilation into mainstream psychology. As an international movement initiated by Asian psychologists – such as Ku-Shu Yang, Paranjpe, and Enriquez (see Kim et al., 2006) – against the imperialist approach of Western psychology toward its Other, IP approximates this greater potential of Eastern psychologies.

From the perspective of IP, the identity of Eastern psychologies is to be sought in its historical roots in Orientalism, which is defined by Said (1978) as "a system of knowledge about the Orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness" (p. 6). Said sums up the legacy of Orientalism in terms of the relationship between Occident and Orient as "a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (p. 5). This historical consciousness can shed some light on the current role Eastern psychologies play in the international scene, where cross-cultural psychology more often than not extends the long shadows of Orientalism.

## International Relevance

One legacy of Orientalism is the persistent East and West comparison, which suggests a binary vision of the world.

> Throughout the exchange between Europeans and their "others" that began systematically half a millennium ago, the one idea that has scarcely varied is that there is an "us" and a "them," each quite settled, clear, unassailably self-evident. (Said, 1993, p. xxv)

This comparative mode casts the East in the role of antithesis to the West, a role that the Orient "has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (Said, 1978, pp. 1–2). Comparison for contrast can lead to a biased representation of the Other.

### Neglect of Genuine Culture in the East

> . . . in discussions of the Orient, the Orient is all absence, whereas one feels the Orientalist and what he says as presence (Said, 1978, p. 208).

In passing through the grid of Orientalism to reach the consciousness of the West, the East gets its genuine culture screened out. Genuine culture may be understood as an inventory of the cultural resources for autonomy and vitality. In the words of Sapir (1924): "a genuine culture is one that gives its bearers a sense of inner satisfaction, a feeling of spiritual mastery" (p. 420). Sapir further defines (genuine) culture as "an outgrowth of the collective spiritual *effort* of man" (1924, p. 403, emphasis added). The key term here is "effort." Sapir emphasizes the "spiritual primacy of the individual soul" (p. 424), which must learn to reconcile its own strivings with the spiritual life of the community, such that "if not embrace the whole spiritual life of its group, at least catch enough of its rays to burst into light and flame" (p. 424).

Genuine culture may be operationally defined as ideals and aspirations that apply across contexts and that inspire continuous striving for excellence. Applying this yardstick of genuine culture to an analysis of the items in the Individualism–Collectivism scale (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995) – a measure most widely used in cross-cultural psychology – reveals some interesting observations.

Four out of 16 (25 %) items of individualism (Singelis, et al., p. 255) meet the criteria of genuine culture as operationally defined above:

> I am a unique individual;
> I enjoy being unique and different from others in many ways;
> Winning is everything;
> It is important that I do my job better than others.

By contrast, none of the items under collectivism meets these criteria due to the fact that they are all context specific, such as "I usually sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group" (p. 256). Furthermore, empirical evidence is accumulating that these collectivistic values of compromise and self-effacement are not necessarily personal aspirations, so much as externally driven concerns to take socially wise action, and to avoid socially unwise behavior (Yamagishi, 2011). Sapir (1924) refers to practices that are based on "an automatic perpetuation of standardized values" (p. 418) as "external" or spurious culture (p. 412), in contrast to the internally driven genuine culture.

This brief examination of the Individualism–Collectivism scale (Singelis et al., 1995) reveals a slippage across the West and East divide from life to data, from ideals and strivings characteristic of a genuine culture to beliefs and practices that are confined to one (social) dimension only, and that pertain to social compliance rather than personal strivings. This is nothing new. Hook (2005) has pointed out a recurring slippage between "the ideals, the norms of the valorized Western culture, and those of the dominated culture, which comes to be the demoted *other* of all of these values" (p. 481, emphasis in original). One of the ramifications of being identified with demoted values is to "accept some miniature version of yourself as a doctrine [such as collectivism] to be passed out on a course syllabus" (Said, 1993, p. 334).

What are the living values, in the collectivistic societies, of a genuine culture that give the bearers a sense of vitality, inner satisfaction, and spiritual mastery across all contexts? Do collectives have any internally driven strivings that endeavor to "burst into light and flame" (Sapir, 1924, p. 424) when ignited by some cultural values? The answer to these questions is a resounding yes: notions of self-cultivation and emotion refinement (Frijda & Sundararajan, 2007), detachment and moksha (Bhawuk, 2011), and *satori* or *wu* (Li, 2012), to name just a few. But none of these beliefs and values makes it to the items of collectivism.

## Self-Representation as Dealienation

Absence of genuine culture in the Western representation of the Other has far reaching ramifications. Biko has addressed in depth the systematic marginalization of the cultural resources through which the black psyche had traditionally attained "autonomy and vitality" (Hook, 2005, p. 489). A continuation of this theme is the sense of alienation experienced by Yang (1997) who refers to the Westernized research process that fails to adequately reflect the Chinese cultural values and ways of thinking as an imposed "soulless psychology" (p. 65).

In response to alienation, IP is highly invested in "an assertion of presence – or voice – that had been previously muted and not given the space in which to speak" (Hook, 2005, p. 496). A case in point is the edited volume on *Asian Contributions to Psychology* (Paranjpe, Ho, & Rieber, 1988), which consists of the presentations of subtlety and sensitivity in the Filipino social interaction by Mataragnon, *Yuan* (the notion of predestined relationship) by Yang and Ho, Buddhist psychology by Rao, yoga and *vedānta* by Paranjpe and others. As a psychological investigation of beliefs and values that have set countless souls on fire for centuries in these traditions, this volume attests to the resurgence of genuine culture in the self-representations of the East.

## Practice Relevance

The shift from ahistorical to historical consciousness has far reaching ramifications for the construction of culture in psychology. Culture is a multidimensional phenomenon that admits to multiple definitions (Cohen, 2009), all of which can be useful depending on the research agenda. In mainstream psychology, culture tends to be constructed along the axis of prediction and control, an approach that focuses on culture as "the primary shaper and molder of everyone's behavior" (Segall, Lonner, & Berry, 1998, p. 1107). It is in this framework that values and beliefs gain importance as the causal factors of behavior. This behavioral approach can be compared and contrasted with the epistemic or semiotic approach to culture more commonly used by anthropologists.

In semiotics terms, cultural beliefs are signs that point beyond themselves to a larger reality – an interpretative framework referred to by Taylor (1997) as the "moral map," which is the "horizon" of significance or "a background of intelligibility" (p. 37). Take for instance sleeping arrangements across cultures. The behavioral approach would predict a causal connection between patterns of parent–child co-sleeping and beliefs and values that fall under collectivism and interdependent self-construals. As causal factors, however, these collectivistic values and beliefs lack the existential thickness that is found in the study of sleeping patterns across cultures by a cultural anthropologist, who claims that "behavior per se is not what the action is about. The family order is part of the social order, which is part of the moral order . . ." (Shweder, 2003, p. 73).

The behavioral approach to culture, while useful for many practical purposes (see Segall et al., 1998), has the unintended consequences of being susceptible to the power and domination of ▶ cultural imperialism.

### The White Man's Burden

Implicit in the prediction and control approach to culture is an asymmetrical relationship between two terms, A and B. A refers to psychology or science, whereas B, culture or folk theories. The asymmetrical relationship – which posits that A studies B, but is not part of B – is made possible by a blind sight of the embeddedness of A in B. This asymmetrical relationship between psychology and culture or science and folk theories is the basis for the assumption that psychological categories, such as gender or the brain, are superior to cultural categories, such as values and beliefs, in that the former are the correct or potentially universal answers to universal questions, in comparison to the latter which are local answers from indigenous cultures. This position is a continuation of Orientalism, with cultural superiority thinly disguised by the authority of science.

One consequence of cultural imperialism is "the white man's burden" which refers to a sense of obligation on the part of the superior culture of the West to enlighten the non-Western cultures about their misguided beliefs, a position otherwise known as the "civilizing mission" (Bhatia, 2002, p. 378). A case in point is the claim by Segall et al. (1998) that psychological research on gender can reduce the victimization of women in certain cultures by "break[ing] the stranglehold of outmoded beliefs about the basis of differences between the sexes" (p. 1107). Cautioning against the haste with which the West condemns the culturally endorsed practices of little known others, Shweder (2003) points out the "totalitarian implications" of "the doctrine that our gender ideals are best . . . . and moreover, good for everyone" (p. 197).

## Future Directions

The future of Eastern psychologies lies in the integration of IP and AP. The development of an IP-informed AP, for instance, would contribute to the making of a global psychology that no longer has to live under the long shadows of Orientalism.

The prevalent model of global psychology is basically an expanded version of mainstream psychology (MP), in which Western psychology serves as the blueprint for global development,

with non-Western psychologies, such as AP, working out some local details. From the perspective of IP, this model of global psychology is not feasible because it continues the hegemony of the West, which determines both research interests as well as the norm of performance (Bhatia, 2002) and which poses an intrinsic constraint on the potential contributions of non-Western cultures to psychology.

From the perspective of IP, the intrinsic constraint on Eastern psychologies can be traced to two practices of Orientalism – domestication and scientific study of the East. Domestication of the Other is evidenced by the "many Eastern sects, philosophies, and wisdoms domesticated for local European use" (Said, 1978, p. 4). A case in point is a branch of Buddhist psychology known as mindfulness, the impact of which is confined mainly to clinical practices in the West, leaving the theory and research of mainstream psychology unscathed, even though rumors abound that mindfulness poses a challenge to some fundamental assumptions of MP (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007).

Using religion as an example, Rosch (2002) rightly identifies the asymmetrical claims of science as the main factor that prevents the two way flow of knowledge between science and culture, as she puts it, "modern psychology, like modern politicians, seems able only to talk *at* religions rather than to listen to them" (p. 37, emphasis in the original). Lamenting the one way flow of knowledge, Rosch wonders whether science can continue to allow

> . . . the understanding of the human mind to be left solely to the preexisting conceptualizations and latest fashions of our incipient psychology, with no contribution from the thousands of years of worldwide religious practice and observation? (p. 38)

From this perspective, solution to the problems faced by Eastern psychologies lies not in having a bigger piece of the MP pie but rather in having a different pie all together, such as an IP-based global psychology.

## An IP-Based Vision of Global Psychology

An IP-based vision of global psychology is succinctly outlined by Yang (1997):

> ". . . the shortest road leading to this overall human psychology should be through the establishment of representative indigenous psychologies all over the world. Such a human psychology would never be accomplished by relying upon one single dominant indigenous psychology, American psychology (or the broader Western psychology). Instead, local psychologies in various societies should develop their own respective indigenous psychologies, which would then be gradually integrated to form a genuine global psychology" (p. 70).

This vision of global psychology has a three-tiered structure: First, equal partnership to all; second, integration of IPs; and last, an emergent global community of psychology.

### Equal Partnership

In a truly global community of psychology, Western psychology will acknowledge itself as IP on a par with other IPs. This can be accomplished through the reflexive consciousness that renders visible the cultural roots of science. Only a science that is aware of its roots in culture and history is a candidate for true collaboration in the global community of psychology, as Bhatia (2002) points out:

> "A truly meaningful collaboration between Western and Third World psychologists will . . . need to begin with the acknowledgment of their shared history within the context of Orientalism in colonial times and cultural imperialism in the postcolonial era" (p. 395).

### Integration of IPs

In the 1990 convention of the American Psychological Association, new research on the kind of men women find attractive was featured as an important item for the press, whereas Noam Chomsky's presentation on the sociopolitical meaning of the assassination of Martin–Baró was not (Martin-Baró, 1994). That psychological topics reflect preoccupations of the contemporary West has its counterpart in other IPs. For instance, Yang (1997) proposed a textbook on general psychology for the Chinese students to cover mainly Chinese psychology, "with theories and findings from foreign indigenous psychologies (for example, American psychology) included only for comparative purposes" (p. 74). This is precisely the agenda followed by

mainstream psychology, if we switch the terms around, "Chinese" for "American" in Yang's proposal. This attests to the insight of Yang that global psychology cannot be an expanded version of any particular IP, but is rather an emergent phenomenon different from all the contributing IPs.

### A Harmony Model of Global Psychology

Yang did not spell out the details of the transformation process from ethnocentric IPs to global psychology. Possibilities for this transformation can be explored along the divide between the two versions of harmony – one based on the classical Chinese notions of harmony, and the other, simplistic interpretations of the same prevalent in the cross-cultural literature (Sundararajan, 2013). The simplistic version of harmony describes the unifying discourse of MP-based version of global psychology, which capitalizes on top-down processes of regulation toward greater unity and uniformity. By contrast, the classical Chinese notions of harmony capitalize on the inherent self-regulatory mechanisms of the system referred to by the Chinese as the yin–yang balance. On this classical view of harmony, global psychology is an emergent phenomenon that evolves from the mutual synergy and mutual constraint of all IPs competing with one another as equals, each with unique strength of its own. This approach to integration via the balancing of opposing forces of yin and *yang* has been successfully applied to management (Li, 2012).

### Toward a New Narrative of Culture

It is difficult to predict the new heaven and new earth that emerge out of the truly global community of psychology. One transformation, however, can be expected, namely, a new narrative of culture. Contrary to the static dichotomies, such as individualism versus collectivism, prevalent in cross-cultural psychology today, cultures change, sometimes rapidly (Fang, 2010). What "the exilic, the marginal, subjective, migratory energies of modern life" (Said, 1993, p. 334) need is a new narrative which validates the freedom of the self to transform or reject its own culture, to belong to multiple cultures, and to "transcend the restraints of imperial or national or provincial limits" (Said, 1993, p. 335). Such a narrative can be developed along the lines of genuine culture, defined by Sapir (1924) as a manifestation of life that has no borders, and an embodiment of the human spirit that is inherently free: . . . those . . . of us who take their culture neither as knowledge nor as manner, but as life, will ask of the past not so much "what?" and "when?" and "where?" as "how?" and the accent of their "how" will be modulated in accordance with the needs of the spirit of each, a spirit that is free to glorify, to transform, and to reject (p. 423).

However, neither identity fluidity nor hybridization in the globalizing era is likely to render Eastern psychologies obsolete. So long as Western psychology claims to be universal, Eastern psychologies will continue to be the placeholder for the Other, in which resides an obdurate grain of resistance against complete assimilation.

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### Online Resources for Indigenous Psychology

Indigenous Psychology Task Force
Psychology Resources Around the World

# Ecopsychology

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## Introduction

The field of "ecology" or "environmentalism" arose over the last third of the twentieth century to articulate and ameliorate looming environmental problems before they become cataclysmic. Recently, psychologists have engaged this quest, creating an interdisciplinary approach that joins psychological expertise with ecological issues. This field is rapidly growing in several directions, with the result that it is ramifying into branches, each pursuing distinct goals (see the later section on "History"). The most urgent impetus that drove this growth was the foundational recognition that environmental problems are caused by human action. Once so linked to human behavior, the attitudes, thoughts, and beliefs underlying those behaviors became a subject of great import. That significance propelled the consequent realization that these psychological phenomena are the least understood aspect of the environmental crisis, and therefore the most difficult to change, and so solving the environmental crisis requires addressing its underlying human basis – a project for which psychology is uniquely situated.

## Definition

As an emerging field, ecopsychologyis still defining itself – even naming itself – so that there are as yet no univocally accepted tasks, credentials, or even labels. Other terms used include conservation psychology, environmental psychology, psychecology, and ecological psychology (although the latter term has also been used by Urie Bronfenbrenner since the late 1970s to refer to an unrelated systems approach to psychology).

In such a context, support for particular developments changes quickly. Nevertheless, it appears the field has attained three currently paradigmatic emphases: (1) the promotion of choices and actions that enhance conservation and sustainability, (2) the analysis of psychopathologies underlying environmentally unhealthy lifestyles and the development of the therapeutic potential of healthy environmental relations, and (3) the articulation of the transformational power of a view of the person as intrinsically interconnected with the world (Aanstoos, 2009). Ascribing an identity to each of these, the field has three current foci: (1) a conservation focus, (2) a therapeutic focus, and (3) a theoretical focus. Each offers rich innovative prospects that will likely be increasingly significant. Each also offers the potential for a profound engagement with the mission and insights of critical psychology, though it is the second and third more so than the first where this engagement has begun to take root.

## Keywords

Conservation; deep ecology; ecopsychology; ecotherapy; environmental psychology; holism; nonduality; sustainability

## History

The term "ecopsychology" was coined by Theodore Roszak in his 1992 book *The Voice of the Earth*: *An Exploration of Ecopsychology*. He identified it as a project whose goal is "to bridge our culture's longstanding gulf between the psychological and the ecological, to see the needs of the planet and the person as a continuum" (p. 14). This initial articulation was then developed in the subsequent collection by Roszak, Gomes, and Kanner (1995), which brought together many of the leading innovators of the field and served to demonstrate its various dimensions. As noted above, the historical development of the field has evolved three subfields, or emphases.

### The Conservation Focus

The largest of these emphases is devoted to researching the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that contribute to the environmental crises and to discovering how to change them to effectively promote the three well-known key conservation actions: reduce, reuse, and recycle (and more recently also a fourth: refuse). Prior to psychology's involvement, most efforts to bring about such behavioral change were simply information-intensive mass media advertising campaigns to promote greater participation in sustainable behavior. These campaigns had made little use of psychological research or expertise and were generally ineffective.

With the engagement of psychological researchers, the roles of perceptions and assumptions on environmentally relevant behaviors are becoming clearer. Among these findings are the impacts of cognitive presuppositions and perceptual biases on the persuasive efficacy of warnings of environmental consequences, on assessments about risk, and on judgments and prejudgments about relative cost/benefit issues. Such research shows how these presuppositions and biases lead to misjudgments that ultimately culminate in choices and behaviors that undermine conservation. Among the most typical biases are (1) failing to include the indirect costs in considering the environmentally destructive potential of one's actions and (2) unduly discounting the significance of the long-term consequences by relatively overrating the short term.

Prominent researchers in this area include George Howard (1997), Paul Stern, Stuart Oskamp, and Doug McKenzie-Mohr. More typically called "environmental psychology," the focus of this branch is the least controversial and so is already widely accepted by mainstream psychology. For example, the American Psychological Association's flagship journal (*American Psychologist*) publishes related articles (e.g., Stokols, Misra, Runnerstrom, & Hipp, 2009) and had a special section on "environmental sustainability" in its May 2000 issue (featuring the above-named researchers). In addition, APA's current initiative on "society's grand challenges" includes a segment devoted specifically to

global climate change (www.apa.org/science/GCBooklets.html). Also a division of the APA, the Society for Environmental, Population and Conservation Psychology is devoted to "using psychological tools to address environmental challenges." Other examples of the scope of this branch include such mainstream publications as the *Journal of Environmental Psychology* and the *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*.

### The Therapeutic Focus

The second major branch of ecological psychology is an emphasis on the therapeutic value of the relation of the person with the natural world. It examines the depletion and restoration of the human spirit by healing the disconnection of human and world. This focus, sometimes called "ecotherapy," (Clinebell, 1996) extends beyond mainstream psychotherapy and draws heavily from work in humanistic psychology. It is based on understanding the importance of a person's relationship with the natural world for their psychological well-being. Two important consequences follow from this insight: (1) that a deficiency in this relationship can leave a person more psychologically dysfunctional and (2) that psychological deficiencies in general may be responsive to amelioration by the enhancement of the person's relationship with the natural world.

Features of a relationship with the natural world found to be facilitative of increasing psychological well-being include awe, harmony, balance, aliveness, at-homeness, and openness. Research (Cohen, 1993, 2003) has shown that deepening a person's relationship with the natural world can result in the relief of a wide range of psychopathological symptoms, including anxieties, depressions, addictions, and violence. In addition to benefits for people with psychological problems, therapeutically connecting with the natural world has been found to provide many generally beneficial psychological changes: empowerment, inner peace, aliveness, compassion, decreased fatigue, mental clarity, enhancement of creativity, relaxation, stress reduction, empathy, civility, self-concept, restoration of well-being, and relief of alienation (see studies by Sarah Conn, Steven Foster, and Crystal-Helen Feral, published in Roberts, 1998). The practice and research in this field is particularly focused on exploring the benefits of a therapeutic relationship with nature for healthy adolescent development (see, e.g., Steven Foster's work, published in Roberts).

Researchers in this branch develop, apply, and assess practices designed to enhance the quality of a person's relationship with the natural world, in order to develop a repertoire of effective modalities. These usually take the form of specific sets of exercises intended to train or enhance a person's capacity for sensing more deeply, fully, and openly specific features of the natural world. Often they are undertaken during extended stays outdoors in wilderness settings. Some practices are also borrowed from indigenous cultures whose relationships with the natural world are not as altered by the artifices of modern life in the more industrialized world. For example, some practices may include a "vision quest" component, in which a portion of the person's time in the wilderness is to be by oneself with the aim of discovering a significant insight. Sometimes, therapeutic goals are achieved by the enactment of a reciprocal interaction, in which one is both "nurtured by" the earth and "nurturing of" the earth.

### The Theoretical Focus

In contrast with the other two branches, both of which are "applied" in one way or another, this third branch draws from theory and philosophy and represents "deep" ecopsychology. Its aim is to comprehend and articulate the foundational meanings and significance of the relationship between human and nature. This (even sometimes ontological) inquiry aligns with the movement within environmentalism known as "deep ecology" (developed first by Arne Naess) and also draws from developments in contemporary physics that emphasize a "systems approach" or "wholeness" perspective. Two physicists that have contributed greatly are Fritjof Capra (founder of the Center for Ecoliteracy) and David Bohm.

As the most radical approach, this one is the least established within traditional psychology;

it tends to draw support mainly from ecofeminist, humanistic, phenomenological, and transpersonal psychologists. Its basic premises, increasingly demonstrated by research, are (1) the interconnectedness of all aspects of the world within a reciprocal and synergistic whole and (2) the value of experiencing this "holism" as a way to overcome the "dualistic" perspective that disconnects human from nature, an alienation in which nature is seen as a sort of "storehouse" of commodities to be consumed. This alternative holistic vision has a breadth and depth that incorporates implications from spiritual traditions, especially the more explicitly nondualistic ones. These have been most commonly the Native American, Wiccan, and Buddhist traditions, although more recently there is an increasing and fruitful dialogue with Christianity as well (e.g., Berry, 2009). Longstanding leaders are Theodore Roszak (1992), Ralph Metzner (1999), and Joanna Macy (1991). Recent scholars of note include Elizabeth Roberts (1998), Warwick Fox (1995), Deborah Winter (1996), and John Davis, Mitchell Thomashow, and Laura Sewell (whose work can be found in Roberts, 1998).

## Traditional Debates

Regarding the first emphasis (conservation), as the mainstream research enterprise concerning the promotion of more environmentally sustainable action proceeds, a variety of controversies are also emerging, which are yet to be resolved. Among these debates are (1) the relative importance for behavioral change of shifting a person's values and beliefs versus altering the behavioral contexts in which they operate and (2) the relative impact of individual versus corporate actions in worsening environmental problems. These tend to be debates within "normal science" – between the cognitivists and the behaviorists – and have not significantly engaged the critical psychology approach as yet. However, at least with the second issue noted above, there is a definite opening for the value of a critical perspective to be brought to bear.

## Critical Debates

It is with respect to the other two major foci of ecopsychology that a critical emphasis has begun to blossom more clearly, and it is there that ecopsychologists such as Carl Anthony and Renee Soule (1998), Will Adams (2010), and Andy Fisher (2002) have each positioned ecopsychology in alignment with the project of critical psychology. Undoubtedly, these developments are occurring due to ecopsychology's capability of revealing a specific and crucial relevancy to the social and cultural critiques of critical psychology. Such revelatory capacity began early: Paul Shepard's 1982 book *Nature and Madness* already drew a link between ecologically unsustainable lifestyles and psychopathologies of various kinds. Many others soon followed, including Anita Barrows, Ralph Metzner, Chellis Glendinning, and most notably, Allen Kanner and Mary Gomes (1995), whose work raises incisively critical reflection on the nonsustainable consumption orientation of contemporary American society and the underlying commercial bases whose interests are served in perpetuating it.

Andy Fisher, in his thoughtful analysis in his book *Radical* Ecopsychology (2002, p. 16), felt that "the critical task consists of... bringing together the sorts of social and cultural criticism found among the more radical voices within both ecological and psychological circles." However, he concluded that "most of the criticism currently encountered within ecopsychology is of the 'cultural' variety... rather than the 'social'" (p. 17). However, more recent trends indicate this previous emphasis on the cultural at the expense of the social has begun to change. For example, Will Adams (2010, p. 17) has elaborated this relation between critical and ecological psychology by noting that:

> Critical psychology shows how the power of dominant theories can sponsor social injustice and oppression, wittingly and unwittingly. Based upon such concerns, this is a psychology that works for justice, liberation and well-being for all. And one of today's most unjust, oppressive, and mutually unfulfilling relationships is humankinds' exploitation of the rest of nature. Thus, ecological and critical psychology can be powerful

> partners. . .. Clearing forests, draining marshes, overheating the planet, concentrating power in a few privileged hands at the expense of so many marginalized others.

The third emphasis – on a theory and philosophy of holism – also provides a major opening for the infusion of a critical perspective in ecopsychology. Anthony and Soule (1998, p. 159) point out the connection: "the lessons of both social justice and ecopsychology are simple and the same. They involve living in connection, feeling the connection, honoring and then acting from that place of being connected." This emphasis provides a powerful platform for critical psychology, as it proffers a decisive undermining of the very dualism that underlies the conceptual foundations of mainstream psychology.

## International and Practice Relevance

The contemporary and future relevance of ecopsychology is most immediately tied to the increasingly urgent need to effectively address the ecological crisis. Respected scientific organizations now regularly warn of pending and worsening ecological disasters brought about by man-made impact on the environment. Exemplary among these are the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, established by the UN, the National Research Council of the US National Academy of Sciences, the International Union of Concerned Scientists, and the Worldwatch Institute. Problems cited include global climate change caused by greenhouse gases; weakening of plant and water life by acid rain; the destruction of the ozone layer by CFCs; the chemical pollution of soil and groundwater and, increasingly, even oceans; the consequences of defortestation for global warming and depletion of oxygen; the exhaustion and destruction of fisheries and other animal habitats; and the consequent species extinction and reduction in planetary biodiversity. In the face of such an unprecedentedly consequential worldwide crisis impacting all of humanity, likely in the near future at least to continue to worsen in ways already forecast, the relevance of ecopsychology is beyond question.

## Future Directions

Current trajectories indicate that all three branches of ecopsychology are likely to grow. Its internationalization and cross-disciplinary hybridization are likely to accelerate, including collaboration not only with natural and social scientists but also with the humanities, such as with artists (e.g., Longobardi, 2009) and philosophers (e.g., Abram, 1996; Brown & Toadvine, 2003; Cataldi & Hamrick, 2007). With this growth will come further forms of institutionalization, through the emergence of organizations (see the list of online resources below), journals (e.g., *Ecopsychology*, *Journal of* Environmental Psychology, *European Journal of Ecopsychology Ecological Psychology Journal*), and university programs. Already in the USA, there are graduate programs in ecopsychology at Lewis and Clark, Naropa, Antioch, Pacifica, Akamai, California State (Hayward), and Prescott, while many others, such as University of West Georgia, Duquesne, and Sonoma State, regularly offer courses in ecopsychology as part of programs that support the underlying emphasis on holism.

Given the difficult and impactful changes that will be needed to avoid ecological catastrophe, this field is poised to be at the epicenter of intense controversy between competing interests whose underlying assumptions must be made explicit, challenged, and critically understood. This confluence of dynamics will provide a significant opportunity for critical psychology to contribute its unique expertise to "examine knowledge production and knowledge biases. . . from the perspective of social categories or in terms of power" (Teo, 2011, p. 193). Indeed, it may well mark the coming of age for critical thinking in psychology.

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### Online Resources

Davis, J. *Ecopsychology*. www.johnvdavis.com/ep
International Society for Ecological Psychology. www.trincoll.edu/depts/ecopsyc/isep
European Ecopsychology Society. www.ecopsychology.net
International Community for Ecopsychology. www.ecopsychology.org
Project Nature Connect. www.ecopsych.com
The Green Earth Foundation. www.greenearthfound.org
The Center for Ecopsychology. www.centerforecopsychology.org

## Education

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### Introduction

Critical education is more than a set of strategies for teaching; it is an approach characterized by values, attitudes, and practices and can be implemented in many ways. Actively concerned with the relationship between knowledge and power, critical education provides a framework for teaching and learning that aims to build capacity in students to critically analyze social forces and act for transformation of the status quo.

Links between knowledge and power are explored through critical education in the context of values, assumptions, and practices that motivate students to question the conceptual framework guiding their own choices and actions as well as those of society. In this way students' critical consciousness is heightened, characterized by awareness of power inequalities and injustice (Freire, 2008) and integration of one's own beliefs about the world (Mustakova-Possardt, 2003). For example, awareness of the structural forces that systematically marginalize certain groups in society replaces a worldview that "blames the victims" for their suffering.

Acknowledging one's own position in systems of power and oppression creates spaces for engagement in sociopolitical discourse and for envisioning alternatives to the status quo. Critical education works toward this goal.

## Definition

Critical education is a sociopolitical teaching and learning process that aims to inspire students to become more conscious, questioning, and involved social actors. Inherent in this model of learning is the explicit valuing of learners' lived experiences and their ability to generate knowledge through dialogue, action, and reflection. Through critical examination of the values and assumptions of dominant systems of thought and engagement in cycles of action and reflection, students can become more conscious of the forces at work within their classroom, across the education system, and in both local and global societies. This consciousness supports and is further heightened by students' ongoing engagement in social justice work.

Critical education is characterized by certain values, assumptions, and practices. First, critical education focuses on making explicit the values that underlie theory, research, and practice. Clarification of teachers' and students' own values is a central component of critical education, including reflection on the difficulties of putting values into practice and the contradictions between one's espoused values and actions. Second, critical education invariably includes an emphasis on posing questions, challenging assumptions, and reframing problems and practices. By problematizing assumptions about history, power, and diversity, critical education can spur students to challenge the status quo. Third, critical education includes an interdisciplinary emphasis that encourages students to expand the boundaries of their exploration of issues. Concepts from other disciplines can be brought into classroom discussions to bridge course material with a wider discourse of social change. Fourth, critical education focuses on action that, when informed by theory and deepened through reflection, is vital for consciousness-raising. Student-led action strategies that target social issues are a common feature of critical education efforts.

The relationship between educators and students is pivotal to critical education practice. Critical educators take on the roles of facilitator, role model, and learning partner in this problem-posing form of education, rather than as the dispensers of information, as in the so-called banking approach (Freire, 2008). In critical education teachers are themselves engaged as learners in the classroom. This complex role for teachers and the engagement required from students for its success can take shape through different strategies but inevitably requires a distribution of power that allows students some control over what and how they learn (see Freire). In this way, teaching becomes a political activity (Smyth, 2010) that has implications both within the classroom and in a wider society as students' thoughts, actions, and language change to allow for critical engagement in sociopolitical spheres of action and discourse.

Concrete distinctions between critical education and critical pedagogy are not clear in the existing literature. Gay's (1995) description of differences between critical pedagogy and multicultural education also applies to critical pedagogy and critical education in that the differences "are more context than content, semantics than substance, and oratorical than essential" (Gay, p. 156). For the purposes of this article, critical education is informed by critical pedagogy as a historical and political force and shares key values and assumptions with it, but is not restricted to the structure of critical pedagogy, as described by Friere (2008). As such, critical education may or may not utilize key strategies of critical pedagogy (e.g., dialogue, praxis) that, without which, an approach would not be called critical pedagogy. For example, critical pedagogy (Freire, 2008) exclusively targets marginalized groups for its intervention. Critical education, on the other hand, might or might not include individuals from marginalized groups but is more likely to take place in mainstream

institutions, such as schools, universities, and colleges. As such, critical education works toward similar goals as critical pedagogy, but the form that this approach takes is not bound to critical pedagogy's structure.

## Keywords

Critical theory; education; critical education; critical pedagogy; consciousness-raising

## History

Critical education has foundations in several educational traditions, including critical pedagogy (Freire, 2008; Giroux, 2001; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007), feminist pedagogy (Crabtree, Sapp, & Licona, 2009; Hooks, 1994), and antiracist education (Karumanchery, 2005; McCaskell, 2010; Mukherjee, 1992). Although these traditions have informed critical education and share key values of transformation with it, they are also distinct in that critical education might or might not utilize essential strategies of these approaches and might or might not emphasize concepts essential to these other traditions. Critical education is not defined by a particular pedagogical approach. Rather, it is a framework of values, assumptions, and practices that can be expressed in a variety of ways and will borrow from other traditions as necessary to reach educational goals. This section describes some of the components of these other traditions that have informed the conceptual framework of critical education.

Established through the emancipatory work of Paulo Freire in Brazil, critical pedagogy describes an intrinsic interrelation between education and society. Critical pedagogy is a theory and method of education that utilizes techniques such as dialogue and praxis (i.e., cycles of action and reflection informed by theory) to achieve *conscientization*, which includes increased awareness of oppressed peoples of their own oppression. Through critical pedagogy, educators and students engage in a process of co-creation of reality through problematizing dialogue. The aim is social transformation that disrupts oppressive systems through organized struggle for liberation.

Critical education takes much of its form and structure from critical pedagogy and they therefore share several key features. Critical education branches from critical pedagogy in its outward orientation to oppression. Rather than focusing on the oppression experienced by the students themselves, critical education explores societal forces of oppression that may or may not directly impact the lives of students. Critical pedagogy is intended for marginalized groups, whereas critical education can more easily be conducted with groups of privileged students as well.

Feminist pedagogy (see Crabtree et al., 2009; Hooks, 1994) counters educational practices that reflect and perpetuate an oppressive and androcentric social order that is based on gendered, classed, and racialized patterns of exclusion. Gaining a voice in the classroom and wider educational settings is an important goal of feminist pedagogy, which encourages students, especially women, to speak about their experiences and perspectives. Personal, communal, and subjective ways of knowing are valued as an explicit contrast to traditional knowledge production and the function it serves to exclude and dominate. Social action and institutional change are often key aims of feminist pedagogy.

Critical education benefits from the contributions of feminist pedagogy in its emphasis on a safe, respectful, and inclusive classroom environment wherein power is distributed rather than hierarchical. Feminist pedagogical approaches are also reflected in critical education's aim to radicalize the learning experience and thereby equip students to engage in transformative social activities.

Antiracist education (see Karumanchery, 2005; Mukherjee, 1992) focuses on the inequity and oppression entailed by racialized social attitudes and policies. Its aim is to utilize education to empower disenfranchised groups and assist them to overcome systemic barriers to participation and access to valued resources. This sociopolitical orientation makes antiracist education transformative, particularly when contrasted with reformist approaches to multiculturalism, which often focuses more on acceptance and

celebration of differences and raising awareness of different cultural practices.

Helping students understand the difference between reform and transformation is an important aspect of critical consciousness-raising. Like antiracist education, critical education is oriented toward transformative change, equality, and empowerment. Although critical education action efforts can focus on short-term ameliorative projects that address immediate needs through reform, the larger focus of critical education is on social transformation (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002).

## Traditional Debates

Critical education is often contrasted with mainstream education in ongoing debates about classroom teaching approaches. Critical education implicitly critiques the mainstream educational system, including its techniques and outcomes. Characteristics of this system, expressed in varying degrees in different classrooms, include centrally determined curriculum from which educators are required to teach and test students in relation to a standardized norm of acceptable achievement; hierarchical power structures in the classroom and school; content that is often information-based for the purpose of memorization and delivered through lectures and assignments that frame the content as correct and therefore unquestionable; and minimal out-of-class activity, in terms of relevant action-based work that connects students to the community and/or wider society. The impacts of these features of the education system on students, teachers, and society as a whole have been widely critiqued by a variety of authors (e.g., Giroux & Giroux, 2004; Leban & McLaren, 2010; Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002; Smyth, 2010). Critical education has been proposed and promoted as an alternative to the mainstream system.

## Critical Debates

In addition to providing alternatives to mainstream models of education, it has been argued that critical education challenges dominant systems of thought and the means used by traditional education to proliferate those systems. Cultural hegemony has been described as the inculcation of the public in a system of values and beliefs about the dominant social order (Gramsci, 1971). This concept suggests that social institutions can utilize various means to adapt the public to the existing social structure, framing it as the norm from which deviation is abnormal and negative. The education system as it exists is one such institution that promotes acceptance of the status quo; its ubiquitous influence over the thinking and actions of individuals, groups, communities, organizations, and the like makes it a particularly powerful tool by which the dominant social structure can be supported and perpetuated. Critical education, however, uses tools to explicitly challenge these norms and to call into question the assumptions and values of the dominant social system. By raising consciousness of alternatives to current social reality that may be more equitable and just, critical education challenges cultural hegemony and poses the possibility that social structures can, and perhaps should, be transformed (Leban & McLaren, 2010).

As described above, several qualities characterize the content and processes of critical education. Three are particularly relevant in its relation to challenging cultural hegemony: power-sharing, engagement, and integration of theory and practice (Evans, Nelson, & Loomis, 2009). The social and political meaning of these three principles has implications for the influence of critical education over the status quo.

Power-sharing refers to the balance of classroom power that seeks to honor the experiences and contributions of students and create conditions for transformational learning. This challenges cultural hegemony by helping students realize that hierarchical power structures are not the only possibility and, furthermore, that participatory decision making may be equally as efficient and probably more just. One challenge of implementing this principle is that students have been socialized through their education to be passive recipients of the teacher's knowledge within a hierarchical structure. As such, students

are often uncomfortable with or resistant to taking on a more powerful role. This speaks to the power of cultural hegemony, however, and exemplifies the role of critical education in providing a vision of alternatives to the norms that may challenge students but often lead to further engagement that contributes to individual development and social change.

In this light, engagement, the second principle, links the classroom, and thereby the students, with the wider community. Power-sharing within the classroom creates spaces for students to engage with each other, with instructors, and with various members of the university and wider communities. In this manner students are exposed to a wider learning space that challenges their normative conceptions of the purpose of education. If communities and their members can be seen as having vital experiences and knowledge that can contribute to students' learning, and if students themselves become active contributors to the communities in which they are embedded, this reciprocal relationship shifts focus from the primacy of institutions and corporations to the value of grassroots change. The consciousness of this value is supported by cycles of action and reflection.

The concept of praxis can be extended in critical education to include theory, such that students engage in critical cycles of theory, action, and reflection. In this way, all three aspects come to inform and be informed by the others for a coherent learning process. Making theory explicit in its application through practice allows for deeper understanding of both. This builds capacity in students to link their actions in society with wider concepts related to theories of justice and liberation. This perpetuates the learning process outside of the classroom and challenges cultural hegemony by increasing the number of conscious, active citizens who have a vision of a just society and the tools to work toward it.

## International Relevance

Critical education acknowledges its international nature in terms of (a) historical development of various fields in different countries, (b) present-day implementation of critical education in different parts of the world, and (c) political consciousness-raising of the nature and impacts of global capitalism. Exploration of these elements in relation to the topic of study in a critical education classroom can expand students' vision beyond their local context to analyze the patterns of thought and action in other areas and how they are interrelated with each other (Evans et al., 2009). Examples of how to implement this include providing reading materials from authors from multiple countries; exploring the roots of ideas, concepts, and fields that originated outside of the students' home country; accessing sources (e.g., documentaries) that explore the international nature of social issues; and creating action projects or class assignments that integrate an international component.

## Practice Relevance

Several key practices of critical education have been identified for each level of the education experience. These levels are (a) student (individual level), (b) student in the classroom and the academic unit (e.g., program, school; relational level), and (c) student in the community and society (collective level). These practices and their related outcomes are relevant to teachers seeking to utilize strategies of critical education.

The qualities and characteristics of critical education can be expressed through several practices that impact the individual level, including student-centered learning, shared decision making regarding course content and marking, students facilitating classroom activities, personal reflection exercises, the value given to experiential knowledge and emotional expression, spaces to connect the personal and the political, and the teacher acting as a resource person and role model. At the individual level, outcomes of these and other practices include personal reflection and consciousness-raising that contribute to self-determination, values clarification, and identity formation.

At the relational level, practices of critical education include ground rules for classroom decorum, highly participatory and collaborative group processes, peer feedback and respectful challenging among students, human relations skill training, attending to diversity, and building community within the academic unit. Potential results of these relational practices include developing supportive interpersonal relationships characterized by caring and compassion, cooperation, respect for diversity, collaboration, and democratic participation.

At the collective level, practices of critical education include individual and group projects in the community, field trips, guest presentations by community members, participation in campus and community events, students speaking out and engaging in advocacy, and field placements and other practical experiences. These collective practices can contribute to students being able to think globally while participating in the local community, including understanding of issues such as distributive justice, supporting community structures, and environmental stewardship.

## Future Directions

The nature of critical education, in particular its focus on dynamically engaging students in wider contexts (e.g., community, society, global perspective), requires some degree of systems-level support from educational institutions. As such, individual teachers and small groups of educators attempting to implement this approach can be undermined and sabotaged by administrators, colleagues, parents, and others who do not share this vision of education. In this way, critical education can become reduced to a set of strategies or techniques that do not fully represent this approach as it is intended, which is a major problem in the present-day application of this model (Giroux, 2001). Because of this, future directions of critical education should include a systems-level vision that helps bring other educational stakeholders to the table. In this way, critical education could move from isolated efforts toward a larger discourse about the purpose of teaching, the nature of learning, and the society our education system is helping to build.

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### Online Resources

*Critical education theory and practice*. http://www.tonywardedu.com/

The Paulo and Nita Freire International Project for Critical Pedagogy. http://www.freireproject.org/

## Educational Psychology

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### Introduction

Courses and programs in educational psychology populate universities worldwide. There are academic departments, international organizations, doctoral degrees, legion texts, and scores of academic journals devoted to the subject.

### Definition

Educational psychology commonly is described as "a mediating discipline" or "conduit" between academic psychology and the field of education, through which relevant psychological theorizing and research are developed and applied to educational aims and contexts. On its face, such a description appears noncontroversial. However, that in which psychology, educational psychology, education, and their relationships consist is multifarious, complex, and has mutated overtime, susceptible to shifts in the history of ideas, social practices and the structure and function of institutions that implement and sustain them. These considerations complicate the task of defining educational psychology.

### Keywords

Apperception; child development; children; education; educational psychology; enlightenment; modern; neoliberal democracies; science; sociocultural; teaching; Elyot; Erasmus; Froebel; Galton; Hall; Herbart; Hopkins; Huarte; Locke; Mead; Pestalozzi; Rousseau; Socrates; Sturm; Thorndike; Vives; Vygotsky; Wotton

### History and Traditional Debates

Whether the inception of educational psychology coincides with its status as laboratory science and/or academic discipline is a matter of debate. The subject matter of educational psychology appears as old as the occupation of teaching. By the time Socrates introduced his famed method, Greek thinkers already had embraced speculation and argument as means of inquiry and edification. They also proposed and debated views of the role of teacher, the relationship between teacher and pupil, instructional methodology, the cultivation of emotions, the nature of learning, and what can be learned.

Beginning in the sixteenth century, education became an impetus to study the mind. The Renaissance rediscovery of classical knowledge and dawning of a new individualism focused attention on methods of imparting knowledge and building character. Thinkers across sixteenth century Europe, including Erasmus in Holland, Sturm in Germany, Elyot and Wotton in England, and Huarte and Vives in Spain, looked to exploit psychological features to these educational ends.

Juan Luis Vives is particularly noteworthy for theorizing mental functions in order to derive principles of effective instruction. According to

Vives, interest, attention, and feelings are integral to knowing and remembering. Ideas persist not simply because we have had them, but moreover, because we have experienced them. Intellectual development begins with elementary grasp of the meaning of a presentation that is elaborated by a series of mental operations (i.e., *consideratio*, *recordatio*, *collatio*, *discursu*, *judicium*, *voluntas*, and *contemplatio*). In addition to this system of thought, Vives identified functions of memory, laws of forgetfulness, and attraction and repulsion as forces responsible for feelings. In applying his psychology to matters of instruction, he prescribed an orderly arrangement of facts to impress contents on memory, practice for retention, adapting instruction to individuals' interests and abilities, teaching the regulation of emotions, attention to nutrition and school environment, and self-evaluation over comparisons with others. Vives also considered teachers' conduct, the effect of their attitudes on student performance, and the need for students to feel appreciated and respected.

During the seventeenth century, Locke interpreted the mind as a receptacle gradually filled by knowledge derived from sensation, verified by experience, and congealed by repetition and training. For Locke, education was "something put into" the child "by habits woven into the very principles of his nature" (1693, p. 44). However, the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw a shift in emphasis from instilling ideas to eliciting and following the natural inclinations of the child. Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbart asserted that education should be child centered, active, and driven by interest. Pestalozzi, who found application for Rousseau's ideas regarding the sanctity of the individual and humanity's inherent goodness, is recognized for his efforts to align educational processes with what was assumed to be the natural unfolding of a child's development. Pestalozzi founded several schools, and his ideas and methods drew a large following throughout Western Europe. Froebel, Pestalozzi's student, originated kindergarten. A progenitor of early childhood education, he defended the value of free play and devised a set of 20 age-related "gifts" (i.e., play objects) of increasing complexity to facilitate children's self-directed play.

Johann Herbart is distinctive for attempting to establish psychology as a distinct scientific discipline and developed a scientific approach to pedagogy based on a sophisticated system of psychological principles. For Herbart, ideas are not joined passively and mechanically through laws of association as Locke had proposed. Rather, they have force of their own and interact dynamically according to quantifiable principles as they vie for a place in consciousness. Compatible ideas form composite wholes, while competing ideas inhibit each other. The content of consciousness at any given moment can thus be expressed as the resultant of interplay among competing ideas of varying strengths.

It is through Herbart's theory of apperception that his psychology meets educational application. Apperception is the assimilation of new ideas by ideas already acquired. If ideas are accepted or rejected given compatible or competing contents of consciousness, insuring new ideas meet a hospitable mental environment for their apperception becomes a central concern of instruction. According to Herbart, the presentation of new information needs to be structured such that it fits readily with the "apperceptive mass" of extant prior knowledge. Consequently, Herbart asserted, instruction should proceed from the known to the unknown following the child's interests and spontaneous observations. Herbart proposed four steps of instruction: clarity, association, system, and method. The steps direct teachers to preparing subject matter, presenting it, questioning students inductively to make apperceptive links, drawing general principles from particulars and summarizing the lesson, and relating its application to daily life.

Numerous other figures contributed to the early historical development of a psychology of education. As the record attests, educational psychology was conceived neither in the laboratory nor by attaining disciplinary status, but rather in much older endeavors to investigate the mind in coming to grips with problems of education. Of further significance to deciphering its origins is that courses in educational psychology

(albeit entitled "mental philosophy" or "child study") were offered as early as 1839 in America (Charles, 1987). Consequently, a firm challenge can be set to the widely accepted account that psychology was born a laboratory science in Germany in the 1870s and 1880s, was exported to America in the 1880s and 1890s, and that educational psychology was conceived as the adjunct application of the "new psychology" for educational purposes (Johanningmeier, 1978).

On the one hand, the subject matter of educational psychology appears to have ancient origins and stability over time. On the other hand, however, there has been considerable variation historically in this subject matter and the means by which it is to be investigated and understood. In the inaugural 1910 issue of the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, the editors listed topics suitable to its pages that included: sensation, instinct, attention, habit, memory, learning, conceptual processes, heredity, adolescence, individual differences, retarded and precocious development, the nature of mental endowments, measurement of mental capacity, the psychology of mental tests, correlation of mental abilities, the psychology of special methods in schools, and problems of mental hygiene, as approached experimentally, statistically, or from a literary standpoint. Inspecting this mélange and more recent attempts to define its subject matter, Walberg and Haertel (1992) conclude, "Clearly, there was no overarching, theory of educational psychology in 1910, nor has there ever been" (p. 6). These sentiments echo those expressed earlier by Grinder (1978), who resolved, "Educational psychologists have never agreed upon who they are or what they are about" (p. 285), and Travers (1969), who stated more emphatically, "one cannot clearly identify a body of knowledge as representing a discipline which can be appropriately named educational psychology" (p. 414). In the absence of agreement regarding its definition and subject matter, educational psychology nevertheless has flourished and become remarkably influential (Berliner & Calfee, 1996).

A related matter pertains to whether educational psychology should be designated a distinct discipline. Although its disciplinary status is affirmed by most contemporary educational psychologists, it is debatable whether the problems, theories, and methods of educational psychology can be distinguished definitively from the "parent" discipline. There also have been reservations about whether educational psychology is sufficiently scientific to warrant distinct disciplinary or even subdisciplinary status separate from the question of whether psychology is, or can be, a proper science. Further, there are marked differences internationally. For example, in North America, there are strong disciplinary and professional distinctions made among educational, school, and counseling psychologists. However, in the United Kingdom, the knowledge, practices, and domains of application of these areas are considered to fall within the purview of educational psychology.

Notwithstanding debates concerning the inception of educational psychology, disciplinary status, and demarcation of its subject matter, it is difficult to gainsay the formative influence of empirical methods in attempts to unify the field. By embracing empirical methods and means of justification, early psychologists not only separated themselves from philosophy but also attempted to gain the standing of objective science. In so doing, they situated themselves in concert with the late nineteenth century movement to structure knowledge across fields in terms consistent with evolutionary theory and post-Darwinian conceptions of science. This had significant impact on education that, at the time, was beginning to acquire legitimacy in universities as a subject of study (Lagemann, 2000). As the scientific investigation of mental functions and structures, psychology was plainly relevant to education. But, moreover, it lent education a scientific footing. Psychologists courted the opportunity and attracted a following of teachers and educational reformers.

In the early 1880s, G. Stanley Hall, who was to become the first president of the American Psychological Association, saw child development as a venue to showcase psychology's practical applicability, especially to education (Richards, 2010). Hall promoted an evolutionary

account of child development (i.e., recapitulationism) and conducted the first large-scale program of empirical research in psychology. Borrowing Galton's questionnaire method and using as a model, a similar study conducted earlier in Berlin in 1869, Hall posed a set of questions to hundreds of Bostonian children to detect what they knew on entry into formal schooling. In 1883, Hall (1883) published "The Contents of Children's Minds" in the *Princeton Review*. Identifying what children know is important, Hall declared, because "the mind only can learn what is related to other things learned before, and that we must start from the knowledge children really have and develop as germs" (p. 271). Such studies, Hall asserted, would generate "practical educational conclusions of great scope and importance" (p. 270), and he used them to promote his ideas for teacher training and school reform.

Hall hoped to enlist the support of teachers. His simple survey studies suited this audience who had limited education. However, by the turn of the century, there was demand for psychological expertise from a new class of professional educational administrators eager to separate themselves from the "lesser" occupation of teaching and who saw their job as modernizing educational institutions by bringing them in line with corporate industrialism. They regarded themselves as managers who, like managers in industry, required the technology of research to deal with narrowly circumscribed problems and scientific justification for decisions (Danziger, 1990). More specifically, they wanted means by which to categorize individuals, identify them, and determine the most effective and efficient ways of administering them. Psychologists responded by inventing scales that measured individuals' performances in ways that made them comparable, experiments that differentiated and assessed conditions under which these performances could be regulated, and a language of statistics capable of bridging the contexts of psychological investigation and educational administration.

The *Journal of* Educational Psychology was founded as a venue for this research and E. L. Thorndike was a key contributor. Over the course of his long and prolific career, Thorndike, arguably more than any other psychologist, linked educational psychology to empirical methods and quantitative analysis. For Thorndike, the basis for education was psychology, psychology was science, science was direct experiment and measurement, and psychological phenomena were quantifiable. As he pronounced famously: "Whatever exists at all exists in some amount" (1918, p. 16). However, Thorndike's contributions go far beyond installing a quantitative metaphysics and methodology for educational psychology. They include his learning theory (connectionism) and "laws of learning," theory of transfer of training, overturning faculty psychology and doctrine of formal discipline, conception of individual learning differences based on inherited traits, first use of children as subjects, pioneering studies of adult learning, and a myriad of experiments, methodological and statistical innovations, tests of intelligence and achievement, textbooks, student dictionaries, and other curricular materials. The first publication to bear the title *Educational Psychology* is a terse scholarly treatise published in 1886, based on a series of lectures by Louisa Parsons Hopkins. However, it was Thorndike's similarly titled work, first published in 1903 and expanded to three volumes by 1913, that was definitive. In over 500 publications, Thorndike articulated his vision of educational psychology as applied science and set its disciplinary course for over a century.

## Critical Debates

As Thomas (1992) has remarked, educational psychologists "are steeped in the view of themselves as applied scientists" (p. 52). However, there is criticism that the received view bears highly problematic assumptions owing largely to remnants of Enlightenment and Modern thought. One such assumption is that the proper unit of study is the human individual who exists as a biophysically discrete and unitary psychological entity. The subject of most contemporary educational psychology is an autonomous learner

who thinks, acts, and develops independently of an objectified world it seeks to know and manipulate toward self-defined ends. Capacities, potentialities, and deficiencies are self-contained in prevailing conceptions of normative and exceptional learners, with those deviating from the norm labeled for "special education" and given interventions most often aimed at presumed internal psychological processes (e.g., self-regulation, self-esteem).

However, theories and research inspired by Lev Vygotsky, George Herbert Mead, and critical and postmodern schools have given rise to a "sociocultural" orientation in educational psychology that repudiates psychological individualism and its metaphysics (Martin, 2006). This confederation of views, while enormously varied, is united by the observation that human beings are constituted psychologically as individuals within social, cultural, and historical contexts that preexist them and furnish linguistic and other relational practices that provide forms and means for thinking, acting, and experiencing. From this perspective, the psychology of individuals does not develop essentially from within, but rather relationally from without. For socioculturalists, humans are social, cultural, and historical beings in a strong constitutive sense. The psychology of individuals is understood not simply as affected by sociocultural practices, but rather as constituted by them and thus varying across history, cultures, and societies.

Socioculturalists allege that the failure to take into account the constitutive influence of historical, social, and cultural institutions has led to attributing psychological features to human nature rather than to characteristics of the institutions within which we develop. Moreover, it should be recognized that educational institutions are not neutral instruments in human development. Education prepares the young for entry into adult society. Societies require persons of certain kinds and schools produce people of these kinds. Not only is education saturated with ideological interests, but consequently, so too is our psychology. Subjectivity is not immune to the social and cultural forces by which it is shaped. Children are understood and administered according to social and cultural institutional purposes and practices, and come to understand themselves and act in institutionally prescribed ways. Psychological theories and interventions when employed for the ends of education also serve ideological and institutional aims. For example, psychological conceptions of learners as autonomous, self-governing, self-determining, and driven by a desire for self-expression are aligned conspicuously with, and promote, those of the ideal citizen in neoliberal democracies.

A connected issue pertains to the assumption that research in educational psychology can be pursued as a technical, sociopolitically neutral, scientific activity. According to the received view, methods of inquiry, particularly when modeled after those of the natural sciences, are universal rational tools exempt from sociopolitical concerns such as power relations, race, gender, and class. When applied rigorously by educational psychologists, it is believed such tools are capable of yielding impartial knowledge that can be applied instrumentally to engineer instructional practices. However, it can be argued that the kind of instrumental or technical rationality on which scientific methods are founded is never prior to historical, social, and cultural background contexts of meaning and significance. It requires for its expression linguistic conventions and always takes place within a shared background of values and assumptions, such as normal psychological development and sanctioned aims of education that provide a common horizon of intelligibility and against which educational problems are made to stand out, defined, and placed on the agenda for research. If educational research bears and perpetuates an ideological inheritance, then the Enlightenment/Modernist conception of knowledge as continual progress achieved by the impartial discovery and incremental amassing of universal objective truths is untenable. Education is concerned with human betterment. However, claims regarding human betterment, even those based on scientific warrants, are subject to diverse individual and collective interests, values, and power.

Relatedly, educational psychology is concerned with the growth and enhancement of

the individual. By contrast, education has the broader mandate of preparing citizens capable of contributing to the collective good of the state and community. In democracies, this often entails sacrificing self-interest for the welfare of the collective. For this reason, the aims of educational psychology to serve and promote the self-interests of individuals may be at odds with the aims of democratic education (see Martin, 2004).

## Future Directions

Educational psychology is perhaps the most conservative of psychology's disciplinary domains. This conservatism owes to its history and allegiance to Enlightenment and Modern commitments regarding conceptions of its subject matter, methodological requirements for underwriting its status as science, and kinds of knowledge deemed legitimate and useful. However, if educational psychology is to accomplish more than perpetuate the sociopolitical status quo and be a vital force for educational betterment, it will need to make greater provision for engaging with self-critical and alternative perspectives.

At present, there appear to be three major interconnected branches of critical inquiry and theorizing in educational psychology that portend opportunities for expanding its horizons. One branch is concerned with critical investigations of the ideological commitments undergirding educational psychology and how psychological expertise functions in orienting educational policies and practices, particularly by promoting the kinds of subjectivities fitted to neoliberal democracies and other political arrangements. A second branch consists of critical historical studies of the origination of the concepts, methods, and aims of educational psychology, how they have transmogrified and ascended overtime, and the implications of this history for contemporary disciplinary and professional practices. A third branch is the sociocultural movement focused on the ways in which human psychological forms and functions are constituted socioculturally and the role of educational psychology and education more broadly in psychological development. Such directions bear the promise of revitalization.

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# Educational Standardized Testing

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## Introduction

This entry concerns standardized quantitative testing in educational systems. Testing is an extensive part of educational systems throughout the world. In standardized quantitative testing, tests are generally developed centrally and thereby in a context removed from everyday educational practice. Standardized quantitative testing in educational systems is often politically initiated, whether at the national, regional, or district level, and can be mandatory for all relevant educational institutions under this jurisdiction. In this entry, the field of testing will both be enlighten from its own logic and in the last part, testing will be discussed from a critical perspective which questions the assumptions that testing rests on.

## Definition

Standardized educational testing is a specific type of assessment, traditionally termed summative assessment. Summative assessment sums up the learner's achievement level, for example, upon completion of an educational program . . . and it can be used in order to determine access to higher levels of education. Results may be used not only in the assessment of individual learning but as a tool for holding teachers, schools, or districts/local education authorities accountable for the quality of education. Summative assessment is usually contrasted with formative assessment, which is a more process-oriented form of assessment that aims to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses, frequently with the goal of improving teaching and education programs internally to enhance learning (see, for instance, Ecclestone, 2003). Testing can be used for either formative or summative purposes. Tests can be either norm-referenced or criterion-referenced. Norm-referenced tests are intended to compare students' achievements to a norm group, whereas criterion-referenced tests are intended to measure the extent to which a learner has learned specific content.

## Keywords

Educational standardized testing; accountability; bias; teaching to the test; learning

## History

It has been argued (Thorndike, Cunningham, Thorndike, & Hagen, 1991) that the introduction of tests within education stems from a need for information about the abilities of learners in order to make different kinds of decisions. Furthermore, testing is often introduced as a mean to hold education accountable for its results. This need for information and documentation in order to make educational decisions about access, grades, and the like has a long history; indeed, the history of educational measurement can be traced back for centuries (Thorndike et al., 1991). However, some eras have seen a greater demand for testing than others. In the following, the history of testing is primarily illustrated through its development in the United States. This is in order to provide the reader with a more thorough presentation of the development in a country with a strong tradition for standardization and accountability in education, in which testing often plays a major part.

The late 1800s has been referred to as "the laboratory period in the history of psychological measurement" (Thorndike et al., 1991, p. 3). During the period from 1850 to 1900, there was an increasing demand for accurate measurements due to a high number of students who were considered unfamiliar with the educational system (Thorndike et al.). This was in order to achieve was what conceived to be fair measures and sorting of different children (see Thorndike et al.).

The publication of the Binet-Simon scale of mental ability and intelligence in the beginning of 1900 had a great impact on modern educational and psychological measurement (Thorndike et al.). This scale was used, among other things, to identify and sort students into either standard or remedial education. Binet expressed certain precautions regarding the use of the test. Among other things, he stressed that the test could not define innate characteristics, that it should not be used to rank those who was percieved to be normal children, and that testing should only identify children who need help – it should not be used for labeling (Gould, 1981, p. 185). When the test travelled to the United States, these precautions were largely overlooked and the test was used for precisely the purposes that Binet had warned against (Gould).

The American involvement in World War I gave rise to a boom period of testing, due to a growing demand for methods of measuring and predicting different types of human behavior in order to improve military service (Thorndike et al., 1991). The use of intelligence tests in military service led to a wider-reaching acceptance of tests of mental abilities and to their adaptation for use in education (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 24). Hereafter, testing increased in both quantity and range. Particularly during the period 1915–1930, standardized testing grew rapidly in the American educational system and developed from the regime of intelligence tests to a broad array of educational and psychological tests (e.g., Thorndike et al., 1991; Ali & Ali 2010). Among other things, tests satisfied a demand within society for increased documentation and efficiency, prompting Madaus et al. to label the years 1900–1930 "The age of efficiency and testing" (Madaus, Stufflebeam, & Scriven, 1991). Furthermore, it is argued (e.g., Giordano, 2005) that it was fundamental for the expansion of tests that psychology as a new discipline trying to legitimate itself as science adopted its methods (experiments and measurement) from the dominant physical and natural sciences.

In the 1940s, tests were again high on the agenda in relation to military service, and over the subsequent 25 years, several test types were developed for the purpose of measuring and predicting human abilities and behavior (Thorndike et al., 1991). In the late 1950s, the United States suffered the so-called Sputnik shock in reaction to the Russian launch of the first-ever satellite into Earth's orbit. The shockwaves from this incident, and the widespread fear that American schools were lagging behind their Soviet counterparts, gave impetus to new educational programs in mathematics, science, and foreign languages, and to a series of assessment initiatives, including new nationally standardized tests as part of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 (Madaus et al., 1991, pp. 11–12). This reaction can be compared to a more recent reaction in Denmark, when Danish students failed to perform as well as policymakers had hoped in the OECD's 2003 PISA tests (Programme for International Student Assessment). This was referred to as the PISA shock. Afterwards, Danish national standardized tests were developed and conducted. The commonality between the two incidents is the idea that national testing is (part of) a solution to perceived national deficiencies.

Since the 1960s, several types of tests (including computer-based tests) have been developed, and numerous test agencies and services have emerged all over the world (Ali & Ali, 2010). Today, standardized quantitative testing serves to meet demands of accountability; thereby, testing makes it possible to signal quality and order to the outside world (Ydesen, 2011). In this way, testing provides possibilities of educational competition within and across countries. This means that we might term the years beginning with 2002 (the year the No Child Left Behind Act was signed into law) "The age of accountability-testing and competition."

The history of standardized testing is one of expansion and growth. Standardized testing have gone from a focus on remedial education and from being used in conjunction with military service to comprehensive usage within education.

## Traditional Debates

A central subject of debate concerning testing has focused on what constitutes the best possible test.

Over time, the quality criteria for educational tests have been refined. Diverse criteria and a lot of know-how in regard to educational testing have been developed. Validity and reliability are considered the most essential qualities of standardized tests (Thorndike et al., 1991). Validity points to the essential question of whether the test measures what it purports to measure. In this regard, a certain test score may be useful for one purpose or decision and not another (Thorndike et al., p. 91). Reliability refers to the consistency and reproducibility of the test (Thorndike et al., p. 91). It is acknowledged, however, that numerous factors can affect the accuracy of a test result (Thorndike et al.).

One of the hotly debated issues concerning tests is connected to the increase in the number of test types in various fields. In some quarters, this has been perceived as an invasion of privacy (Thorndike et al., 1991, pp. 464–465). This has led to discussions of how test practice can be managed; for instance, who will have access to the information and which information will be stored (Thorndike et al.).

Some central questions are related to how much power test results should have in decision-making. Should test results be used for sorting learners into different educational programs, or should test results merely help teachers recognize student learning needs? Should educational institutions, or individual teachers, be held accountable for test results? These questions are connected to whether or not a test is considered high stake or low stake. High stake and low stake points to what is at stake for the test taker, the teachers, and the school, and they are usually connected to either centrally devised tests or locally embedded tests in regard to accountability. Furthermore, it has also been discussed whether high stake and low stake can be decided once and for all and externally; high stake and low stake also depends on how the test is perceived in concrete practice.

A rationale behind increased standardized testing is a need for differentiation and more objective, so-called "colorblind" assessment methods that are not biased by personal prejudices when it comes to certain groups of people (for instance, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic background) (Thorndike et al., 1991, pp. 464–465). However, standardized achievement tests have traditionally shown extensive achievement gaps, for example, between different groups of people, with respect to minority status, gender and socio-economic background. On this basis, it has been argued that certain test items could be said to discriminate these groups of people, according to gender, socio-economic background and cultural background.

Test bias has to do with the question of test validity, as a bias could mean that a given test measures different aspects across different populations (Schellengberg, 2004). For example, if a math test entails a lot of reading, thereby measuring second-language speakers' reading skills instead of their math skills, then it can be argued that the test lacks construct validity (Schellengberg, p. 11). Over the years, several techniques have been developed to evaluate test items for bias in order to ensure fairness in the testing system. The discussion of test bias implies that, if the test is bias free, then it will do a good job of measuring the real achievement level of the individual learner.

## Critical Debates

The critical debates presented below will first challenge the assumption of tests as neutral tools of measurement. Instead, it is argued that testing has negative consequences on the same practice that testing operates in. Secondly, a critical view on testing from another paradigm of understanding will be presented. It is argued that we need to take a different approach and instead understand learning from the perspective of the learner.

### Negative Consequences of Testing

It is posed that tests do not merely measure a student's achievement level. Instead, tests (and particularly high-stakes tests) can influence educational programs negatively, so that teaching focuses on preparing children for the test in question and not on supporting the development

of other important skills and competences. When it comes to standardized high-stakes testing (where students' results may be used in a system of institutional accountability), tests risk promoting washback effects, which means that educational practice will tend to adjust itself to prioritize the content of the tests.

It is argued (cf. McNeil, 2000, pp. 230–231) that this is especially the case in schools with many students from low-income or minority backgrounds, who traditionally score low on standardized achievement tests, as these schools are therefore under more pressure to improve their test results. This phenomenon, changing educational practices to accommodate tests, is called "teaching to the test." Arguably, this will make education more instrumental and trivial, focucing narrowly on what is being tested instead of experimenting. This means that test performances are given a higher priority than learning. A consequence could be that certain groups of students do not have the same educational opportunities, as their teaching focuses on tests instead of a more experimental approach to learning.

Scholars have claimed that centralized standardization widens the gap between education for the poor and education for middle-class children (McNeil, 2000, p. 231), which is the exact opposite of the stated intentions of test implementation. In this regard, Vygotsky, (1978, pp. 88–89) has criticized diagnostic tests for being unable to measure children's zone of proximal development. As such, these kinds of tests cannot express the potentiality of a child's learning abilities and development. Furthermore, it has been suggested that testing could lead to "self-fulfilling prophecies," if teachers view their pupils/students on the basis of test results; hereby, tests determine learners' educational paths (cf. Holmen & Docter, 1972, p. 11; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968).

In this way, high-stakes testing and demands for accountability can have serious consequences for schools as well as for learners. Standardization could reduce the quality of school learning and increase inequalities (McNeil, 2000). At the same time, it is difficult to place the responsibility for poor test results. A societal system of accountability and competition demands that someone can be held responsible for any failings. However, the point has been made that it can be difficult to identify a single responsible party. Instead, responsibility could shift from teaching and school structures to the pupils' learning abilities, because the quality of the schools is evaluated through the children's test results (Danziger, 1997, p. 75; Varenne & McDermott, 1998, p. 107).

It is argued (Danziger, 1997, p. 75) that this system of accountability and high-stakes testing/examinations also produces a discourse regarding students' innate personal characteristics, such as cleverness or slowness. High-stakes testing is often part of political agendas, and test results can be interpreted in a variety of ways (Holmen & Docter, 1972, p. 4). Furthermore, it has been pointed out that tests promote competition instead of cooperation and that the system of individualization and standardized testing produces failure to an unnecessary extent. Testing entails the risk of failure for all learners (Varenne & McDermott, 1998), which might very well cause anxiety for some learners.

### Learning from the Perspective of the Subjects

Traditional achievement tests build on the assumption that cognition and learning depend primarily on individual, inner qualities. This assumption is "built into" tests and the utilization of test results. As Jean Lave (1988, p. 9) points out, tests are often conducted for individual learners with little or no resources or help. Traditional classroom tests are taken in silence and involve no cooperation between students. As such, it could be argued that testing is connected to a traditional cognitive science understanding of learning.

If we instead understand learning from a critical psychological and sociocultural approach, it is possible to question the very assumptions upon which testing is founded. Standardized quantitative tests are traditionally designed to measure intelligence/abilities/achievement individually, without regard to other aspects such as context, communities, and the use of tools. Instead, it has been argued that

cognition/intelligence is distributed among people, contexts, and tools (Salomon, 1993). However, tests often aim at measuring individual abilities with no regard to the significance of tools and cooperation, and therefore testing can reproduce the expectation that intelligence/cognition exists only in the individual mind. Instead, categories such as cleverness/intelligence/cognition, which are traditionally understood as internalized and individualized, should be understood as entangled with and part of the conduct of everyday life, societal conditions, personal meanings and perspectives, resources of others, and artifacts. If we take this stance, then testing learning outcomes is not as simple as it may first appear.

Tests also imply the idea of a relatively unproblematic and stable transfer of learning from the learning context to the test context. This assumption can be challenged by the work of Jean Lave (1988), which shows that there are disparities in the level of success between math performances in test-like situations and in situations that are closer to everyday life, such as grocery shopping. People use different calculation methods and have a higher rate of success in conjunction with grocery shopping than when placed in test-like situations. A similar point is made in a study comparing Brazilian children's everyday arithmetic problem solving in the street to computation in test situations. Even though no external aids were available in either context, the children solved the problems in the streets more easily than in the formal test setting (Nunes, Schliemann, & Carraher, 1993). This points to the significance of the test context and how everyday problem solving (in some places) seems to be superior to school arithmetic, which is frequently more abstract.

From the perspective of this approach to learning, it is crucial that we focus on the process of learning instead of test results. Learning and cognition are connected to the learner's conduct of everyday life and self-understanding, to concrete contexts, personal positions, and resources (see e.g., Holzkamp, 2012 in press; Lave, 1988; Salomon, 1993; Stevens, 2010). Learning is understood as people's modification of participation and understanding in social practice (Dreier, 1999; Lave, 1996). Learning is therefore to be understood as situated (Lave & Wenger, 1991). What is learnt varies for different people with different perspectives and with different conditions for learning (Lave, 1996, p. 8). Learning conditions are constituted in communities and places and do not primarily depend on individual abilities.

It is argued that, for learning to occur, subjects must have reason to accept a learning task as their own learning problem. On the other hand, extraneous demands (such as tests) could be handled without any learning (Holzkamp, 2012 in press, pp. 147–149). This indicates the importance of focusing on children as subjects in their own and others' learning processes, not as objects for testing. The danger lies in confusing learning with test results, rather than what happens in concrete learning practices (which includes many other locations than schools) (Stevens, 2010). This might lead to the misunderstanding that learning needs an expert tool to be recognized (Stevens) and that this tool objectifies learning in such a way that children can be placed into more or less formal educational hierarchies.

From this perspective, it could be argued that traditional standardized achievement tests leave little room for brilliance in life (Lave & McDermott, 2002). Instead, these tests for the most part test memory competences and the ability to reproduce existing knowledge. Lave and McDermott (2002) term this "alienated learning," and they argue that "What they [the learners/the children] are given to learn is not theirs but the school's product" (Lave & McDermott, p. 35). As part of these structures, it is argued that children produce themselves as objects – the gifted, the slow, the disadvantaged, the learning disabled (Lave & McDermott, p. 34).

Standardized quantitative testing has often been connected to the school's task of sorting children according to different learning paths and access to further education. Testing is not neutral and innocent but a powerful tool. It was developed to solve problems of differentiation in education, but, as the critical debates have shown, testing simultaneously contributes

to problems of differentiation. Testing is implemented in education due to a need for justice and better learning. However, it has been argued that testing paradoxically supports injustice as well as the alienation of learning.

## International Relevance

Educational standardized tests are used worldwide. Testing is a way to try to manage school quality, both nationally and internationally. Internationally we see how tests (e.g., PISA) are used to compare educational levels across countries. In a competitive globalized economy, tests provide possibilities for certain global educational comparisons and competitions. A central question is, whether we are determined to measure the same aspects across countries. In many countries, these international test results have a significant impact on the way education is handled and how politicians, teachers, parents, and maybe children think about their decisions, their professionalism, their daily practices, and their performances as good or bad.

## Practice Relevance

The critical debates on testing suggest that decision makers should consider which kind of knowledge test results can provide them with and how far it reaches. They also suggests that decision makers consider the negative consequences of testing in practice; particularly that, despite the assumed objectivity and color-blindness of testing, testing can play a part in reproducing and even worsen unequal societal structures.

## Future Directions

Testing is given high priority throughout education, inasmuch as testing provides a unique possibility for identifying certain weaknesses and strenght in students' performances sorting students and comparing test results between students, schools, and even countries. But the question remains whether testing is the best way to measure learning. And what do we even mean when we talk about learning? Standardized quantitative testing seems to support a widespread understanding of learning as primarily dependent upon internal cognitive structures. Psychological testing is an example of how psychology adopted its methods from the physical and natural sciences with its experiments and measurements. It has been argued that psychology is still in search of its own methods and quality criteria (see for instance Dreier, 2007), (on the conceptualization of knowledge in qualitative research) and maybe this is the case for educational assessment as well. Nevertheless, several ongoing practices across the globe try to develop educational assessment.

We also need to take children's perspectives on testing into account. How does testing become meaningful/not meaningful for children/the test takers? What is at stake from their point of view? How can we view their participation in testing contexts? However, relatively little knowledge exists regarding the children's/the test-takers' perspectives on testing practices and on their concrete participation in test situations. These considerations and questions could offer productive lines of enquiry for future research.

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# Egalitarianism, Overview

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## Introduction

Egalitarianism is typically understood as a political doctrine or a social philosophy. However, based on its association with the inherent worth of all human beings, egalitarianism also can have moral and religious/spiritual meanings. In keeping with its etymological roots in the French word for "equal," the subject of egalitarianism has at its heart a number of critical questions regarding the meaning and value of equality. These include the following: (1) How should equality be defined, (2) is the goal of equality desirable or morally right or are certain forms of inequality desirable and morally right, (3) what is the basis for the desirability or moral rightness of equality, (4) can equality be achieved or is inequality inevitable, (5) what factors give rise to inequality and can such inequalities be remediated or eliminate, and (6) what measures can be used to determine if the goal of equality has been achieved (Vlastos, 1962) In light of these diverse issues, egalitarianism has been subject to considerable debate.

Such debates notwithstanding, the relationship between the idea of equality and social justice makes egalitarianism a concept of importance to critical psychology.

## Definition

Definitions of egalitarianism vary dependently on principles used to defend it and the form it is proposed to take. Some view egalitarianism as instrumental in the sense that it is not regarded as a valuable end, but as a means to achieve a valued end, such as harmony, cooperation, or stronger social ties. Others advocate for a noninstrumental view in which equality is seen as a valued goal in its own right. Arguments based on the inherent worth of the person, as discussed below, would be an example.

Another distinction offered by Miller (1999) is between equality as connected with justice and as independent of it. In the first form the equating of justice and equality is based on a distributive view aimed at treating people equally by distributing the benefits and burdens of membership in a society equally. One version of this definition seeks to achieve equality of outcome. Typically this is understood as reducing or eliminating unfair inequalities in material conditions across members of a society. Income and wealth are the typical targets for such efforts, in part because they can be measured with a greater degree of precision than less-tangible outcomes.

Another version of this definition is aimed at equality of conditions. A libertarian, capitalist example of this version is based in "...our modern, Western, meritocratic principle that all persons are deserving of a equal opportunity to utilize their energies and talents to achieve whatever inequality of outcomes of wealth and social status is possible" (Sampson, 1975, p. 50). This view regards unequal outcomes as justified based on inequality of merit among individuals.

The philosopher and economist Amartya Sen (1999) provides a critique of an economic approach to measuring equality and offers a very different approach. He argues for what he calls the capability approach. In this view, equal opportunity means providing a social environment in which people are not excluded from certain resources such as education, employment, and health care and from opportunities to exercise certain fundamental rights. Equal concern for the good life of all members of a society is demonstrated by eliminating oppression and creating equal access to conditions that enable people to realize their potentials and fulfill their needs through the exercise of substantial freedoms. Sen's approach illustrates the importance of a proper relationship between rights, resources, and opportunities to achieve social justice (Barry, 2005).

The second meaning of egalitarianism according to Miller (1999) is a social ideal advocating for social equality. Human beings are to be treated with respect and dignity not because of any superficial notions of equality such as in position, status, membership, or rank, but simply because they are human beings and as such have inherent worth. Within this view certain inevitable inequalities between people in strength, intelligence, and ability can be recognized so long as they do not result in a social hierarchy and all enjoy equal standing. This view is traced by many to ethical philosophy of Kant that requires that human beings always be treated as ends in themselves.

## Keywords

Egalitarianism; equality; equity; fairness

## Traditional Debates

A persistent historical debate has been whether equality is desirable or achievable. Some non-egalitarian views espouse justifiable and natural differences between people based on caste, race, or ethnicity. Other non-egalitarian views believe that the values of equality and justice should be kept separate and distinct. This position sees the relevance of equality to justice only in a formal sense such that certain rules to be fair must be applied equally to everyone.

However, matters of justice often must be settled by employing a standard other than equality. This position espouses equity or fairness as the means for achieving just outcomes. Such a view takes into account differences in need, desert, and merit in determining what persons are due. Frankena (1962) writes, "The equal concern for the good lives of all members also requires society to treat them differently, for no matter how much one believes in a common human nature, individual needs and capabilities differ, and what constitutes the good life for one individual may not do so for another. It is the society's very concern for the good lives of its members that determines which differences and which similarities it must respect (and which are relevant to justice)" (p. 20).

Thus, traditional debates about egalitarianism have taken opposing and diverging positions regarding to whom equality should be extended. Should unborn fetuses or individuals with a severe mental or emotional impairment be included? How should people be made equal or in what respects? For example, the idea of natural rights is often invoked as the basis for equality and respect for the inherent worth of all persons. However, there is disagreement on what these natural rights are (Vlastos, 1962). Finally, a more outcome view of egalitarianism becomes immersed in debates about what resources and social goods should be distributed equally among members of a society. Possible outcomes include income, wealth, educational opportunities, or employment.

## Critical Debates

The social and political relevance of egalitarianism to critical psychology is based on the adverse impact of inequality on human well-being. For Rawls (1971, 2001), the issue of equality is embedded in what lies at the core of justice, the major social institutions whose function is to distribute rights and duties to its members. Because of the profound differences in life circumstances that such structures create, they must be of utmost concern. Rawls writes, "The basic structure is the primary subject of justice because its effects are so profound and present from the start. The intuitive notion here is that this structure contains various social positions and that men born into different positions have different expectations of life determined, in part, by the political system as well as by economic and social circumstances. In this way the institutions of society favor certain starting places over others. These are especially deep inequalities. Not only are they pervasive, but they affect men's initial chances in life; yet they cannot possibly be justified by an appeal to merit or desert. It is these inequalities, presumably inevitable in the basic structure of any society, to which principles of social justice must in the first instance apply" (p. 7). The life chances of an individual are substantially based on circumstances that he or she is born into and so does not choose. As research on the social determinants of health (Marmot & Wilkinson, 2006; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009) has convincingly demonstrated, such inequalities increase the likelihood of a host of personal and social ills. Looking at an index of income inequality in developed countries, Wilson and Pickett make a convincing case for the strong relationship between inequality and a number of indicators including mental illness, life expectancy and infant mortality, obesity, teenage births, and homicides.

The research on the impact of inequality on well-being also helps to elucidate the relevance of egalitarianism for how human beings understand themselves and their relationships with others.

The interdependent relationship between individual psychology and social structure must be considered when examining why egalitarianism is conducive to healthy persons and societies. Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) point out that since people's sense of identity is embedded within the community to which they belong, their sense of confidence and self-esteem are largely based on other's perception of their worth. Under conditions of inequality, social evaluation anxieties are intensified as the external signs of social status become the most important

element of an individual's identity. Feeling inferior gives way to shame, higher levels of stress, and increased competition. Higher levels of inequality are correlated with increased competition and lower levels of trust which also have detrimental impacts on both personal and social well-being.

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### Online Resources

*The equality trust*. www.equalitytrust.org.uk
*Unnatural causes. . .is inequality making us sick?* http://www.pbs.org/unnaturalcauses/

# Emancipation, Overview

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## Introduction

Emancipation is a distinctive way of conceptualizing the causes of problems as well as solutions to them. To say we need emancipation to solve problems implies their causation in oppression; they are not merely accidents, mistakes, or technical problems that stem from and can be resolved by addressing tax policy, monetary policy, mediation/negotiation, conventional education, or psychological interventions regarding risk strategies, open-mindedness, or communication strategies of listening skills and expressiveness. Emancipation explains crises and conflicts in terms of oppression by a power structure. An intransigent power structure benefits from crises and has no interest in solving them, and fights against reforms for correcting them. This is why emancipation from the oppressive power structure is necessary to solve the crises. If social problems were accidents or technical failures, there would be no need to call for emancipation.

In what follows, I outline a concept of emancipation that can help achieve it.

## Definition: Emancipation Is the Dialectical Opposite of Oppression

Emancipation is of course freedom from oppression. Consequently, emancipation requires understanding its dialectical opposite, oppression (Boltanski, 2011). To formulate a thorough, viable, and concrete negation of oppression, people must understand oppression's specific characteristics, modus operandi, origins/basis, and what a comprehensive, specific, and viable alternative praxis consists of.

Emancipation is historical in that it must eradicate a particular form of oppression that exists at a particular time in a particular social system that affords particular paths of emancipation. The emancipation of American slaves in the nineteenth century could only be achieved by defeating the slave system via a civil war, and then accepting ex-slaves to work and reside in the capitalist socioeconomic system of the time. No greater changes in capitalism were possible. The emancipation of the American underclass today can only be achieved by different political and economic programs – to develop a non-capitalist socioeconomic system that is collective,

communal, and democratic. This is possible in today's conditions.

Emancipation of Saudi people today must take yet other political, social, and economic transformations that are historically possible at this time. For instance, Saudi emancipation must end the slavish gender apartheid, and its disastrous psychological effects on Saudi women and men. This condition does not exist in America and need not be addressed in the emancipation of women (and men). Furthermore, Saudi Arabia has no political institutions or processes by which the people could construct a new society. Emancipation requires constructing these, which is not necessary for emancipation in Great Britain, for example.

Emancipation is not an abstract act such as "respecting human rights" or "allowing people to construct their own societies," or "women's liberation," because these are not concrete historical, political, social, economic programs.

## Keywords

Oppression; Political economy; Social transformation; False consciousness; Unified struggle

## History

This conception of oppression was articulated by Marx. He demonstrated that oppression is rooted in the political economy, or the mode of production. The mode of production is thus a mode of oppression. Other elements such as religion, education, health, and government are spawned and shaped by the political economy and bear its fundamental character, while having their own distinctive characteristics that reciprocally act back on the political economy. A social system is not reducible to the political economy but it is structured by it. The entire social system is historical, including its mode of oppression (Ratner, 2012c). Its historical character is what makes oppression eradicable by transforming the political economy and corollary institutions. A cultural system that includes oppression may be analogized to a cone or a funnel. Deep, basic, central features at the stem are the source of diverse features along the rim.

Marx explained this as follows:

> The specific economic form in which unpaid surplus-labor is pumped out of direct producers determines the relationship of rulers and ruled, as it grows directly out of production itself and, in turn, reacts upon it a determining element. Upon this, however, is founded the entire formation of the economic community which grows up out of the production relations themselves, thereby simultaneously its specific political form. It is always the direct relationship of the owners of the conditions of production to the direct producers – a relation always naturally corresponding to a definite stage in the development of the methods of labor and thereby its social productivity – which reveals the innermost secret, the hidden basis of the entire social structure, and with it the political form of the relation of sovereignty and dependence, in short, the corresponding specific form of the state. This does not prevent the same economic basis – the same from the standpoint of its main conditions – due to innumerable different empirical circumstances, natural environment, racial relations, external historical influences, etc., from showing infinite variations and gradations in appearance. . . (Marx, 1962, p. 772).

Marx's systemic (conical) conception of oppression as fundamental to the political economy of class society, points to the origins of social oppression in its diverse manifestations. Thus, the particular form of oppression in Saudi Arabia stems ultimately from its historical political economy, while the oppression of women in Romania stems from its historical political economy. This is Marx's point in his 1844 essay, "On The Jewish Question." "All human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and all types of servitude are only modifications or consequences of this relation" (Marx, 1964, pp. 132–133). The exploitation of women and ethnic groups, for example, ultimately derive from economic motives to enrich and empower the ruling class by exploiting labor in particular, historical ways. Super-exploitation of particular groups derives from general exploitation of the population. Eradicating the former therefore requires eradicating the latter.

Eradicating core oppression is pivotal for eradicating any of the particular forms of social

oppression. Eradicating any of them requires eradicating all of them because they are all rooted in a common core. None of them can be eradicated individually without eradicating the core, which then eradicates the other expressions of the core.

## Critical Debates

There are, of course, diverse conceptions of emancipation. Because they have immense practical importance for guiding action, they warrant vigorous debate. Marx and Engels engaged in this sort of analysis in The Communist Manifesto where they critiqued various conceptions of socialism.

The macro cultural psychological approach to emancipation is grounded in real conditions, restrictions and transformative potential of oppression. This makes emancipation a concrete negation of the impediments to it. Hegel and Adorno called this an "immanent critique."

Immanent critique contrasts with other approaches to emancipation that have no analysis of capitalism, no viable, alternative social organization to replace capitalism, and no analysis of the groups that are most and least susceptible to developing transformative consciousness and militancy, as Engels and Marx analyzed. We will analyze four inadequate approaches to emancipation ("pseudo emancipation"): (1) "transcendental critique" that imports and imposes external ideals of emancipation as the direction to follow; (2) "reformist critique" that works within existing macro cultural factors to introduce small, marginal improvements in them; (3) *personal and interpersonal forms of emancipation*; (4) spontaneous, unorganized efforts to oppose oppression.

1. "Transcendental critique" imports and imposes external ideals of emancipation as the direction to follow. These external ideals may be metaphysical ideals of justice, or they may be idealized historical praxes. These external ideals are not viable because they do not grow out of real conditions, restrictions, and possibilities that are currently in effect.

The fallacy of trying to move forward, beyond capitalism, by adopting pre-capitalist praxes is manifest in conservative religious movements, such as fundamentalist Christianity or Islam. Fundamentalist Islam in Saudi Arabia, for example, has completely handicapped the country in intellectual, scientific, and cultural achievements (see my entry on false consciousness for further discussion).

Fanon cites Marx's statement in "The Eighteenth Brumaire": "The social revolution cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future. It cannot begin with itself before it has stripped itself of all its superstitions concerning the past" (Fanon, 2008, p. 198). The process of opposing oppression and becoming fulfilled must break with oppressive tradition, not identify with it. "In no way do I have to dedicate myself to reviving a black civilization unjustly ignored. I will not make myself the man of any past." "I am not the prisoner of history. I must not look for the meaning of my destiny in that direction" (Fanon, 2008, pp. 201, 204). Fanon fights so that the oppressive past of his people will never be repeated (p. 202). "The struggle does not give back to the national culture its former values and shapes; this struggle which aims at a fundamentally different set of relations between men cannot leave intact either the form or content of the people's culture" (Fanon, 1968, p. 243).

It is irresponsible and suicidal for democracies to accept reactionary religious praxes under the banner of multiculturalism, for these praxes seek to destroy democracy and negate emancipation. They oppress women, oppose birth control and abortion for women, they are anti-scientific and oppose teaching of evolution and biological science, and they promote irrational, dogmatic thinking. Giving them free reign opposes freedom.

Freedom is only the freedom to be free of oppression; it is not the freedom to choose oppression. Freedom is not indiscriminate choice that includes unfree activities. Freedom to choose drug addiction or obsessive consumerism is not freedom, just as the freedom to choose depersonalizing, isolating naqib is not freedom. Freedom requires suppressing unfreedom – as it

required militarily defeating the Nazis, slave owners, monarchs, theocrats, and imperialists. Suppressing the Church's oppression of women is emancipatory, not oppressive. Emancipation depends upon the content of an action, not the abstract capacity to choose any content whatsoever. Emancipation requires critical evaluation of action, not uncritical acceptance of all choices.

2. "Reformist critique" that works within existing macro cultural factors to introduce small, marginal improvements in them.

### Civil Rights

One example is civil rights. Civil rights are conservative in the sense that they only demand equal participation of all groups in mainstream society; they never challenge mainstream society. Civil rights allow minorities and women and homosexuals to join the military or corporations or the electoral process, but they do not challenge the imperialist character of the military, or the exploitive character of corporations, or the corrupt electoral process.

Civil rights grants equality to minorities and majority people, but it does not grant equality to workers and capitalists. Civil rights prohibits discrimination against minorities, but it allows employers and managers to exclude workers from their ranks, their meetings, and their decisions. Civil rights prohibits capitalists from selectively reducing the workforce along ethnic or sexual lines; however, it allows capitalists to reduce the workforce in general by cutting the jobs of all subgroups. Civil rights allows general exploitation of the populace, that is, equal exploitation; it only prohibits unequal exploitation.

Civil rights for marginalized people have no potential for full emancipation of the populace because they do not attack the general exploitation that befalls all people outside the ruling class. This is true for the "women's movement" as well as the black movement. The very names "women's movement" and "black movement" are apolitical, for they refer to physical features of people rather than social structural issues. Womanhood is a biological attribute, not a cultural or political one. Women can be rich or poor, exploitive or exploited. "Woman" lumps all women together despite political differences and interests. Woman is not a social position within a class structure. Women can be members of the capitalist class, or aristocracy, who defend these structures and benefit from them. "Woman" transcends social class and exploitation. Rights for women must therefore also circumvent social class, because women's rights must pertain to all women, not simply women exploited by capitalism or feudalism. "Women's rights" includes the rights of capitalist and aristocratic women who are just as female as working women. These rights will necessarily deflect attention away from social class and exploitation. Women's rights refer to gender equality with men, and this includes being equally exploitive or equally exploited as men; it has nothing to do with eradicating general exploitation or social class.

Worker, on the other hand, is a political-social attribute that refers to a subaltern class position within a social system. Class exploitation is endemic to the worker role. The worker role calls for analysis and transformation of the class system that makes someone a worker. The worker role calls for eliminating that role. None of this is true for "woman". Being a woman does not call for eliminating womanhood; nor does it call for eliminating class society. Being a woman is not inherently exploitive the way that being a worker is. A woman may live comfortably as a woman if she is a member of the ruling class. A worker cannot belong to the upper class, because he works for it and is exploited by it. There is an inherent contradiction between worker and upper class that does not exist for women and upper class. Pressing for worker rights necessarily requires transforming class society, whereas women's rights for gender equality do not. Gender equality can be achieved within class society if women are exploited equally with men. Gender equality does not oppose exploitation, it means equality of exploitation, within exploitation.

Only the struggle to eliminate class society can lead to general emancipation of the entire population. This struggle is only central to the working class, broadly defined, because social class constitutes the worker as a necessary victim

of social class. Women and blacks are not so constituted because they may occupy any social position. In addition, women and blacks define liberation as parity with men and whites, respectively, not as free of exploitation in general. Only when marginalized people identify with this general struggle of the working class against social class structure, will they achieve emancipation. As long as they insist on struggling for particular civil rights, they will lose sight of the broader problem and struggle.

Civil rights for women, minorities, and homosexuals are acceptable to the ruling class while deeper, general demands for reforming central pervasive, political-economic policies are resisted. Civil rights do not include worker rights because the latter challenge the class structure of workers and capitalists.

This contrast is evident in the mainstream treatment of Martin Luther King's political evolution. While King struggled for civil rights, per se, he was accepted by many mainstream politicians, as well as the populace. However, politicians and the populace turned against him from 1965 when he began assailing the American invasion of Vietnam, and more general issues such as exploitation, imperialism, materialism, and class structure that could not be alleviated within the parameters of capitalism. They require the transformation of capitalism, which civil rights refrains from doing. King's speech, "Beyond Vietnam" on April 4, 1967 criticized the materialist, exploitive basis of the war, to gain profits through military conquest. He railed at the contradiction of spending money to invade a defenseless people while depriving poor Americans of funds for social services. He linked the war to deep-seated flaws in the American system and psyche. This evolution from civil rights to anti-imperialism and anti-class hierarchy earned him the enmity of mainstream media and the populace. It even led the National Association for The Advancement of Colored People, and blacks in general, to criticize him for linking together "extraneous" issues – war, racism, and poverty into a broad critique of the social system. After King's Vietnam speech, 55% of black people disapproved of him. They feared that indicting American foreign policy and political economy would jeopardize mainstream support for black issues.

### Activity Theory

A second example of reformism is interventions proposed by "activity theorists" who claim to be carrying on the work of Vygotsky, Luria, and Leontiev. Sannino (2011, p. 580) states: "Throughout this history, activity theory stands as an activist theory of development of practices, which may be traced back to Marx's idea of revolutionary practice, emphasizing that theory is not only meant to analyze and explain the world but also to generate new practices and promote change." This statement is troublesome because it fails to specify what kinds of new practices and what kind of change should be pursued. Marx's revolutionary practice specifically attacked the capitalist mode of production and its entire social system, and sought to replace it by a socialist mode of production and social system, as depicted in figure one. Calling for indefinite new practices does not qualify as revolutionary, for they could include new forms of exploitation or superficial liberal reforms. Abstract statements about culture, history, and society by activity theorists are thus not emancipatory. They obfuscate and protect the political economic basis of oppression that needs to be transformed (Ratner, 2012c, pp. 239–240; Ratner, 2012d).

Sannino's statement is additionally troublesome because it implies that contemporary activity theory is inspired and informed by Marxism. However, activity theorists have long abandoned Marxism. They do not engage in a detailed critique of capitalist society utilizing Marxist social-economic-political constructs. (The leading journal of activity theory, *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, has only mentioned the words capitalism and neoliberalism a few times in all the articles in its entire history.) Activity theorists rarely pursue radical critiques of capitalism, social science, or culture that are offered by scholars in anthropology, geography, sociology, political science, and political economics.

The refusal to analyze concrete forms of oppression and their social basis renders activity

theorists incapable of conceiving revolutionary alternative practice. Their interventions are limited to liberal reforms. (See *Theory & Psychology*, vol. 21, issue 5, 2011 for articles on activity theory as an interventionist approach.)

For instance, Engestrom (2011) used conventional methods to bring together a hospital staff in order to express and resolve some work problems they were having. Staff comments at the intervention included:

*Senior anesthesiologist*: So you have no control over your own work and you cannot plan it beforehand. . .

*Senior anesthesiologist*: Nobody ever thanks you, the work remains unfinished, you leave, and everything is unfinished, your shift ends and you leave; you never see the reward for the hard work, so that . . . Surely one thing that should be developed is that really you would feel that the work is rewarding. So that you would really feel that you do your job well and that the patients get well and stay alive.

Doctors, nurses, and staff attributed their mundane problems to the large size of their work unit, and they recommended dividing it into subunits. Engestrom accepted their conventional analysis and solution that simply addressed the size of the work unit, not its social relations and institutional constraints. Engestrom did not attempt to deepen these analyses in line with Marx's deep structural analysis and practice (on which activity theory is supposedly based) that I have outlined in Fig. 1.

Engestrom did not trace the staff's mundane problems to the social relations of the hospital (not simply the number of staff in a unit). He did not root these social relations in core aspects of the political economy, such as ownership and management of the hospital, profit considerations that affect working conditions and budgets, commodification of services, alienation of market relations that govern physicians' treatment of patients, and so on. Nor did Engestrom suggest reorganizing any of these in order to improve work. Engestrom seeks minor improvements in unit size within the existing political-economic system (see Ratner, 2012c, pp. 240–246 for critique of Engestrom's related research).

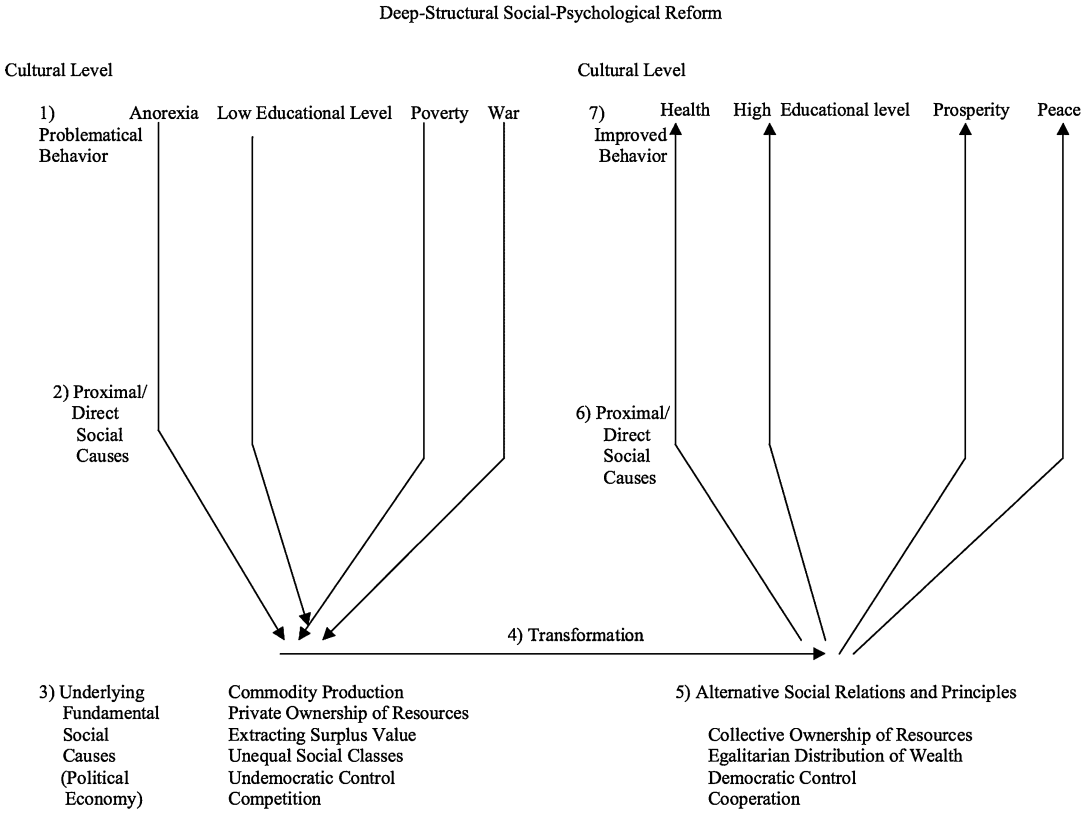
Similarly, activity theorists who work in the field of education fail to explore the neoliberal structuring of education that this author explains in the chapter on macro cultural factors in this encyclopedia. Nor do activity theorists consider Althusser's (2001, pp. 155–156) sweeping political critique of education as the dominant ideological apparatus of capitalism:

> Besides techniques and knowledges, and in learning them, children at school also learn the 'rules' of good behaviour, i.e. the attitude that should be observed by every agent in the division of labour, according to the job he is 'destined' for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination.

In other words, the school (but also other State institutions like the Church, or other apparatuses like the Army) teaches "know-how," but in forms which ensure *subjection to the ruling ideology* or the mastery of its "practice." All the agents of production, exploitation, and repression, not to speak of the "professionals of ideology" (Marx), must in one way or another be "steeped" in this ideology in order to perform their tasks "conscientiously" – the tasks of the exploited (the proletarians), of the exploiters (the capitalists), of the exploiters' auxiliaries (the managers), or of the high priests of the ruling ideology (its "functionaries"), etc.

Ignoring this cultural-historical-political context that informs activity allows the given culture to persist and influence behavior via cultural factors as well as via habituses within individuals' consciousness/psychologies. These powerful, well-organized, entrenched social trends of predatory capitalism overwhelm the limited, isolated, apolitical agenda of activity theorists. Entrenched social trends threaten the survival and educational gains of programs such Cole's "Fifth Dimension" after-school educational program that has a spotty record of survival (Downing-Wilson, Lecusay, & Cole, 2011, p. 661).

To be emancipatory, interventions must revolutionize macro cultural factors and consciousness. Freire called the latter "conscientization" (the term originally derives from Frantz Fanon's




**Emancipation, Overview, Fig. 1** Deep-structural social analysis and reform

coinage of a French term, *conscienciser*, in his 1952 book *Black Skins*, *White Masks*). Interventions must deepen peoples' understanding of the way their society is organized, its power structure, dynamics, and ideology; how the organization of social relations affects their individual work; and how oppressive social factors can be circumvented and transformed. Freire, for example, railed against neoliberalism in his pedagogical critiques. To qualify as successful, interventions must demonstrate that they achieve conscientization.

Simply encouraging students to become more involved in their studies (taking more interest, participating more actively, expressing themselves more often, getting along with peers and teachers, or improving test scores and knowledge retention of standard curricula) does not challenge the content and structure of education or the students' habituses. Nor does it motivate students to work for viable, concrete social transformation that is necessary for emancipation.

3. Personal and interpersonal forms of emancipation.

## Agency, and the Individual-Society Dialectic

A popular view is that the individual continuously negotiates culture and reforms it in individual, mundane acts. Simply interacting with society necessarily reforms it. The individual is considered to be an independent agent that is other to society, inherently in dialectical tension with society, and therefore inherently and continuously transforming society.

This view is abstract. It ignores any content to the dialectic of what kind of changes an individual might introduce into society. An adolescent deciding to purchase Pepsi rather than Coca Cola qualifies as a dialectic of individual agency negotiating with cultural factors and affecting

corporate success and failure. The dialectic also includes individuals exacerbating exploitation by capitalism, for here, again, the individual is contributing something to culture and changing it. These dialectics are hardly emancipatory. Agency, per se, does not generate emancipation, nor does the individual-society dialectic.

Furthermore, championing the individual-culture dialectic does not recognize that individual psychology, agency, consciousness, and subjectivity are culturally formed to reflect and reproduce society. Vygotsky and his colleagues emphasized this – as did role theorists, and sociologists such as Bourdieu. From this perspective, the individual is not substantively in tension with society; rather, the individual is typically a social functionary – as in purchasing Pepsi or promoting neoliberalism.

A meaningful, emancipatory dialectic is one in which individuals struggle to transform existing culture in concrete ways that enhance cooperation, democracy, freedom, and fulfillment. This meaningful dialectic between culture and individuals must be created by developing a critical praxis (consciousness and action). This is not inherent in individual psychology, agency, or subjectivity. Only certain politically informed psychology, agency, subjectivity, and behavior comprise a meaningful dialectical tension with society that is emancipatory (Ratner, 2013).

### Contact Theory

Another micro-level strategy for emancipation is contact theory. Pioneered by Allport, it claims that deep-seated, historical, ethnic antagonisms can be overcome by allowing groups to have interpersonal contact. This interpersonal experience will show them that their antagonist is human, and that there is no reason to fear or hate the antagonist. Hammack (2011, Chap. 6) refutes contact theory. He found that it did not work with Palestinian and Israeli Jewish youth. Historical, political, social, and military animosity had so shaped the habituses of both groups that interpersonal interactions did not overcome them (see Ratner, 2011, 2012b). Hammack (2011, p. 354) says, "In focusing primarily on the promotion of individual change, practitioners of intergroup contact have typically overlooked the reality of structural relations among groups and the political needs those relations achieve. They traditionally fail to consider the ways in which intergroup conflict is connected to the reproduction of a particular social order, with a particular power dynamic." (Unfortunately, Hammack does not carry this pregnant thought through to its logical conclusion, which is that interpersonal change requires political-economic change. Instead, Hammack falls back to an apolitical, individualistic, subjective view of emancipation, as he concludes "It is perhaps the rich ability to make meaning, even in settings of injustice, that defeats tyranny" (Hammack, 2011, p. 367).)

4. Spontaneous, unorganized efforts to oppose oppression. This is exemplified by mass protests recently known as the Occupy movement. These protests are praised for their lack of structure, history, leadership, and programs. From the perspective outlined in this chapter, such spontaneity is naïve and unworkable. It is not steeped in a specific social philosophy or political-economic thinking that provides intellectual coherence or guidance about the sources of oppression and the transformation that is necessary to eradicate it. It does not draw upon the history of struggles for social reform. It simply complains about problems such as inequality, greed, militarism, pollution, and corporate corruption, without understanding their dynamics or a viable, concrete alternative political economy. The movement also lacks a viable structure and leadership that can provide coherence. It is easily fragmented into factions, and easily infiltrated by police spies and saboteurs.

This is why the Occupy movement has not accomplished anything transformative in its year of existence. It has prevented a handful of housing foreclosures by embarrassing the banks that were pursuing them. This did nothing to transform the institutions at the heart of the cascading crises, nor did it help the millions of Americans who have been permanently debilitated by them.

An endorsement of the first anniversary of the Occupy movement by several activists and supporters, hosted by "Democracy Now"

September 17, 2012, counted as an indicator of its success: "activists formed close bonds for the future," "the movement is in the process of brainstorming about how to proceed," "some students refused to pay student loans," and "some tenants refused to pay rent and they organized a work day to clean up garbage in the basement of a rental." After an entire year of meeting, organizing, and exchanging ideas, these actions fall far short of understanding and solving social crises.

In comparison, the antiwar movement of the 1960s galvanized a broad political-intellectual movement known as the New Left that developed a deep intellectual analysis of the origins of the war in the capitalist political-economy. This analysis was grounded in a study of Marxism, anarchism, and radical sociology, anthropology, and geography. The New Left transformed the intellectual landscape of the United States for decades. It effected major transformations of university curricula and pedagogy. That movement marshaled popular opinion against the war in a way that successfully shortened it and prevented more deaths and destruction. It also agitated for the Great Society Programs of the 1960s that included curbing government abuses such as spying on citizens. The New Left also transformed culture by introducing critical social content into music, movies, literature, and social science. "Occupy" has accomplished nothing comparable.

Ironically, the New Left made greater reforms during a period of prosperity in the United States than the Occupy movement has made (and will make) in a period of social-economic-political crisis.

Progressive spokespeople who praise Occupy for its lack of doctrine, lack of a program, and lack of organization contribute to the impotence of this movement.

## Practice Relevance

### Emancipation Requires Transforming the Oppressive Social Core to a Democratic, Collective One

The core oppression must be transformed to eradicate all particular forms of oppression. This may not always be historically possible given the state of development of oppositional forces vis-á-vis the ruling class, and given the state of development of political and economic institutions that would be necessary for a structural transformation. Narrower forms of emancipation might need to precede and prepare more complete structural transformation. This was the case with abolishing slavery and struggling for civil rights in the United States. Structural transformation of capitalism was impossible in the nineteenth century, however necessary it might have been. The present stage of capitalism affords more possibility of reorganizing the political economy along cooperative, democratic lines. It is always important, in all oppressive societies, to work toward this transformation as the means of thoroughly eradicating oppression. The process is depicted in Fig. 1.

The need to transform the political economic base of oppression gains credence from failures to eradicate oppression without such transformation. The American civil rights struggle prohibited discrimination against blacks, but it did not challenge the political economic core of capitalism that profits from exploiting minorities. Consequently, the economic incentives to exploit blacks persist and they undermine the legal mandates to treat blacks as equal to whites. Persisting racial inequality is evident in downward social mobility: 60 % of blacks born to parents in the top half of income distribution wind up in the bottom half, compared to only 36 % of whites. Forty-five percent of black children with middle-class parents end up in the bottom one fifth of income, while only 16 % of comparable white middle class children end up in the bottom one fifth of income. Conversely, 68 % of all white people eventually achieve middle class status compared to only 38 % of blacks (*Wall St. Journal*, September 20, 2012, p. A6).

Political economy is more powerful than laws, as Marx explained.

### The Culture of Exploitation

An important aspect of exploitation that emancipation must address is the way it becomes normative, taken-for-granted, habitualized, and

accepted by its victims, as the entry on psychology of oppression in this encyclopedia emphasizes. Emancipation must therefore challenge people's most ingrained, habitual, acceptable forms of behavior to ascertain exploitive features that escape notice. Consequently, we are more oppressed than we realize. And we have far more to change than we realize, if we are to emancipate ourselves.

Since much of the consciousness of many people is oppressed and mystified, we cannot depend upon people's given consciousness to comprehend and resist their oppression and mystification. Thomas (2009, p. 18) explains this clearly: "There are limits to self-knowledge because the self is fundamentally socially informed and founded...As Butler puts it, the identifications used to recognize – and to be recognizable – are not 'ours'. In a sense then, one's body is also not one's 'own' – and the discomfort, pain, and hurt feelings of the girls point to that... Paradoxically, subjectivity, that highly personal experience of being a self, is achieved only by entering into fundamentally social spaces of difference, although the origins of those founding moments are lost to the subject."

The psychology of oppression must be re-educated before people can correctly understand and struggle for what their emancipation consists in. "Education for liberation strives to effect a fundamental change in the native's consciousness and self-knowledge; confronting the 'internalized' oppressor" (Gibson, 1999, p. 358).

This does not make us elitist or demagogic, any more than any educator or educated professional is elitist in explaining to people her informed conclusions. Our analysis would be subject to debate as all others are.

While emancipation must address limits imposed by the status quo, it must also apprehend emancipatory potential that the oppressive status quo affords.

## The Potential for Emancipation Depends Upon the Conditions of Oppression

Engels (1847) explained how groups that are exploited in particular ways have different potential for developing transformative consciousness that will thoroughly comprehend and challenge exploitation. Engels explains how the exploitation imposed on wage earners actually provides more potential for transformative consciousness than the exploitation imposed on slaves:

> The slave is sold once and for all, the proletarian has to sell himself by the day and by the hour. The slave is the property of one master and for that very reason has a guaranteed subsistence, however wretched it may be. The proletarian is, so to speak, the slave of the entire bourgeois class, not of one master, and therefore has no guaranteed subsistence, since nobody buys his labour if he does not need it... The slave frees himself by becoming a proletarian, abolishing from the totality of property relationships only the relationship of slavery. The proletarian can free himself only by abolishing property in general.

This is a pregnant statement because it says that the proletariat has more radical need and more radical potential for abolishing private property altogether than slaves do. This is counterintuitive because most people assume the brutalized slave has the greatest need to abolish exploitation and private property. Engels shows that the extraordinary brutality of slavery leads to focusing on overcoming it without overcoming the ordinary exploitation of the proletariat – the banality of exploitation, so to speak. Super-exploitation, or extraordinary exploitation, actually militates against comprehending and challenging the ordinary, general exploitation that pervades society. This is what happened after the American Civil War. The ex-slaves felt free by entering the capitalist labor force and failed to comprehend that they were subject to the ordinary exploitation of wage labor (or wage slavery as Marx and Engels called it).

Today, homosexuals and women feel free, vindicated, and validated when they are entitled to join the military in contrast to their former segregation from it. The military is reciprocally validated for admitting them. In this celebration of emancipatory civil rights, the oppressive, imperialist agenda of the military is ignored.

The more specific, extraordinary, and excessive the exploitation, the greater the tendency to denounce it in particular, as exceptional, and to ignore general, banal oppression that is

more pervasive and more insidious precisely because it is "normal."

It is only the oppressed group that is already freed of all particular, extraordinary exploitation/discrimination, and is subject to the most general, ordinary form of exploitation that has the pressing need to abolish general, normal exploitation.

This analysis contradicts the theory of super-oppressed groups having the most potential for revolution. It means that super-exploited women and minorities have less potential for transformative consciousness and action than working class people in general because they are more inclined to demand civil rights to join mainstream, exploitive society (*Critical Sociology*, 2011, vol. 37, issue 5).

### The Political Economy of Oppression Can Unify the Struggle for Emancipation

The structure of oppression in the form of a cone that is rooted in a political economy, affords important possibilities for emancipatory action in the form of solidarity among oppressed groups. The conical structure means that diverse forms of oppression emanate from a common source of oppression (political economic oppression). This means that all victims of various kinds of oppression (workers, blacks, Latinos, environmentalists, women, Indians, homosexuals, cancer patients, mental patients, immigrants, social critics) must work to transform the political economy in order to emancipate themselves from their particular oppression. This means that seemingly diverse struggles to eradicate particular forms of oppression are objectively united in a common struggle to transform the single issue of the political economy. Particular oppressed groups may not realize this, but it is the objective telos and requirement for their emancipation. No group can achieve emancipation by challenging its own particular form of oppression. Each constituency must go beyond its own oppression to transform the core. This unifies all victims in a common struggle (Ratner, 2009).

Treating particular oppressions as disparate, different, and separate prevents truly understanding the basis and characteristics of each, which lie in the common social core. Fragmenting the struggle for liberation into disparate, self-centered struggles (which Marx explained in "On The Jewish Question") also excludes potential allies who are necessary for strengthening the struggle, and it impedes solidarity and cooperation that are the emancipatory alternative to capitalism.

## Future Directions

The future of emancipatory praxis depends upon a dialectical posture that examines the present with a view to elucidating possibilities for an improved future and examines the future as grounded in the present – that is, grounded in negating the present causes of oppression and drawing upon possibilities that the present holds. If the future is envisioned without a thorough understanding of the present problems and possibilities, the emancipatory movement will be utopian. Conversely, trying to solve current problems within the parameters of the status quo, without transforming its structure in a qualitatively new organization, will be conservative and ineffective (see Kowalik, 2012 for a current example).

This entry directs a future viable, effective emancipatory movement to unite the myriad oppressed groups in a collective struggle to identify and transform their common core exploitation in the political economy. Particular struggles must be distinctive moments in the common, general struggle against the core exploitation of the political economy. This will bring the collective weight of all oppressed people to transform the central, general exploitation that is their common, objective enemy (Ratner, 2009, 2013).

This may be difficult for particular super-exploited groups to fathom because their exploitation appears to be more distinct and egregious than general exploitation. However, this is a misperception. It is general exploitation that is broader and deeper and affords the broadest basis of unified, thorough, substantive social improvement.

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# Embodiment


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## Introduction

Embodiment is an important concept in critical psychology. When this term is used in place of alternatives (typically, the body), it indicates an emphasis on the experientially lived, biologically enabled preconditions of subjectivity and experience. The origins of this way of thinking can in part be traced back at least to Kant, although today it is primarily associated with phenomenology. In critical psychology it is often used to counter currently dominant notions of cognition and to understand the profound extent to which social and cultural influences are already part of our activity and experience.

## Definition

Both the location and the character of the body in the world, and the ways in which this body structures and enables experience; the bodily aspects of human subjectivity.


## Keywords

Phenomenology; embodied cognition; habitus

## History

In his philosophy, Kant was frequently concerned with the a priori conditions of cognition and knowledge, so the body – as "sensibilities" – informs his discussions of a priori forms that yield fundamental dimensions of experience (e.g., space and time). However, the recent history of embodiment relates most closely to phenomenology, in particular the work of Merleau-Ponty (although, somewhat paradoxically, he did not make much use of this actual term). More recently still, a strand of work known as embodied, situated cognition also informs psychological thinking and research.

In Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, embodiment refers to the ways in which the body is a living, dynamic unity, a Gestalt that continually informs and shapes being and experience. Our bodies are not simply *in* the world – our bodies *give us the world*, so that without them there would be, for us, no world to experience: "far from my body's being for me no more than a fragment of space, there would be no space at all for me if I had no body" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 117). Since the body makes the very world possible, it follows that the capacities, affordances, senses, limits, and potentials of the body – its various sensory and generative capacities – must structure all of our experience. Nevertheless, these structuring influences operate for the most part *pre-reflectively*. We do not have to think about what our bodies provide for them to influence how we experience the world, and in fact it is frequently difficult or impossible for us to do so: "if I can, with my left hand, feel my right hand as it touches an object, the right hand as an object is not the right hand as it touches: the first is a system of bones, muscles and flesh brought down at a point of space, the second shoots through space like a rocket to reveal the external object in its place. In so far as it sees or touches the world, my body can therefore be neither seen nor touched. What prevents its ever being an object, ever being 'completely constituted', is that it is that by which there are objects. It is neither tangible nor visible in so far as it is that which sees and touches" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 105).

While Merleau-Ponty is predominantly seen as a philosopher of the body, in his analyses of habit and language he also considered ways in which the body is both enculturated and social. Embodied habits are acquired in social relations, but – because it is only through our bodies that we know the world at all – once acquired they serve the dual function of both enabling activity and structuring perception: "every habit is both motor and perceptual, because it lies, as we have said, between explicit perception and actual movement, in the basic function which sets boundaries to our field of vision and our field of action" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 175). Similarly, Merleau-Ponty considered the intersection of the body and language, describing how words contain an embodied, gestural sense that exceeds their dictionary definitions. He describes combinations of phonemes as "ways of singing the world" (2002, p. 217) and observes that their varying prevalence in different languages must convey different embodied capacities for understanding, so that there is a necessary sense in which the full, embodied meanings of one language are never entirely translatable into another. In Merleau-Ponty's final writings (published posthumously), he was further developing his thinking about language after reading Saussure.

Another, more recent strand of work on embodiment is associated with the tradition of embodied cognition. Largely associated with the work of Lakoff and Johnson, this approach treats cognition primarily as individual thinking and locates its organizing principles in the body, sometimes in the form of metaphors supplied by or based upon bodily capacities (e.g., movement, direction, orientation) and sometimes within the activity of the sensorimotor system. To date, this work has had little influence upon critical psychology.

## Traditional Debates

The concept of embodiment is not widely discussed in the mainstream of psychology.

Broadly in accord with the Cartesian separation of mind from body, the discipline tends to fracture into subdisciplines (biological psychology, social psychology, cognitive psychology, etc.) within which phenomena such as the socialization of the body or the corporeal grounding of experience rarely arise, either as organizing principles or as topics of study. Consequently, research within the behaviorist paradigm provided evidence that bodily capacities respond to social and environmental forces (understood as contingencies or reinforcement schedules), but did so at the cost of sacrificing any proper account of experience or subjectivity. Similarly, cognitive psychology sometimes works with implicit associations, schema or dispositions, and acquired habits of thinking that reflect histories of social engagement (usually traced back to early experience) and which are now embodied within specific individuals. Nevertheless, the actual flesh and blood body here remains largely invisible: its somatic capacities, specificities, potentials, and affordances are not adequately considered, and the contribution made to experience by prereflective modes of comportment, gesture, posture, and orientation is ignored. Indeed, in all this work the lived experience of the body features barely at all, and Stam (1998, p. 4) says that for the most part the body in psychology is "the sexless hull of the robomind": consistently subordinated to a version of cognition that could equally be accommodated by silicon and wire as by flesh and blood, and mostly lacking the identifying features that might align it with sociological variables such as gender, class, ethnicity, and disability.

## Critical Debates

There are various tensions running through critical psychological work on embodiment, many of which reflect the way in which it gets deployed as an alternative to scholarship which more or less straightforwardly presumes a mind-body divide. These tensions reflect wider conceptual issues to do with the relations between the body, experience and subjectivity, and social forces and structures. Speaking very generally, treating the body as the basis of experience can problematize attempts to understand how experience is socially produced; foregrounding social influence (e.g., in the form of language) tends to dematerialize the body and obscure its specificities, and attempts to include both bodily and social influences together as constituents (but not determinants) of subjectivity and experience typically require very dense theorizing that renders this work both somewhat inaccessible and difficult to carry forward empirically.

Scholars agree that Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology does not provide an adequate account of social influence. His approach was influenced by Sartre's existentialism, a philosophy which the poststructuralist philosophers (notably, Derrida and Foucault) rejected. They questioned the status of notions of the subject and of experience within the work of their predecessors, producing by contrast a philosophy within which subjectivity and experience are contingent, fragmentary, unstable or epiphenomenal, and not capable of yielding simple origins, sources, or foundations.

Social constructionism has supplied the dominant critical psychological paradigm for the incorporation of poststructuralist thought, and within social constructionist, psychology embodiment frequently appears as a problem or a concern. Constructionist approaches tend, to some degree or other, to subordinate the lived experience of the flesh and blood body to other influences, notably those carried by language and organized in discourses (Cromby & Nightingale, 1999). Constructionism has done much to render visible the ways in which bodies are "written upon" by discourse, showing how they are positioned, enrolled, circumscribed, policed, and made to signify and to carry meaning and value. At the same time, constructionism has tended to obscure the multiple ways in which the body both resists and works with social processes and influences, and the concomitant ways in which it is fashioned and changed by them. In this context, the concept of embodiment is sometimes deployed to overcome the divide that tends to open up within constructionism by effectively subordinating the body to language. The aim is

to produce accounts that neither treat bodies as determined by social influence nor treat them as existing fully formed outside of it.

Perhaps the area of critical psychology that has most prominently confronted and worked with embodiment is feminism. The separation of sex (biologically endowed) from gender (culturally worked up and accomplished) already suggests a notion of embodiment, a way of thinking about how bodies become different as they respond to and are worked on within regimes of power and cultural influence. Moreover, in many analyses the mind-body divide that embodied challenges is a gendered divide, with traditionally masculine attributes (e.g., rationality and control) associated with mind and traditionally feminine attributes (e.g., emotionality and unpredictability) associated with the body. One of the most influential scholars here is Butler (1993), who theorized how gender is materialized and stabilized through bodily practices of repetition, performance, and ritual. Her analyses, informed by both Foucault and psychoanalysis, suggest that enduring, embodied ways of being are neither simply chosen nor straightforwardly imposed; rather, they are performatively accomplished as people either refuse, or align themselves with, normative expectations.

Feminist scholarship in relation to embodiment also includes Grosz's work, influenced initially by Lacan and Irigaray and more recently also by Deleuze. Grosz has been concerned to move from the epistemological to the ontological, in order to generate an account of the forces and potentials that give experience its specific character. This has entailed sustained engagement with aspects of embodiment, including both case studies (e.g., of phantom limbs) and analytic elaborations of more general categories such as sensation (Grosz, 2008). Feminist engagements with the ontological aspects of embodiment also include Wilson's (2004) work, which explores contemporary neuroscience and biology to challenge accepted Western notions that subjectivity simply emanates from the brain by emphasizing the significance of the neural aspects of the gut.

Some critical psychologists draw upon psychoanalysis in order to understand the ways in which embodied desires, absences, and longings are bound up with and interpellated (called out by) cultural forms and social influences. Others question the adequacy of psychoanalysis in this regard, noting that the specificities of the actual flesh and blood body are largely absent here, too, and that the version of embodiment produced is therefore somewhat ephemeral. These disagreements have sometimes played themselves out in recent years (in relation to numerous issues, not just embodiment) in discussions over whether the approach known as psychosocial studies should be seen as fundamentally psychoanalytic in character.

Some of the most vociferous debates about embodiment in critical psychology have arisen with respect to method. Two separate but related strands of debate can be identified. The first concerns the extent to which methods such as discourse and conversation analysis can adequately include embodied experience. Proponents of these methods frequently argue that they already include the body and that their methods are adequate to its study. Others argue that while these methods might sometimes include the body as an object, they do not adequately include embodiment, the lived experience of the body. These debates began in the 1990s and currently remain unresolved (see, e.g., Corcoran, 2009; Potter, 2010). The second strand of debate concerns the extent to which interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA: Smith & Osborn, 2003) is an adequate approach to embodiment. Proponents of IPA suggest that it effectively counters the omission of embodied experience seen, for example, in discourse analysis. However, critics argue that IPA's focus on individual experience renders it unable to explore how embodiment is socially and culturally produced and that its reliance upon self-reports largely negates the phenomenological emphasis on modes of comportment, motility, posture, sensation, and performance that the study of embodiment seems to require.

## International Relevance

Since all experience is embodied experience, embodiment is potentially relevant within

(critical) psychology internationally, for example, as a means to conceptualize the ways in which cultures are both enduring and, simultaneously, frequently invisible to their bearers. Embodiment has nevertheless not loomed large within critical psychology internationally, although it fares better within critical health psychology where – for obvious reasons – the lived experience of the body is frequently central.

## Practice Relevance

The concept of embodiment has widespread practical relevance because it illuminates the ways in which social and cultural influences become part of the ways of acting, thinking, and feeling of specific individuals. Additionally, because these ways of being are associated with our physical makeup, not just with our thinking and talking, they tend to elude reflection and are somewhat resistant to change. This can be illustrated with respect to the influential work of Bourdieu on social class and Iris Marion Young on gender, both of which have inspired many empirical studies.

Bourdieu (1977) described how dispositions, acquired ways of using, holding, and relating to the body, cluster into a structured and structuring system known as the habitus. Dispositions are class-specific patterns of facial expressions, posture, walking, and ways of using the head and the arms, and Bourdieu emphasizes the role of early experience in their acquisition. As these dispositions shape our embodiment, so ruling ideologies and subcultural norms become "political mythology realised, em-bodied, turned into a durable manner of standing, speaking, and thereby of feeling and thinking" (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 93–4). Experientially, social class becomes a matter of ways of being in and relating to the world, of accent and dress style, and of embodied preferences and desires. The habitus inculcates sets of dispositions which structure embodied experience, supplying embodied, classed boundaries which are acquired largely before we are capable of properly reflecting upon them: "The principles em-bodied in this way are placed beyond the grasp of consciousness, and hence cannot be touched by voluntary, deliberate transformation, can't even be made explicit; nothing seems more ineffable, more incommunicable, more inimitable, and, therefore, more precious, than the values given body, made body by the transformation achieved by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy, capable of instilling a whole cosmology, an ethic, a metaphysic, a political philosophy, through injunctions as insignificant as "stand up straight" or "don't hold your knife in your left hand" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 94).

Similarly, Young (1990) suggests that girls typically learn to throw differently to boys because their gendered upbringing encourages specific ways of relating to and using their bodies. She considers evidence that, in Western cultures, young girls typically throw without fully extending their arms and using their entire body: they do not reach back, twist, move backward, step, and thrust forward. Elaborating this example, she argues that women's engagement with the world tends – on balance – to be somewhat hesitant and inhibited, since their embodiment is often characterized by a "feminine" style inculcated through the gendered organization of practices such as play, work, and sport; through specifically "female" ways of dressing, walking, and sitting; and through emotional norms which tend to treat women as more at-risk, vulnerable, weak, and available to care for others.

These examples show how the concept of embodiment has very wide-ranging practical relevance; other substantive areas where it is deployed include sexuality/queery theory and disability studies.

## Future Directions

For some years, writers in the social sciences and humanities have been heralding an "affective turn" to succeed the influential linguistic turn of the 1980s. This work is impacting upon critical psychology and may be seen, at least in part, as a continuation or mutation of the concerns which the concept of embodiment attempts to address.

In this work affects, emotions, and feelings – all enabled by the body – are treated as an irreducible but not separable realm of phenomena running alongside and through the social and the linguistic, both shaping them and being shaped by them.

The concept of embodiment in critical psychology may be further transformed in coming years because of its relevance to and intersections with critical neuroscience. Neuroscience is increasingly coming to dominate mainstream psychology, and critical neuroscience – which provides a necessary corrective to the reductive tendencies of its parent discipline – might increasingly both inform and make use critical psychological studies using the concept of embodiment.

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### Online Resources

http://www.embodiment.org.uk/
http://www.phenomenologyonline.com/

# Emotion


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## Introduction

Emotion is one of the core categories, not just of psychology, but of contemporary Western thought: as such, its ramifications and associations are both vast and profound. In mainstream psychology, the concept of emotion is usually sharply distinguished from cognition, as though these are two wholly distinct processes, and is frequently associated with judgement biases and information processing errors. In critical psychology, however, the absolute separation of emotion from cognition is often questioned, the concept itself is sometimes subject to interrogation and deconstruction, and consistent attempts are made to analyze its intersections with society and culture.

## Definition

An individually experienced, culturally normative, and relationally enacted ensemble of intention, feeling, judgement, and performance that typically includes a distinctly embodied phenomenological component.

## Keywords

Affect; feeling; mood; passion; rationality; sentiment; embodiment

## History

From the perspective of the recent past, it often seems to us in the West that emotion has a long history of simply being the polar opposite of

calm, rational judgement: emotion is what intrudes, what biases, what threatens to engulf or overwhelm; what must be carefully managed and controlled if optimal judgements are to be made. Some (e.g., Gross, 2006) contribute to this picture by treating emotions as largely synonymous with the older term, passions. By largely glossing over the significances of this change in terminology, the history of emotion can be traced in a continuous line back to Aristotle (who advised moderation) and the Stoics (who recommended rigorous control). This is also the stance predominantly adopted in the mainstream of psychology where emotion tends to appear as a genetically endowed, physiologically enabled biological accomplishment, albeit with some (usually relatively minor) cultural modification. From this perspective, it is easy to see the origins of the view that cognition, which wholly equates to reason and rationality, is opposed to, and quite separate from, the unruly, irrational biases of passion and emotion.

However, other historical analyses have noted that the Western concept of emotion in fact only emerged and became dominant during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Dixon (2003) observes that during this period, the previously dominant palette of concepts – including appetites, sentiments, and affections as well as passions – was gradually supplanted by an overarching category of emotion. He associates this conceptual shift with various significant and interrelated social changes, including the decline of Christian influence, the corresponding increased secularization of Western psychological thinking, and the rise of science. Dixon describes how a more secular, mechanical view of affectivity took hold and became dominant during the nineteenth century and argues that it was the emergence of this modern concept of emotion that actually created its relatively sharp separation from concepts of reason, intellect, and will. Before this time, he suggests, more nuanced and subtle discussions of the relations between thinking and feeling were more possible.

Danziger (1997) also treats the conceptual shift from passions to emotions as having historical and psychological significance. His analysis suggests that the rise of capitalist social relations, first of all in eighteenth century Britain, created a need for a new moral discourse suitable to the emergent social order, one that located morality in (individual) human nature rather than enduring metaphysical traditions. His review of relevant philosophical texts identifies Hume's 1739 "Treatise of Human Nature" as a seminal influence. At this time discussion of the passions often centered on a distinction between "calm" desires – which were both individually and socially good – and "unruly" or "violent" ones which were not. Hume's influential analysis transformed this distinction into one between motives, understood as enduring, settled dispositions, and emotions, understood as temporary "mental agitations."

For both Danziger and Dixon, then, the emergence of emotion as a modern psychological concept is closely associated with important social changes. Their conclusion is amplified by histories of specific passions or emotions, which commonly show not only that their configuration within moral orders varies but also that the relevant prominence of and values attached to them changes significantly over time. To pick just one example, Demos (1996) shows how there were significant changes in the prominence, meanings, and social functions of shame and guilt in New England in the period between 1650–1750 and 1800–1850.

## Traditional Debates

Given this history it is perhaps not surprising that, even in the mainstream of psychology and emotion science, there is continuing debate about what emotion actually is. The component process model of emotion proposed by Scherer (2001) is currently the focus of much research: this model treats emotions as appraisals of interest and relevance produced by the relative synchrony of multiple systems including some characterized as (low level) cognitive and some characterized as physiological. At the same time Ekman's (1992) notion of basic emotions is also still prevalent.

For Ekman, basic emotions are hardwired, evolutionarily old affect programs (Ekman links basic emotions explicitly to Darwin's work on emotion). These are distinguished from secondary or social emotions, which contain a marked cognitive aspect, and also from culture-specific emotions. For Ekman all emotions are subject to culture-specific display rules that regulate when, where, how, and with who they should be released. Emotion is also usually distinguished from mood, which is more enduring, of lower intensity and frequently of more indeterminate origin.

Debate about emotion in the psychological mainstream is also informed by contemporary affective neuroscience. Influential texts by Panksepp, Damasio, and LeDoux, amongst others, promote notions of emotion that are markedly biological in character. Nevertheless, despite large areas of agreement, there are important differences between these writers. For example, Panksepp frequently emphasizes circuits in the lower brain, common to all mammals, and makes careful distinctions between the evolutionary and adaptive functions of these circuits and the human experiences (elaborated through our evolved higher cortices) to which these circuits give rise. Damasio, by contrast, treats areas of the higher cortex as being more significant, places great emphasis on feeling as well as emotion, and strongly emphasizes the ways in which emotion and cognition continually play off each other.

Mainstream psychological research on or related to emotion appears within almost the entire range of subdisciplines (cognitive, biological, social, developmental, etc.) that make up the field, and is associated with virtually every area where psychology is applied, from health and clinical applications through to education, law, and teaching. Moreover, reflecting the definitional confusion that characterizes this entire field, it shades across into influential topics such as self-esteem, which has a distinctly affective aspect but is nevertheless not usually explicitly related to emotion in the way that studies of anger, for example, clearly are.

## Critical Debates

In the last decade or so, scholars in the social sciences and humanities have noted the emergence of what they are calling an "affective turn": an emphasis on affect, emotion, or feeling understood as phenomena that are neither wholly social nor wholly biological, hybrids that cut across disciplinary and subdisciplinary divides and challenge the seemingly comprehensive character of analyses that emphasize language and were associated with the linguistic turn of the 1980s. Because of its close links with the social sciences and humanities, issues and concerns associated with the affective turn are now informing debate within critical psychology.

As with the mainstream, there is debate here about the definition of emotion and of its contemporary alternatives, affect, and feeling. While these three terms are sometimes used interchangeably, they are also used to mark both conceptual differences and disciplinary allegiances. However, these usages are not consistent and even the same terms are subject to multiple definitions. Affect, for example, is sometimes defined in Deleuzian terms as a force or intensity that constitutes experience rather than simply appearing within it, and is bound up with processes of becoming: the restless movement and change that constitutes life itself. Conversely, affect is defined in psychoanalytic terms as primary process activity, forever inaccessible to consciousness or introspection, and reflective of bodily needs and impulses that are too threatening for the subject to acknowledge. Alternatively, affect is also treated as largely synonymous with emotion by those who deploy aspects of Tomkins affect theory in order to emphasize the ways in which emotions combine and circulate, both within and between individuals. Greco and Stenner (2008) observe that sharp definitions between affect and emotion seem to be in general hard to sustain, since when analysts talk about specific affects it is almost invariably emotion terms that they use as referents.

Some scholars present the turn to affect as a distinct break with scholarship associated with the turn to language. It is perhaps more useful,

however, to see the affective turn both as flowing from the linguistic turn and as carrying forward in significant ways many of its critical imperatives (Greco & Stenner, 2008). Both movements reject the naive humanist assumptions commonly found within mainstream psychology, both strive to understand how experience and subjectivity are produced and regulated, rather than treating them as foundational origins; and both are concerned with how social and cultural influence constitute, rather than merely contextualize, psychological processes and contents.

There is ongoing debate about method in relation to emotion and the affective turn. Wetherell (2012) provides a lengthy summary of many of the key issues and favors a broadly discursive approach to what she calls "affective practice"; Scharff (2011) applies an approach that unites discursive psychology, performativity, and affect theory; other discussions commend a pluralist stance within which both discursive and other methods, including memory work and visual/multimodal analyses, are valuable (Cromby, 2011).

## International Relevance

Of the three commonly used contemporary terms (feeling, emotion, and affect), only feeling is a linguistic prime, i.e., it is the only one consistently denoted by a word or concept in every human language that has so far been studied. For example, anthropologist Catherine Lutz' much-cited work with the Ifaluk of Papua New Guinea showed that these people do not conceptually separate thoughts from emotions, instead combining them into a unitary category they call "nunuwan." Consequently, whereas in the West maturation from childhood to adulthood is frequently understood as a process of increasingly controlling, taming, and regulating emotion with thought, for the Ifaluk maturation is conceived of as increasing and differentiating nunuwan.

The cultural specificity of what (we) Westerners frequently take to be a universal, natural category of experience suggests that caution is necessary when interpreting theories and studies from across different cultures. Equally, we must consider the cultural universality of the term "feeling," alongside overwhelming evidence that there is a human species-specific potentiality to enact repertoires that include affective or emotional components, and in conjunction with extensive biological and neuroscientific evidence that humans share with each other, and with other mammals, brain and physiological systems that are specialized to enable the experiences we call affect, emotion, and feeling. While the Western concept of emotion is a social construct, the human capacity for feelingful or embodied responses, meaning-making, evaluations, and interpretations seems to be part of our species-nature.

Ratner (2000) discusses these issues and uses Vygotskian activity theory to analyze emotions across cultures. He argues that biological systems and processes underlie or enable the qualities and expressions we call emotions, but do not determine them, since their particular qualities or expressions are shaped by cultural processes and social structures. Certainly, the striking range and variation of emotion-related terms and concepts across the world's many cultures suggests that emotions or feelings are social and cultural at the same time as they are biological. Albeit that this must mean that there are some constraints upon the emotional plasticity that culture produces, there is extensive evidence that emotions are consistently bound up with local moral orders and cultural norms, consistently regulated and produced in accord with the social relations of the present moment, performed or enacted in ways that accord with normative expectations, and interpreted and talked about in ways that are largely specific to the time and place of their occurrence.

## Practice Relevance

Studies of emotion and its related concepts have practical relevance in relation to many areas of critical psychology. Recent work on experience, for example, draws upon literature associated with the affective turn in order to formulate

politically progressive understandings of the ways in which individuals are both regulated by disciplinary power and, at the same time, how those powers continually produce an affective "excess" that, if recruited and taken up appropriately, can be a source of struggle and resistance (Stephenson & Papadopoulos, 2007). Similarly, feminists have long grappled with emotion and its associated phenomena, producing penetrating and influential analyses showing that how we feel is always bound up with regimes of difference, power, and practice (e.g., Crawford, Kippax, Onyx, Gault, & Benton, 1992). However, many of the more immediately practical relevancies of emotion scholarship are associated with critical work in areas such as clinical and organizational psychology.

In clinical psychology, Smail (e.g., 2005) uses notions of the emotional, felt, and therefore somewhat ineffable character of human psychological experience as central constituents of his critical analyses of psychological distress and its associated therapy. He argues that in an atomized, individualized capitalist society, therapy potentially fulfils useful remediatory functions: comfort, clarification of the nature of one's problems, and encouragement to use available resources to produce beneficial change. Nevertheless, it is consistently oversold and its efficacy less than many imagine, and this is in large part because the emotions and feelings of those referred for treatment will reflect, more or less accurately, the continuing social and material abuses and deprivations of capitalism. Similarly, Cromby and Harper (2009) offer an account of clinical paranoia as constituted from complex mixtures of shame, fear, anger, and other feelings, showing how these emotional states are bound up with deprivation, exploitation, marginalization, and abuse. Their account challenges psychiatric notions of schizophrenia and makes recommendations about the kinds of interventions and research agendas that might flow from their reconceptualization.

In critical analyses associated with organizational psychology, Hochschild's (1983) notion of emotional labor has been massively influential. Emotional labor occurs when employees or service providers regulate or suppress some emotions and display or enhance certain others, in accord with the strictures of their employment or the commodified demands of the service they are supplying. For example, waitresses are expected to smile and express generally positive emotions toward their customers, nurses and doctors are expected to adopt consistently caring and compassionate attitudes toward their patients, while sex workers are expected to express only the emotions and desires that accord with their clients' expectations. For Hochschild these kinds of expectations, sometimes practiced and encoded in supervision and training courses, lead to both "surface acting" – where employees fake the requisite emotion – and "deep acting," where they actually experience the emotion that their work requires. Studies of emotional labor therefore provide critical insights into capitalism's contemporary emotional economy, suggesting concrete explanations for the occurrence and prevalence of absenteeism, burnout, and work-related stress. Hochschild's broadly Marxist approach to these issues has been supplemented by poststructuralist analyses of affective labor (Hardt, 1999) which evince similar concerns with the ways in which our capacities to feel are recruited and exploited in Western capitalist economies which, today, are frequently characterized by a predominance of immaterial labor with a marked affective dimension: call centers, service industries, leisure services, and so on.

## Future Directions

It seems reasonable to suggest that neuroscience, which is currently a growing influence upon psychology, will continue to impact upon studies of emotion in both critical and mainstream psychologies. Critical psychological work on emotion is likely to be increasingly influenced by the scholarship of the affective turn, and this engagement should continue to produce politically progressive, conceptually sophisticated, and empirically grounded analyses.

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## Online Resources

http://isre.org/
http://homecookedtheory.com/

# Empathy


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## Introduction

As a contemporary cultural and psychological phenomenon, there is little doubt that empathy is a concept of importance in most areas of information construction, dissemination and inquiry—scientific, literary, and civic. Its prominence in both academia and public discourse is supported by two relatively simple observations: (1) the proliferation of popularized scientific writing on empathy in relation to the brain and mirror neurons (e.g., Iacoboni, 2009; Ramachandran, 2011) and (2) its suggested role in most topics related to human (and nonhuman) relationships, culture, and functioning.

A short list exemplifying empathy's role in several aspects of modern societal discourse might include its centrality in political-civic discourse (e.g., as a central moral concept in the agenda of US President Barak Obama; see Obama, 2006); its integration into democratic and political decision-making processes (e.g., Morrell, 2010); its representation in business in relation to customer service and marketing (e.g., Patnaik & Mortersen, 2009); its inclusion in school curricula (e.g., Davis, Yeager, & Forester, 2001; Gordon, 2007); and its consideration in discussions on globalization as it relates to the increase in communication technologies across geographies, both in terms of intercultural communications (e.g., Pedersen, Crethar, & Carlson, 2008) and environmental concerns (e.g., Rifkin, 2009). Some writers suggest that cultivating empathy in citizens will assist in alleviating some of what ails modern society (e.g., Trout, 2009), and some view it as a central concept through which to study the human condition (e.g., Agosta, 2010), although many

do not believe that the occurrence of empathy (in some form) is restricted to human beings alone (e.g., Grenier & Lüthi, 2010; see also de Waal, 2012).

Making the headlines, empathy has become a buzz word in North American popular culture (and popularized psychology), as exemplified by statements such as "Greed is out, empathy is in" (de Waal, 2009) or mirror neurons are "empathy neurons" or "Dalai Lama neurons" (Ramachandran, 2006). According to Jeremy Rifkin (2009), human beings have evolved into what he calls *Homo Empathicus*, and it is no longer feasible to talk about human nature without recognition that modern civilization is comprised of individuals who are highly attuned to the mental states of many others. Yet despite the fact that empathy is perhaps more "popular" in the first decade of the twenty-first century than at any other point in its history, empathy has been on the radar of philosophers and social scientists for well over a century (both prior to its use in the English vernacular and also construed as phenomena that might be known by other names, e.g., sympathy).

## Definition

From the perspective of a layperson, empathy is relatively easy to describe. A common phrase encountered in popular discourse refers to empathy as "putting oneself in someone else's shoes," and informally, it is described as an attempt to know what it feels like to be in another person's situation. Although this popular culture description seems relatively simple, the practice of empathy and the ideas that emerge from the topic are complicated and extensive. Despite the term's widespread use, there is significant heterogeneity in how it's conceptualized, and this is particularly pronounced amongst those that study it. Research and scholarship on empathy is robust and so too are the varieties and the specifications for its use within the discourse on empathy.

According to Coplan (2011, p. 4), the most common ways that empathy is used by researchers are:

(A) Feeling what someone else feels
(B) Caring about someone else
(C) Being emotionally affected by someone else's emotions and experiences, though not necessarily experiencing the same emotions
(D) Imaging oneself in another's situation
(E) Imaging being another in that other's situation
(F) Making inferences about another's mental states
(G) Some combination of the processes described in (A)–(F)

Uses A through F appear a relatively modest list, however, this modesty disappears in reference to G. Specifically, empathy may be construed as a combination of A through F in a manner of the researcher's choosing (see Batson, 2009 for a slightly expanded list and a discussion of the eight uses he cites), thus making the possibilities for its use increase exponentially.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, empathy is defined as "the ability to understand and share the feelings of another." This is the current definition one would encounter with a simple dictionary search. This definition includes two aspects most frequently encountered in definitions: one related to emotional experience (i.e., a sharing, understanding, or responding to the feelings of another) and the other related to some form of appraisal regarding the other's situation (e.g., understanding or making inferences about the content of another person's mental life). The latter aspect frequently appears in literature related to "theory of mind" (ToM) (or "mentalizing"; Singer, 2006), whereas the notion of vicarious experience or affect sharing (sometimes referred to as "emotional contagion"; Hatfield, Caccipo, & Rapson, 1993) has recently become a hot topic of debate within the context of social neuroscience (not withstanding that both aspects have been debated in and on different terms in a variety of areas in both psychology and

philosophy historically). One of the primary problems with these two aspects, commonly found in definitions of empathy, is some choose to construe empathy as including both (i.e., affect sharing and mentalizing) while others choose to restrict the use of the term as it applies to one or the other.

Upon survey of the historical and current academic and public discourse, it is difficult to capture a uniform answer to the question "what is empathy?" There are different meanings within each particular context of its use. For example, within the context of the cognitive sciences and philosophies of mind, the term has a significantly different meaning in contrast to its use in the psychotherapeutic context. Furthermore, given its recent proliferation on the contemporary scene, the range of its applications has increased, which in turn lends towards further increases in the diversity of its meanings.

Some scholars (and most people) believe empathy is something that we are all qualified to talk about; falling in line with this sentiment, Shlien (1997, p. 3) states that "[e]veryone who experiences empathy is entitled to propose a definition." Thus despite the confusion that emerges in relation to "what it is," many have embraced empathy's multiplicity. And indeed there are almost as many definitions of empathy as there are people studying it.

## Keywords

Sympathy; understanding; projection; imagination; morality; mirror neurons; perspective-taking

## History

The concept of empathy has a complicated history and this statement rolls easily out of the lack of agreement regarding "what it is." Moreover, this also makes a singular historical account problematic and an "origination" narrative subject to debate. Histories of the concept typically source the Germanic aesthetics tradition as the "site" of empathy's birth; however, in addition, there are at least four other identifiable traditions that are relevant to the varied conceptions that comprise the empathy discourse of the twentieth and twenty-first century: first, British moral philosophies of sympathy; second, the Germanic hermeneutic tradition of Verstehen or understanding and interpretation; third, the phenomenological response to Lipps's theory regarding the episteme of "other minds"; and last, evolutionary theory, beginning with Darwin on sympathy. These other traditions make important contributions towards an historical reconstruction of empathy. Yet these different historical roots (aesthetics theory, moral philosophy, hermeneutics, phenomenology, and evolutionary theory) may play a role in the development of *some*, but *not all*, conceptions of empathy. A complete reconstruction of these traditions in relation to empathy is beyond the scope of this entry, I will touch on each only in brief.

The English language term empathy originated out of the German language term *Einfühlung* ("feeling-into" or "in-feeling"); it is transliteration of the Greek word "empatheia." The appearance of this term empathy within the psychological literature is frequently credited to E. B. Titchener (1909, p. 21) as a translation of Lipps's (1903/1979) use of the term *Einfühlung*. This origination narrative regarding the term empathy has been challenged and refined by contemporary historical scholarship (see Lanzoni, 2012).

The notion of *Einfühlung* was used by German aesthetic theorists of the late nineteenth century to describe an emotional and kinesthetic response to art. Lipps's theory brought to the discourse on *Einfühlung* the idea of feeling-into or projecting oneself into another human being; he suggested it a basis for interpersonal understanding (see Mallgrave & Ikonomou, 1994, for *Einfühlung* prior to Lipps, e.g., Robert Vischer and Friedrich Theodor Vischer; see Lanzoni, 2009 regarding Vernon Lee's (Violet Paget) contributions; see also Lanzoni, 2012, for the translation of *Einfühlung* to "aesthetic sympathy"). In the late nineteenth century, debates about *Einfühlung* as a theory of perception, questions about the role of motor movements, and the relative contributions of "organic" sensations and "mental" factors

were the primary issues at hand (for useful reviews see Gladstein, 1984; Jahoda, 2005). Within the context of contemporary neuroscience, Lipps's theory of *Einfühlung* has been invoked in support of the recent turn towards the neuromechanisms of empathy (specifically as it relates to the mirror neurons, the notion of motor mimicry, motor resonance, perception-action-mechanisms, etc.).

The connection of empathy to the British moral philosophies of sympathy (i.e., "fellow-feeling," "feeling-with," discussed by moral philosophers, e.g., Hume, 1739/1968; Smith, 1759/1982) has been taken up by a number of contemporary philosophers and psychologists (e.g., Darwall, 1998; Wispé, 1987). The continued conflation of the two terms is by no means unique to modern discourse; as mentioned above during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the process of attempting to render an English term for *Einfühlung*, one such proposal was aesthetic sympathy. Moreover, as cited by a number of authors, the manner in which sympathy is described in the historical record is in many ways synonymous with some of the descriptions included in some definitions of empathy (Wispé, 1991).

The Germanic hermeneutic tradition of Verstehen or understanding and interpretation is also relevant to an historical account of the varieties of empathy found in the literature, both prior to the development of theories of *Einfühlung* (e.g., 1819/1990, see Ormiston & Schrift, 1990) and also proceeding (see Kögler & Stueber, 2000). In terms of the hermeneutic tradition one finds in translations of some of the earliest hermeneuts a focus on *interpretive understanding* (or Verstehen) and (in some cases) understanding authorial intention through the use of "empathy." Some contemporary scholars have begun the process of interpreting the views of post-*Einfühlung* (or early twentieth century) hermeneuts as it relates to empathy and understanding for English-speaking readers (e.g., regarding Wilhelm Dilthey and understanding as a method of the human sciences, see Harrington, 2001; Makkreel, 2000; Palmer, 1969; Steuber, 2006; regarding Hans-Georg Gadamer, see Kögler, 1996).

The phenomenological critique as a response to Lipps's theory regarding the episteme of "other minds" (e.g., 1917/1989; 1913/1970) was particularly pronounced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. There were a number of phenomenological objections to Lipps's theory (Zahavi & Overgaard, 2012). And much of the phenomenological discourse reconfigures the "problem of other minds" around the concept of intersubjectivity, discussed in terms of ontology regarding the coconstitution of self, others, and the world (see Zahavi, 2001, 2005 for a review of Scheler, Heidegger, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre with regard to the different phenomenological approaches to intersubjectivity; see also Hermberg, 2006).

The debate stemming from Lipps's theory of *Einfühlung* (both from the contemporary hermeneuts and phenomenologists of his era) eventually led to the rejection of empathy as means for debating the problem of other minds. Yet, the philosophical debate on empathy has been reinvigorated within contemporary ToM debates (i.e., questions of mind reading or making inferences about the content of another's mind and simulation theories; see Gallagher, 2012; Stueber, 2008; Zahavi, 2008) in the last decade or two. And debate ensues within the context of newly formed disciplines such as neurophenomenology and social neuroscience.

The last historical tradition which has a role to play in contemporary conceptions of empathy is evolutionary theory (e.g., Darwin, 1871). The significance of an evolutionary account of how empathic capacities evolved has become particularly pronounced specifically as it relates to the discourse on altruism and questions regarding our instincts or capacity to help or console others in need (de Waal, 2008). The evolutionary account of human morality and emotions such as empathy or sympathy has figured prominently into contemporary discussions about the brain (e.g., the neuroevolution of empathy; Decety, 2011).

From the mid-twentieth onwards, the study of empathy has been extensive within the discipline of psychology and it has been explored in many of the core areas of the discipline (developmental, clinical, personality,

social, and neurophysiological). Extensive bodies of literature and applications related to empathy within the context of psychology include: empathy in psychotherapy (see Bohart & Greenberg, 1997; Dunn & Hill, 1996), social-personality psychology and measurement (see Batson, 1991; Chlopan, McCain, & Carbonell, 1985; Davis, 1996), developmental psychology (see Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987), moral development (see Hoffman, 2000), and the intersection of clinical and developmental psychology (see Farrow & Woodruff, 2007).

In the twenty-first century, traditional disciplinary lines have grown fuzzy in an era of what some refer to as "interdisciplinarity." The current trend in the study of empathy would now be referred to as an interdisciplinary and integrative enterprise, and this approach was most notably prompted by the explosion of interest and research on empathy with the discovery of mirror neurons in the late 1990s, for example, as forged within the context of social neuroscience, which includes contributions from cognitive, evolutionary, and social psychologists (see Decety, 2012; Decety & Ickes, 2009). Moreover, the scope of what is meant by interdisciplinarity not only refers to a "coming together of like-minded" scholars on a "shared topic of interest," it also encompasses the coming together of traditions that at first blush would appear incommensurate (e.g., neurophenomenology; see Gallese, 2011).

## Traditional Debates

The bulk of the debate surrounding the concept of empathy has occurred within the discipline of psychology although not exclusively so. In what follows, I will refer to four broad themes derived from the debates surrounding the concept.

### Conceptual Confusions: Tightening or Broadening How the Term Empathy Is Used?

In an attempt to reduce conceptual confusions, most researchers acknowledge empathy's varied use and then specify how they have selected to construe the concept. Some researchers choose to study it narrowly (e.g., empathic accuracy, Ickes, 2003), while others take a "multidimensional" approach differentiating empathic "process" from empathic "outcome" (e.g., Davis, 1996). There have been a number of attempts put forward as a way *out* of conceptual confusions. One trend has been to turn empathy into an umbrella term, which encompasses the many aspects cited within the literature (from emotional contagion to perspective-taking, e.g., Preston & de Waal, 2002), whereas another approach has been to tighten the use of the term (i.e., specify a particular aspect and build a case around why this conception is preferred as opposed to others, e.g., Coplan, 2011).

A review of the historical record reveals that empathy is frequently conflated or used in conjunction or as a synonym for the concept of *sympathy* and *understanding* (notwithstanding empathy's connection to an array of other concepts such as projection, imagination, emotion contagion, mimicry, imitation, vicarious affect sharing, mentalizing, mind reading, shared representations, and compassion). There have been attempts to differentiate empathy from concepts such as sympathy (e.g., Eisenberg, 2000); however, in many cases one author uses a term ("sympathy") to describe a phenomenon that is known by others as something else ("empathy") (Verducci, 2000). Therefore, the term itself becomes redundant and the description of the phenomena itself becomes the only means through which to discriminate what "concept" is being invoked. Based on the historical contexts in which the terms empathy and *Einfühlung* were circulated, disentangling empathy from sympathy and understanding remains an ongoing issue and a subject for debate within the contemporary literature.

### The Distinction Between Self and Other: Is Empathy About Me or Is It About You?

Is empathy always other-oriented or is it always necessarily self-oriented (can it both)? For example, can one apply empathy to oneself (e.g., self empathy; Barrett-Lennard, 1997)? Some insist that a distinguishing characteristic of empathy is a self-other awareness—an awareness that the emotional response is yours but produced by the

other's situation (Decety & Jackson, 2004). And some theorists have broken empathy into a set of emotions that are more self-oriented or other-oriented (e.g., Batson, 1991). Yet within the simulation and mind reading literature, the blurring of the self-other divide becomes murky; questions can be posed regarding the extent to which imagining oneself in the other's situation or imagining the other in the situation alters the construal of whose phenomenon it is. Moreover, to what extent does the simulating of another's emotional experience need to be a match or just similar? Zahavi and Overgaard (2012) pose an additional nuance to the notion of whether empathy is about self or other and whether it can indeed lead to interpersonal understanding by questioning how the act of simulating and projecting, or matching of another's state, actually gives one access to the other. Moreover, how does the self-other distinction fit with co-constitutive theories of intersubjectivity? Wherein does empathy take place (does one need always construe a perceiver and a perceived, and if so what then is determined the subject/object in the relational encounter—the person or their experience)?

### Empathy and Its Connection to Helping Behavior and Morality

Questions regarding whether empathy leads to a genuine concern for the welfare of another, whether it leads to helping behaviors, whether it is the source of altruism, or whether it provides the basis for moral judgments, remain topics with considerable robustness in the empathy literature. Popular conception attributes a positive valence to empathy, for example, as suggested by the contemporary campaign to cultivate more empathy in society. The assumption underlying the promotion of empathy is based on a belief that it will lead persons to act on the behalf of other persons in need (i.e., that empathy fosters moral consciousness and action). Empathy has been explored as precondition for moral performance and ethical decision-making (e.g., Vetlesen, 1994) and as the primary source of altruistic motivation (e.g., Hoffman, 2000), and others have developed an extensive research program examining how certain conditions lead to concern for the welfare of the other and action on their behalf (e.g., Batson, 2012). Yet most people would agree with the statement that knowing or having a feeling about another's circumstances does not necessarily translate into benevolent actions. Part of the difficulty in drawing conclusions about empathy in relation to morality stems from one of the primary problems with the study of empathy — there isn't one singular conception of it (e.g., does it include prosociality and concern for the welfare of others?). The reality is that fundamentally different questions are being asked in the study of the concept (e.g., how can one know what another is thinking or feeling and/or what leads a person to respond with care to the suffering of another?; Batson, 2009).

### Epistemic and Affect Debates: Emotional Versus Cognitive Distinctions

In decades past the trend within the psychological literature was to distinguish between cognitive-based and affect-based empathy. This dichotomy still lingers, for example, in the epistemic debates regarding theory of mind; the notion of affect sharing and emotional contagion; and in reference to "hot" empathy (affective) and "cold" empathy (cognitive), which can still be found in some of the recent literature. Despite this commonplace way of differentiating between different types of empathy (cognitive versus affective), as the academic landscape has continued to be modified, most no longer conceive of empathy exclusively in affective or cognitive terms but construe it includes both.

## Critical Debates

A critical appraisal of empathy (or *Einfühlung*) can first be traced back to the response by phenomenologically oriented philosophers of the late nineteenth into mid-twentieth century. And the second wave of debate as mentioned in the preceding ensued primarily within the context of psychology during the mid- to late twentieth century. Third, a critique of the individualist, one-sided, and disembodied conception of empathy

has taken form in much of the current discourse on empathy, particularly in relation to empathy within generalist psychotherapeutic and psychoanalytic discourses (Orange, 2002, 2010; Stolorow & Atwood, 1992). Fourth, there is a rich literature in feminist epistemology that speaks to gendered conceptions of empathy (and emotions more broadly). For example, some of this literature addresses the differential valuation placed on "affect-based knowing" (feminine) in contrast to more "rational" (masculine) forms of knowing (see Code, 1991, 1995; Jaggar & Bordo, 1992). Lastly, there is a growing literature in what is referred to as "critical neuroscience" and in particular there are a number of scholars critical of the extent to which the discovery of mirror neurons has been solicited in the name of promoting further "brainhood" in the modern conception of the ontology of mental and experiential life in human beings (see Vidal, 2009; Vrecko, 2010; see also Olsen on neuropolitics). Acknowledging this, I suggest that within current context (i.e., given the status of empathy as cultural icon), there are at least two other critical debates that can be launched. The two debates are (1) empathy avoidance as a phenomenon instantiated via social-political and cultural institutions and ideologies and the prescriptions they create regarding encounters with the "other" and (2) the commoditization of empathy.

## Empathy Avoidance: Constructing the Who and How of Our Empathic Engagements

A second critical perspective that comes to bear on empathy is in relation to the moral valence that comes with the term and how this becomes concretized in social institutions and its programming. The empathy campaign launched in North American society appears to be instantiated in social programming that occurs in selective contexts. For example, there has been a blossoming of programs to teach empathy to school age children in Northern American classrooms. This in and of itself is not a point of critique (i.e., many of these programs have been initiated to help deal with bullying and a number of in school problems concerning peers in relation to one another). Rather, I would suggest what is worth noting is the selectivity in where empathy is being cultivated. The notion that empathy facilitates kindness towards others and that society on the whole would be a better off if more people were considerate to those less fortunate seems to suggest that those that have "less" in society need a whole lot more empathy from those that have "more." Social and moral development are highly valued, and so one would assume that if the pursuit is towards the development of kindness towards "the other" that social programs would be designed that would allow for the prompt of empathy in perceiving the other who most needs to be understood or cared for. Yet we have not seen the bulk of social programming going towards this end. Rather the trend has veered in two directions: one focusing on teaching young children to have empathy with their peers, those of similar socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, so those they would likely encounter and, the second, towards teaching empathy for the "foreign other" through an imaginative process (e.g., reading about the other's experience; see Boler, 1997). Yet, how does this mode of empathic engagement compare to direct contact—does the experience of the other through imagination produce the same type of empathy as the experience of the other in real time? Moreover, if it is the case that empathy is needed because it will help one person understand the experience of the other, and understanding those that are less fortunate facilitates acting on their behalf, it seems than that empathy as a moral concept is about helping the less fortunate. Practically then, attention needs to be paid to the "targets" of our empathy; for example, if teaching empathy may help our children be kinder to others, why not address those others that desperately need that kindness. Rather than money for empathy programs, why not policy and programming towards addressing poverty directly?

The preceding leads directly into a concept that I will refer to as "empathy avoidance." Empathy avoidance refers to social and institutional barriers to encountering the "foreign other." I suggest that this is not a problem of the individual rather it is a systemic issue embedded in our social, cultural, and political institutions.

My use of the term empathy avoidance becomes manifest on a personal level through the reproduction of what Antonio Gramsci (1971) has termed "cultural hegemony" and what Cecil Blake (1979) has referred to as "cultural warrants." Empathy avoidance refers to the reality that even though the moral discourse surrounding the concept of empathy suggests that we need to engage diversity and otherness because we are all global citizens; the reality is that our experiences in the world are largely determined by habits of action that we often do not reflect on and are created by the cultural hegemony of one's particular "place" in a given society. Thus, the places persons of a particular socioeconomic status will go (and not go) are part of a cultural script (danger/safety, good/bad) based not so much on lived experiences (although they may be) but those that are communicated (embedded and reproduced) in our day-to-day living, actions, and movements within social systems. Specifically, the structure of the social system and its institutions deliver a message to us in a very concrete way regarding "with whom" and "through what means" we may engage the "other" (see Calloway-Thomas, 2010).

Political scientist Gary Olsen has written a number of cogent pieces on how our engagement with others is shaped by class, ideology, and cultural warrants. Olsen (2010) asks striking questions regarding the moral dimension of empathy (e.g., why, if it is the case that we are biologically wired and evolutionarily designed to be empathic, interconnected, and caring towards others, has little progress been made in extending this innate capacity towards distant "others," those outside certain moral circles?). The answer to this question speaks to empathy avoidance as an ideological and socially sanctioned rule about engaging only particular others and only engaging to the extent that it does not disrupt the status quo. For example, Olsen cites the practice of volunteering or charity as an example of personal and local demonstrations of empathy that allows citizens to "feel" like they are doing "good" without actually altering or disrupting the social strata. Compartmentalizing and regulating these activities ensures that the system is kept in place as is (which means that important systemic issues are not addressed).

## Commoditization of Empathy: Selling the Skills

A hallmark of the psychological sciences in the first decade of twenty-first century has been its focus on brain and neurophysiology. Thus, with the discovery of mirror neurons and its connection to "action-understanding" (Sinigaglia, 2008), social scientists, psychoanalysts, clinicians, and educators are excited that there is now some "solid" physiological evidence for the disdained "metaphysics" of our connectedness to others (some may refer to this connectedness as "resonance," a "felt-sense," "mutuality," and historically it may have been referred to as "telepathy," while currently it has been referred to as "neural Wifi," e.g., Goleman, 2006). Yet neuroscientific activities alone cannot account for the "empathy boom" of the twenty-first century—empathy would not have attained the status it has without being implicated in popular culture. The relationship of empathy-based scientific research to popular culture is co-constitutive: scientific discoveries support its appearance in public discourse, and reciprocally, as it continues to be on the public agenda, research agencies (government, university, corporate) continue to fund scientists to study it. Cultivating empathy in the classroom, the workplace, and civic society, even marketing and selling the skills needed to demonstrate that one has it for another. One is hard-pressed to argue against the statement that empathy is a topic of considerable *value*. I will go so far as to identify a form of what I refer to as "commodity empathy," specifically in relation to the capital (both monetary and social) generated from the research, interest, and reification of the concept in its production and performativity.

There is indeed considerable investment occurring with regard to empathy, not just in the name of science or civic society but also in terms of how empathy can be helpful for product developers and marketing professionals. For example, in terms of being able to understand the experience of an aging demographic in North America; according to Singer (2011), reported in the *New York Times*, Business Section, Sunday February 6th: "M.I.T researchers designed Agnes – short for the Age Gain Now Empathy System – to help

product developers, researchers and marketers empathize with their target audience: older adults" (p. 1). Similarly, if one does a search on the Internet, one will retrieve a plethora of resources on the importance of cultivating empathy in the workplace, "how-to-guides" on empathy-display responses, and even printable empathic statements that customer-service representatives can have at their desk when dealing with an unsettled customer in business.

Thus, as with many other psychological phenomena, the greater the degree of a concept's endorsed relevance, the greater the range of its applications and its potential for misuse. In many ways there seems to be some conflicting messages in the extensive coverage of empathy in civic society. In one sense it is valorized as the source of humanity's betterment (i.e., morally, as a facilitator of increased compassion and care for the well-being of others), yet, on the other hand, it is also observably being commercialized and molded into a tool for profit to "big business" (see Hochschild, 2003).

## Conclusions

It may not be necessary to say empathy is "this and not that," yet what is important is the discussion surrounding empathy towards what ends. Is one seeking to cultivate empathy in the pursuit of making a profit or in the pursuit of prompting kindness towards other human beings in need? More important than a consensus on "what it is" (or is not) is the examination of the motivations underlying the inquiry. As demonstrated in this entry, empathy refers to multiple phenomena with a diversity of meanings. Can empathy be all these things? Yes, as there are many empathies. Therefore, it may be stated from the outset that the role of a critical deconstruction of empathy is not to uncover the "true" empathy, to refute one definition over another, and to declare one to get at the "real" empathy more accurately than another. The function is to resolve debates about "what is empathy" by stating that it may be the case that all empathies are "useful." And discuss in particular, useful to whom and for what purposes? The different varieties and conceptualizations have significance beyond their level of theoretical sophistication and degree of empirical validity. The construal of this concept as a part of our social fabric has significance in defining how human beings view one another and what they expect from their engagements. Yet the status of empathy in modern society also plays a role in directing its use by sociocultural, civic-political, and economic institutions, seeking to cultivate particular attributes in particular contexts, for particular purposes. Viewed with an eye to its broad social, cultural, and political uses, empathy is important for more than its theorized connection to harmonious exchange.

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# Empiricism, Essay

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## Introduction

When psychology instructors tell students that they have raised "an interesting empirical question," these instructors do not typically mean that students have engaged in an empirical *ideology*. Indeed, it is likely these instructors mean the *opposite* of engaging in an ideology because they consider empiricism a kind of scientific method for mapping "objective" reality and avoiding ideologies altogether. Often, in fact, the term "empirical" is used as a synonym in psychology for unbiased or scientific.

We describe this common student/instructor exchange in psychology because it exemplifies a prominent misconception in the discipline – that empiricism is a kind of transparent window that reveals the objective truth of the world. As we will explain, however, the philosophy or epistemology of empiricism is anything but transparent because it has its own values and assumptions. In fact, these values and assumptions could be viewed as a kind of "disguised ideology." According to Richard Bernsten (1976), a disguised ideology occurs when "value biases have been confused with factual descriptions in explanatory social science" (p. 104). As we will see, empiricism has clear "value biases" that provide a privileging of certain aspects of our experience over others, yet these values are often presented to students as the "facts" or "logic" of science.

From this perspective, an awareness of this ideology is vital to the province of a critical psychologist because empiricism is both a "dominant account of psychology" and used in the "service of power" (Parker, 1999, p. 11). Few would question its dominance, as virtually all the prominent research methods texts evidence (e.g., Dyer, 2006; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007; Schweigert, 2006; cf. Slife, Reber, & Faulconer, 2012). But citing its power is provocative because methods are rarely viewed as having political or economic implications. Still, one only has to consider the central role of empiricist values and assumptions in evidence-based practices to realize the economic power of these therapeutic practices in insurance reimbursement. Clearly, the power implications of this disguised ideology could be mightily important to critical psychology specifically and the social sciences more generally.

## Definition

Empiricism is the philosophy or epistemology that our knowing and learning is primarily derived from our experience. However, this essay examines how empiricism has historically varied in what is viewed as valid forms of experience, from narrower forms that embrace only observable experience to broader forms that allow more experiences than merely visual experiences, such as emotional and spiritual experiences. Interestingly, only the most narrow version of empiricism is typically described in psychology's research method texts (e.g., Dyer, 2006; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007; Schweigert, 2006). As we will also see, this narrowed version continues even when operational definitions are taken into account.

## Keywords

Empiricism; research; science; disguised ideology; operationalism; prejudice

## History

The philosophy of empiricism has a rather long history, at least as far back as the ancient philosophies of Democritus and Aristotle. Even the Middle Ages had strong champions of empiricism. William of Ockham, for instance, favored sensory contact with objects of experience, what he called intuitive cognition, in the fourteenth century. However, the most influential proponents of empiricism for psychologists were the seventeenth and eighteenth century British philosophers John Locke and David Hume who built entire philosophies of mind around the notion that knowledge is derived from sensory experiences (Leahey, 2004; Rychlak, 1981; Slife & Williams, 1995).

This Lockean/Ockhamian tradition is the narrower brand of empiricism, exemplified most prominently in many of psychology's quantitative methods. Sometimes known as naïve empiricism (e.g., Strong, 1991), its doctrine that only the observable should count as knowledge is currently so taken for granted in psychology that many students find it odd to consider it a philosophy; it is for them *the* way science is conducted. As Mitchell and Jolley (2007) stated in their research method text: "To avoid being swept away by either unfounded speculations or biased perceptions, scientists tie their beliefs to concrete, observable, physical evidence that both independent observers and skeptics can double-check" (p. 4).

## Traditional Debates

Challenges to this narrow or "naïve" empiricism originated from several historical quarters. Perhaps the two most significant were arguments that this tradition of empiricism discounted or omitted important interpretive and social elements. The eighteenth century philosopher Immanuel Kant (1783/1996) is probably most noted for asserting the interpretive element of experience while Karl Marx is distinguished for contending the importance of social factors in experience. As Kant put it, the British empiricist Hume "interrupted my dogmatic slumber, and gave my investigations in the field of speculative philosophy quite a new direction" (Kant, p. 7). With Kant's more rationalist leanings, his philosophical investigations moved in a direction that challenged the notion that knowledge comes directly into our minds from sensory experience. He eventually contended, instead, that our minds are naturally prepared to organize and give meaning to experience. In other words, Kant held that at least some knowledge results from mental activity that is logically prior to experience. From this perspective, the knower makes sense of the world through organization and selective attention. The world does not make sense of itself.

The philosophy of (Marx & Engels, 1848/2002), on the other hand, could be viewed as indirectly challenging the narrow brand of empiricism for its relative neglect of other factors, including social and ethical factors (Taylor, 1966). First, from Marx's perspective, giving so much credence to the merely observable can lead to the underestimation of how much this observable depends on the culture or society. In a modern investigation of child abuse, for instance, conventional empiricists can too easily overlook how much their society shapes their understandings of what counts for child abuse. As Gergen (2009) has demonstrated, these understandings can differ not only across cultures but also across time within the same culture.

Second, Marx rejects the traditional empirical distinction between fact and value. Many conventional empiricists, for example, tend to view their data as representing the objective and value-free reality of the world – the so-called facts (Slife & Williams, 1995). Yet, this view discounts the importance of a number of value-laden investigator decisions, including the value of the topic investigated, the value of the particular method design selected, and the value of the particular interpretation made of the data. As Slife and Williams describe, the data themselves, past or present, dictate none of these decisions. These decisions are the value-laden conditions of the data, not their result.

Challenges such as those of Kant and Marx have led to a broader notion of experience and thus empiricism in many qualitative approaches to research. The philosophy of one of psychology's "parents," William James, perhaps best typifies this broader tradition of empiricism. This tradition embraces more than merely sensory experiences. It assumes that humans can have knowledge of their thoughts, feelings, meanings, and even spiritual experiences. James's (1902/1982) classic book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, is an example of a book that attempts to further knowledge about spiritual experiences in this more inclusive sense of empiricism. Although experiences of our feelings, meanings, and thoughts do not fall on our retinas, they are nevertheless central to a broader understanding of experience and we depend on our knowledge of them everyday (Slife & Melling, 2009). James's *radical empiricism* (1912/1996) is "radical" in this sense because of this experiential inclusivity.

Many phenomenologists and hermeneuticists are interested in this broader understanding of empiricism, especially if empirical experience includes meanings (Packer, 2011). The reading of books is an example of how meanings do not fall on our retinas. Although the printed words on a page are clearly observable, and thus fall on our retinas, the relation among these printed words, which is required to understand the meaning of the story, is not strictly observable. In fact, the relations among almost any items or things, including interpersonal relations, are not strictly observable (Slife & Wiggins, 2009). They are meanings that are experienced in the broad Jamesian sense of empiricism but they are not publicly observable in the narrower sense advocated in most psychological methods texts (e.g., Dyer, 2006; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007; Schweigert, 2006). Yet, people seem able to comprehend and compare understandings of these meanings as forms of knowledge (Slife & Melling, 2012).

## Critical Debates

The realization that many important psychological phenomena are not strictly observable in the narrow sense – including not only emotions, spiritual experiences, relationships, and meanings, as we have just described but also attitudes, memories, and motivations – led historically to important empirical method developments perhaps most notably that of operationalization. Indeed, most psychological texts on research methods consider operationalization a *required* step in formulating studies in psychology, especially when the topic under investigation is not itself publicly observable (e.g., Dyer, 2006; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007; Schweigert, 2006). Historians of psychology, such as Viney and King (2003), have credited the physicist Percy Bridgman with "set[ting] forth the principles of operationalism" (p. 302) in his classic book (1927) *The Logic of Modern Physics*. However, Bridgman was also one of the first to debate operationalization's usefulness to psychology (Holton, 2005; Walter, 1990). We examine aspects of this debate after first describing operationism's connection to modern empiricism.

Operationalism's intimate relationship with the narrower sense of empiricism is probably best understood through a simple example. Although the authors of this essay can *claim* to love their partners, this love, whether an emotion or a relationship, is not strictly observable (see explanation above). This situation leads quantitative researchers who are interested in studying love to "operationalize" love in terms of observable behaviors. In an important sense, these researchers are attempting to translate the unobservable into the observable so that the topic can be investigated with the narrow version of empiricism. Typically, these researchers assume that the operationalization is a manifestation of the unobservable topic under consideration. With the example of love, this translation might mean considering love to manifest hugs and/or kisses. In others words, if the present authors truly love their partners, hugs and kisses should be manifested accordingly.

As logical as this method practice may seem, critics have noted several problems that directly involve the narrowed meaning of empiricism (cf. Chang, 2009; Leahey, 2001; Slife, Wiggins, & Graham, 2005). First, hugs and kisses are not

necessarily connected to love. Hugs and kisses can occur without love, and love can occur without hugs and kisses. In this sense, knowledge of hugs and kisses, which could itself be valuable, should *not* be considered knowledge of love. Operationalizations, for this reason, are not necessarily identical with and may not be related *at all* to the construct or topic being operationalized, though this problem is rarely discussed in psychological research that uses operationalizations. Even biological operationalizations, such as fMRI scans of human brains, are not identical to the human brains they attempt to measure (Bub, 2000; Fenton, Meynell, & Baylis, 2009; Tovino, 2007). Like all operationalizations, these "scans" selectively attend to or emphasize some parts of the topic under investigation and ignore or deemphasize others.

Critics of the method practice of operationalization have also pointed to a second problem: operationalization prevents us from knowing, at least in the narrow empirical sense, the relation between the unobservable topic of interest, such as love, and the observable operationalization, such as hugs and kisses (cf. Slife et al., 2005). The relation between the two, the betweenness of the observable and unobservable, is not itself observable. In other words, we cannot empirically check the validity of operationalizations, such as how closely they represent or manifest the topic under investigation, because this relation is not itself knowable, at least from the narrow and conventional psychological meaning of empiricism.

Even a "convergence" of multiple operationalizations (Grace, 2001), where one unobservable topic of interest (e.g., love) is converged upon by several operationalizations at once (e.g., hugs, kisses, smiles), would not necessarily overcome these problems. As discussed, the operationalized relationship of one unobservable topic of interest to its operationalization is not itself empirically knowable (in the narrow sense). Consequently, adding other nonempirically knowable relationships in a convergence of operationalizations could compound rather than resolve the problems. The dominance of the narrow meaning of empiricism, and thus the prominence of operationalization as a method practice, means that psychology could be filled with studies of operationalizations that have no necessary or knowable connections to the topics of original interest (cf., Slife & Melling, 2012).

## International Relevance

Perhaps more important, from the perspective of a critical psychologist, is the possibility that a narrow or "naïve" version of empiricism has become the international standard for investigation in psychology with all the ideological prejudices that such a philosophy implies. As Gadamer has noted (e.g., 1993), all ideologies, including all the variations on empiricism, have implicit prejudices, i.e., ways in which the ideologies reveal and conceal certain aspects of the experienced world. We mentioned at the outset the unfortunate myth in some parts of psychology that empiricism does not involve values and biases and thus prejudices. Indeed, many empiricists would claim to strive to *eliminate* all biases, values, and prejudices. They would claim to discover the objective world by clearing away, as much as possible, the subjectivity (and thus prejudices) of the researchers through the scientific method (e.g., control groups, experimental manipulation).

However, Gadamer (1993) and other critics of this claim view it as another manifestation of implicit prejudice, what he calls the "prejudice against prejudice" (p. 273). This is the prejudice that biases are bad, itself a type of value, i.e., the value of wanting to be value-free. These critics note that any epistemology or philosophy that guides knowledge advancement, such as empiricism, must guide that advancement by being "biased" in some sense about what matters (e.g., observables) and does not matter in science. Empirical researchers, however, rarely admit these prejudices explicitly nor are the prejudices always consciously held (Slife & Williams, 1995). Rather, many researchers are taught these prejudices in their methods training often without the recognition that they are values or biases.

This training means, for example, that when Western psychologists teach "the scientific method" to their Eastern psychological colleagues, they are simultaneously teaching an often unidentified set of philosophical assumptions, many of them singularly Western prejudices. The empirical epistemology, especially when it is viewed as synonymous with the scientific method, becomes a kind of Trojan horse or "disguised ideology" of Western imperialism. This situation was brought home to the senior author of this article when he collaborated with Chinese psychologists who wanted to develop a methodology, including an epistemology that was more indigenous to their own context, such as dialectical materialism (Chen & Chen, 2012; Slife & Melling, 2012). These Eastern researchers saw quite clearly the Western philosophies that were endemic to "the" scientific method being taught in the West and appropriately desired to explore alternatives. Too often, however, this clear identification of Western method biases is obscured with claims of value-free objectivity.

## Practice Relevance

What, then, are these assumptions of psychology's empiricism and how might the potential for these kinds of prejudices practically affect the study of certain psychological phenomena? Perhaps the most obvious "prejudice" in this regard is the simple empirical injunction that "only the observable can be properly known." As mentioned, this prejudice literally means that only that which comes through our eyes can be known and/or measured. This meaning is a prejudice because it is an unproven, value-laden judgment about what has worth in science – the observable has worth. Moreover, this prejudice ignores the considerable practical evidence that humans have knowledge of many other forms, from their thoughts to their feelings to their relationships. Some empiricists might respond that these forms of knowledge are private, and thus not subject to public verification, which is surely true from this narrowed empiricist perspective. Still, this response begs the question of whether there are forms of *non*observable knowledge that are publicly verifiable. As mentioned above, the meanings of a book, whether storyline or information, do not "come through the eyes," yet people can experience these meanings and come to similar conclusions about what books mean.

If, however, the psychologist persists in using empiricism in the narrowed sense, which is true even when operationalizations are used (see above), then only the observable portions of psychotherapies will be emphasized. This emphasis implies that some portions of psychotherapies will not be studied, the unobserved portions. An example involves what some would call the "healing relationship" between the therapist and client. As important as this relationship is (Norcross, 2002; Slife et al., 2005), the "betweenness" of this relationship is not strictly observable. The therapist and client, as bodies and behaviors, clearly "fall on our retinas," but the interpersonal relationship between them does not.

This empirical situation also has important implications for what is considered "evidence-based practices" in psychology. Not only do important aspects of therapy remain unstudied but also those therapies that emphasize observables are more *easily* studied. Behaviorism, for example, stresses observables almost exclusively. Indeed, behavioral accounts of therapy are routinely understood to have inherently empiricist theoretical foundations (Rychlak, 1981), making these therapeutic strategies more connected with and amenable to empirical scientific methods. As a result, those therapies that are more conceptually related to empiricism are those typically approved as evidence-based practices (Messer, 2001, 2004).

Existential therapy, as a counterexample, will likely never become an empirically based practice because existentialists contend that vital elements of their therapy are not observable (Yalom, 1980). The therapist-client relationship is just one such element. If this contention is true, then existential therapy will be poorly investigated by empirical scientific methods and likely

omitted as an evidence-based practice. Those who advocate empirical scientific methods may contend that the observable aspects of existential therapy are the more important aspects, but this contention is the method tail wagging the therapy dog. In other words, it is less about what existentialists consider existential therapy and more about what is in the service of the method.

If these psychotherapeutic implications have merit, then the ideology of empiricism has rather dramatic economic implications because certain therapies, those that agree more with empiricism's prejudices, are more likely to be included on the list of evidence-based practices regardless of investigation. Therapies that are omitted from this list might be considered not only less effective but also ineligible for reimbursement from healthcare insurance companies. The point is that all these economic outcomes are driven not by the data of an objective world, but by an empiricist ideology.

## Future Directions

The philosophy of empiricism is also known to accompany and perhaps even complement other ideologies. Although empiricism is obviously not value- or bias-free, given our previous discussion, the widely held notion that empirical evidence is objective or relatively bias-free evidence may stem from its association with other ideologies, such as logical positivism or even liberal individualism. Liberal individualism, for example, has been defined as the relatively unimpeded pursuit of freely chosen ends in the promotion of individual autonomy (Fowers & Richardson, 1993; Richardson, Fowers, & Guignon, 1999; Taylor, 1985). Often considered a political ideology, liberal individualism has been "conceived as a means to free individuals from arbitrary authority and oppressive bonds" (Fowers & Richardson, 1993, p. 355). Arbitrary authority, in this sense, is the imposition of unjustified values or biases, particularly on an individual.

As dissimilar as individualism and empiricism may at first seem – with the former a philosophy of politics and the latter a philosophy of science – the two ideologies have a similar distrust of arbitrary values and biases. The individualist resists the imposition of arbitrary values to protect individual autonomy and the empiricist resists the imposition of arbitrary values to protect the objectivity of knowledge. Arbitrary values are those considered merely personal or *subjective* so that when both ideologies resist these subjective values they can both be viewed as moving generally away from subjectivity and toward a more objective understanding of the world.

This somewhat complementary relationship between empiricism and individualism is also clarified in their shared "prejudice against prejudice." The liberal individualist seeks to prevent arbitrary forms of moral authority to protect individual rights, etc., and is thus prejudiced against arbitrary forms of moral prejudice. Similarly, the empiricist seeks to prevent biases and subjectivities to protect more valid forms of evidence, such as sensory experiences, and is thus prejudiced against nonempirical forms of prejudice. Although the two ideologies do not logically necessitate one another, their seeming complementarity can lead them to be confounded in certain political or scientific arenas, such as the ethics of science (cf. Abou, 1995; Haan, 1982).

The general point here is that empiricism is not a conception or method for mapping an objective reality; it is an ideology for illuminating various aspects of an *interpreted* reality. That this reality is interpreted is not necessarily negative. It is only negative if one accepts the prejudice against prejudice and then overlooks that this acceptance is itself a prejudice. All methods and epistemologies, in this sense, are interpretations of reality. What is pivotal from this perspective is not only being aware of this interpretation but also taking it into account when considering method outcomes, especially power and economic relations.

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### Online Resources

Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy – operationalism. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/operationalism/
Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy – rationalism versus empiricism. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rationalism-empiricism/

## Employment

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### Introduction

In the industrialized and modern context, where waged labor represents 85 % of the total active population at work, employment is the socially accepted and/or institutional forms and codification of dependant activity. At a macroeconomic level, employment measures the good use of manpower, whereas its contrary, unemployment, means less personal idleness than a social inefficiency of the economy. On the other hand, full employment has been described as the *sine qua non* objective for public policies. However, historical and critical approaches show that status of employment is far from being plain and clear. The precariousness of work in modern economies for a consistent proportion of the population, especially young people, seems to have ended with the society of full employment and seriously shaken the credibility of employment protected by the welfare state in the dialectics of security and subordination.

### Definition

In a broad sense, employment means any kind of use of human activity by a society to produce its means of reproduction. If we take the example of slavery, Patterson (1982) has shown the diversity in slavery: origin, transmission, duration, forms of manumissions. Modern slavery shares little with slavery in antiquity. Because history has generally been written by the hands of the masters, the subjectivity attached to the slavish condition is poorly known until the nineteenth century. Psychologists' observations of the slaves are deceptive. Their so-called "stupidity" was repeatedly exhibited as a proof *a contrario* of the superiority of the white man by racist colonial literature; the slave's naivety, in a more paternalist way, as the evidence of his childishness. But it seems finally that it was the guile of the slave to deceive his master and allowed him to lead another life, *From sundown to sunup* (Rawick, 1976). The alleged subjectivity of the slave or servant described by Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as the birth of consciousness through work in his struggle with the master was commented on by Kojève and used by Lacan: the slave desires through the desire of the master. Such is the hope of the master who can feel reassured. Thus begins a dialectic where the slave is supposed to refuse the master and to want to take his place, becoming captive of the figure of the father in an Oedipal way. But what happens if the slave does not desire the desire of the Master and starts the dialectic with a no, a "Let my people go" exodus? No process of identification, no redemption through work will ever take place.

In a strict sense, unlike the generic concepts of work and activity, employment refers to the modality and characteristics of the use of free people in a subordinated position and not to any kind of business. It involves all kinds of salaried jobs in capitalist or former socialist societies, and also domestic paid work or servant, companion in less developed societies (feudalist or peasant economies). Slaved or forced labor at a micro level cannot be called "employment" in the modern sense of the word because there is no contract between employer and employee, nor is there true acceptance. In a capitalist society, life of the worker is alienated in production. Authority is originated in the position of strength of the employer, mostly due to a monopoly of means

of payment in cash for the produced work or the service provided. The worker is losing his life to make a leaving and feels alienated even when he receives a fair retribution. He is dispossessed of the conditions of production of commodities and also deprived of the means to reproduce himself. Authority is linked to the position in the hierarchy. Obedience does not rest on the authority shared between peers and disobedience is heavily punished.

Even if a happy end of this latest scenario is the recovery by the worker of his humanity in the end, providing productive forces have been developed so far that dependant work is not necessary anymore to satisfy his needs. It is not by case that the vulgarization in the worker's movement of Marx's formulaz of the Critique of the Gotha Program of 1875 has become the slogan "from each according to its work (ability in the original) to each according to its needs," has fed the hope of transition to socialism and to communism. What is important in a wage earner society is that the feeling towards work becomes more complex. The search of an immediate satisfaction (pleasure or disutility of work compensated by money reward) gives way to a symbolic retribution including consideration for both the person independently from their working role, for example, the citizen. It encompasses the mediated understanding of common good or collective utility.

## Keywords

Activity; work; labor; wage; satisfaction; slavery; capitalism; satisfaction; achievement

## Traditional Debates

How much psychology is concerned with employment depends to a large extent on the point of view with which one considers division of labor, organization of society, and distribution of wealth. Mere acceptance of the existing order will almost eliminate any subjective implications of employment that are not closely linked to a functional fulfillment of a designed task. Membership, participation, individual effort, ability to coordinate with others – categories referring to the life of the subject at work – appear only to achieve better productivity through compliance of work and acceptance of rules. More sophisticated categories like loyalty, proactivity, cooperation, and satisfaction of both worker and customer are brought in with the global perspective of total quality management. Repeated defaults, errors, accidents, and sometimes catastrophes produce a retro-critic on the processes of work and often underscore that employees' subjectivity has been neglected or badly treated. More attention should be paid to the worker, not because of human preoccupations but in order to avoid sabotage and improve quality of the performance.

Such developments follow the increasing complexity of the organization of work: cooperation is not "mechanical solidarity" (Durkheim) but requires subjective coordination and "organic solidarity." Hence a strong development of the psychology of work and ergonomics has taken place. This has produced a critique of factory work. The critic has started with two radical questionings. The first deals with the wage system as a way to subordinate and exploit people deprived of instruments of work. Subordination of the employee to the employer is not the product of an objective division of work, but the rationale of appropriation by the waged labor system of more time of labor than what is necessary to reproduce the worker. In the 1960s, satisfaction of the customer as well as satisfaction with work and achievement in employment were rebuked both by Marcuse's contestation of the society of consumers downstream and upstream by the refusal of work as such by unskilled young blue-collar workers. As a result, personal achievement through employment and work has been challenged by models of collective achievement through activity performed in the third sector of the economy that is neither market nor civil employment.

## Critical Debates

One can speak of work, labor, and activity in any kind of society. Employment does not make

sense in an aboriginal society. Employment refers to a contract ruling the relationship between the one who is giving work and the one who is taking the task and/or the job. It requires the existence of dependent labor, whatever the kind of dependence. Dependent labor is associated with a family head, a master, a boss, as an employer, and a woman, a child, a slave, a prisoner, a servant, an apprentice, a worker, as an employee (singular or plural). It goes with a sophisticated division of task and labor, codified rules regulating this relationship. The market does not imply such relation of employment. The need of a commodity or a service can lead to a commercial contract without any responsibility in employment. Outsourcing in contemporary firms often obeys their will to get rid of the employment relation so that it will shift to the subcontractor.

On the labor market, with the caveat we have noticed between market *of* commodities and market *for* a very singular commodity, the labor force (Marx as well as Marshall have thrown into relief the uniqueness of this good and this market), the situation is asymmetrical in its original setting. The position of the candidate to a wage employment is not as strong as the position of the donor of work. But soon comes another asymmetry to the detriment of the employer: what he buys through the wage is not an already made good, it is only a virtual service of a working force or capability. The description of its characteristics is not known for sure. Reciprocally, the employee does not know in advance what will be the machines and conditions he will have to work with. The description of the contract between the two parties cannot follow the model of a complete contingent contract. It cannot describe the whole set of events that can occur on both side. Buying determined time, buying fixed people (through slave disposition or binding rewards like retribution in nature) is not convenient. Simon (1951) has shown that the wage system is an incomplete and contingent contract.

What can be bought by the employer is only the willingness of the employee to lend their own capacity to work, a service. And because no one, on either side, is able to predict the future and settle how long the link will be, this service will last an undetermined or unlimited duration.

In a waged society, liberty at work does not consist only of freedom to work for one's own sake as an independent worker, but more especially to enjoy the right of breaching the labor contract. Each time this liberty is denied or somewhat limited or diminished, we are facing constricted labor. The making of the waged system of employment relation began with the manpower shortages after the Great Plague in Europe. This control of the mobility of the labor task has proved to be as important as the proletarianization of the peasants, although less studied (Moulier Boutang, 1998).

The wage system appears to enjoy a state of flourishing health. With urbanization and the decline of self-employment in agriculture, the dominant pattern in developed countries approximates 85–90 % of the active population employed in industry and service as workers paid in wage. Blue-collars workers are replaced by white collars, but no substantial increase in self-employment is observed. In developing countries, where liberal activities in crafts, agriculture, transport, fishing, and construction employed half of the active population in the 1960, globalization has accelerated the growth of paid work by blue-collar workers along with fast-growing urbanization in giant metropolises.

Some significant signals of a decline in the sustainability of the wage-earning system have appeared since the 1980s. The main consequence of this breach in the implicit contract of full employment is an unequal burden put on the shoulders of the younger generation that has been excluded from a correct level of pension in the future and confronted with increasing difficulties in access to credit and housing. This creates a sharp decline in the trust between employees and employers. Exclusion from a regulated labor market offering protection leads to a loss in consideration of the rest of the population, a lack of self-esteem, a retreat from political participation, and sometimes support for xenophobic populist solutions.

Problems of interest to a critical perspective in psychology are twofold. On the one hand,

employment as a contract regulating activity still encounters enforcement problems due to the degree of satisfaction of the dependant workers and employers in their relationship (from voice to exit solutions). On the other hand, a deeper constitutional crisis has impacted the sustainability of the contract according to contemporary changes in production of economic value. The first aspect has received a great deal of attention in management of human resources and normative law disciplines. However, the second aspect, the crisis of the category of employment, deserves closer examination because of the strategic consequences it will have on the global and political consensus about macro issues like education, welfare, wealth, and leisure.

What conclusion can one draw from this mutation of the role of dependant labor? One can compare exploitation of first level to the production of wax and honey by the bees. As in the Marxian scheme, they are obliged by the beekeeper to produce more than what would be necessary for them to feed and raise their offspring. Pollination instead is an exploitation of second level: by transferring pollen into the flowers to feed themselves, bees help the reproduction of plants. Honey as a commodity generated one billion dollars in 2010, but pollination in human agriculture cost 794 billion and between one and five trillion dollars in reproduction of the biosphere (Moulier Boutang, 2012).

Peer-to-peer cooperation (Bauwens), horizontal hierarchy, coordination through networks that do not belong to the planning model by the means of fixed price nor to the market coordination model, and a new ethic of work and activity (Pekka Himanen, 2002) are some consequences of the digital revolution. Is the old framework of waged labor an adequate tool for collecting exploitation of human interaction and invention, the correlate of pollination for the bees. If not, the traditional contract of labor that took several centuries to build up will suffer a constitutional crisis. The articulation between the wage earning system and basic an garanteed income that retributes human pollination could become the frontier for a New Welfare Deal. Will full employment in waged tasks producing commodities remain the priority, or will maximization of productive and collective pollination become the new objective?

If the comparison with pollination is enlightening, activity in nonmarketable fields may become more important than paid work and a codification of this new kind of contribution will be necessary. If this activity of human pollination is recognized, it will deserve, in one way or another, an income. In any case, the relation of employment of dependent labor will be totally upset, along with the place of work, its division, and the subjective feelings it produces.

In *Le travail sans l'homme?* (1995), Yves Clot, a French scholar in the ergonomics of work, proposes the concept of "trans subjectivity" to take into account the search by the worker for the meaning of his action and the continuous redefinition of objectives interacting with other subjects involved in the social organization of work. This concept of trans subjectivity can be compared to the notion of transculturality forged by Fernando Ortiz (1942) in order to overtake the limits of acculturation (Malinowski, 1944). There is transculturality when the ceaseless contact between two cultures does not produce the adoption of the values of the dominant society by the dominated society, as the acculturation foresees it, but the conquest of the defeated conquers the winner as the Greek culture did with the Roman Empire. The culture and the values of the market seem crushing and dominant, But it could happen that the non-merchant culture of the new digital commons, as reported by Lessig (2001) and Benkler (2006), the new understanding of the traditional old commons by Ostrom (1990), and the politics of the new Commons (Hardt & Negri, 2011) provide essential values and schemes of organization for a complete restructuring of the relation of employment under the third capitalism. Critical psychology of work, activity, and employment could experiment a renaissance.

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### Online Resources

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# Environment

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## Introduction

Psychology's main concern has been the processes within the person; thus the environment has not received much attention. While the environment plays a part in influencing the processes within a person, "environment" has been an elusive term within psychology. It has often been reduced to stimuli in behaviorist psychology or limited to "other people" in social psychology. Environmental psychology emphasizes the physical setting.

## Definition

The definition of the environment varies depending on the subfield or perspective within the discipline of psychology. The environment is often conceived as limited to discrete physical or social stimuli, and it has been argued (Proshansky, 1974) that no single theoretical task has been more neglected in traditional psychological theory and research. In environmental psychology, a subfield that considers the environment as its central theme, the environment refers to the physical setting, which includes the natural as well as the built environment (Gifford, 2007). The environment can refer to various scales ranging from work spaces to rooms, apartments, buildings, and communities. Also "environment" can be understood as an inclusive term for contextual factors, as well as for "ecology." The term ecology has seen different uses, traditionally from the focus of a person's lived world, the natural conditions as opposed to the laboratory, to current associations with sustainability.

Contrasting the reductionism of conceiving the environment of discrete stimuli received by an organism to which it reacts are the lens model

(Brunswik) and concepts such as life-space (Lewin), behavior setting (Barker), and the ecological systems approach (Bronfenbrenner). Brunswik's lens model (Brunswik, 1956) emphasizes how the organism seeks out cues from the environment from which probabilistic inferences are made that steer the course of action. Lewin's concept of life-space (Lewin, 1935) is a consideration of the environment and the possible forces (goals, barriers, positive and negative valences) that impact a person's course of action. It considers person and environment as a unit, signifying that neither person nor environment alone can account for behavior, but that person and environment have to be considered together. It is further noted that person and environment exist in a dynamic relationship. Barker (behavior setting) and Bronfenbrenner (ecological systems approach) claim to have been deeply influenced by Lewin's theory.

The concept of behavior setting (Barker, 1968; Wicker, 1987) emphasizes the role of the environment by highlighting the spatial and physical features, objects, as well as other people constituting a setting influence behavior. The implications are how a variety of specific environmental features impact the effectiveness of a person's behavior and fulfillment of goals.

The ecological systems approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) identifies various spheres or systems, such as the microsystem (environments a person has a direct interaction with, such as home, school, or work), the mesosystem (the connections and mutual influences between the microsystems), the exosystem (factors influencing the microsystems but having no direct interaction with the person), the macro-system (sociocultural, economic, and political forces), and the chronosystem (time). The ecological systems approach is an attempt to conceptualize multi-contextual influences including the impact of social policies.

## Keywords

Environmental psychology; Reductionism; Holism; Ecological perspective

## History

The origins of "modern scientific psychology," which has been referred by critical psychology as "traditional mainstream psychology" (Maiers, 1991), are dated around the beginning of the nineteenth century, contrasting the speculative psychology, which has been considered a branch of philosophy. Advances in physiology enabled to establish a link between the physical (bodily) and psychological (mental) as reflected in Fechner's psychophysics in 1860. The official founding or the birth of psychology as a science, as found in psychology textbooks (e.g., Myers, 2008), is often dated as 1879 when Wundt opened a laboratory in Leipzig, Germany, dedicated to study psychological phenomena experimentally. The so-called scientific method, which relied on experimentation and observation, was how psychology was legitimized into a science. While Wundt did not necessarily limit the scope of psychology to phenomena to be studied inside the lab via experiments, his consideration of cultural psychology (Völkerpsychologie) included phenomena to be studied outside the lab via observations received relatively little attention. The emphasis remained on the "hard" scientifically appearing sterile lab, inspired by the physical sciences. This can be seen as one way in which psychology was getting rid of the environment. Experimental psychology tends to treat the environment as a confounding variable, thus as something potentially distorting the phenomenon of interest. A main objective of science was to discover universal laws and general principles, something applicable anywhere and anytime, something not bound by context: the particularities of a specific place and time, which made the lab or an empty environment; the suitable place (or non-place) blocking the specifics of place and time; or any other potential distractions.

An additional fundamental assumption of traditional mainstream psychology is reductionism, the belief that simple phenomena underlie more complex ones or that complex phenomena can and should be reduced to simple ones. In order to study a particular phenomenon of interest, the phenomenon had to be isolated.

Thus studies in visual perception, for example, ended up in a highly unnatural setup, where the experimental subjects were restricted with a head brace, with one eye covered, looking at two-dimensional shapes. This had little relevance to how actual perceptual processes in and of real environments take place. Gibson's (1979) ecological psychology has pointed out how perception is a dynamic and multisensory process. It is not just the eye passively apprehending a single stimulus, but an actively moving head in a world with rich contextual information.

In addition to the theoretical and practical shortcomings, the "return of the environment" in psychology can be traced to the zeitgeist of the 1960s with the human rights movement, the ecology movement, and the state of architecture. These are considered as the background from which environmental psychology has emerged (Sommer, 1987). The late 1960s saw numerous activities relating to the consideration of the environment as a central theme: the oldest continuing program, the PhD program in environmental psychology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York founded in 1968, the establishment of one of the primary journals in the field *Environment and Behavior* in 1969, and Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA) that has held annual meetings since 1969 (Gifford, 2007).

The 1970s saw a rise in environmentalism and propelled the interest in environmental studies, which involved transdisciplinary endeavors often known as environment-behavior research. There was a realization that psychology had very little to say about the environment (Proshansky, 1974) and perhaps not much about human nature either (Kvale, 1992). Provoking insights came from other disciplines: Among them was ethology, where organisms are studied under natural conditions and how organisms' physical and behavioral properties can only be properly understood in relation to their environment. Philosophy offered existential phenomenology emphasizing human experiences of being-in-the-world. At Clark University the psychology and geography department began to collaborate, and several notable scholars in the field had some affiliation with the institution during that era (Canter & Craik, 1987; Koelsch, 1987). However, with the dispersal of key faculty and lack of institutional support, this collaboration faded over the years.

In 1974 the Task Force on Environment and Behavior was established by the American Psychological Association (APA) and in 1977 joined Division 34 (Population Psychology) of the APA, and Division 34 was renamed the Division of Population and Environmental Psychology. The conceptual framework that unifies population and environment is the ecological perspective that holds that populations and their environments must be viewed as integrated wholes, as well as the concerns of population growth and environmental degradation. The ecological perspective is opposed to the view that there are no inherent limits to human activities and no inherent limits to economic growth (Richards, 2000).

## Traditional Debates

While modern psychology underwent several shifts, for the most part, the environment tended to remain in the background. A major shift was from consciousness to behavior, as consciousness can only be subjectively reported and behavior can be objectively observed just like properties in the physical sciences, but psychology mostly still remained in the lab. Ironically behaviorism is often criticized for the empty-organism approach, seeing the organism as merely reacting to the environment. The behaviorist's environment however primarily consisted of limited stimuli and restricted action opportunities created by the laboratory setting. Thus behaviorism was a nearly empty-environment approach, as well.

The nearly empty-environment approach in psychology is not limited to behaviorism. As the dominance of behaviorism faded in the 1960s, humanistic psychology shifted the focus from merely behaving to acting and cognitive psychology from merely behaving to thinking. However, a problem remained because humanistic psychology was about "humans without environments" and cognitive psychology "minds without worlds."

The nearly empty-environment approach applies to numerous other major perspectives and subfields within psychology. Most applied fields in psychology exclusively on the individual rather than the individual in context. Even social psychology usually limited its treatment of the environment to the "social environment" – other people, often confederates in a lab. The article "College Sophomores in the Laboratories" (Sears, 1986) highlights the inherent limitations of the psychological studies, as the majority of them are conducted on, as the title suggests, college sophomores in the laboratory. Whenever environmental factors are considered, studies tend to focus on one particular aspect of the environment (e.g., lighting, noise).

Another way in which the environment is considered tends to be as a sweeping term, as the factors that cannot be accounted for genetically. In such instances, at heart lies the interest in the degree of genetic role rather than role of the environment. Similarly clinical psychology has the tendency to attribute psychological problems and potential solutions within the person, regardless of the perspective within clinical psychology – whether it is a matter of the neurotransmitters, which would be addressed with medication, or having maladaptive behavioral and mental processes, which would be addressed by retraining or reprogramming the person.

## Critical Debates

Traditional debates have often given inadequate treatment of the environment and tended to have a highly dualistic view fundamentally seeing the person separate from the environment. The assumption that the person and related psychological concepts and phenomena such as the self, consciousness, and behavior can be isolated from context has been pointed out as a major shortcoming of modern psychology (Kvale, 1992). More current views highlight context, considering the person part of the environment or situating the person-in-the-environment. More recent developments in cognitive psychology include an embedded-embodied approach which situates the mind in a body and in an environment (Clark, 1998; Varela, Rosch, & Thompson, 1993).

Concepts such as distributed cognition and situated learning, and a revival of the cultural-historical approach reflect a more contextual approach: Knowledge and skills are not situated within a person, but exist in the relationship with the world with its tools and resources, and as a property of the working collective. While these views reflect a shift from an absolutist to a more relativist position, sociocultural variations still need to be grounded in the reality of the physical environment. Along these lines is again a rejection of a highly dualistic view with sharp distinctions between the sociocultural and the physical, the built (the human made) and the natural: Any activity needs to "take place" somewhere, which shapes the environment and is shaped by the environment.

Traditionally as well as currently psychological problems are often primarily seen as problems within the person (or the neurotransmitters), not with social or environmental conditions (Hedges & Burchfield, 2005). Changes need to occur within the person, not the social and environmental conditions that may have contributed to the problem. Community psychology does take these factors into consideration and looks at health in a more comprehensive way. Generally speaking, however, it is easier to change one's view of the world than it is to change the world, and addressing social and environmental conditions may go beyond the role and scope of psychology. This view, however, is not necessarily shared by all psychologists, particularly environmental psychologists, whose aim is to study the impact of the real world with its social and environmental issues. In many instances environmental psychology aspires to "make a difference" and "improve the world" going beyond making recommendations to actually changing environments (Gifford, 2002).

## International Relevance

Technically the environment is relevant everywhere. Every nation has an environment with its opportunities and challenges. Particular environmental issues, such as resource and waste

management, environmental risks, as well as the perception of these issues can vary greatly. And yet, the environmental issues as well as environmental attitudes and behaviors (or the lack of) are rarely contained within national boundaries (e.g., global warming, radiation contamination).

While the United States in the 1970s showed some indication of environmental concern, in the 1980s, with a change in political climate, economic priorities led to a decline in environmental interest and funding.

In Europe and internationally, commitments with regard to environmental topics, particularly those concerned with pro-environmental behaviors, appear more dominant. The European and international counterparts to the American journal and research association are *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, established in 1981, known for its international emphasis, as well as the International Association for People-Environment Studies (IAPS).

Outside North America and Europe is the Man-Environment Research Association (MERA) in Japan. Founded in 1982, MERA is an interdisciplinary research association with its primary objectives to facilitate advancement of the science and technology in human-environment research. This research is to aid the creation of an environment that meets human demands and the advancement quality of life.

The Environmental Psychology Division (Division 4) of the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP) was founded in 1982 to facilitate the activities of researchers in the multidisciplinary environment-behavior-design area. Throughout the world, with its rapid development, an environmental psychological perspective would highlight the importance of viewing the environment not just a means for production and consumption but as a vital foundation for people's health, well-being, ways of life, and sense of identity.

## Practice Relevance

Environmental psychology focuses on environmental justice (addressing geographical inequities such as the access to resources and exposure to hazards from industrial production, consumption, and waste), sustainability (promoting pro-environmental behaviors, such as reducing consumption and waste), and design (improving user-friendliness and user satisfaction via research-based design, which includes user-need analysis, participatory design, and post-occupancy evaluation).

Environmental psychology can be considered to be interdisciplinary. In order to study the phenomena of interest or to impact the world, it is often necessary to look beyond one's discipline and work across disciplines and professions, such as design, architecture, urban planning, and public policy. Thus the environment, whether referring to design issues, environmental justice, or sustainability, cannot be sufficiently addressed by psychology alone, which has been reflected in terms such as environment-behavior studies and human-environment relations.

The environmental psychological perspective would argue that people's mental health and well-being can be improved by changes in social and environmental conditions. While obvious, it seems a neglected aspect in need of more serious consideration, particularly when governments tend to prioritize the economy without much consideration over health and quality of life issues.

## Future Directions

The political climate of the 2000s in the United States may be epitomized by the refusal to sign the Kyoto Protocol. However, the current economic crisis and mounting ecological concerns may initiate a much needed paradigm shift.

In 2011 Division 34 of the APA was renamed from the Division of Population and Environmental Psychology to the Society for Environmental, Population and Conservation Psychology. The term "society" was chosen for its spirit of inclusiveness, welcoming people from all disciplines and professions, who share the interest. The addition of the term "conservation" was to highlight the commitment to conserving the environment. The name change, in

particular the inclusion of the word "conservation," approved by vote was not without controversy, as it seemed to undermine environmental psychology's tradition with its commitment to the environment. Furthermore, the term conservation signifying the commitment to the environment can be questionable, as the conservation may imply consuming or spending sparingly but consuming and spending nevertheless.

It appears that the roles of psychology in sustainability will continue to be important in identifying factors facilitating or hindering sustainable behaviors. While the science and technology to address some of the pressing issues are available, the psychological challenge is how to get them implemented (Gardner & Stern, 2002). The most urgent issue to date appears to be the ecological crisis and globalization at the expense of the health and well-being, which requires not only the collaboration of disciplines and professions but an international collaboration between governments and organizations.

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### Online Resources

APA Division 34: http://www.apadivisions.org/division-34/index.aspx

EDRA: http://www.edra.org/

IAAP Division 4: http://www.iaapsy.org/division4/

IAPS: http://www.iaps-association.org/

MERA: http://www.mera-web.jp/index-e.html

# Environmental Psychology, Overview


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## Introduction

While the conceptual framework of environmental psychology developed in the work of the

psychology's nineteenth-century founders, it was not until the 1960s that environmental psychology was announced as a formal interdisciplinary field. Environmental psychology examines the interplay, interrelationships, and transactions between humans and their physical surroundings, including built and natural environments. Rather than a specific branch or specialized subdiscipline of psychology, environmental psychology is an interdisciplinary social science which draws from a variety of disciplines, including geography, anthropology, sociology, public policy, education, architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, education, and psychology, especially social and developmental psychology. Environmental psychology is also known as environmental social science or environmental behavior among other monikers. The field consistently pushes the boundaries of mainstream psychology in its call to account for contextual factors that inform human behavior, perception, and cognition. Environmental psychology continues to act as a key contributor to work on critical psychology through its use and development of interdisciplinary research related to real world issues.

## Definition

Environmental psychology can be broadly defined as the study of how people relate to and define their sense of space and place and how space and place relate to and define people. Beyond the most commonly used "environmental psychology," other terms for or versions of the field include environmental social science, environmental behavior, ecological psychology, ecopsychology, environmental sociology, urban anthropology, behavioral geography, psychogeography, human factors science, cognitive ergonomics, architectural psychology, socio-architecture, environment and behavior studies, human-environment relations, person-environment studies, social ecology, and environmental design research. First theoretically articulated in the work of Lefebvre (1991) and Harvey (1973), the field has always worked from a perspective that space is produced in the way it is perceived, conceived, and lived, rather than seen as preexisting and total. Environmental psychology's participatory, problem-solving, and agentic orientation develops from the field's efforts to do research beyond the lab, i.e., in the context of everyday lives and places.

## Keywords

Life space; Behavior settings; Affordances; Place identity; Place attachment; Production of space; Geographical imagination

## History

Throughout the development of psychology as a field, environment often has been used described as the "context" in which a person dwelled, worked, and/or leisured. However, more exacting studies of human-environment relations began with the work of the field's founders, including John Dewey, William James, Jakob von Uexküll, and Charles Pierce. For example, Dewey's (1896) landmark work on the reflex arc denied the separation between stimulus (outside of the person and in the environment) and response (from within the person) by proving the interrelatedness of events, environments, and people. As such, cause and effect, much like people and space, are connected rather than distinct.

With the emergence of social and developmental psychologies in the first half of the twentieth century, work on psychological studies became more attuned to the role of environment. A signature focus for mid-century psychology, social psychologists like Kurt Lewin struggled to understand how war came to pass, particularly the violent atrocities of World War II. The role of place and context became amplified in these studies of culture and nation through studies of violence and peace. At the same time, major developmental psychological theorists such as Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Urie Bronfenbrenner paid special attention to the

ways children develop not only in relation to other individuals and groups but also through physical settings, material tools, and sociocultural contexts.

The environmental crisis and the radically charged ideas of going beyond laboratory studies in psychology provided a groundswell for the congealing of environmental psychology as a field unto itself. The first program in environmental psychology was founded at the City University of New York's (CUNY) Brooklyn College in the early 1960s; the only PhD granting environmental psychology program continues to reside at the CUNY Graduate Center soon after. However, the aim of environmental psychology as expressed by the collective work of these scholars and their research sought to confront pressing problems of everyday life in ways that connect the experience of the individual to complex environmental systems. Shortly thereafter, Proshansky, Ittleson, and Rivlin (1970) released the seminal *Environmental Psychology: Man and His Physical Setting*. Those working on environmental psychology or the field under one of its other monikers included psychologists Roger Barker, Egon Brunswik, J.J. Gibson, William Ittleson, Stanley Milgram, Harold Proshansky, Leanne Rivlin, Robert Sommer, and Joachim Wohlwill; anthropologists Edmund T. Hall and Amos Rapoport; geographers William Bunge, Peter Gould, and Yi-Fu Tuan; architect Christopher Alexander; urban planner Kevin Lynch; and social theorist Guy Debord. These studies focused on issues of crowding, personal space, territoriality, environmental cognition, childhood spaces, institutional environments, and environmental stress.

Since this time, the field continues to grow and draws centrally upon the work of geographer David Harvey and social theorists such as Michel Foucault, Jane Jacobs, and Henri Lefebvre. Recently, huge advances in the field were made by Heft's (2001) work in integrating multiple approaches and ideas of environmental perception and behavior under the umbrella concept of ecological psychology.

Environmental perception encompasses the way humans perceive and take in their environments which in turn helps to reveal processes at work in cognition. A keyword in the study of environmental perception is Lewin's (1943) concept of the *life space*, which describes the internalization of external environmental factors and stimuli into a sort of force field in which the person lives their life. Lewin felt that the external environment or field, per a Gestalt psychological framework, is dynamic that changes over time, across spaces, and with experience, and, as such, people change over time as well. Both environmental perception and experience heavily inform notions of personal space, the immediate area surrounding a person which is psychologically regarded as one's own.

Environmental experience addresses the interplay between cognition and received knowledge that is made useful and/or personal. In an effort to understand how our environments affect our behavior and vice versa, studies of behavior and environment formed both with and against notions of environmentalism determinism, i.e., that environment determines behaviors. Barker (1968) posited the concept of *behavior settings* whereby certain settings inform if not enforce certain types of behaviors, i.e., when entering a classroom as students, we are inclined to sit at desks. He based this concept on over a year's worth of observations by himself and his team of the entire population of a small town in the Midwestern US in the 1940s. Subsequent research on behavior settings instead suggested that settings can influence behavior, but human-environment relations are also effected by stages of the life cycle, resources, internal dynamics, and context (Wicker, 1987).

The keyword *affordances* (Gibson, 1979) is particularly helpful in studies of environmental perception and behavior. Affordances are the qualities afforded an object or environment that allow an individual or group to perform an action or series of actions. For example, a bowl can be an eating tool to an adult, as well as a drum or hat to a child.

The relation of place and identity has been on long-standing import in environmental psychology because it gives words to the meaning of an individual's or group's environmental sense and experience. In her review of the study

of the emotional relationships to places, Manzo finds that "affective relationships to places (1) encompass a broad range of physical settings and emotions; (2) are an ever-changing, dynamic phenomenon, (3) are both unconscious and conscious, and (4) exist within a larger sociopolitical milieu" (2003, p. 48). The most well-known concept regarding the study of place and experience of place-making and experience of place-making in environmental psychology is *place identity*. Proshansky, Fabian, and Kaminoff (1983) define place identity as a substructure of a person's self-identity consisting of cognitions developed in their everyday lives and physical spaces. In other words, place identities are the ways identities form in relation to our environments (c.f. Manzo, 2003). In a related vein, *place attachment* (Low & Altman, 1992) describes the ways people bond to places and the effects of such attachments in identity development, perception, and behavior.

As a problem-oriented approach to the field necessarily relates to social and political concerns, environmental psychology also draws upon and informs a number of sociopolitical concepts regarding people, place, and space. Most importantly, environmental psychology builds from a perspective that space is socially produced. Lefebvre (1991) defines the *production of space* in how space is all at once perceived, conceived, and lived (see also Harvey, 1973). Similarly, Harvey's (2005) concept of the *geographical imagination* defines how we imagine and think about space and, in turn, enact spaces our everyday lives. As such Harvey argues that the geographical imagination is also a tool to be used in order to produce new kinds of spaces and places, and to continually break free from old, limiting models, systems, and ideas.

Environmental psychology became increasingly popular and a handful of programs were founded throughout the 1970s and 1980s, namely, in the USA and western European countries. The next generations of environmental psychologists include and draw upon the work of psychologists Irwin Altman, Caitlin Cahill, Gary Evans, Robert Gifford, Harry Heft, Rachel Kaplan, Stephen Kaplan, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Susan Saegert, Daniel Stokols, Gary Winkel, and Allan Wicker; geographers Roger Hart and Cindi Katz; anthropologists Tim Ingold and Setha Low; sociologist Eugene Rochberg-Halton; architectural historians Dolores Hayden and J.B. Jackson; art critic Lucy Lippard; architects and planners David Chapin, Lynne Manzo, and John Seley; and social theorists Pierre Bourdieu and Donna Haraway.

Environmental psychologists employ a number of methodologies including participant observation, interviews, focus groups, visual analysis, GIS mapping, and surveys. Mental mapping, also known as cognitive mapping, is particularly characteristic of the field. Mental mapping is the representation of an individual or group's cognitive map, hand sketched and/or computer assisted, in drafting and labeling a map or adding to and labeling an already existing map. Other key methods include environment behavior mapping, transect walks, and post-occupancy evaluation.

Grounded in a long history of co-research in the field rather than in a laboratory, environmental psychologists are likely to work *with* research participants rather than study about them. As a result, environmental psychology has been informative of recent critical psychological research using participatory action research (PAR) designs. Even in its model-based studies which are performed to enhance reasonable and healthy behavior, environmental psychology orients itself in a contextualized approach to solving real world issues. For example, studies of wayfinding and movement are performed to enhance productivity and sense of self rather than in an effort to control and manipulate. PAR work questions mainstream experimental approaches to psychology and hence calls for a rethinking of the epistemological structure and findings of psychological research and social science research as a whole.

## Critical Debates

By the 1990s, Stokols (1995) pointed out the "paradox" of environmental psychology which

still persists today, i.e., with so much research relevant to and drawing upon environmental psychology, why has the field itself not grown, and why are the number of programs so few (see also Saegert & Winkel, 1990)? Opotow and Gieseking (2011) suggest that many psychologists still assume the environment, i.e., "context," is still considered to be background noise to mainstream psychology rather than a variable or component of study. As such, environmental psychology's contributions have been many in the last four decades and still must be heeded and encouraged to grow.

Recent studies continue to challenge disciplinary and conceptual boundaries by highlighting the coproduction of place and identity, the co-constitution of physical and virtual environments, the social production of the natural as well as built environment, and the interrelationships between public and private space. Prominent areas of research now include home and housing, children's environments and aging environments, restorative environments, wayfinding and movement, post-occupancy evaluation, practices of and consciousness regarding environmental sustainability, and food environments.

The issue of geographical scale has also served a key issue of debate in the last decades. Marston (2000) points out that different scales may seem fixed in our imaginations, but they are actually socially produced; she explicitly discusses the scales of the body, home, neighborhood, nation-state, and the global (see also Smith, 1996). Drawing upon this work, Pratt and Rosner (2013) went even further to rethink how the binary of global–local pairs to masculinist-feminist dualism. They describe the levels in which power works through policies, problems, and people at all of the scales Marston outlines and pair the global with the intimate to produce more complex and critical analysis.

As international movements grow to combat inequalities and injustices, public space is often at the heart of these inquiries and contentious debates. Public space serves as the physical apparition of what is at stake in the representation of democracy and community in the social life and economic ownership of public spaces (see Gieseking, Mangold, Katz, Low, & Saegert, 2014; Low & Smith, 2005). Those spaces marked as public and/or private are also productions of social and material systems and are the basis for a rich source of literature in which public and private are interrelated and interdependent concepts, each helping to form the other. Breaking open the fixation on space rather than human-environment interactions in these public-private discussions, recent research has begun to increasingly address the body in space and concepts of embodied space (see Gieseking et al., 2014; Ingold, 2000).

Building from these participatory perspectives, critical debates presently relate to these core topics: whether or not and, if so, how "nature" is restorative and what are our roles in creating and sustaining nature? How do we become attached to place versus integrate ourselves into a place, and integrate a place into our lives? How do ecological approaches support (or even thwart) more critical approaches? How is the affect of a place produced and shared? How are places and spaces embodied? Overall, these topics and issues point to environmental psychology's continued interest both in fine-tuning and expanding our understanding of environmental perception, behavior, cognition, and action.

## International Relevance

The primary associations for environmental psychological research are International Association of People-Environment Studies (IAPS) in Europe; Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA); Man-Environment Research Association (MERA) in Japan; People and Physical Environment Research Organization (PAPER) in Australia and New Zealand; as well as the Society for Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), American Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA), Interior Design Educators Council (IDEC), Association of American

Geographers (AAG), and American Anthropological Association (AAA). The core journals for the field include *Journal of* Environmental Psychology, *Environment and Behavior*, *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, *Population and Environment*, and, in the past, *Architecture and Behavior*. Other major journals publishing environmental psychological work include *Journal of Social Issues*, *Qualitative Inquiry*, *Journal of Architectural Education*, and *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*.

## Future Directions

In a review of the status of the field, Stokols (1995) put forth a list of future research concerns that environmental psychology must tackle: (1) environmental change at the global level; (2) intergroup relations and crime; (3) effects of new technologies on everyday life; (4) health promotion; and (5) aging. While the field has already begun to confront these dilemmas, much more remains to be done about these problems and issues. In the 75th anniversary issue of the *Journal of Social Issues*, Opotow and Gieseking (2011) suggested that psychological conceptualizations of the environment should include but must extend beyond environmentalism to multiple ways of thinking about sustainability within the physical environment. As most of the world's population will be based in urban areas, environmental psychologists understand that focusing to urban concerns is as paramount as addressing environmental policy.

A new generation of activisms in the form of groups such as Arab Spring, Occupy, and hacktivisms reinspires work needed to be done on territoriality, indigeneity, and occupation. At the same time, these movements call attention to the critical work needed to help confront inequalities and injustices. Many of the concepts and keywords of environmental psychology build heavily upon concepts of territoriality and presume the ability to claim and occupy space; however, histories of oppressed groups show that such an ability is not always possible, and these perspectives should be noted in future research.

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## Epistemological Violence

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### Introduction

It is a historical fact that empirical psychology (and other empirical social sciences) has produced research work that must be labeled as racist, classist, sexist, etc. Empirical methods and commitments to empiricism and "objectivity" could not prevent the reality that minorities, women, gays and lesbians, subaltern groups, lower classes, people with disabilities, etc. were portrayed as inferior or as a problem when differences were found. How was (and is) that possible and how should this "knowledge" produced in scientific racism, sexism, classism, etc. be characterized? How can it be understood from the perspective of persons or groups who are constructed in harmful ways? Teo (2008, 2010, 2011a, b) has argued that harmful empirical "knowledge" (results and interpretations) that is disseminated in academic work on race, gender, class, disability, homosexuality, etc. can be understood as a form of *violence*.

In order to understand the construction of harmful knowledge of the *Other*, one can analyze empirical psychology on the background of four perspectives: (a) *Internalist reconstructions* focus on the epistemological (sometimes ontological) problems of empirical psychology. Studies in this tradition assess the quality of methodologies and methods and focus on sampling problems, selective data reporting, and the validity or reliability or meaningfulness of concepts and instruments. (b) *Externalist reconstructions* address why researchers are interested in studying particular topics and might identify underlying social, historical, political, economic, financial, and personal interests. (c) *Reconstructions of application* look at how research has been used in practice, which may reach from individual behavioral interventions to social and governmental policies. (d) *Reconstructions of interpretations* assess the quality of the interpretation of data and address the relationship between empirical results and *discussion* in psychological studies. All four types of reconstructions complement each other and provide a better understanding of the meaning of empirical research on the *Other* in psychology.

The term epistemological violence was introduced in the *context of interpretations* of empirical data in psychology (Teo, 2008). Knowledge that is produced by psychological studies contains empirical results and theoretical interpretations. The interpretations are not determined by data and require a hermeneutic process. For example, if one finds differences in IQ between two groups, which may be an empirical result, the interpretation that this difference is a result of nature is an interpretation that is not determined by data showing empirical differences. This interpretation is speculative and underdetermined by the data themselves. The term epistemological violence does not refer to the misuse of research in general but refers to theoretical interpretations of empirical results that produce harm for the *Other* in a given community. Interpretations of inferiority, or the problematizations of groups, are not determined by empirical data.

In a critical sense, interpretations are actions of a subject against an "object." These actions are violent when they produce harm (Waldron, 2012). The word *epistemological* in the concept suggests that theoretical interpretations are framed as *knowledge* about the *Other* when in

reality they are *interpretations*. The term *violence* denotes that this "knowledge" has a negative impact on the *Other* or that theoretical interpretations are produced to the detriment of the *Other*. The negative impact can range from misrepresentations and distortions to a neglect of the voices of the Other, to propositions of inferiority, and to the recommendations of adverse practices or infringements concerning the *Other*.

## Definition

Epistemological violence is a practice that is presented in empirical research articles, chapters, and books in psychology (and the social sciences), when theoretical interpretations of empirical results implicitly or explicitly construct the *Other* as inferior or problematic, despite the fact that alternative interpretations, equally viable, based on the data, are available. If an empirical difference is interpreted as inferiority or problematizes the *Other*, whether this theorizing has epistemological or practical consequences, then one should speak of a form of violence that is produced in "knowledge." Interpretations of data turn into epistemological violence.

## Keywords

Epistemology; violence; harm; underdetermination; racism; sexism; hermeneutics; interpretation; speculation

## Traditional Debates

The problem of speculation in psychological research has been understood by many mainstream psychologists and has been used as a tool to invoke the shortcomings of other researchers' studies (Teo, 2008). Current psychologists in academia do not understand their own research as speculative because hypotheses and, to a certain degree, theories are assumed to be tested through observations and experiments. Yet, even in experiments the relationship between theories and experiments, or data and interpretations, is underdetermined. In that sense, speculation remains an essential part of the *interpretation* of empirical data (results) because results do not *determine* interpretations. If results determined interpretations, then psychologists would not need to present discussions because results would be sufficient by themselves. Discussions always and necessarily include *interpretative speculations*.

The traditional philosophy of science has identified this problem as the underdetermination of theory by data (Quine, 1969). The *underdetermination thesis* suggests that radically different theories can be supported equally on empirical grounds. This thesis was developed in the context of the natural sciences by the physicist Duhem (1905/1954), who suggested that experiments in physics contain observations of phenomena *and* theoretical interpretations. Within the logic of empirical research in the discipline of psychology, this notion entails that the *realm of data* is not identical with the *realm of the interpretation of the data*. Discussions impart meaning to data and make results understandable for the authors themselves, peers, an audience, or a readership. This phenomenon, the *hermeneutic surplus* of interpretation, suggests that through interpretations, data are understood better than if they were to present themselves. From this point of view, what are labeled "facts" are indeed data *and* the interpretations of data. This hermeneutic surplus is often the most important part of a study because it is conveyed to peers in presentations, to students in the form of textbooks, and to the general public via the mass media.

The relationship between theory and experiment was also discussed by the critical psychologist Klaus Holzkamp (1964/1981), who addressed the relationship between experimental practices and theoretical conceptualizations. He concluded that theoretical conceptualizations are *not determined* by experimental data. He demonstrated that the theoretical interpretation of experimental results is not binding and that there exist no criteria in experimental psychology for establishing particular theoretical interpretations as valid. It is impossible to determine which interpretation is best represented by a given experimental result.

## Critical Debates

Modifications to an individualistic and narrow concept of violence have been proposed in the history of the social sciences. Galtung (1969) developed a now-famous distinction between personal and structural violence, arguing convincingly that structures such as social injustice can be understood as violence. The term *epistemological violence* (EV) follows this tradition and applies it to academic knowledge. EV is closer to personal violence in that it has a subject, an object, and an action, even if the violence is indirect and nonphysical. In the empirical social sciences, the subject of violence is the researcher (or researchers), the object is the *Other*, and the action is the interpretation of data that is presented as knowledge.

The term *epistemic violence* was developed by Spivak (1988) to identify the various projects in history, culture, literature, and philosophy through which the colonial subject has been constituted as "Other." In her postcolonial analyses, Spivak suggested that the *subaltern* woman was not solely politically and economically oppressed and dispossessed but that she existed in a shadow, was unable to speak, and had no history, not in Western contexts but also not in her own native culture. Spivak applied the term *epistemic violence* to the knowledge practices of colonialism in "third-world" countries. However, in order to do justice to the methodological nature of the problem in the empirical sciences, more precisely in empirical psychology, which was not a concern for Spivak, the term *epistemological violence* was suggested (Teo, 2008).

Theoretical statements about the *Other* are very powerful in psychology because they appear to be based on empirical studies. The past successes and to a certain degree the current shaping of discourse on the *Other* can be attributed to psychologists' accepted usage of empirical mainstream methods that are applied, for example, to the comparison of racialized groups. Social, historical, philosophical, and political challenges to this type of research are quickly dismissed by the argument that critics do not use statistical testing. An analysis of the context of discovery is seen as irrelevant to the actual results of experimental and empirical studies. One could argue that ideas and hypotheses themselves are violent, but within the logic of mainstream research, hypotheses and ideas are not considered knowledge; yet, the theoretical interpretation of empirical data is presented and understood as *knowledge*. A focus on the theoretical interpretations of empirical data puts the onus back on the researcher to justify his or her interpretations, instead of on critics focusing on research motives.

The concept of epistemological violence is descriptive although it has moral connotations. The concept is not about political correctness but about scientific correctness, which is an epistemological as well as a moral concept. It is easy to train individuals to identify epistemological violence in an article when they look at the problem of *representation* (do the empirical propositions allow one to test the theoretical propositions and do the theoretical propositions represent the empirical data?), the problem of *underdetermination* (do the empirical results determine the theoretical interpretations or do equally viable alternative theoretical interpretations exist?), and is the *Other* constructed as inferior or as problematic?

It should be said that liberal or progressive interpretations of differences regarding the *Other* may also be underdetermined by data and nonrepresentative of empirical results. However, if the theoretical interpretations do not construct the *Other* as inferior or problematic, then these theoretical propositions are not epistemologically violent. For example, to interpret empirical difference, namely, the underrepresentation of women faculty at elite universities as a reflection of women being less intelligent than men, or that women are not able to fill the extreme ends of a normal distribution, is an epistemologically violent interpretation of empirical data. To interpret the same difference of the same empirical study as a reflection of women being oppressed at elite universities should also be identified as an underdetermination and representation problem, but such a proposition would not be epistemologically violent to women.

There are at least two forms of EV surrounding interpretations: The interpretation itself can be a form of violence, for instance, because the concept of "race" is not challenged and when psychological group differences are understood as inherited; and the interpretation can be violent because specific policy recommendations are made or accepted (e.g., regarding the separation or segregation of the two groups). Traditional psychologists will have fewer problems with the second kind of EV, because it reinforces the distinction between facts and decisions. However, the first form of EV might be more contentious among traditional psychologists because it requires an understanding of the historical and theoretical situatedness of concepts, as well as an acceptance of the idea that empirically validated research itself can have a negative impact on human groups, when negative interpretations are underdetermined.

The idea that group A is intellectually inferior by nature when expressed in an academic publication has consequences for the members of group A or for group non-A readers who might construct the members of group A as intellectually inferior and who might change their behavior as a consequence. A close look at this type of research shows that the theory (that group A is intellectually inferior by nature to group non-A) has never been tested, but empirical findings of difference are interpreted as if this were the case. This theoretical proposition itself is violent even if it does not lead to practical harm. This can be compared to the throw of a fist of an attacker whereby the target ducks and the attacker misses. The act of consciously throwing the fist itself is violent whether the target is hit or not. It should be mentioned that in the history of race studies, worldviews, behaviors, and policies have changed negatively because of epistemologically violent interpretations by empirical researchers and psychologists (e.g., Gould, 1996).

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# Epistemology

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## Introduction

The term "epistemology" originated to designate a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge, focused on articulating criteria for defining knowledge, for adjudicating knowledge claims, and for specifying "valid" knowledge generating procedures. Epistemology can also be understood to refer to societal discourses of knowledge that inform people's understandings and that configure how different social agents are evaluated as knowledge

producers, hence its relevance for psychological concerns. Whereas traditional debates in contemporary Western philosophy tend to focus on formal criteria for defining knowledge, critiques of knowledge from feminist theory, postcolonial critiques and other critical perspectives emphasize instead the situatedness and historicity of discourses of knowledge, their power-infused nature, and the politics of their social construction. Within psychology, the term has been extended in recent decades to denote the study of individuals' conception of what knowledge consists of, or "personal epistemology." Cognitive psychological approaches to personal epistemology are implicitly rooted, though loosely so, in traditional philosophical conceptions, while more recent approaches, especially from feminist perspectives, emphasize the relations between personal epistemology and the subject's social location.

## Definition

As an academic field, epistemology is the study of how knowledge is defined and attained. More broadly, the epistemology of a society or a group is the conception of knowledge that guides its social practices.

## Keywords

Knowledge; power; social location; feminism; discourse; politics

## Traditional Debates

Within the historically dominant, normative tradition on epistemology in Western philosophy, knowledge has generally been defined as justified true belief. Debates center on the nature of justification and the definition of criteria for stating that "S knows p" or "S is justified in believing p," where S is the subject and p is the object of knowledge. One debate contrasts foundationalists, for whom justification ultimately relies on inferences from basic, unquestionable beliefs, and coherentists, who emphasize relationships between beliefs and conceive of justification as involving maximal consistency with existing beliefs. The kinds of beliefs considered basic for foundationalists are another area of debate; for empiricists, basic beliefs are those gained through perception or empirical experience, while rationalists hold that at least some basic beliefs rely on a prior knowledge and rational intuition. More recently, alternative conceptualizations of knowledge have developed, with one prominent approach ("contextualism") including the conversational/practical context of utterance in its evaluation of *S knows that p*. In contrast to the normative tradition which assesses knowledge according to formal criteria, a more recent, naturalist tradition takes into consideration the human agent and the conditions through which the belief was produced, such as the reasons for the belief as causally reasonable or its source as reliable (Sosa, Kim, Fantl, & McGrath, 2008).

Cognitive research on personal epistemology (Hofer & Pintrich, 2002) can be seen as an indirect psychological outgrowth of this philosophical tradition. Research focuses on people's beliefs about knowledge and learning, describes on empirical grounds different forms a personal epistemology can take, and explores the nature of epistemological thinking. A related literature guided by those notions examines epistemological development and the role of personal epistemology in educational contexts. While this research is descriptive and hence ostensibly detached from the normative concerns of mainstream epistemology, it shares some of its paradigmatic aspects. For the most part, in line with the mainstream philosophical tradition and with mainstream cognitive psychology, this work has considered the person as a generic knower and has not placed theoretical attention on the particularity of people's social location.

## Critical Debates

Critical debates center on three issues, closely intertwined: the politics of knowledge, the social

and historical locatedness of discourses of knowledge, and the indissoluble relation between the knowing subject and the knowledge produced. Critical analyses from sociology, feminist theory, or cultural studies elaborate on the fundamental link between power and discourses of knowledge. The concept of power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980) is widely used to convey their intrinsic intertwining. Epistemology, in aiming to define the nature of knowledge, is highlighted as a paramount power/knowledge system by postcolonial and feminist critics, who highlight in particular the constitutive role that colonialist expansion has played in the formulation and the implementation of Western epistemology and in the marginalization or suppression of other discourses of knowledge (e.g., Collins, 1990; Narayan & Harding, 2000). A growing literature on African epistemologies discusses concepts of knowledge, truth, and the person rooted in African traditions of thought (e.g., Coetzee & Roux, 2003), as well as the problematic tensions between authenticity and modernity in African philosophy after colonialism and the African postcolonial critiques of Eurocentrism (Eze, 1997). A recent philosophical collection on epistemologies of ignorance importantly emphasizes how epistemological ignorance by dominant groups is not accidental but is actively produced and sustained, and the strategic role it plays in perpetuating racism and white privilege (Sullivan & Tuana, 2007).

Against the "view from nowhere" and the generic subject of mainstream epistemology, feminist philosophical critiques emphasize that the knowing subject – the researcher/theorist – is inextricably part of the knowing process and that he/she occupies a particular social location constituted in historically specific ways by social formations such as 'race,' class, gender, and institutional privilege (e.g., Alcoff & Potter, 1993; Tuana & Morgen, 2001). For feminist standpoint theories, this social location affords a particular standpoint (albeit neither automatically nor deterministically) that configures as well as places limits on what can be apprehended and on the 'knowledge' that is produced. Hence Western epistemology, in contrast to its foundational aspirations, is a "local knowledge system" (Harding, 1998). One debate centers on whether to theorize a group's social location primarily in terms of social structure or in terms of a poststructuralist approach in which it is discourse (and the contingent discursive construction of meanings and subjectivities) that are primary in shaping the social world (Harding, 2004). Another debate is whether or not the standpoint of oppressed groups is epistemically privileged by virtue of affording understandings that are not readily available to dominant groups because of the blinders associated with privilege (e.g., Alcoff & Potter, 1993).

One line of feminist critiques interrogates rationalism and objectivity. Critiques stress that the rationalist conception of reason as separate from emotion or value and as promoting abstract thought over concrete knowledge is socially located and historically specific and that, as a dominant discourse of knowledge in Western thought since the Enlightenment, it has functioned as a power/knowledge system (e.g., Antony & Witt, 2002; Falmagne & Hass, 2002). Related critiques interrogate objectivity as an ideal premised on the misguided notion that the subject of knowledge can be detached from the knowing process (e.g., Antony & Witt, 1993; Harding, 1998). Some critics have also focused specifically on the relations between rationalism (and rationality as traditionally conceived) and the way in which masculinity is symbolized, and emphasize how the construction of ideals of rationality and objectivity is guided by metaphors of masculinity (e.g., Bordo, 1990; Lloyd, 1984).

A recent line of psychological research guided by a feminist perspective approaches personal epistemology contextually, with a particular focus on gender and, more recently, on the simultaneous efficacy of gender, race, and class in the formation of approaches to knowledge. An initial, influential study motivated by the male gendering of epistemology and of psychological research and using a large sample of women from diverse educational, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds examines the woman's conception of knowledge and on her sense of herself as a knowing agent through contextual analyses

of in-depth interviews (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986) and distinguished different positions, or kinds of knowers, described contextually in relation to their particular social experience: silence, received knowing, subjective knowing, procedural knowing, connected knowing, and constructed knowing. A later collection includes various extensions and elaborations on these ideas (Goldberger, Tarule, Clinchy, & Belenky, 1996), as well as responses to the debates generated by Belenky et al. (1986). Expanding beyond the original arguments regarding the gendering of approaches to knowledge and learning, the essays address the way in which race, class, and culture intersect with gender in constituting social location and experience. The collection also includes the further exploration of connected knowing, a mode of knowing that involves holding on to one's view loosely while extending one's understanding to competing views, and of collaborative knowing, a mode of knowing derived from the feminist philosophical critiques of individualistic conception of knowledge (Alcoff & Potter, 1993). Pedagogical implications of these notions are discussed in some essays and in an extensive subsequent literature by those authors and others.

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## Online Resources

For traditional debates: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epistemology, http://www/rep.routhledge.com/article/P059

For feminist epistemologies: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-epistemology, http://www.iep.utm.edu/fem-epis/

# Essentialism, Overview


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## Introduction

Within various disciplines, the issue of essentialism arises when clarity of identity and belonging to a collective are called for or threatened, such as in recognitions, protections, or refutations of essentialist criteria for gender, sexual orientation, race, developmental norms, and other concerns.

## Definition

Essentialism is the denoting of nonnegotiable qualities that identify or make a thing, person, encounter, or event what it is and not something else.

## Keywords

Essentialism; multiculturalism; haecceity; identity; difference; universals; nominalism; existentialism

## History

The history of essentialist thinking reaches back thousands of years as the search for permanence and absolutes related to the sacred in counter-distinction from the profane in various religious traditions, more often than not aligning the sacred with that which was immutable and the profane with non-essentialist qualities such as mutability, impurity, relativity, and penultimate specificity (Eliade, 1987; Tillich, 1984). The history of essentialism as a formal topic began at least with the Pre-Socratic debate between mutability and immutability and became more explicit in Plato's famous cave analogy of appearances and reality. The work of John Duns Scotus, a medieval philosopher, is of particular significance in discussions of essentialism, particularly his differentiation between *haecceity* (the "thisness" of a thing, in its particularity) and *quiddity* (the "whatness" of a thing or the universal qualities that make something what it is that are a part of similarities shared universally) (Scotus, 1987, p. 166). An accompanying existential critique is proposed by many central existential-phenomenological thinkers, beginning with Kierkegaard's (1846/1941) emphasis on radical subjectivity, and summed up in the Sartrean (though borrowed from Heidegger) notion of existence as essence, reversing the historical setting of essence as preceding existence (Sartre, 1947/2000). Martin Heidegger's existential phenomenology is influenced by his dissertation on Scotus and his explication of the uniquely unfolding nature of *Dasein*, or ways of uniquely unfolding and "being there" in situations, and in his later work on *Ereignis*, or a coming into view of one's own particularity. Moreover, Heidegger's distinctions between Being as shared ontological givenness of human existence and the incomparably ontic expressions of beings or ways of being-in-the-world by which we take up the more essential ontology are also influenced by Scotus (Heidegger, 1962).

## Traditional Debates

Traditional debates center on the problem of universals in counter distinction from nominalist, and later existential stances that denied universals or essentials, and saw them as abstract totalities disconnected from concrete situations. Several issues arise when essentialism is taken up from a critical psychological perspective.

A number of questions present themselves as central concerns that focus on identity and difference, community and uniqueness: Can one be a proponent of diversity and hold to essentialist values at the same time? Can there be an essentialist theory of diversity? Can one be collaborative, egalitarian and inclusive, and essentialist at the same time? If contextualized, is essentialism supplanted by relativism? Can there be an understanding of identity that is non-essentialist? Critical psychology often seems caught in an aporia of wanting to resist the oppressive outcomes of essentializing human beings while being critical of individualism. Moreover, the fundamental question remains: Why is it significant to discern the "thisness" or "whatness" of a thing in the first place?

But the debatable question remains about whether or not essentials are socially constructed or do essentials have a type of eternal immutability, or a combination of both. For instance, in current developmental psychology, the traditional debate about nature versus nurture is most often seen as a false dilemma, with most proponents arguing for a mix of the two. Furthermore, privileging autonomy and reasonableness as essentialist benchmarks of maturity, exposed by

Erica Berman as patriarchal, calls forth much needed review of who gets to determine which values, discourse, and relational practices are normative (Berman, 2007). Emphasis on multiculturalism in contemporary psychology places the discussion of sameness and uniqueness of the essentialist debate as perhaps the most important topic of our age. The vital debate, however, engages the concern of how to differentiate definitions of identity from imposition of essentialist norms, particularly norms about included and excluded membership in collectives, and to become aware of the violence operative in the exclusive quality of essentialist thinking, in spite of its often intention to unify. The debate extends to further discussion of singularity, universalism, and the appeal to identity predicates as either demarcations of difference or generic essentialisms covering singularity. This becomes even more important when deciding what is ethical for whom and to what extent (Badiou, 2013). The challenge is to find ways we can belong in which the belonging includes an affirmation of otherness that will nonetheless threaten the familiarity of mine-ness while acknowledging that mine-ness and sameness of some sort will continue to push itself into engagements as long as we want to gather as a species. In fact, both belonging and freedom from belonging may very well be essentials themselves.

Another aspect of this debate has to do with whether or not it is possible to define identity in any way that does not automatically entail exclusion of what is not shared by those identifying, essentialist qualia, and, if not, is this practice of exclusion ethically acceptable in a field of critical psychology that concerns itself with the suffering of disenfranchisement. It seems that the only way to truly not be essentialist may be to disidentify, but how is this possible? Identification by its very nature differentiates what is not something else; respecting difference seems inextricably linked to some kind of exclusion. Logically, one solution may be an identification based on a type of *e pluribus unum*, however, even this qualifying identification ironically excludes those who wish to impose fascist sameness, and either stance as stated may not be stances as actually lived. Perhaps the greatest aporia in the topic of inclusivity in essentialism is whether or not one can be inclusive of the one who excludes? Defining who is included or not presumes an identification of members' qualities that remain fixed, but this presumption is itself debatable. That is to say, if there were essences in the first place, are they in place forever, and, if not, can they still be considered essences? How language enframes experiences has much to do with addressing this dilemma.

Language is important in identifying, but not essentializing persons, things, or situations. We can easily find ourselves essentialist in comportment and communication without even knowing it, such as this very sentence presuming this reality as a universal one. That said, a phenomenological approach, either premised on the Husserlian epoche (Husserl, 1931) or on Heideggerian reduction, construction, and destruction (Heidegger, 1975), contends that description rather than classification, categorization, typification, evaluation, or other objectifying kinds of discourse, safeguards against essentialism, a task difficult to accomplish indeed when many languages are predicated on subjects acting on direct objects and nouns defined separately from verbs. The illusory "stationary" quality of objects and nouns as separate from the actions of verbs fosters tendencies toward essentialism. Perhaps, as Nietzsche noted (1888/1982, Sect. 481), there are not facts, only interpretations, raising the challenge of a communion of uniqueness.

## Critical Debates

In spite of common practice among critical psychologists to challenge essentialist thinking and practices, particularly when related to diversity concerns, another debatable point remains: Can we ever really escape being essentialist? What remains unresolved and often overlooked is the essentialist position of claiming not to be essentialist. We could even consider the essentialism of insistence on otherness and diversity, or egalitarian inclusivity, and presumed postmodern relativity as unwitting essentialist

positions that show up when these ideologies and practices are challenged by dissent. If we are to own the ontological reality that we are coexistential, some form of essentialism will be operative; our challenge is whether we can discern an essentialism that is less violent and exclusive and has its own built-in deconstruction of hegemonic impositions. One option is to embrace the distinction between ontological shared givens we share as all human beings and how we take up those ontological givens in ontically unique ways (Boss, 1994; Heidegger, 1962). However we resolve this dilemma, the letting go of essentialist norms raises much anxiety and requires much courage and understanding about why both sameness and difference are important to our daily, meaningful existence.

## International Relevance

Many aspects of this debate are relevant for international affairs, particular any attempt to establish a foundational understanding of what it means to be a human being, or in essentialist criteria about what a moral or good life entails, or what it means to be with one another, especially in our increasing globalization of the world. Another vital issue is related to essentialism and racial cleansing in genocide within civil war contexts, as well as the issue of any kind of imperialism operative in the name of essentialist ethics. The debatable issues are related to when one feels justified to step into international conflicts and interrupt crimes against humanity and how this intervention, albeit in the name of justice, may become an employment of an essentialist agenda of its own. Franz Fanon's work on challenging colonialism and its continuing legacy is perhaps the most familiar critique of international essentialism (1952/2008), and his work should be revisited often.

## Practice Relevance

The pragmatic relevance is related to how essentialism is exercised in relation to dissent and diversity within various institutions. In psychological research and assessment, the implications are large whether or not there is an essentialist understanding of the human being. For instance, what is sought for in a psychological assessment is to denote "who" the person "is." But if the "is-ness" is relative to situational, contextual factors, or, for that matter, relative to varying interpretations of data, and if reality is how interpretation enframes it, what can an assessment claim? In experimental research much reliance is placed on correlational relationships between abstracted variables, such that often correlation is equated with causation, both of which are presumed to be essential ways nature works. But correlation and causation are constructs and, as such, are imposed interpretations rather than observations of essences. Even neuroscience's materialistic essentialism is currently challenged given the field's own research showing the plasticity of the brain and the brain's ability to rewire itself in light of how meaning is made in contextualized situations, such as varying levels of stress, pain, or trauma.

Likewise, qualitative research's own challenge to materialistic reduction, transcendental phenomenological claims of essences of experiences are achieved only by abstracting from the radical uniqueness of situatedness in the world as incomparably lived. Mental health diagnostic categories and conceptualizations of personhood have been culturally and historically bound, as established by who has had the power to determine what is considered essential. Michel Foucault's work (1984) has disclosed how various institutions shift what is essential according to the needs and functions of power relations and practices of discourse serving particular power relations. Taking into account these critiques of essentialism in everyday clinical practices, our task is to work on the possibilities of non-essentialist diagnostic, assessment, research, and structural practices, which may include the replacement of categorization of mental illnesses with descriptions of lived situations in discerning troubles in existence, or tempering our claims about research findings, or reshape what is even considered a research

finding, given ontic differences of shared ontological givens, and guard against prescriptive and generic impositions of behavioral care that is predicated on essentialist understandings of persons and diagnostic schemas.

## Future Directions

One thing in current thought about essentialism is that we have a tendency toward essentialist thinking, and whether or not this is evolutionarily embedded and/or is a psychological need to be in the world in safe ways. It is comforting to know which group one belongs to, on what one can consistently rely, and which things will be the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. In critical psychology's concern to guard against oppressive impositions of essentialist thinking, it is important to see if this task is even possible for human beings to accomplish and whether or not we are acting against our nature to live non-essentially.

In a global community, of course, the ongoing relationship between identity and essentialism will necessitate continued rigorous concern as to how uniqueness and collectivity coexist given increased complexity of interconnections and an increased capacity for communication among differences. In critical psychology, identity and sharing of power are predicated on similarities and differences (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002). It should be clear by now that genocidal thinking that gave rise to eugenics and the final solution are fuelled by essentialist jettisoning of difference and otherness, or privileging one difference over another, violating phenomenological horizontalization of significance in any and all situations. Once again, though, language becomes difficult in countering hegemonies born from essentialists projects. Even the words "other," or "different," still presume a norm from which one is other or different. Hence, the emphasis on recognition of otherness of any kind unwittingly reinforces an essentialist "from whence" such otherness is defined. Our experiences differentiate and come into focus in relation to what is not familiar, but without familiarity experience would not register difference. Both familiarity and difference make sense only in relation to each other. Gilles Deleuze (1995) noted how identity comes off of difference, not the more assumed position that sees difference as a derivation of identity. Heidegger's (1957/2002) stance discloses the inescapable co-constitution of identity and difference in the existential relationship. The conflict of particulars to collectives or wholes is a false dilemma if seen hermeneutically. Particulars are only particulars in relation to wholes; uniqueness gains its uniqueness in differentiation from otherness. Existentially, one is always and already situated in some context (belonging, even if belonging among those alone, seeing aloneness as an essential) and unique as evidenced by the instant, the moment, and the act of decision. Continued rigor is needed if identity and difference are pressed to the radical incomparability of each uniquely lived situation; if *everything* is different in this way, would the category of difference carry any significance anymore except as another essential? Without persistent awareness of difference and otherness in any relational encounter, sameness more often than not will become the status quo consciousness. That said, as critical psychologists continue to challenge hegemonic practices predicated on essentialist thinking, and the reduction of singularity to genericity accompanying such thinking, it will also be important to reconsider lived experiences of similarity as necessary for deeper clarification of difference. With no experiences of similarity available in a de-essentialized existence, mirroring and comradeship may vanish. With too much similarity, singularity will disappear. The work for critical psychologists in the future will be to disentangle the privileging of sameness over difference, or vice versa, and regain a new appreciation for the co-constitution of sameness and difference.

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# Ethics, Overview

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## Introduction

This article describes the ethics proposed by Enrique Dussel, which began in the 1970s, when a group of Argentine philosophers postulated the need for a philosophy developed from the context of oppression and exclusion of large sectors of society in Latin American and providing a criticism of European philosophical thought. This perspective is the result of several years of discussion with thinkers such as Karl Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas with regard to the ethics of speech versus the ethics of liberation and influenced by philosophers such as Emanuel Levinas. Also Latin American concepts such as the theory of dependence, Friere's pedagogy of the oppressed and liberation theology are considered. In addition, Cartesian thinking is criticized.

The second part presents the methodology of liberation ethics, which, in contrast with the Hegelian dialectic, is represented by the philosophizing methods of Dussel and Scanone. This method takes as reference externality and "the Other," the poor, oppressed or massacred, understood socially and historically. This constitutes a new and different perspective compared to that used of Eurocentric discourse ethics. This method is called analectic.

## Definition

The ethics of liberation emerges as an interpellation to discursive ethics and practice; it demands justice for the oppressed and is transformed into an ethics based on solidarity with the community of victims. Contrary to ethics in Eurocentric thought, Latin American ethics was conceived in the situation of domination and the need to reaffirm the oppressed, the Other. It transcends the idea of applying criteria that must be met according to hegemonic discourse, a formal ethics that is really a lack of content (Dussel, 2000, p. 143).

This chapter presents the ethics developed by Enrique Dussel with the criterion of release for the oppressed, pointing out that its construction emerges from the process of interpellation of the ethics of speech focused on the construction of standards that do not consider the oppressed, colonized or excluded.

## Keywords

Discursive ethics; ethics of liberation; lobbying; praxis and formal ethics

## Critical Debates

Countries undergoing the processes of liberation and decolonization show that Eurocentric ethical universalism was a mask and ideological instrument used to legitimize colonization and propagate the conditions of oppression and exclusion (Corominas, 2000). In these countries, from a thought critical perspective, motivated by a praxis based on the principle of liberation, an ethical project was developed considering the Other, the oppressed and excluded. The principle of this project is the production, reproduction and development of life in community, a project that is feasible (Dussel, 2011).

The ethics project is not focused on moral issues, but on the need to recognize the Other more than phenomenology, taking as a reference the political economy. The theology, philosophy, pedagogy, sociology and psychology of liberation are expressions of Latin American critical thought (Dussel, 2005).

The origin of the ethics postulated in Latin American critical theory is different from that of modern European thought, because it was born as a theory that requires practice contrary to being a system. It is an ethics of concrete action against injustice and oppression, an ethics postulated as trans-modern, as a cultural break, as a search for new paths and as a new draft to release the victims of modernity (Dussel, 2002). This ethics declares the significance of the Other and calls for eliminating exclusion of people; it calls for an inclusive community with social justice (Dussel, 2005).

Such ethical challenges as the original speech act require its transcendental law to become personal, to include everyone in the community of communication. It also claims to aim to transform the reality of oppression and exclusion through a praxis of liberation in a struggle to build a possible historical reality (Dussel 2005).

It is an ethics that, in addition to being useful for history, psychology, political economy, sociology, theology and philosophy, is also important for everyday praxis as action that builds the future. The philosophy of liberation shows the need to question modern European ethics, which have concealed the reality of oppressed and excluded people and has worked as a means to legitimize colonization, oppression and exclusion.

The project developed from liberation ethics allows us to describe the experience of the colonized, oppressed and excluded historically; therefore, it allows that the Other – the oppressed and excluded – transcends the mind that denies the existence of this group. Transformation takes place in propositions, where being good manifests itself as transformation.

Ethical action is reflected as a faculty, linking the present with the future, and opens the horizon to allow us to move closer to a real utopia expressed as "becoming action to come," as deployed in the present. In this process, ethics ceases to be a hegemonic discourse as it finds categories of understanding of reality that can be transformed. This can create new socioeconomic structures and outlines mechanisms to train people to realize the utopia of liberation.

The basis for liberating ethics lies in the possibility to listen to the other oppressed and excluded people, who have been ignored because the thinking behind the discursive ethics of modernity and decision-making consciousness is locked in a perspective that prevents listening to the Other, a voice that shouts and claims its right to be included in the past-present-future exteriority (Dussel, 2011).

Contrary to the neoliberal ethics that are death, liberating ethics are life. Therefore, when saying that the Other is silent, ethically this is asserting that the Other is dead; here, the unethical, oppressive and exclusionary conscience is averse to others and has objectified the silence of the other oppressed and excluded people. For its part, liberating ethics have as their principle the production, reproduction and development of life in community, being carried out through feasible projects (Dussel, 2011).

Contrary to classical ethics, which speaks of morality in human actions and categories such as freedom, value or difference, ethical liberating ethics are part of a horizon, a utopia. A morally good act affects us all. It is a creative act beyond need, concerning, in essence, the search for the worthy and just.

According to Dussel (1973), liberating ethics develops as follows: (1) it comprises an existential way to organize history and culture as an *ethos*; (2) it is included in the *ethos* of a communicative existential ethics; (3) it philosophically thematizes the *ethos*, and the existential ethics and sciences are integrated in the domination of the whole as a possible moment of forming an ontological ethics; (4) the practical action and follow-up of the liberation are supposed to be the trans-existential and final movement of the whole (i.e., as an ethics of faith or uncritically); (5) such uncritical ethics arising from the movement of liberation manifests itself as a form that is still not explicit or systematized. It is a fledgling and unorganized ethics, existing in a preliminary state of training and development; (6) it is an expression of a metaphysical ethics that hears the voice of the liberating *ethos* as it seeks to overcome dominated culture and is capable of a radical critique of the established order as justification of the path of liberation.

The point of emergence of liberating ethics is an outrage that hopes to transcend the dehumanization imposed by capitalist modernity; this ethics contributes to the liberation of the oppressed and excluded.

## Methodology of the Ethics

According to the the Dusselian ethics of liberation, ethical Eurocentric traditions, including the proposal by Levinas, are not reflected in the Indian, African or Asian Other. Therefore, based on this, Dussel proposed the analectic method, that is to say, looking beyond the ontological horizon. It considers that the dialectical is the path that is followed in itself, from the entities to the foundations and from the foundations to the entities. The analectic is a movement and dialectic that develops in a manner contrary to the false dialectic, which in the end is dominating and conquering (Dussel, 1988).

The voice of the other, which is denied metaphysical and ethically, is explained through the analectic, where the Other bursts in with a new voice, procreating and innovative, established from scratch, in which the analectic refers to the establishment of a new ontological horizon, provided by the Other, formed from a praxis beyond the established logos, a praxis that corresponds to a time of justice that will transcend the established order (Dussel, 2011).

The analectic is a new project. It outlines its legality in morality as negativity and positivity responding to the interpellation or provocation of justice for the other. It is repackaged – a positive face that sees the other person. It is first negativity, a nothing from whence something new emerges and creates, i.e., its origin is found in that another is loved and free, and in an alternative development, human praxis and revelation of the person emerge in community.

In the analectic methodology, speech becomes ethical in order to discover the fundamental ontological level as non-native, opened from the ethical as revealed in history, in that process. In the end comes the ontic level of possibilities of transferring the ontological order, with real utopian justice and service emerging.

The first critical moment of the analectic is its liberating praxis for the poor, oppressed and excluded. Thus, it affirms the absolute priority of the poor, reflected in personal face-to-face acting in the community, where people reveal themselves as an interpellation with absolute responsibility for the new project, in which the ethics appears, as seen in Latin American critical theory (Dussel, 2011).

An important moment in the analectic method is hearing, because reality does not show up as a written text in everyday history, but is heard. By the same token, in the analectic method, part of the interpretation is to understand and transform oppression, exclusion or colonization in the present.

Through ontological ethics it will be possible for native peoples to emerge as beings in a new world, a world that recovers the dignity and hope of the oppressed and excluded, developing from a new *ethos*, in other words, a new way of life for every human being and every culture.

In short, the ethics of liberation is a critical project considering all of the moral problems

with responsibility and commitment. It is a project developed from a praxis that listens to the oppressed and excluded, a praxis to walk in solidarity with them, including them in the community of communication.

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# Ethnicity, Overview

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## Introduction

Ethnicity has become a key but contested analytical concept used to distinguish human groups in the wider social sciences and everyday life. It tends to refer to the classification of people and boundaries between groups that are based on shared ideas or myths of a common origin, descent, and history. Ethnicity is often associated with minority (cultural, racial, religious) groups that are different than a majority, especially in everyday speech. However, it has become increasingly used to describe majority (e.g., *ethnic Dutch* or *ethnic Norwegian*) as well as minority members (e.g., immigrants) in contemporary multicultural societies.

Ethnicity is also, importantly, a relational concept about demarcations and involves the construction of similarities and differences between two or more groups in social interaction. An ethnic group is thus always defined in relation to some other group(s). This process involves how both members and nonmembers recognize (cultural) distinctions between groups and further implies that they possess a certain degree of contact with each other.

It should thus be apparent that ethnicity is a central concept in which to understand intergroup relations. In particular, key aspects associated with ethnicity involve both *politics* in terms of intergroup competition for power, resources, and recognition and *meaning* by providing group members a sense of social identity and belonging.

Central issues concerning ethnicity which are relevant to critical psychology include the dynamic negotiation of group boundaries, characteristics of different types of ethnic group relationships, the dual dimensions of power relations and belongingness, and understanding the everyday processes associated with social (ethnic) identification. Because the topic inherently relates to international issues such as globalization and multicultural societies, there will be no separate section on International Relevance.

## Definition

While *ethnicity* is a relatively new concept, *ethnic* has a long history that may be traced back to Ancient Greece (Eriksen, 2010). According to Murji (2005) the term's roots may be traced to the Greek *ethnos* meaning "nation, people," although others (Williams, 1983) have claimed that it has been derived from *ethnikos* meaning "heathen."

Finding a widely agreed upon definition of ethnicity is somewhat challenging due to its contested nature. Noting this, the APA

nonetheless defines ethnicity "as the acceptance of the group mores and practices of one's culture of origin and the concomitant sense of belonging" (American Psychological Association, 2002, p. 9). This definition emphasizes culture, origin, and in-group practices as central, coupled with an emphasis on the internal nature of ethnicity (i.e., "one's culture of origin and sense of belonging"). However, the intergroup nature of ethnicity is not explicit in this formulation.

Alternatively, ethnicity may be understood as *a relational concept that refers to the classification and everyday experiences of people and group relationships on the basis of shared ideas or myths concerning a common origin, descent, and history*. Building on this definition, social anthropologists have also come to a relative consensus that ethnicity may be best considered as possessing four core qualities (Jenkins, 2008):

- Ethnicity is a matter of cultural differentiation and identification that involves a dialectical interplay between similarity and difference.
- Predominantly concerns shared meanings (culture) that are produced and reproduced during interaction.
- Entails dynamic processes that are in no way fixed.
- As an identification is both collective and individual, externalized in social interaction and the categorization of others, and internalized in personal self-identification.

## Keywords

Identity; boundaries; ideology; diversity; multiculturalism; immigration; majority-minority relations; race; nationality; difference

## Traditional Debates

Ethnicity may often be used to signify minorities and synonymously with nation, culture, or "race" in both social scientific and everyday discourse. While certainly reasonable, there may be some disadvantages to not adopting a more nuanced and critical usage.

Within mainstream psychology, ethnicity tends to be adopted to classify certain groups and in attempts to better understand minority experiences and identities in culturally diverse societies (e.g., immigrants or established minorities such as Hispanics). For example, there are now APA Guidelines (2002) and journals (e.g., Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology) which focus on multicultural issues in research and practice which are intended to better recognize and describe ethnic differences, at least in the American context.

In traditional psychological research, studies of ethnic groups or ethnic identity tend to analyze ethnicity as a bounded quality in which it is measured as a standard background or demographic variable in quantitative investigation. In these types of studies, differences between predefined ethnic groups on a number of variables are examined using statistical techniques.

Social psychological research on intergroup relations may illustrate some of these practices, especially a tendency to treat ethnicity as synonymous with "race." Cohen and Janicki-Deverts (2012) examined differences in levels of psychological stress in relation to a number of demographic variables. One such variable labeled "race/ethnicity" was measured with "category items" in which participants self-reported their group membership as either White, Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, particular types of American-Indian, or different classifications of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origins. The researchers then aggregated "race/ethnicity" to four categories (White, Black, Hispanic, and others), and their analyses found few group-based "racial/ethnic differences" on psychological stress when accounting for other demographic variables. It is also not uncommon to measure and frame interethnic differences on dimensions involving "Whites" and "Blacks," especially in North American research (see, for instance, Morrison, Plaut, & Ybarra, 2010; Wolsko, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2000). Such aggregation of groups is however more based on notions of skin color and "race" than ethnicity as defined above.

While there is undoubtedly descriptive and theoretical value in traditional research which

describes response patterns or examines differences between ethnic groups, a static usage of ethnicity divorced from theoretical debates concerning the concept may come at a cost. For example, a focus on difference may obscure findings on the similarities between groups or variations within. A potential drawback in using ethnicity and "race" as interchangeable concepts involves undermining the potential value of both for highlighting qualitatively distinct but interrelated aspects (origins and visibility) of the social construction of group differences. Another risk in ethnic identity research may be that the rather complex processes of ethnic identification involving both external and internal pressures may not be adequately identified. Furthermore, the continuous, ideological negotiations of ethnic group boundaries which frame the mobilization of identities are undoubtedly keys to understanding current intergroup relations (Phelps, Blakar, Carlquist, Nafstad, & Rand-Hendriksen, 2012). However, there are currently too few empirical investigations within psychology which address these processes explicitly.

## Critical Debates

While critical debates focusing solely on ethnicity are relatively scarce, critical perspectives build upon a theoretical reflection of the different usages of the concept, and how these help understand central aspects of intergroup relations in academic research and everyday life.

### Universal and Particular Usages of Ethnicity

As a starting point one may distinguish between two equally important usages of the ethnicity concept involving (1) a "universal" way of differentiating and constructing human groups on the basis of common descent and (2) its current importance in understanding and dictating contemporary human affairs in an age of globalization, increased migration, and the establishment of increasingly multicultural societies, mainly in "Western" societies.

In the first instance, Jenkins (2008) emphasizes that although ethnic groups and boundaries are "imagined" social constructions, they are rather ubiquitous historically and near universals of the human condition. Hence, the concept has close connections to anthropology where it is used as an analytical tool to understand human groups in their interactive context and the boundaries that come to demarcate "Us" and "Them." Referring to the second, particular usage, ethnicity has been growing in importance historically to describe current developments in the human world as it has become more globalized due to increased migration and connectivity between human groups. Thus, in contemporary times, the concept of ethnicity has provided a useful portal to discuss cultural diversity, identity politics, and multiculturalism. It is also considered as one of the most important group distinctions for the development of meaningful social identities in multicultural societies.

### Ethnic Boundaries

Ethnicity does not necessarily concern "objective" or "real" cultural differences, but *socially relevant* differences which delineate "Us" and "Them" (Barth, 1969; Jenkins, 2008). These differences are further considered to be represented by symbolic and constructed ethnic boundaries. Hence, there may be a number of differences attributed to or between ethnic groups in a given context.

Types of differences that may characterize ethnic groups may vary, ranging from perceptions of appearance, clothing, economic activity, cultural practices, religion, or language – or a combination (Eriksen, 2010). The "boundary markers" which come to "define" ethnic groups may thus involve or become intertwined with national, "racial," religious, or other culturally shared characteristics such as language, norms, or values (Jenkins, 2008). Yet for a group to be considered ethnic, these characteristics do not all have to be present as long as an idea of common heritage remains central to group boundaries. Therefore, ethnic groups may be associated with distinct cultural or religious practices (e.g., Jews) and/or "racial" features (e.g., African-Americans).

Ethnic boundaries are not static, but dynamic and open for negotiation. However, they are often

more resilient to change than the actual cultural differences between groups ("the cultural stuff"). Thus, ethnic boundaries may persist even in the face of immense cultural change (Barth, 1969; Jenkins, 2008).

### Ethnic Relations

Eriksen's (2010) classification of different types of ethnic relations illustrates the centrality of the concept for discussions in both academic research and everyday life:

- Urban ethnic minorities (e.g., non-European immigrants in European cities, Hispanics in the United States)
- Indigenous peoples (e.g., Sami)
- Ethnonationalist movements (e.g., Kurds, Sikhs, Palestinians)
- Ethnic groups in colonially established societies with a culturally heterogeneous population (e.g., Sudan, Kenya, Indonesia)
- Post-slavery minorities (e.g., African-Americans)

It is also important to point out that in certain contexts in contemporary multicultural societies, not only minority groups but also dominant majority members are considered ethnic (i.e., the increasing prevalence of terms like "*ethnic Norwegian*"; see Phelps et al., 2012).

### Power and Belongingness

Verkuyten (2005) highlights that what makes ethnicity distinct from other ways to classify human groups is the centrality of the genealogy element, combined with two interrelated dimensions involving *power* (the circumstantial dimension) and *belongingness* (the primordial dimension). On one hand, ethnicity involves power relations. Common descent may be mobilized at particular points in time to become an important boundary in intergroup conflict or competition for material resources and symbolic power. Ethnic boundaries function to both include and exclude, to mark some as insiders and others as outsiders. Through processes of "othering," specific ethnic groups may potentially be excluded and stigmatized or at worst considered something to be abolished (e.g., ethnic cleansing). However, ethnicity may also be mobilized in attempts to obtain recognition of group rights and practices through identity politics (e.g., ethnic minorities in multicultural contexts). In sum, this circumstantial dimension highlights that ethnicity involves ideological pressures between groups which frame, legitimize, or manipulate the manifestation of common descent.

At the same time ethnicity is an important aspect of human relations in terms of providing members of a group with a social identity and a sense of belonging to a collectivity (Eriksen, 2010). Ethnicity may elicit feelings that can be meaningful, "internalized," and "self-confessed" for individuals and groups. In other words, the primordial dimension of ethnicity highlights that ideas of common heritage often provide individuals and groups with meaning through solidarity and feeling of kinship. Moreover, the ability to connect to a cultural collectivity across time and place is one of the most powerful forms for human beings to make social identifications or construct a social identity.

### Ethnicity as a Process

The importance of ethnicity and ethnic identification in everyday life may be further understood as a process that occurs both externally between different groups and internally as a matter of group and self-identification. Ethnicity is both self-confessed (one may identify as a member of a particular ethnic group) and ascribed (others may identify a person or group of people as a member of an ethnic group that has distinct origins). However, not all people have the same opportunities to choose how they are categorized (Jenkins, 2008), and this is why power relations are such an important aspect of ethnicity. For example, visible markers of difference, like skin color, can lead to immediate categorizations regardless of how one categorizes oneself.

Merely defining or categorizing ethnic boundaries and relationships may also obscure the lived experience of ethnicity. As Jenkins (2008, p. 15) notes,

> [n]either ethnicity nor culture is 'something' that people 'have' or, indeed to which they 'belong'.

> They are, rather complex repertoires which people experience, use, learn, and 'do' in their daily lives, within which they construct an ongoing sense of themselves and an understanding of their fellows. Ethnicity is best thought of as an ongoing process of ethnic identification.

This side of the ethnicity concept is also related to Brubaker's (2004) work on "ethnicity without groups." He argues that social scientists should not treat ethnicity as a substance, thing, entity, or collective. Instead, Brubaker (2004) recommends that the analytical category of ethnicity should not be a "group," but the process of "groupness" and that ethnic divisions are better suited as the object of study rather than as part of an analytical toolkit. In other words, he contends that ethnicity is what should be explained, not necessarily what one explains things with.

## Practice Relevance

It is essential that researchers and practitioners develop an understanding of ethnicity as grounded in the everyday social contexts in which they are engaged. This entails developing awareness and asking a number of questions regarding the prominence of common ancestry as a group boundary and the mobilization of social ethnic identities. Moreover, highlighting and investigating the dynamic nature of ethnicity, including the interrelated circumstantial (ideological) and primordial dimensions (meaning to individuals and groups), ought to be central for a critical psychology.

Psychologists must therefore be simultaneously aware of both the ideological nature of ethnicity in that it is tied to power relations between different groups in social interaction and to the way in which ethnicity may create meaningful social identities and foster group belongingness. Hence, in their work, critical psychologists should question, investigate, and theorize when and how ethnicity may be mobilized in everyday life. What are people doing with ethnicity in a particular social context? What are the consequences for the social construction of group differences based on common heritage? What do ethnic boundaries, relations, and practices mean in terms of the everyday experiences of inclusion and exclusion for members within a community? In short, how, when, and why do different markers of ethnic identity become salient at a given time and place? In asking these questions, practitioners and researchers should also be prepared to challenge the reification of ethnicity and ethnic groups when appropriate.

Another challenge in adopting a critical usage involves precisely articulating the ethnicity concept's interrelationship with other ways of categorizing human groups such as culture, religion, nation, and "race." In this regard, it is beneficial for ethnicity to be understood as a function of the ideological construction of group boundaries based upon common heritage that becomes salient in a particular society at particular points in time. As contemporary ethnic identities are often taken for granted based upon "racial" criteria, ethnic groups may be constructed, legitimized, and naturalized using skin color or outsider origins to support "White" or "Western" hegemony (Jenkins, 2008). However, instead of viewing race or even nationality as ubiquitous ethnic boundaries, Jenkins (2008) recommends conceptualizing racism and nationalism as ideologies which are "historically specific manifestations of ethnicity" (Jenkins, 2008, p. 86).

A final, potentially positive consequence of adopting ethnicity as a focal point for theory and research is that it may allow for building connections between traditional and critical psychology. For example, Verkuyten (2005) suggests that the term may be particularly useful in both mainstream and discursive social psychology with their mutual concerns on social identity and intergroup relations. While he acknowledges that these different approaches may take different levels of analyses (e.g., individual vs. ideological), investigation of the concept may provide common ground that could eventually build bridges between different traditions, particularly if a nuanced conceptualization is adopted.

## Future Directions

Ethnicity is often explicitly or implicitly present in everyday interactions, especially in multicultural societies. Historically, some social scientists, like Weber, assumed that the relevance of ethnicity in modern societies would disappear (Eriksen, 2010; Jenkins, 2008). However, it now seems difficult to envision a future in which ethnicity will not be relevant (Putnam, 2007). Therefore it is essential that psychologists investigate how ethnicity is used in various contexts. Adopting ethnicity as a way of understanding cultural differences and similarities is encouraged, but it is important to be aware of the tendency to reify and further construct ethnic groups and differences. Moreover, the dynamic and relational nature of the concept ought to be better understood in theory, practice, and empirical research.

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### Online Resources

Center for World Indigenous Studies. http://cwis.org/

Migration Information Source. http://www.migrationinformation.org/

Migration Policy Institute. http://www.migrationpolicy.org/

National Association for Ethnic Studies. http://ethnicstudies.org/

Nordic Journal of Migration research (open access). http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/njmr

Sage web resources for Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class. http://www.sagepub.com/healeyregc6e/study/resources.htm

# Ethnocentrism

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## Introduction

Ethnocentrism is the evaluation of individuals and cultures based on the perspectives, standards, and values of another cultural group. This evaluation relies on the assumption that one's own racial or ethnic group is the most important, valuable, and superior. However, the term ethnocentrism may obscure implicit hierarchies within these perspectives, standards, and values; cultural evaluation relies largely on the perspectives of the dominant culture in a given situation, based on a hierarchical ordering of ethnic groups. Ethnocentrism may be seen as a subtle and often

unacknowledged form of racism which operates on a continuum which includes explicit racism, and shadeism or pigmentocracy – hierarchies within racialized groups which value lighter skin tones more highly (Thiyagirajah, Han, McAdams, Rider, & Rodriguez, 2011) – but is also informed by the history of colonialism and globalization. Parallels may be made between the research on androcentrism and on ethnocentrism in psychology; however, critical psychology continues to benefit from theories of ethnocentrism developed in other disciplines.

## Definition

Ethnocentrism indicates a viewpoint centered on a single ethnic group, where ethnic refers to categories of race, people, or culture. These categories are often conflated, even though a racialized group may contain multiple cultural groups. Although this definition suggests that a member of any group will evaluate another ethnic group based on the member's own cultural values, the dissemination of dominant cultures, noted by Edward W. Said in *Orientalism* (1979) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), results in a Eurocentric basis of ethnocentrism, in which cultural standards and values are based on a Western European perspective. Said's term "Orientalism" refers to the construction of concepts of other cultural groups based on the perspectives of Western European culture, predominantly through the arts but also through the sciences. The term ethnocentrism was first used by W. J. McGee in 1900, who interpreted negatively the resistance of nonwhite or "primitive" groups to his understanding that European culture was superior.

Due to the current dominant status of white or Western European culture, in most cases ethnocentrism refers to the evaluation of nonwhite individuals and cultures based on the perspectives, standards, and values of ethnically white groups. However, ethnocentrism as a practice is not limited to racial groups or even to racialized groups in otherwise European cultures. Ethnocentrism operates using multiple markers of identity such as gender, class, or sexuality. Even within cultural groups, hierarchically ranked subcultures are often judged based on ethnocentric evaluations, usually upon markers of "difference" from the dominant group (Pratto, Hegarty, & Korchmairos, 2007). Thus, ethnocentrism also connects to the concept of self/other. However, even the concept of self/other contains embedded ethnocentrism, due to its reliance on binary divisions central to many European philosophies (Anderson, 1996).

Because of its distinction from but connection with race, caste is an important marker of identity with regard to ethnocentrism. Within South Asian cultural groups, the caste system acts as a hierarchical system in which the culture of the dominant upper castes forms the basis of the evaluations of other groups (Ilaiah, 2009). Likewise, during the colonial period, the concept of social Darwinism, in which Darwin's principles of evolution were applied to sociology and politics, applied racial characteristics to other marginalized groups, such as women or the working class (Yuval-Davis & Cain, 1993). The intersectional nature of identity results in ethnocentric evaluations of "subcultures"; for example, an ethnocentric evaluation of a working class group may be based on standards of dominant middle-class culture.

Hierarchies of race and culture intersect with hierarchies of gender and sexuality. Ethnic groups are often defined using stereotypes of gender and sexuality (Back, 1994; McClintock, 1995). Thus ethnocentrism often mutually influences other evaluation biases such as androcentrism and heterocentrism – the centering of a heterosexual viewpoint (see also entry, Heteronormativity). A contemporary understanding of ethnocentrism sees it as a form of intuition, whereby members of the Western ingroup express ethnocentrism explicitly through racism and prejudice, as well as more subtly through exclusion and institutional practices (Teo & Febbraro, 2003).

## Keywords

Androcentrism; classism; colonialism; critical race theory; ethnocentrism; eurocentrism;

feminism; heteronormativity; objectivity; orientalism; race; racialization; racism; savage vs. civilized; scientific racism; social Darwinism; stereotypes; whiteness; womanist

## Traditional Debates

The central traditional debates arose during the colonial period of the sixteenth to twentieth centuries. As Edward W. Said has argued, ethnocentrism was used as a particular tool to advance the interests of European political power. The legacy of colonialism contributes significantly to the contemporary practices and understanding of ethnocentrism. The term Eurocentrism offers an alternative to the term ethnocentrism, due to its acknowledgement of existing ethnic hierarchies (Shohat & Stam, 1994).

During the colonial period, European scientific communities developed theories of racial hierarchy which proposed an evolutionary hierarchy of ethnic groups as well as cultural practices. Western European groups were ranked on the opposite end of a hierarchical continuum from sub-Saharan African groups. Specifically, scientific psychology developed a model of a deficient psychology among colonized groups (Mama, 1995). Eurocentrism may itself be an ethnocentric term, as it assumes shared culture among European ethnic groups, due to assumptions that the Western European colonial powers, including Britain, France, and Germany, were racially and culturally superior to Eastern or Mediterranean Europeans (Bashi & McDaniel, 1997).

Ethnocentrism is sometimes expressed as the duty of white people to aid people of color, often through conveying white European culture, including sciences, arts, and Christianity (Fischer-Tiné, 2004; Rieger, 2004). This duty assumes the superiority of white European culture. The term "white man's burden," used in the poem by Rudyard Kipling (1899/2006), which was widely used by European colonialists, summarizes this attitude. Throughout the colonial period, Europeans believed that they offered their superior and civilized culture as a means to improve inferior and primitive cultures, while at the same time ensuring that the standard privileged European ethnic groups and maintained the hierarchy.

## Critical Debates

Critical debates regarding ethnocentrism take the position that colonialism and neocolonialism most strongly influence ethnocentrism in the contemporary period, an argument advanced initially within postcolonial studies. Critical race theory examines the implications of race in institutional discrimination (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Studies focus on ethnocentrism in existing political, justice, and legal systems. Critical race theory critiques civil rights movements with liberal goals of equality, arguing that equality is based on ethnocentric assumptions, in which white European culture is the apex of human achievement. It also questions essentialist assumptions which limit identity to the experience of one group, for example, requiring black women to choose an identity of either black or woman, rather than recognizing intersections between these, and challenging both patriarchy in the black community and racism in the feminist community (Shields, 2008). Importantly, critical race theory challenges the myth of objectivity, arguing that it arose in the European academy alongside scientific racism, and is a privilege conferred on the basis of racial hierarchy (Fairchild, 1991; Fanon, 1963).

The term "whiteness" refers to the construction of a category which presumes an absence of race or ethnicity. Researchers in the field of whiteness studies examine the category of whiteness in various disciplines, drawing on critical race theory (Frankenberg, 1993; Morrison, 1992). Whiteness has become the norm with which to compare racialized groups, which are positioned as being different from the norm. Ethnocentrism as a means of judging nonwhite cultures from the standard of the white norm confers with it the sense of white privilege, in which individuals or cultures understood to be white are also assumed to be superior, universal, and normal (see also entry, Normalization). This concept also relates to the concept of

"passing," a concept which arose in queer theory to indicate access to heterosexual privilege. An individual can benefit from white privilege on the basis of the ability to "pass" as white to others or emulate ideal European behaviors, although a self-awareness of racialized or othered status remains, a type of double consciousness (Rush, 1997).

Furthermore, because of mutual exchange, rather than simply a one-way imposition of dominant culture upon a colonized group, external cultural signifiers arise in most cultural groups. In the contemporary period, religious mission work, or foreign aid projects, often focused on Africa or Latin America, may be seen as reflecting the legacy of colonial ethnocentrism, through contemporary neocolonial practices. Neocolonialism may be defined as a form of economic imperialism, in which developed countries (often European or settler European) act like the former colonial powers (Sartre, 1964/2001). However, while the effects of colonial culture on racialized groups have been well documented, the assumption of white European cultural superiority obscures the contributions of nonwhite ethnic groups to European culture; for example, the contemporary fields of maths and sciences trace their history to the Muslim empires of the Middle Ages. Important anti-ethnocentric challenges to white European ethnocentrism include Africentric research and education – literally African centered, the written expression of indigenous African philosophy centered in experience – as a means to revalue and recenter nonwhite cultures and nonwhite experiences (Hunn, 2004). Indigenous theory and decolonizing methodology also challenges the centrality of the Eurocentric scientific model (Smith, 1999). These approaches do not necessarily seek to replace a Eurocentric worldview, but to disrupt the assumed universality and objectivity of ethnocentric thinking by drawing attention to unacknowledged biases and to develop a more balanced worldview. In this sense, ethnocentrism may be used as a tool to draw attention to ethnocentrism based on a dominant group.

Because feminist theory and activism initially developed within racially and economically privileged communities, ethnocentric biases arise even among groups which challenge other forms of bias such as androcentrism or heterocentrism. Many liberal feminist principles have been critiqued by womanists – feminist women of color – for their ethnocentrism but most importantly for neglecting to address the intersections between forms of discrimination and the ways in which ethnocentrism and androcentrism, racism, and sexism mutually reinforce one another (hooks, 2000; Shields, 2008).

Contemporary scholarship, including psychology, was developed in Western Europe and remains prominent. Thus the field of psychology itself is an ethnocentric creation; the discipline's epistemologies and praxis incorporate and perpetuate ethnocentric biases. Difference is marked as variance from the standard of whiteness; for example, racial differences are attributed to black individuals more than to white individuals (Pratto et al. 2007). Not only are differences marked on one group in comparison to the other, but differences are ranked in a hierarchy, in which the norm is assumed to represent the superior culture.

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### Online Resources

Colorlines: News for action. http://www.colorlines.com/
The crunk feminist collective. http://crunkfeminist-collective.wordpress.com/
Incite: Women of color against violence. http://www.incite-national.org/
Microaggressions: Power, privilege, and everyday life. http://microaggressions.tumblr.com/
Racialicious: The intersection of race and pop culture. http://www.racialicious.com/

## Ethnography

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### Introduction

Ethnography is a qualitative research method that has evolved out of ethnology within the broader field of cultural and social anthropology.

With the emphasis in research conducted within mainstream psychology on positivistic quantitative research, ethnographic research within the field of psychology has been slow to gain stature as a viable and rigorous form of qualitative research within naturalistic settings.

### Definition

Ethnography is a research methodology that seeks to explore and describe emic or etic knowledge about specific cultural groups and cultural phenomena and thus contribute to the understanding of the social and cultural life of humans. The concept of "culture" is defined broadly to include any group that shares and engages within a common psychosocial experience, within a given space. What constitutes a given space – the field – is also defined broadly to include any geographical space, large or localized, or any virtual space, where members of the culture interact.

Ethnographic fieldwork involves the immersion of the researcher in the culture and naturally occurring setting of the group under study (Brewer, 2000). Data collection may include a number of the following techniques: participant observation, informal conversations, individual interviews, focus groups, surveys, document analysis, and object or artifact analysis. This data may be documented through field notes, journaling, photovoice, as well as video and audio recordings that are later transcribed.

## Keywords

Ethnography; fieldwork; participant observation; emic knowledge; etic knowledge; cultural phenomena; naturalistic methods; field notes; colonization; critical ethnography; institutional ethnography; autoethnography

## Traditional Debates

Mainstream psychology is associated with controlled experimentation, a single methodology that for many defines the field. This experimental method involves statistical techniques that compare and contrast data gained through the collection of data within laboratories where real-life situations are both simulated and controlled. This is thought to allow for the measurement and ultimate predictability of behavior. Given the uncompromising emphasis on controlled experiment, resistance to any form of qualitative research within mainstream psychology is rather high. Although ethnography may include the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, its emphasis on exploring and documenting unpredictable and dynamic behavior renders it outside the purview of strict scientific and experimental designs. As such, ethnography is generally dismissed by experimental psychologists as "lacking in scientific rigor," "anecdotal," and not able to contribute as valid or reliable knowledge in the field of psychology.

## Critical Debates

### Naturalistic Methods in Research in Psychology

The focus in mainstream psychology on scientific and experimental design is problematized by critical psychologists as narrowly focused, hypothesis driven, and missing an understanding of the way power, privilege, disadvantage, and social injustice impact on the people and issues under study in the laboratory (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997). Rather than trying to reproduce human and social behavior within the laboratory, qualitative research generally, and ethnography in particular, seeks to engage in research within natural settings. That is, within ethnography the researcher seeks to embed oneself into the culture of the people under study by occupying a place within the natural setting of that culture. Hence, space remains as important within ethnography as the culture itself.

Ethnography focuses on the lived experience of people, usually as detailed by the research participants (also called "informants") and as observed by the researcher. Additional information may be gleaned from documents and artifacts that are relevant to the culture under study. As such, more than one information source is often used to gather data thus providing a more complex picture of the group. This is in direct contrast to mainstream quantitative psychology's attempts to simplify data through a reductionist scientific method. In addition, ethnography may be combined with participatory methods in order to elicit more closely the lived experience and perspectives of the group understudy, or alternatively, the study may be conducted in a way that may reflect more closely the researcher's perspectives based on observations and analysis of in situ field notes.

### Contexts and Their Struggles

Within the different contexts of fieldwork, different struggles may arise in relation to the ethnographic research design. For example, although the researchers make attempts to embed themselves within the culture, the level of success doing so and being accepted by

members of the culture varies widely based on the context of the fieldwork. Moreover, the status of the researcher as either an insider or an outsider at the beginning of the research will likely impact greatly on the quality and quantity of data collected. The status of insider or group member may lead to less detailed descriptions from participants who feel the researcher already understands that which is understudy, whereas the status of outsider may lead to difficulties with acceptance and openness of participants.

Another example of struggles in the field includes the length of time spent in the field. Although 1 year is touted as a general rule, the different contexts of the setting and research may preclude such a long stay or may demand a longer commitment on the part of the researcher. Where ethics boards may limit length of access, for example, in the case of research within hospitals or in other settings where participants are deemed "vulnerable," community groups or personal ethics may require researchers to "give back" to the group in the form of community development or other activities that may require ongoing involvement.

When understanding ethnography as a form of community-based research, ethnographers may need to grapple with embedded ethical issues in relation to control of and influence over the research. Questions may be raised in relation to the influence institutions (such as universities, ethics boards, or when the culture under study is located within institutions themselves, such as within hospitals, other public institutions, or the independent sector) have over the research and the influence of the actual communities or group members: who is calling the shots and who should be calling the shots? Ethnographers often incorporate participatory methods within the research design in order to attempt to redress this power imbalance.

## Critical Ethnography

Feminist, indigenous, antiracist, anti-colonial, and poststructural forms of scholarship have mounted cogent and intense critiques against the oppressive links between traditional ethnographic research and colonization (see, e.g., Poddar, Patke, & Jensen, 2008). Ethnography is understood as a method of knowledge production used by the empire, explorers, local colonial administrators, and white European settlers to produce and objectify the colonized other – a dehumanizing yet exoticizing process rendering the colonized other both knowable and governable (Diamond, 2012). These critiques have been used to develop critical ethnography, an approach to ethnography that explicitly and intricately addresses issues of power and domination, at macro and micro levels, regardless which culture is under study.

## Institutional Ethnography

Institutional ethnography is a particular approach to ethnography, developed by the Canadian sociologist and feminist scholar Dorothy Smith. This approach to ethnography seeks to deconstruct the impact of power and, indeed, regimes of ruling, within everyday life (Smith, 2005). Institutional ethnographers study a range of social problems in and across institutions, often exposing the ways that frameworks of administration and conceptualizations of social problems within social organizations perpetuate injustice, inequity, social dominance and marginalization, privilege, disadvantage, and domination. With the workings of power as its analytic focus, institutional ethnography is useful to critical psychologists studying the agencies and institutions in which psychologists work and offers a radical methodological alternative to studying organization design and program evaluation, by making connections between the organization of lived experience, professional practice, and social policy.

## Autoethnography

Autoethnography emerged from ethnography as a reflexive approach that focuses on the researcher as the primary research participant in the fieldwork (Ellis, 2004). Rather than attempting to minimize researcher impact and bias in the fieldwork, or "bracketing" researcher experience as in phenomenology, autoethnographers make visible and center their knowledge, beliefs, feelings, and lived experience in the field through reflecting on and documenting their personal narratives in relation to the social

context and cultural phenomenon that is being explored. Autoethnography falls within the social constructionist, postmodern, and/or poststructural approach to understanding knowledge which eschews the modernist research tradition's embrace of dichotomized classifications of researcher and research participant, subjective and objective knowledge, the art of humanities and the "science" of social sciences, as well as neutral/benign scientific investigations and political projects (Ellingston & Ellis, 2008).

Autoethnography may fall under the "evocative" form or "analytic" form (Ellingston & Ellis, 2008). The evocative autoethnography genre crafts emotional narratives designed to elicit questions in its readers rather than to answer them, whereas analytic autoethnography seeks to provide explanations of social and cultural phenomenon. Regardless of which genre is employed, autoethnography is an inherently political approach to research that employs storytelling as a means to provoke meaning-making (Bochner & Ellis, 2006) and to discursively disrupt insidious cultural norms and practices, while thoroughly implicating oneself as researcher and cultural actor (Adams & Jones, 2011). Paired with this political approach to research is the desire to affect not only cultural change but also personal change through reflexivity.

This approach to research may be of particular interest to critical psychologists working at the interface of clinical psychology, as there has been a trend over the past decade for Mad-identified and psychiatrized people to write autoethnographic dissertations, as part of postgraduate studies (a localized but growing trend at OISE in Toronto), as a way of exposing sanism and the violence of mainstream clinical psychology and psychiatry (see, e.g., Church, 1996; Fabris, 2011, amongst others).

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## Online Resources

http://www.ethnography.com/
http://www.brianhoey.com/General%20Site/general_defn-ethnography.htm
http://learnlivethrive.blogspot.ca/2009/12/auto-ethnography.html
http://www.ethnography.uci.edu/
http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/pageid/1236/m/464

# Eugenics

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## Introduction

More than any other social movement of the early twentieth century, eugenics illustrates and illuminates the intersection of science, ideology, and

social values. With a complex history and a shifting relationship to a number of academic disciplines, eugenics provided a major point of cooperation and conflict among scientists, politicians, civic leaders, and social reformers, including those with a redemptive vision for the destruction of the unfit. Psychologists played varying roles in the history of eugenics, as both supporters and critics. The intelligence testing movement of the early 1900s raised hopes for the objective identification of human worth and was therefore an important part of the eugenics movement. Even after World War II, claims regarding the heritability of IQ and alleged racial differences in intelligence continued to play an important role in eugenic ideas and proposals. Despite Nazi atrocities, eugenics remained a muted and transformed presence in the scientific community, with increasing emphasis on human medical genetics and population control. The American Eugenics Society was renamed the Society for the Study of Social Biology in 1972 and was more recently renamed the Society for Biodemography and Social Biology.

## Definition

Sir Francis Galton (1883) introduced the term "eugenics" to describe the science of improving the "stock" of "man, brutes and plants." He later formalized the definition as "the science that deals with all influences that improve the inborn qualities of a race; also those that develop them to the utmost advantage" (Galton, 1904, p. 1). His program emphasized the encouragement of increased breeding among the "vigorous" and decreased breeding among the "weak," respectively termed positive and negative eugenics by physician Caleb Saleeby. For Galton, outstanding achievements, whether in science, government, business, the military, or philosophy, were a primary indication of hereditary quality and the "comparative worth" of different human races. Biologist Charles B. Davenport, leader of the eugenics movement in America and founder of the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor, subtitled his book, *Eugenics*, as "the science of human improvement by better breeding" (Davenport, 1910).

## Keywords

Eugenics; dysgenic trends; Frances Galton; eugenic sterilization; IQ tests

## History

Suggestions for the control of human characteristics through breeding can be found before Galton in Plato's *Republic* as well as utopian writings of the nineteenth century. Emerging within a context of intense concerns over the cost of poverty, the eugenics movement evolved to address social anxieties over disease, alcoholism, mental illness, feeblemindedness, economic competition, and degeneration. The movement attracted a wide range of scientists and civic leaders and followed different trajectories in different nations (see Bashford & Levine, 2010). In England, the Fabian Socialists, including H. G. Wells, G. B. Shaw, and Sidney and Beatrice Webb, supported the progressive aims of this new, scientific approach to human life. The Eugenics Society in England held its first meeting the year after Galton's death in 1911 and received endorsements from Winston Churchill, Alexander Graham Bell, Leonard Darwin, former Harvard President Charles Eliot, and others. Support for segregation and sterilization of the feebleminded was already underway.

Popular interest in eugenics grew even more rapidly in the United States than in Britain. The publication of Henry Goddard's (1912) study of the Kallikak family dramatically highlighted the dangers posed to society by unchecked reproduction among the feebleminded. Goddard's version of the Binet intelligence test promised an important tool for identifying "morons." Eight states had already enacted laws for involuntary sterilization, but not all eugenicists supported this approach; Goddard favored segregation (Zenderland, 1998b). The aims of eugenics were embraced by

religious leaders, primarily but not exclusively Protestant (Zenderland, 1998a). For many psychiatrists and other physicians, eugenics fit well with their reformist and Progressive-era vision (Dowbiggin, 2003). Prominent economists (e.g., Irving Fisher), geographers (e.g., Ellsworth Huntington), sociologists (e.g., Edward A. Ross), and psychologists (e.g., G. Stanley Hall and Lewis M. Terman) became active supporters. The scientific aspect of the movement was institutionalized in America with the founding of the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor, by plant biologist Charles B. Davenport. He was highly effective in obtaining financial support from the Harriman fortune and later from the Rockefeller Foundation. Davenport was particularly concerned with the dangers of race-mixing.

The growth of interest in eugenics as a public health issue intersected with the rising nativism and xenophobia during the massive influx of Eastern and Southern Europeans in pre-WWI America. The older organizations, such as the Immigration Restriction League, now rallied under scientific principles in a circle led by prominent New York City attorney and amateur scientist Madison Grant (Spiro, 2009). Using a racial explanation for the rise and fall of nations, and a strong belief in the late nineteenth-century racial categories of William Z. Ripley, Grant's eugenic ideas were tied to the belief in the biological and cultural superiority of Nordics and the dangers posed by the influx of other races, including Jews. Grant and Davenport formed the Galton Society in 1918 to promote their version of eugenics. Edward L. Thorndike was a charter member, although he is now known for his work on learning more than his eugenic interests. Kevles (1985) termed their approach "mainline eugenics" to distinguish it from the "reform eugenics" that emerged in the 1930s. The WWI army intelligence test data, broken down by race by psychologist Carl Brigham (1923), provided further support for the allegations that Southern and Eastern Europeans were inferior to the Nordic stock of the United States, despite the poor performance of the Nordics of impoverished Appalachia. Brigham later repudiated his conclusions. Even when mainline eugenicists ceased to emphasize differences among European races, many still assumed that Black-White race crossing would result in a dysgenic lowering of intellectual level. During the 1920s and 1930s, the mainline position met increasing criticism from geneticists for the assumption of "single-unit" transmission of defects, and from Boasian anthropologists for the failure to understand culture.

The German eugenics movement was founded at the beginning of the twentieth century by biologist Alfred Ploetz as a progressive approach to combat "degeneration." National efficiency, economic competitiveness, and the scientific management of populations became the major aims (Weiss, 1987). *Rassenhygiene* rapidly became a mainstream view among German biologists, anthropologists, psychiatrists, and physicians. Some rejected Nordicism and antisemitism, and many prominent Jewish scientists joined the movement. The *Gesellschaft für Rassenhygiene*, organized in 1905, grew to more than 1,300 members by 1930 and included such leading academic figures as Erwin Baur, Eugen Fischer, Fritz Lenz, Ernst Rüdin, Hans Günther, and Otmar von Verschuer (Proctor, 1988). Rassenhygiene of the 1920s and 1930s was influenced by American eugenicists such as Harry Hamilton Laughlin, Charles Davenport, Madison Grant, and Lothrop Stoddard (Kühl, 1994; Lombardo, 2002). Eugenics became a state policy immediately after the Nazi Party achieved full control over the government in 1933. Psychology and psychologists played a relatively minor role in *Rassenhygiene*, although IQ tests were used in the Hereditary Health Courts as part of the evidence for deciding on involuntary sterilization under the *Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases*. Approximately 400,000 men and women were sterilized from 1934 to 1940 (Proctor, 1988). Under the Action T4 "euthanasia" program, at least 75,000 physically and mentally disabled children and adults were killed between 1939 and 1941, until public protest ended the program.

The relationships between the eugenic laws, Nazi racial theories, antisemitism, T4, and the Shoah are complex and beyond the scope of this entry. Given the wide popularity of eugenic ideas, laws, and practices, including forced

sterilization, in many countries, there is no "straight line" from eugenics to the Shoah. Despite contemporary efforts to separate the Shoah from science and eugenics, the role of eugenic ideas in providing scientific rationalization for elimination is clearly established (e.g., Kühl, 1994; Müller-Hill, 1988, Proctor, 1988; Weindling, 1989; Weinreich, 1946). According to research of the time, the genetic defects of Jews produced elevated incidences of diabetes, hemophilia, deafness, muscular tumors, manic depression, schizophrenia, suicide, mental retardation, glaucoma, myopia, gallstones, brain malfunction, criminality, and moral depravity (Proctor, 1988). In this view, common by the mid-1930s, the Jewish gene pool posed an urgent public health risk to Germany, requiring drastic measures. Thus, the *Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor* of 1935, forbidding marriage or sexual relations with Jews, was rationalized on scientific grounds. Academic supporters of these measures could claim to be ideologically neutral, objective scientists. Jews could be counted among the other scientifically identified, diseased groups to be quarantined, sterilized, or killed, including individuals who were mentally ill, "asocial," homosexual, disabled, or Roma. The joining of scientific discourse on public health to traditional antisemitic ideas of a Jewish plot for world domination made for a particularly dangerous *Weltanschauung*.

Although Nazi crimes affected scientific and public response to eugenics, the movement, already in decline in the 1930s, did not disappear after WWII. Involuntary eugenic sterilization continued in many countries and some states, particularly California, Virginia, and North Carolina. Lawsuits brought by the victims are still in progress. Although early eugenicists had argued that at least 10 % of the US population would require sterilization, only 60–63,000 US sterilizations were performed under state eugenic laws from their inception to the 1970s (Largent, 2008). In the postwar scientific community, eugenic interests and questions were subsumed under the growing fields of human genetics and medical genetics. Frederick Osborn, an early leader in the field, assumed the presidency of the American Eugenics Society in 1946. Osborn (1973) would later admit that the early period of eugenics, in which he was an active participant, was characterized by class and race bias. As he worked to promote the "reform" eugenics that had begun in the 1930s, he was extremely adept at managing the "stigma" now attached to eugenics. He recruited leading geneticists, such as Theodosius Dobzhansky, and psychologists from the emerging field of behavior genetics, such as Gardner Lindzey and Paul Fuller, to serve as officers in the American Eugenics Society.

Postwar eugenics tended to emphasize birth control, voluntary family planning, and world population issues. The belief that eugenics could do much to solve the problems of poverty remained part of the "reform" eugenics movement (Mazumdar, 2002). However, some members of the eugenics community, such as the directors of the Pioneer Fund, founded in 1937, continued to view race and race-mixing as their primary concerns (Lombardo, 2002; Tucker, 2002). These issues were revived after the Supreme Court *Brown* decision of 1954. Henry Garrett, the 1946 President of the American Psychological Association, organized interdisciplinary scientific resistance to school integration using allegedly ineluctable racial differences in IQ test scores as the primary justification (Tucker, 1994; Winston, 1998). Garrett's (1963) view that race-mixing would result in a catastrophic "lowering of the cultural and intellectual level of the American people" was a throwback to the eugenics of the Madison Grant circle. Debates over welfare and antipoverty programs during the 1970s and 1980s also produced revivified eugenic proposals, often directed at African Americans, and again using alleged race differences in IQ as a justification. The proposal of Nobel Prize-winning physicist William Shockley (1972) to pay poor, African American mothers to be voluntarily sterilized was a well-publicized example. Psychologist Raymond B. Cattell continued in the 1990s to propose the replacement of religion with eugenically based ethics and social policies. At present, psychologist Richard Lynn

has continued the arguments of mainline eugenics in relatively pure form. His extensive publications explain differences in the wealth of nations as the result of racial makeup, largely due to alleged racial differences in intelligence (e.g., Lynn, 2008). Like the early eugenicists, he emphasizes the danger of dysgenic trends and the need for action. The Pioneer Fund provided substantial funding for the efforts of Lynn and others to promote a revived racial eugenics (see Lombardo, 2002; Tucker, 2002).

## Traditional Debates

For mainstream scientists, a primary question regarding eugenics has often been "Was eugenics based on bad science?" If the answer is that eugenics rested on a faulty understanding of genetics in an earlier time, the belief in transmission by single-unit characters, then faith in the self-correcting properties of science is not threatened. The "misuse" of eugenics by evil people is then not the problem of scientists. Fortunately, extensive historical investigation has made this position untenable and made it impossible to speak of eugenics as science separately from eugenics as a social program.

Was eugenics inherently "reactionary" or "right wing"? Political diversity among supporters of eugenics has been well established at least since Paul's (1984) analysis of eugenics on the left. As an explanation for class structure, poverty, and crime, mainline eugenics stood in sharp contrast to the fundamental principles of a Marxist analysis of exploitation and class conflict. The early scientific critics of mainline eugenics, such as Julian Huxley, J. B. S. Haldane, Lionel Penrose, and Lancelot Hogben, were socialists, but they maintained a basic commitment to eugenic aims. Eugenics was an active movement in the Soviet state for a brief period. The concept of socially engineered human improvement for the collective good was broadly consistent with the aims of the revolution, and the view that eugenics was ideologically unacceptable did not fully develop until the 1930s. With the Cultural Revolution of 1929–1932, the "biologizing" of social life was forbidden. American geneticist, reform eugenicist, and communist H. J. Muller argued that eugenics was only appropriate in a society that had already undergone socialist transformation and provided equality of opportunity (Paul, 1995). After he moved to Moscow in the mid-1930s, Muller presented Stalin with his eugenic proposal for breeding better Soviet citizens, *Out of the Night*. Lysenkoism was on the rise and Stalin was unresponsive to Muller's vision. Muller soon found it necessary to flee the Soviet Union; two of his former students and the translator of *Out of the Night* were arrested and shot (Adams, 1990). In contrast, the "biologizing" of social life and the transformation of German eugenics under National Socialism clearly did not involve this level of ideological conflict, despite the disagreements and diversity among German eugenicists, as described by Weindling (1989) and Weiss (1987). Eugenics was adaptable to a wide range of political ideologies, but the adaptation was not equally "comfortable" or as easily accomplished in all cases.

## Critical Debates

Was racism inherent in eugenics? It is not presentist to suggest that mainline eugenics was imbued with and encouraged racial prejudice. This is exactly what the critics of the time, such as reform eugenicist Lancelot Hogben, charged. But in the 1930s, the boundary between mainline and reform eugenics was indefinite and permeable. Both used the language of "the unfit" and not all reformers rejected the possibility of hereditary racial or class differences in intelligence and character. According to Stone (2001), race remained an important theme in many versions of British eugenics through the 1930s. Nothing in the idea of improving human heredity *required* a set of racial categories arranged in a hierarchy of quality, despite Galton's views on the inferiority of African peoples (see Fancher, 2004). Many reform eugenicists adopted the Galtonian conception of overlapping distributions of talent in racial groups. This move allowed for a more subtle position on putative racial differences, one that emphasized individual characteristics.

As Weizmann (1998) noted, the relationship between earlier and later eugenics movements is problematic, and there is substantial disagreement among historians regarding continuity of aims and methods. However, the discourse of overlapping distributions could be readily employed for demonstrations of racial inferiority and cannot be considered a "neutral" stance on race (Winston, Butzer, & Ferris, 2004). Eugenics without racism was certainly possible, but traditional eugenic ideas of the differential economic success of human groups enabled and helped preserve the hierarchical way of speaking about race and race differences of the late nineteenth century.

From a critical perspective, even reform eugenics remained a hoped-for technology of control over the deviant, the "primitive," and women in general. Eugenics was the clearest, although not the only, manifestation of biopower and biopolitics in the early twentieth century (see Rose, 2007). In many locations, women were the primary target of eugenic intervention, and control of women's sexual activity was a primary aim. However, the historical interplay between twentieth-century feminist movements and eugenics, particularly in the area of birth control, is complex. Sterilization was both an involuntary means for control of women's sexuality and a "voluntary" form of reproductive control by some women (see Ladd-Taylor, 1997). These complexities should not obscure the important ways in which eugenic programs were creations of powerful elites for the management of the "other." Nor should a critical inquiry neglect the ways in which "voluntary" participation in eugenic programs was embedded in systems of differential power, that is, the differential power available to the physicians, ministers, administrators of institutions, and husbands who encouraged voluntary eugenic decisions.

## International Relevance

The variations in eugenic practices across different nations are beyond the scope of this entry. The main object of eugenic intervention often differed, with "outsiders" the major concern in some locations and "marginalized insiders" the target in other nations (Bashford & Levine, 2010). Race-mixing was a major concern in some countries, such as America, while social class and "pauperism" were the more prominent themes in others. Eugenics was not part of interwar Dutch public policies, but was enthusiastically taken up in the Dutch East Indies (Pols, 2010). Analysis of international differences and similarities troubles the popular view of eugenics as primarily rooted in National Socialist ideology. The case of eugenics in postwar China shows how an authoritarian regime under Marxist-Leninist principles could join older, Western ideas of the unfit with the concerns of population control and central planning for modernization (see Rose, 2007).

## Practice Relevance

Eugenics was originally conceived and developed as a *practice* for the future of humankind. For many adherents, eugenics served as a secular religion, in that eugenic principles provided a framework of values for determining what social policies and practices were morally "good," that is, eugenic rather than dysgenic. Eugenic ideas would guide individuals and families, as eugenics would specify how one could and should contribute to "bettering the stock," and it was a matter of civic responsibility to do so. The use of early intelligence tests by psychologists with eugenic interests may be viewed in this context. However, the legacy of eugenic sterilization and eugenic views of persons with disabilities as unfit and unworthy has provided an important backdrop for discussions of disability rights and medical vs. social models of disability (e.g., Shakespeare, 1998). Awareness of the history of eugenics in relation to psychology can serve important functions for practitioners involved in disability and researchers involved in the study of cognitive abilities. The embrace of eugenics by leading psychologists and other academics in the early twentieth century is a cautionary tale of science and social policy for all students.

## Future Directions

With the rise of modern genetics and genetic testing, many of the original concerns of the eugenics movement have been subsumed under the aims of medical genetics. Although modern genetic counseling may appear to be the direct legacy of eugenics, the profession is dedicated to nondirective counseling and has no commitment to the "improvement" of the species or reducing costs to the nation (see "genetic counseling" entry in this volume). As argued by Rose (2007), the politics of managing risk of disease through screening and counseling is not the same as the politics of managing the "quality" of a population. However, as the possibilities for genetic engineering increase, new versions of eugenic ideas can be expected to emerge. During the world financial crisis that began in 2008, new questions about the sustainability of social programs were raised. Assertions that the requirements for successful economic competition and national success are incompatible with the "welfare state" are reminiscent of late nineteenth-century themes. We can expect that some form of eugenics will be offered as the solution to the problem of "pauperism" that inspired the original eugenics movement. As in the early twentieth century, discussions of intelligence and heritability of intelligence are likely to play a role in this revival.

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### Online Resources

www.eugenicsarchive.org
http://mulibraries.missouri.edu/specialcollections/exhibits/eugenics/
http://www.hsl.virginia.edu/historical/eugenics/

## Everyday Life

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### Introduction

Everyday life (the quotidian) encompasses personal habits, shared rituals, and interactions. The everyday has been investigated through explorations of experiences of boredom, walking, cooking, eating, and shopping; the use of objects such as food, money, and plastic; and the relevance of places such as the street, mall, and home. Research considers the wider significance of such mundane acts, things, and places in reproducing sociocultural patterns of life. A focus on "everyday life" is imperative for a critical psychology that moves beyond the "worldlessness" of many Anglo-American psychologies (see also entry on "▶ Conduct of Everyday Life").

### Definition

Everyday life remains an inherently problematic, vague, polysemic, and contested concept (de Certeau, 1984). The term "everyday life" is often used as a general catchphrase for the ordinary, the typical, repetitive, mundane, and shared fabric of social life. It is defined by what is left over when extraordinary events, such as having one's home destroyed by an earthquake, are excluded (Highmore, 2002). Yet, if extraordinary events disrupt and contribute to changes in life routines, why would they be considered separate? Such polarization is problematic because everyday life can remain constant, featuring continuity and routine in some respects, as well as encompassing change, variation, and unpredictability. It is important to avoid a mechanistic approach that simply reduces everyday life to repetitive and distinct aspects of life such as shopping, eating, working, playing, walking, getting stressed, and finding pleasure. It is also useful to think of everyday life as a medium in which people are immersed, rather than an abstract theoretical category (Sheringham, 2006).

Attempts to define the everyday commonly invoke binarisms, such as the mundane and extraordinary, local (particular) and global (general), flow and disruption, constraint and freedom, structure and agency, personal experience and public discourse, domination (alienation) and resistance, and positive and negative. It is possible to draw upon such tensions to emphasize a dialectical understanding, which sees the everyday as a social process forged through the general (societal) being reproduced

through the particular (local) activities of daily life (Hodgetts et al., 2010). As a site of contestation, the everyday is woven out of both structure and agency and conformity and creativity and constitutes the relational glue that bonds a cluster of evolving and shared domains of life within routine practices that are taken for granted until disrupted. The everyday can, therefore, be tentatively defined in terms of routine, rhythm, flow, and disruption (Lefebvre, 1947/1958/1991).

## Keywords

Quotidian; routine; structuration; place; disruption; defamiliarization; practice research

## Traditional Debates

A focus on everyday life is evident in early social theory and research, as well as the artistic works of figures such as Virginia Woolf, Charles Dickens, and Bertolt Brecht. Marxist, surrealist, mass observation, and situationalist movements have been particularly influential for the development of critical psychology theory and research into everyday life (Hodgetts et al., 2010). Rather than a coherent historical progression and refinement of ideas, these works constitute a heterogeneous collection of divergent interests and orientations (Highmore, 2002).

One important feature across these interlinked literatures is the attempt to transcend the dualisms between the general and the particular and structure and agency. For example, Marx and Engels (1846/1985) proposed that peoples' distorted understandings of their situations and actions are the product of a "material life-process" that reproduces social structures and ideologies. Imagining an orientation towards everyday life resembling contemporary theories of *structuration*, Lefebvre (1947/1991) anchored his dialectical approach in Humanistic Marxism. He explored the reproduction of social structures through daily acts and the potential in daily life for social transformation. Georg Simmel (1903/1997) also focused on incidental events or accumulated moments that make up everyday life in order to understand the broader patterning of social life. According to this approach, the specific resembles the general, but is not reducible to it (cf., de Certeau, 1984). Simmel extracted general arguments out of detailed considerations of specific events such as dinner with friends and studied these as situations indicative of city life. His work typifies attempts to bridge the gap between philosophical abstractions and detailed empirical engagements with located lives. Simmel was also reluctant to rely on abstract theories to interpret the world. Rather, he viewed the everyday and particular acts, material things, and places as a basis for developing theory from the bottom up. This focus informed subsequent ethnographic research in psychology, which reclaims the everyday through engagements with the lives of regular folk, who are typically written out of theory and history (cf., Highmore, 2002; Hodgetts et al., 2010).

The focus on everyday life has contributed to critiques of social psychological structures. For instance, Guy Debord and Henri Lefebvre emphasized alienation and the colonizing of the everyday by capitalism, while Michel Foucault explored the governance of the everyday through the discursive structuring of daily practices and routines (Highmore, 2002). When reading such material one needs to keep in mind that not everyone leads miserable alienated lives dominated by social structures and discourses. Later work, including the micro-sociology of de Certeau (1984), attends more fully to agency and resistance. This agentive orientation was continued with the advent of British Cultural Studies and explorations of various subcultures that brought subversion, creativity, and resistance to the fore. The focus shifts to the dialectics of structure and agency, from what social forces do to people to how people self-fashion, rather than simply reproduce these forces (Lefebvre, 1947/1958/1991). Drawing on such insights, critical psychologists have explored issues of disruption in daily life due to events such as migration and associated tensions within and between social groups (Hodgetts et al., 2010).

## Critical Debates

For some people, everyday life is characterized by freedom, creativity, inclusion, and routine. For others, it is characterized by disruption, prejudice, exploitation, and repression. Therefore, it is useful to think in pluralistic terms in order to avoid imposing the everyday norms of dominant groups and glossing diversity (Hodgetts et al., 2010). The everyday is made up of lives that overlap and can be similar, as well as distinct and different. Differences can be the result of issues of social class, migration, colonization, and illness. Incorporating the taken-for-granted and everyday experiences of diverse groups of people is imperative for developing a relevant and responsive critical psychology. To do so, processes of defamiliarization (de Certeau, 1984) or making the taken for granted strange have been used since the early work of Simmel, the development of the surrealist movement, the drama of Brecht, sociology of Simmel, and ethnomethodology of Garfinkel (Sheringham, 2006). Defamiliarization supports attempts to move the analytic gaze out from a description of an activity, such as shopping, and on to the broader socioeconomic arrangements that shape such daily activities.

Finally, research into everyday life focuses on lives in context and provides the basis for theoretical developments and social change initiatives (Hodgetts et al., 2010). Included are efforts to understand the collective processes operating at various scales and how such processes shape people and are shaped by people within the shared everyday spaces. Although we share social spaces with other people, our experiences can be distinct. Critical psychologists acknowledge the situatedness of people's daily experiences and embodied actions, along with greater divergence of everyday experiences associated with age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class. Of particular interest is how metropolitan areas have become sites for an increasing convergence and cohabitation of people from diverse lifeworlds. Critical psychologists have utilized the study of everyday life to provide understanding of the ways in which different groups cohabit and the politics and history of intergroup relations within specific shared spaces. For instance, Dixon, Tredoux, Durrheim, Finchilescu, and Clack (2008) explored issues of racial segregation by focusing on the local practices through which broader intergroup relations are patterned and reproduced. They showed how prejudices can manifest in particular situated practices, in this case when different ethnic groups use a "shared beach." A key point here is that everyday social situations and spaces are subject to both "local" and "general" narratives, which may be sometimes in tune and sometimes in conflict. Critical research increasingly looks locally in order to explore how systemic elements of the sociocultural world within which people reside are reproduced via particular interactions and daily practices.

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### Online Resources

Mass Observation Archive. (1937/2012). Retrieved October 25, 2012, from http://www.massobs.org.uk/index.htm

# Evolution, Overview

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## Introduction

At the time of writing, the phrase "the critical analysis of evolution" is associated with projects pursued by the Discovery Institute in the USA to promote the teaching of creationist science in schools. This entry has a different purpose, in that while it is the case that "nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution" (Dobzhansky 1964, p. 449), there are still controversies among evolutionary scholars as to the exact particulars and applicability of evolutionary theory. These controversies are vitriolically dismissed by those who would regard themselves as the keepers of so-called neo-Darwinian orthodoxy. The dynamics of these disputes would make for a fascinating study in the sociology of science.

## Definition

Contemporary evolutionary thought is rooted in the work of Charles Darwin (particularly 1859). Darwin's theory is based on three propositions:

- The potential of a population to expand is infinite, while the resources available to sustain any population are finite. This dynamic causes a struggle for existence among individuals as they compete for resources.
- Organisms vary in their physical qualities; these variations allow some members to reproduce more successfully than others.
- Some of these variations are inherited by offspring from their parents.

This is uncontroversial and self-evidently correct. It leads to the current orthodoxy that evolution is caused by the natural selection of heritable variations within a species as they compete between themselves for resources.

## Keywords

Evolution; natural selection; group selection; variation; Darwin; carrying capacity

## History

This basic definition poses two immediate problems. The first is that animals can exhibit characteristics that do not appear at first sight to assist them in surviving. A peacock's tail, for example, requires a large amount of energy to produce and maintain, energy that could be used for other purposes. It also makes its possessor more easily preyed on and thus less likely to survive. Darwin (1859, 1872a) resolved this problem by recognizing that potential mates were resources that organisms competed for, and he supplemented his concept of natural selection with that of sexual selection. The contemporary view would be that the preferences of peahens have channelled the selective pressures on peacock tails to their current absurd proportions, and since it takes a very fit peacock to strut such stuff, a peahen choosing an absurd tail is providing her offspring with the selective advantage of a robust father. Quite why peahens should have evolved such a preference for colossal tails is another matter.

The second problem is that if organisms are in competition with each other, how can altruism be accounted for, because it is the antithesis of competition? Darwin was aware of this problem and spent some time on it, particularly with respect to colonial insects, but didn't fully resolve it. Altruism provokes a major issue in evolutionary theory: what does natural selection act on? The individual or the social group? Clearly, within social groups, some animals dominate others and have more offspring, so it is their offspring that come to dominate within the

group. But what about neighboring groups of animals? If a group can cooperate among its members better than a group it is in conflict with, then that group could outcompete its rival. This issue is still not resolved (see below), although it appeared to have been in the 1960s and 1970s with the concepts of reciprocal altruism and kin selection.

Reciprocal altruism puts the view that an individual might gain an advantage in the long term by assisting a rival if that rival can recall that assistance and pay it back with a future favor. This line of thinking leads into the adoption of game theory by evolutionary thinkers. Kin selection accounts for altruism on the understanding that relatives share genes with each other. Thus, since brothers and sisters share, on average, 50 % of their genes with each other, then on average, if there were four brothers in a hot air balloon that would crash because it was only capable of keeping three aloft, then if one individual jumped out, while taking 100 % of his genes with him, that would leave 150 % of his genes to struggle another day. QED for altruism as an evolutionary comprehensible strategy.

## Traditional Debates

Many of the contemporary controversies in evolutionary theory center on this gene-centric view just mentioned, a view associated with Richard Dawkins, John Maynard Smith, Daniel Dennett, and others, and opposed by Ernst Mayr, Stephen Jay Gould, Niles Eldredge, and others. The bases of this and other debates are deep rooted, though this is not always recognized (e.g., the term *ultra-Darwinist* as a label for those who accord natural selection the paramount causative role in evolution is often attributed to Gould and Eldredge (e.g., Cunningham, 2010) but is actually first used for that purpose by Romanes (1892, p. 109) to describe those "who maintain the doctrine of natural selection as the only possible cause of the origin of species"). These debates swirl around three main issues. First, what is it that evolution "works on" – genes, individual phenotypes, species, or all of these – multi-level selection? Second, is natural selection the driving force of evolutionary change? And third, if natural selection is not causative of everything in the evolutionary record, what else is involved?

These debates stem from Darwin being unaware of the causes of variation and of the mechanics of heredity. Darwin was thus ignorant of what we take today as basic facts of biology: that the inheritance of traits follow regular patterns (stated in Mendel's two laws of segregation and independent assortment); that these laws hold because particular areas of an organism's chromosomes constitute genes (a term coined by William Bateson) that are the basic units of information for constructing organic forms; and that these genes cannot be modified by the life experiences of the organism (however), in that while "information" can flow from the genes to the body, it cannot go in the other direction (August Weismann's germ plasm theory. There may, however, well be exceptions to this principle; see Charney, in press. In addition, through processes now termed "epigenetic," the expression of genes can be modified during development). Darwin himself (1872b, p. 395) was sufficiently sensible to hedge his bets as to how evolution actually operated: "As my conclusions have lately been much misrepresented, and it has been stated that I attribute the modification of species exclusively to natural selection, I may be permitted to remark that in the first edition of this work, and subsequently, I placed in a most conspicuous position – namely at the close of the introduction – the following words: "I am convinced that natural selection has been the main, but not the exclusive means of modification." This has been of no avail. Great is the power of steady misinterpretation."

But Darwin was clear that if variations which are useful to their possessors in the struggle for life occur, then those individuals will be at a relative advantage as compared to their competitors, and given those variations that are heritable, adaptive changes will occur within populations, thus creating the evolutionary process.

The conceptual bases of evolutionary thinking were best articulated immediately after the publication of the *Origin* by Darwin's contemporary,

the geologist Sir Charles Lyell (cited by Wilson, 1970, p. 369): "If we take the three attributes of the deity of the Hindoo Triad, the Creator, Brahmah, the preserver or sustainer, Vishnu, & the destroyer, Siva, Natural Selection will be a combination of the two last but without the first, or the creative power, we cannot conceive of the others having any function."

The same point recurs in the analysis of de Vries (1909–1910, pp. 825–826) that "natural selection may explain the survival of the fittest, but it cannot explain the arrival of the fittest." Nowadays, this point comes out in the disagreements over the role of genes in evolution (e.g., Dawkins vs. Gould). For Dawkins, genes play a causal role in evolution: by contrast, Gould's opposite view is that "gene differences do not cause evolutionary changes in populations, they register those changes" (Sterelny, 2007, p. 83). This latter view is closer to Darwin's original conception (e.g., 1859, pp. 80–81): "If [variations] do occur, can we doubt (remembering that many more individuals are born than can possibly survive), that individuals having any advantage, however slight, over others, would have the best chance of surviving and of procreating their kind? On the other hand, we may feel sure that any variation in the least degree injurious would be rigidly destroyed."

In this view, natural selection is a consequence of variations that give individuals (and perhaps groups) a relative advantage over other individuals, and a better chance of securing the resources required for their continued survival and reproduction.

There are further disagreements. The centrality of adaptation in evolutionary change is one. First, adaptations are necessarily constrained by what solutions were previously adopted. Thus, the developmental pathways via which genetic information is expressed tend to be conservative. For example, the developmental pathways that lead to the eyes of vertebrates, mollusks, and insects are all controlled by the same genes in these very divergent organisms and result in both very convergent and very divergent eye structures – single lens in squids and mammals vs. multi-lens in insects. Consequently, the products of evolution are as much a result of constraint as adaptation. That they are is actually a very good argument against the idea of intelligent design: most organic structures are really very bizarre organizations of components that originally had other functions. A second objection to the centrality of adaptation is the "spandrel" argument (Gould & Lewontin, 1979): that some structures may emerge as a by-product of particular adaptation; therefore, not all structures are adaptive in origin.

A third, and vitriolic, dispute has ebbed and flowed over the possibility that evolution may work at the group as opposed to individual level. The first strong claims that this could occur were made by Wynne-Edwards (1962, 1986). The basic logic of the argument is this: Imagine two strains of a virus that are transmitted among a mammalian population by external parasites such as fleas, and that these fleas only parasitize live mammals because they are sensitive to the particular range of body temperatures that characterize their live hosts. These fleas do not bite dead individuals and quickly die once their host does because of the concomitant drop in temperature. Likewise, their eggs will only hatch on live individuals. Suppose further that it is the viral load which results from a flea infestation that determines whether the host mammal dies or survives a viral infection. Further suppose that one strain of virus reproduces much faster than the other strain within the mammal.

On the argument that individuals are the unit that evolution operates on, the rapid breeding strain of the virus will outcompete the slower strain and so come to dominate in the population. However, at the same time, by killing their host more quickly, they provide the conditions for their own demise, since virus strains are simultaneously under a pressure to operate at lower population densities so as to keep the host alive and enable them to infect new hosts through their flea vector. Thus, in the long run, virus groups that reproduce more slowly have an advantage over those that reproduce more quickly. The issue then becomes under what conditions might this initially counter intuitive outcome be established in reality, as opposed to supposition?

In the 1960s, the view – associated with Hamilton (1964a, 1964b), Maynard–Smith (1964), and Williams (1966, see also 1971) – was that the requisite conditions for group selection would rarely operate in nature and that within-group selection provided the most plausible foundation for the evolution of cooperation. This view was consolidated in the 1970s, particularly by E.O. Wilson (1975) and Dawkins (1976). The 1980s and 1990s saw more interest in devising possible models of group selection and in presenting empirical evidence from both laboratory and field studies, demonstrating between group selection was itself also plausible and actually occurred. Subsequently, D.S. Wilson and Sober (1994; see also D.S. Wilson & E.O. Wilson, 2007) advanced an account of multi-level selection that integrates the divide as to the likely units of evolution. Given plausible alternative hypotheses, the relative importance of genes, individuals, and groups is most likely to vary on a case-by-case basis.

By and large, these and other arguments have generated more heat than light and are likely largely ego driven. Recently, for example, E.O. Wilson and colleagues (Nowak, Tarnita, & Wilson, 2010) have argued in *Nature* that an earlier rejection of group selection was unwarranted, and Hamilton's conception of kin selection – which E.O. Wilson had earlier championed – is actually not the best account of the evolution of altruism. But, retorts Dawkins (quoted in The Boston Globe, 17 April, 2011), "It's almost universally regarded as a disgrace that Nature published it." Yet previously, Dawkins (1983, p. 422) had tacitly accepted multi-level selection, noting it was "arguable that . . . selection operates on several levels, for instance . . . the gene, and the species or lineage, and perhaps some unit of cultural transmission."

## Critical Debates

The bases of Darwin's thesis remain intact with respect to the organic world. With respect to sexually reproducing organisms, evolution has undoubtedly occurred, and natural selection plays a major role in this process. That natural selection doesn't explain everything is not surprising, as it is unlikely everything can be explained by one single process: neutral genetic changes clearly accumulate; and that catastrophes have greatly influenced the actual pathway to the present is clearly demonstrated by a meteor hitting Mexico 66 million years ago and its consequences, as well as tectonic plate movement isolating various individuals from each other and slowly subjecting them to different environments. The point that organic evolutionary pathways are constrained by their history states the obvious.

Where things get genuinely contentious is in applying an evolutionary perspective outside the parameters the narrow neo-Darwinian formulation deals with. If one accepts that chemicals have evolved, as well as galaxies and solar systems, then natural selection may well not apply in this case, since these processes do not involve reproduction (but see Smolin, 1997, for a "cosmological natural selection theory" which speculates that the universe in which we live exists because alternative universes spawned in black holes in which key physical constants are set at different values to those that apply in ours failed to survive).

At the other end of the scale is culture. Here, changes occur over time, but cultures are based on the transmission of acquired knowledge from one generation to the next. There are many claims that cultural evolution thus has a Lamarkian character, and different principles are operative (e.g., Boyd & Richerson, 1985; Gould, 1997; Medawar, 1959; Waddington, 1961). The major difference would be that not all cultural variants are created blindly and then subjected to natural selection. Others argue for a generalized Darwinism, which "does not rely on the mistaken idea that the mechanisms of evolution in the social and biological worlds are similar in a substantive sense" (Hodgson & Knudsen, 2010, p. 23), and thus argue that cultures and their contents do change over time through the natural selection of alternatives. Similarly, some cultures prove to be more successful than others, and this again demonstrates that group selection does occur.

## Practice Relevance

Darwin's thinking was developed from his reading of Thomas Malthus' *An essay on the principle of population*(1798) particularly in his point that "the increase of population is necessarily limited by the means of subsistence" (p. 61). Matlhus' essay is at the root of two ideas. The first is the "carrying capacity" of an environment, this being the maximum number of individuals of any one species that an environment can sustain indefinitely. The second is conveyed by the slogan of Herbert Spencer (1864) used to sum up Darwin's natural selection principle: "the survival of the fittest." From these two ideas follows the conclusion that selection pressures increase as populations approach an environment's carrying capacity, and resources will tend to accrue to those individuals or populations that increase their access to those resources at the expense of others. While the carrying capacity of Earth for its human population is not precisely known, evolutionary theory does point to the general shape of global politics should the human population of the planet continue to increase at its current rates.

At least two evolutionary factors outside the sphere of human intentionality affect the potential carrying capacity in question. These are both evolutionary consequences of technology. First comes the fact that any evolving system changes the environment in which it evolves and thus changes the conditions it is adapting to. Global warming is a clear example of this, being a consequence of industrial technologies whose by-products change the nature of the atmosphere, with all the massive consequences – famines, for example, due to shifting climate zones and population displacement due to sea-level changes – that stem from that.

The second set of consequences arises from attempts to use technology to increase the potential carrying capacity of the Earth while maintaining the lifestyle expectancies of the inhabitants of First World countries and the aspirations of developing nations. Intensive meat production, for example, creates conditions that need to be ameliorated by the use of antibiotics. The USA Food and Drug Administration (2011) reports that whereas 7.7 million lbs of antibiotics were prescribed to sick humans in the USA in 2011, livestock were treated with 29.9 million lbs of them. The intensive farming of livestock receiving such high doses of antibiotics is a fertile niche for evolving resistant bacteria. The FDA's National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System reports (2012) high levels of resistance to antibiotics among livestock pathogens. For example, 95 % of US retail chicken products were contaminated with Campylobacter, and nearly half of those bacteria were resistant to tetracyclines; for Salmonella on ground turkey, about 78 % were resistant to at least one antibiotic and half of the bacteria were resistant to three or more. If one adds to the equation that animal fodder became less available to US farmers during this period due to the increasing diversion of maize and soybean production into biodiesel manufacture, then the potential political consequences maintaining geographically restricted current consumption levels are immediately obvious. That evolutionary theory is finally beginning to impact economic theory is thus hardly surprising.

## Future Directions

It is in the area of culture and social systems that evolutionary thought is most likely to undergo a renaissance. The long-standing antipathy to Darwinian ideas is itself unlikely to survive in the face of sophisticated theorizing that links evolutionary thinking, constructionist ideas, and systems thinking together. The idea that evolutionary thinking leads to biological reductionism, the explanation of human behavior in terms of genes, and arguments for the status quo is no longer useful. As Hodgson and Knudsen (2010, p. 46) note, "Darwinism is a general metaphysical framework rather than a complete context-specific theory," and it is likely that "as long as we are addressing a population of replicating entities, social evolution *must* be Darwinian, whether or not self-organization, human intentionality, and Lamarckian inheritance are

involved." As E.O. Wilson (1978, pp. 206–207) points out, "the evolutionary epic is probably the best myth we will ever have." The tensions which evolutionary theory is likely to generate as its centrality is increasingly recognized will stem from the perennial confusion of "is" with "ought" issues.

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## Online Resources


TalkOrigins Archive: Exploring the creation/evolution controversy. http://www.talkorigins.org/

The complete work of Charles Darwin online. http://darwin-online.org.uk/

# Evolutionary Psychology

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## Introduction

Evolutionary psychology is an interdisciplinary endeavor that applies evolutionary theory to psychology. Since its inception in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the field has witnessed the rising to dominance of a particular perspective launched mostly by David Buss, Leda Cosmides, and John Tooby; in this rising, scientific efforts were coupled with publications aiming at a wider public from early on. Critical scholars call this perspective *Evolutionary Psychology* (EP) in order to distinguish it from the vast field of evolutionary perspectives in psychology. EP dominates the field of evolutionary psychology, though, is popular in the general public, and has sparked most vehement criticism. From a critical perspective, focusing on the relations between scientific knowledge, power, and subjectivity, EP is of particular relevance exactly because it displays such potential to soak into everyday discourse. In line with the encyclopedia's focus on concepts and theories from traditional psychology for which critical assessments have already been provided, we have narrowed down our overview to EP.

## Definition

Evolutionary Psychologists apply evolutionary theory to psychology. Within this vast field, the term *Evolutionary Psychology* (EP) is here used to describe a psychological paradigm characterized by rather coherent theoretical and methodological premises, which has given way to scientific textbooks and handbooks and which is grounded on the works of a couple of widely influential and popular authors like David Buss, Leda Cosmides, Steven Pinker, and John Tooby, to name only a few (comp. Buller, 2008). When referring to other evolutionary perspectives in psychology, we will use the term evolutionary psychology without capitals.

According to Evolutionary Psychologists (e.g., Tooby & Cosmides, 1992), humans are biologically and psychologically adapted to a phase in human prehistory called the *environment of evolutionary adaptedness*, an environment probably be located in the East-African Savannah between 1.8 billion and 10,000 years B.C. This focus on human prehistory goes along with the claim that much behavior of contemporary humans is adapted to this phase – such a behavior is called an *adaptation* and is conceptualized as a product of natural or sexual selection. Adaptations are specified as genetically stabilized solutions to problems early humans should have regularly encountered. Psychological adaptations or functional specializations are called *modules*. Such modules are said to include highly specific phenomena like "[a]n intuitive version of biology or natural history" (Pinker, 2002, p. 220) or "[a]n intuitive economics, which we use to exchange goods and favors" (ibid., p. 221), and many others. Modules are generally thought to be genetically coded for.

## Keywords

Evolutionary psychology; evolution; natural selection; sexual selection; adaptationism; naturalization of social relations; ideology critique; immanent critique; sociobiology; sociobiology debate

## History

The inception of EP is associated with Donald Symons' 1979 book *The Evolution of Human Sexuality* and an anthology *The Adapted Mind*, in 1992, with the now classic article *The Psychological Foundations of Culture* by John Tooby and Leda Cosmides.

In a broader sense the origins of evolutionary psychology date back to nineteenth-century

theories of evolution. Darwin's (1859) theory of natural selection is grounded on Thomas Malthus' premise that population rates increase in an exponential manner while the natural resources needed to nourish populations only increase in a linear fashion. This imbalance between population and natural resources is supposed to lead to a scarcity of resources and to increasing competition among the members of any given population. Natural selection poses that individuals of any species compete among each other, but also with individuals of other species, for scarce natural resources. Another premise is the existence of genetic variability between individuals. Based on this given variation, some individuals are better prepared for the "struggle for existence" (Darwin, p. 5) than others. Some individuals succeed in surviving and in producing offspring, thus handing their genetic makeup to successor generations, while others do not. Darwin already claimed that many human psychological traits, especially features relating to morality and intelligence, had developed under the pressure of natural selection. The mechanisms of sexual selection, on the other hand, are guided by the principles of mate choice (Darwin, 1871). Darwin was startled by the observation that, in many species, females did not only seem to care for signals of natural fitness. Quite on the contrary, some features preferred by females, for example, the male peacock's display of plumage, were more of an impediment in the struggle for existence. Hence, Darwin came to believe that it was the seemingly arbitrary preferences of the so-called "choosing" sex that determined the course of sexual selection. Evolutionary psychological studies on mate choice (e.g., Buss, 2003) and on human attractiveness (comp. Swami & Furnham, 2008), in particular, draw on this Darwinian framework but superimpose the mechanisms of natural and sexual selection. According to Evolutionary Psychologists, prehistoric humans should have chosen mates not due to arbitrary aesthetic features but on the basis of their affordance as visible indicators of fitness, for example, fertility in women or parasite resistance.

More proximate roots of EP can be found in twentieth-century German ethology and, more importantly, sociobiology. Sociobiology is an immediate predecessor of EP – in terms of its theoretical underpinnings, its strategic function within the field of academia, and of the critical debates it sparked. In his (1975) book *Sociobiology*: *The New Synthesis*, Edward O. Wilson strongly put forth the argument that social behavior is the product of evolution and that the genetic constitution was accountable for most human traits. Another key sociobiological tenet is that humans of all times are engaged in fitness-maximizing behavior and produce *adaptions* to their current environments. While EP, for good reasons, can be considered a descendent of sociobiology, there are major differences. First, Evolutionary Psychologists do not focus on current behavioral adaptions to human environments. They rather hold that humans have evolved sets of problem-solving devices (modules) designed to solve behavioral and psychological problems of the environment of evolutionary adaptedness (adaptations). Therefore, they claim that much current human behavior is not at all fitness-maximizing, but in fact maladapted to the current environment. Second, sociobiologists are concerned with the evolution of behavior while Evolutionary Psychologists focus on the evolution of mental modules. The elective affinity between cognitive science and evolutionary theory, evident in the EP's focus on cognitive-behavioral modules, is certainly one of the defining success criteria for the rise of EP in contemporary mainstream psychology.

## Traditional Debates

Traditional debates about EP within psychology usually focus on concrete methodical and methodological shortcomings. While written by a philosopher and not a psychologist, David Buller's (2008) painstaking analysis of selected empirical studies is a case in point. Buller launched a major attack on the modularity hypothesis, arguing for the flexibility of the brain instead. He also took up Stephen Jay

Gould's (1997) claim that EP hypotheses about prehistoric humans were generally not testable but modified this critique by showing that many hypotheses could be tested in principle but that the evidence offered by Evolutionary Psychologists was often not convincing. In a similar manner, Viren Swami and Adrian Furnham (2008) have put specific EP hypotheses on the evolutionary function of physical beauty to the test and criticized them for weak methodological premises and lack of empirical support. For example, they showed that certain stimuli used in evolutionary psychological attractiveness research were inadequate. They also pointed out that prehistoric data contradicted some major EP theories on attractiveness. While such rather immanent criticism is relevant also from a critical psychological perspective, traditional debates remain within the epistemological and methodological scaffold of EP and disregard its sociopolitical context and function.

## Critical Debates

EP has given rise to a line of critical debates rooted in the critique of sociobiology of the late 1970s and even in the critique of the theory of evolution by Darwin's contemporaries. Unlike traditional debates, this form of critique often combines immanent critique and ideology critique, thus addressing the larger social and political context and function of evolutionary psychology. Furthermore, it is characteristic for this branch of critique that it was addressed to a broader public and was largely carried out in the form of public debates about sociobiology and evolutionary psychology.

*Ideology critique*, spawned by the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, is at stake whenever evolutionary theory naturalizes social relations and whenever this naturalization serves to legitimate the status quo. Such critique was taken up by the *radical* science movement already in the so-called *sociobiology controversy* and later continued into a full-blown evolutionary psychology controversy. Soon after Wilson's sociobiology had appeared and had received a praiseful review in the *New York Review of Books*, several authors sent an open letter to the *New York Review of Books* (Allen et al., 1975), accusing Wilson of providing scientific legitimation for societal dominance relations and oppression, in particular of racism. The critical take on sociobiology had two major issues: On the one hand, *Sociobiology* was put in a line with scientific traditions like eugenics or scientific racism – i.e., with examples in which science had been used to justify and legitimate oppression, inequality, or downright crimes against humanity. Susan McKinnon (2005) continued this line of critique when she, rather polemically, called EP "neoliberal genetics" (ibid., title). Evolutionary speculation about prehistoric humans is especially prone to androcentrism and ethnocentrism when the social situatedness and cultural premises of its theory building are not reflected and accounted for. On the other hand, the radical science movement (e.g., Allen et al., 1975) also pursued a strategy of *immanent critique*, listing examples from *sociobiology* in which speculation overrode empirical evidence or careful theoretical inference.

Population geneticist Richard Lewontin and Wilson were the primary opponents in the sociobiology controversy of the 1970s and early 1980s, which to a good extent was carried out in public media. During the 1980s, paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould and ethologist Richard Dawkins took on center stage for the camps of radical scientists (Gould) and sociobiology (Dawkins), respectively. During the 1990s, it was Gould who carried the sociobiology debate on to EP. In a public controversy in the *New York Review of Books* between Gould on one side and John Tooby and Leda Cosmides, Steven Pinker, Daniel Dennett, and Robert Wright on the other side, for example, Gould (1997) accused EP of being "ultra-Darwinian," i.e., of overestimating the evolutionary impact of natural selection. This argument draws on an earlier critique of sociobiology as "adaptationist" (e.g., Gould & Lewontin, 1979). Adaptationism is criticized to overestimate the power of natural selection to shape individual traits to an optimum and to focus on natural selection at the expense of other evolutionary mechanisms, for example, genetic drift or constraints that operate on natural selection. Gould (1997) furthermore criticized EP for focusing too

much on the speculative search for reasons why a certain behavior should or could have been adaptive in the environment of evolutionary adaptedness. He called EP unscientific because its hypotheses about prehistoric humans could not be tested.

## International Relevance

EP was initially put forward by a group of scholars located mainly in the USA and the UK. Nowadays, it is represented by several major international journals such as evolutionary psychology or *Evolution and Human Behavior* and by a number of international academic societies like the *Human Behavior and Evolution Society* or the *International Society for Human Ethology* that have their seat either in the USA or in Europe. Evolutionary psychology has gained increasing presence in many psychology departments especially in North America and Europe, with approaches ranging from a focus on cultural evolution to those rather biologistic versions of evolutionary psychology criticized by critical psychologists.

## Practice Relevance

The most important practical relevance of EP lies in its broad popularity and stark presence in popular media (comp. Cassidy, 2005). Public controversies have often centered around practical suggestions made by Evolutionary Psychologists. Randy Thornhill and Craig Palmer, for example, triggered a heated public debate when in their book *A Natural History of Rape*, they infamously claimed a mental "rape" module in men and suggested that women should understand that with their behavior and dressing, they might increase their propensity of being raped. According to Angela Cassidy, public debates like these are integral for EP's growing success within the academia. In her view, Evolutionary Psychologists compensated for their initial lack of academic credentials by aiming at a broader audience. It was not least the popular scientific books authored by Evolutionary Psychologists like David Buss or Steven Pinker that paid off: At least in the UK, popular press coverage on EP was intricately connected to the publication of popular science books on EP during the 1990s. Cassidy even suggests that academic interest in EP is related to the popular press coverage. Comparing citations of EP in the popular press in the UK and academic citations in databases like PsycINFO, she finds that "academic citations for EP started to rise sharply after the appearance of the subject in mass media in 1994" (ibid., p. 121). In this process, EP has gained increasing scientific authority which is carried back into popular discourse. EP theories of supposedly natural sex differences, in particular, receive extensive press coverage. These theories not only reflect neoliberal gendered divisions of labor but also have an effect on how people think about gender and the current gendered division of labor and on their (gendered) subjectivities.

## Future Directions

From the beginning, all reading of Darwin has been intricately political but also diverse as to the political agendas at stake. The Malthus-inspired liberal reading of Darwinism, for example, emphasized competition and laissez-faire capitalism. Russian evolutionary theorists of Darwin's time, by contrast, criticized this liberal reading and stripped away the Malthusian components of evolutionary theory. EP is rightfully to be criticized of lending itself to neoliberal politics and/or to the naturalization of reactionary gender dichotomies and gendered divisions of labor; Evolutionary Psychologist Pinker (2002) explicitly points out EP's vicinity to conservative political ideologies. Nevertheless, such biased and one-sided importing of evolutionary theory to psychology is not inevitable. What if evolutionary theory can also be used to *challenge* the societal status quo (Grosz, 2004). Critical psychologists need not throw out the baby with the bath water, but rather explore different vantage points to evolutionary theory – ones with different implications and possibly emancipative potential.

Most prolific critics of sociobiology and EP (Stephen Jay Gould, Richard Lewontin, Steven Rose) have indeed been evolutionary biologists; some were committed to both evolutionary theory and progressive politics. Feminist evolutionary theorist Antoinette Brown Blackwell, for example, provides a starting point for a *Darwinian* feminism (Fausto-Sterling, Gowaty, & Zuk, 1997) rooted in evolutionary theory but at the same time committed to feminist politics. Blackwell (1875) criticized Darwin for his androcentrism and ended up with an idea of evolution leading to real equality between the sexes.

In a more empirical vein, critical psychology could follow discourse analytical research strategies to reconstruct how EP dissipates into everyday psychological knowledge and into everyday practices. EP as a public science is a paradigmatic showcase to study how a specialized scientific discourse may contribute to the shaping of subjectivity. In such analyzing the relations between scientific knowledge, power, and subjectivity, the case of EP may provide insights into the operation of power but also into mechanisms of resistance.

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## Online Resources

*David Buller's guided tour on evolutionary psychology*. http://host.uniroma3.it/progetti/kant/field/ep.htm

Online resources on public debates and the 'Adaptationism Debate'. http://cogweb.ucla.edu/Debate/index.html#Public%20Debate

# Exclusion, Overview


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## Introduction

To *exclude* is to shut out, hinder, bar, put out, or eject (Gove, 1993). Two related constructs, *moral exclusion* and *social exclusion*, describe how dominant groups marginalize particular kinds of people in ways that reduce or eliminate their access to essential and valued resources.

## Definition

A thematic issue of *Journal of Social Issues* in 1990 introduced *moral exclusion* theory and its applications. Drawing on the construct, *scope of justice*, the psychological boundary for the applicability of justice (Deutsch, 1975), these papers described antecedents, processes, and outcomes of moral exclusion in schooling, immigration, and other societal contexts. They analyzed how excluding people from the scope of justice can become institutionalized and seem inevitable to justify harms experienced by excluded people as normal and routine (Opotow, 1990). Symptoms of exclusion include: victim blaming, unflattering and self-righteous comparisons, derogation, dehumanization, condescension, and double standards (Opotow & Weiss, 2000).

*Social exclusion*, a term coined by René Lenoir, French Social Action Secretary of State during the 1970s (Lenoir, 1974/1989; Davies, 2005), draws on work by Deleuze and Guattari (1980) and others. It came into wider use after a 1994 seminar convened by the European Commission and the United Kingdom Department of Social Security that spurred scholarship in sociology, social policy, geography, and economics (e.g., Room, 1995; Young, 1999). Social exclusion describes contemporary, institutionalized forms of social disadvantage, often historically based, that occurs in multiple societal spheres.

Both *moral exclusion* and *social exclusion* are attentive to societal contexts that prevent individuals, groups, communities, and larger identity groups from having the opportunities, resources, and rights available to others. In both, salient demographic categories, such as ethnicity, citizenship, gender, religious beliefs, and political orientation, are associated with persistent disadvantage. Both constructs are critical as they expose a gap between widespread support for cherished values, such as equality or freedom, and their violation by unspoken consensus and in practice.

Although moral and social exclusion overlap, their emphases differ. Moral exclusion focuses on those with power to identify attitudes, beliefs, and norms that justify the exclusion of people from the scope of justice (or moral community). It is largely a theoretical construct delineating social psychological antecedents and processes that intensify or ameliorate exclusionary practices and policies. Social exclusion emphasizes the policies and outcomes associated with exclusion, investigating how disadvantage is distributed in society and the socio-political and historical causes of such disparities. While also theoretical, much scholarship is empirical, delineating exclusionary processes and effects in specific societal spheres and national contexts. Both moral exclusion and social exclusion critique prevailing stereotypes and inequalities that are institutionalized in societal arrangements.

## Keywords

Exclusion; inclusion; harm-doing; injustice; structural inequality; social categories; prejudice; discrimination; procedural justice; distributive justice; power; disadvantage; poverty

## Traditional Debates

For more than seven decades, social psychological research has focused on prejudice (Allport, 1954) and the precursors and outcomes of differentially conferring privilege or disadvantage based on group membership (e.g., Apfelbaum, 1979; Lewin, 1933/1986). Research on distributive justice and procedural justice (Deutsch, 1985; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975), which investigates fair distributions and fair processes in social relations, has largely focused on social contexts in which parties involved were approximately equal. The construct, moral exclusion, integrates prejudice and justice research in its attention to social contexts characterized by inequality, prejudice, and oppression. Such contexts are characterized by distributive and procedural injustice in which those outside the scope of justice are vulnerable to harm, exploitation, and deadly violence that is rationalized as just

(Opotow, 1995). These consequences can then ripple out into multiple societal spheres (Fine & Ruglis, 2009).

Although it is generally agreed that the construct, *social exclusion*, is multidimensional, dynamic, and involves power relations in social, political, cultural, and economic spheres, various lines of research conceptualize and define social exclusion differently. These empirical approaches focus on: groups at risk; groups with limited access to social goods (e.g., jobs, citizenship, respect); effects of exclusion on excluded groups (e.g., poor housing and health); processes driving exclusion; and the agents and actors connected with social exclusion (Kahn, 2012). Theoretical debates concern the relationship between social exclusion and such kindred constructs, including power, disadvantage, and poverty. Disadvantage, for example, can occur without poverty but can nevertheless engender negative effects that include destructive conflict (Fischer, 2008).

## Critical Debates

Several lines of research that focus on intergroup relations characterized by extreme negative attitudes cover some of the same ground as moral exclusion. Dehumanization concerns reducing some kinds of people to nonhuman objects by denying their individuality and dignity (e.g., Bandura, Underwood, & Fromson, 1975); delegitimization is the utilization of extremely negative stereotypes to describe people positioned as enemies (e.g., Bar-Tal & Hammack, 2012); and infrahumanization positions some kinds of people as species below humans (Vaes, Paola, Castelli, Leyens, & Giovanazzi, 2003).

These lines of research contribute to our knowledge of cognitive and moral orientations associated with extreme and derogatory attitudes in hostile intergroup relations. They contribute to moral exclusion, a broader theoretical construct, which encompasses milder as well as more severe forms of exclusion at smaller (e.g., interpersonal, family) and larger (e.g., region, state, or nation) levels of analysis as well in intergroup relations, including those characterized by hate (e.g., Opotow & McClelland, 2007). A key challenge for researchers investigating extreme discrimination is to delineate the factors that reduce hostility and oppression in unequal social relations (cf., Opotow, 2008, 2012).

Critical debates about the causes of social exclusion concern power relations, agency, labeling, sites of exclusion, and structural discrimination in causing exclusion (Kahn, 2012; also see Davies, 2005). Social exclusion can emerge from: neoliberal ideologies about specialization and resulting discrimination; Social Democratic ideologies about deficiencies of solidarity; and change ideologies about extant monopolies of status and power (Silver, 1994; also see Barata, 2000). Critical debates also focus on effects of low power, marginality, and insufficient agency on the rights and well-being of specific groups such as people who are aged, young, stateless, disabled, women, or have nontraditional gender identities (e.g., Gibney, 2008; Jackson, 1999; UNICEF, 2006). Given the heterogeneity of research foci, the appropriate measure of social exclusion is also an ongoing critical debate (Burchardt, Le Grand, & Piachaud, 2002; World, 2007).

To summarize, moral exclusion and social exclusion are broad, critical constructs. Social psychological research investigating moral exclusion scrutinizes the justice beliefs and social cognitions giving rise to biases and justifications for exclusionary attitudes and behavior. Social science research investigating social exclusion scrutinizes socio-historical antecedents, practices, laws, and social policies that differentially distribute privilege, rights, and resources. Research on both offers a critical perspective on the power relations and social technologies that classify, control, and seem normal and inevitable, resulting in negative material and psychological outcomes for excluded people.

In sum, moral exclusion and social exclusion critique a *status quo* that confers and condones disadvantage. They direct critical attention to disparities in well-being in order to foster inclusionary societal change and social justice.

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# Existence

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## Introduction

Although major philosophers have discussed being since before Socretes, Soren Kierkegaard is usually considered the first existential philosopher. Differing from the philosophies of Kant and Hegel, Kierkegaard (1855) believed that meaning is the responsibility of the individual, and it is the individual's responsibility to use this meaning to lead the authentic life, often in the face of the absurd.

The most influential existential thinkers of the twentieth century base their methodology and ontology on the phenomenological movement; Edmond Husserl's version of phenomenology was particularly influential. Martin Heidegger was Husserl's student and assistant, and although he broke from Husserl, Heidegger uses Husserl's phenomenology as a tool to study being. Jean-Paul Sartre studied for a time with Husserl, and, although Heidegger was closer to Husserl, Sartre's work, the philosophical study of being, also uses Husserl's phenomenology as its major tool.

Although Sartre discusses an existential psychology in his work Being and Nothingness (1943/1992), it was the work of Heidegger (1927/1962) that most influenced psychology through the Swiss psychiatrists Meddard Boss and Ludwig Binswanger. The German psychiatrist Karl Jaspers became an existential philosopher and has influenced psychology towards the direction of existentialism.

In the USA, Rollo May led a movement to import existential psychology from Europe and with Angel and Ellenberger (1958) edited an influential anthology of therapeutic works by major European existential psychologists and psychiatrists, translated for the first time into English.

During the last several years, existential psychotherapy has been popularized by May's student and protégé, Irvin Yalom (1980). Existential psychology has also had a significant influence on humanistic psychology and psychotherapy, and together they have been called by Bugental "the third force" in psychology.

## Definition

Although existentialists seem to shy away from definitions, it would seem that Heidegger (1927/1962) has captured the philosophical meaning of existence through his concept of "being-in-the-world," or, similarly, by the German word, dasein. Dasein has six facets, which he calls "existentials" or basic modes of being. They are (1) spaciality, the perceived spacial meaning of our experience; (2) temporality, the future-oriented, temporal meaning of experience; (3) attunement and mood, our personal feelings and tendencies, our mode of opening up to the

perceived world; (4) Mitsein, our mode of being with others; (5) bodyhood, the way our physical self senses the world; and (6) being-towards-death, the way we perceive the completion of our journey. According to Heiddeger, the world is experienced in three modes, the Eigenwelt, our experiencing of the world through experiencing ourselves; the Umwelt, experiencing through our natural surroundings; and the Mitwelt, or experiencing the world through living with others.

Sartre (1943/1992) divides being into being-in-itself, which is the existence of creatures and things, and being-for-itself, which is the particularly human consciousness of them. Another important part of being according to Sartre is nothingness. We cannot understand what something is unless we also understand what it is not. From here Sartre arrives at the conclusion that "nothingness lies coiled in the heart of being-like a worm" (p. 21).

## Keywords

Existentialism; daseinsanalyse; phenomenology; meaning; being; being-in-the-world

## Traditional Debates

One of the preexistentialist debates was whether existence is a first-level (pertaining to the object itself) or second-level category (pertaining to understanding about the existence of an object). Aristotle is considered to be the prominent proponent of the first position, whereas Frege and Russel have taken the second position. Hintikka has attempted to reconcile the two positions by asserting that the concept of existence has both absolute and relative uses.

Another early debate was on the difference between existence and essence, which was a precursor of the existentialist claim that existence is before essence. Aristotle believed that the actuality of a substance is its essence, whereas the Arab philosopher Avicenna saw existence as ontologically distinct from essence, with essence being also the realm of the possible and not the actual.

## Critical Debates

The most important critical debate is likely that between theological and atheistic existentialism. The former is represented by Christian theologians Kierkegaard and Tillich and Jewish philosophers Buber (1923/1970) and Soloveitchik, who was also a prominent orthodox rabbi. Standing out among the atheistic proponents is Sartre, whom the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Flynn, 2011) called "the best known philosopher of the twentieth century" and attempted to eliminate the deity completely from his philosophy. The religious existentialists see the binding character of religious dictates as emanating from the individual and not from an external source, whereas the atheists propose that the individual is defined by his or her choices and that the person must be the author of his or her own life.

Ludwig Binswanger (1963) and Meddard Boss (1957) differed over the understanding of Heidegger's meaning of dasein. Binswanger's interpretation was more transcendental; that is, he believed that the mode of "being-with" (one of the existential modes mentioned above) should be fundamentally grounded in interpersonal interaction in an a priori, structural way. Boss saw "being-with" as a psychological factor enabling this interaction and not as an inherent structure of dasein. Heidegger upheld Boss' interpretation, causing a break between Boss and Binswanger; Binswanger continued to cling to his transcendental understanding, calling it his "creative misreading".

Critical theory developed in parallel to existentialism. The Frankfort school, which included theorists such as Marcuse, Adorno, Habermas, and Benjamin, overlaps with existentialism in mood and themes. The criticism of positivism, which appears both in the existentialists and in many critical theorists, is beginning to influence psychology, widening its epistemological base.

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## Existentialism

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### Introduction

The relationship between existentialism and psychoanalysis is at once self-evident and contradictory. Influenced by Martin Heidegger's critique of metaphysics, French philosophers in the mid-twentieth century developed existentialism as a mode of thought that privileged being and acting over substance and essence. The French existentialists, led by Jean-Paul Sartre but including Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, viewed human essence not as a metaphysical given but rather as the result of the acts that the subject chooses during its existence. This rejection of human essence places existentialism in theoretical proximity to psychoanalysis, which also refuses any notion of essence that transcends and expresses itself in the subject's acts. Sartre's debt to psychoanalysis led him to write a screenplay for a film about Freud (Sartre, 1989), a screenplay that provided the basis for John Huston's *Freud* (1962). In addition, Sartre's famous contention that "to be is to act" (1956, p. 613) could serve as a motto for the psychoanalytic theorization of the subject, which views the unconscious as expressed in what the subject does rather than in what the subject intends.

The problem with the relationship between existentialism and psychoanalysis, however, arises with the emphasis that existentialism places on the subject's free decision that defines its being. According to the existentialist philosophers, the subject cannot avoid its freedom, even when it acts according to what psychoanalysis would interpret as unconscious drives that are not the product of any decision. What psychoanalysis classifies as unconscious, existentialism labels "bad faith," free acts that the subject cannot or refuses to avow as the product of its own freedom.

In his magnum opus *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre devotes a chapter to what he calls "existential psychoanalysis." Though he retains the term "psychoanalysis," he explicitly rejects the founding concept of Freud's theory when he claims, "Existential psychoanalysis rejects the hypothesis of the unconscious; it makes the psychic act co-extensive with consciousness" (1956, p. 728). With this gesture, the chasm between existentialism and psychoanalysis becomes apparent, despite their shared emphasis on the significance of the act. Existentialists such as Sartre refuse to abandon the priority of consciousness because they equate this theoretical concession with the loss of human freedom, and it is true that Freud conceives a ruthless necessity at work within the psyche. But there have been attempts to marry existentialism and psychoanalysis while retaining both the priority of the unconscious and the possibility of freedom.

### Definition

Existentialism is often cursorily defined by the idea that existence precedes essence. Our being

determines who we are rather than the reverse. In this sense, existentialism is part of the phenomenological project of incorporating human experience into the theorization of subjectivity. But the definition of existentialism also involves the role that the subject plays in determining the significance of its existence.

Rather than functioning as a given that the subject must discover through self-reflection or through investigation of the world, the significance of existence derives from the acts of the subject itself. For existentialism, there is no meaning inherent in the self or in the world, but this does not imply that life is meaningless. Through its acts and its projects, the subject provides a meaning for its life and even for the world.

## Keywords

Anxiety; Bad faith; Jacques Lacan; Jean-Paul Sartre; Slavoj Žižek

## Traditional Debates

The key divide between traditional psychoanalysis and existential psychoanalysis concerns the question of meaning. While traditional psychoanalysis does not view its task as helping the patient to arrive at meaning but to confront its unconscious, meaning for existence functions as the basis for the intervention of the existentialist psychoanalyst. Existentialism rejects the idea that being in itself has any meaning at all. The subject finds itself thrown into a groundless and meaningless world, but through the project that it gives itself, the subject has the capacity to find an individualized meaning. This is the task that existentialist therapist like Rollo May and Ludwig Binswanger set for themselves. As fellow practitioner of existential psychoanalysis Viktor Frankl puts it, "man's main concern is not to gain pleasure or to avoid pain but rather to see a meaning in his life" (1959, p. 136). Desire is not oriented toward pleasure or enjoyment but toward the discovery of meaning, and the aim of the therapist is to assist the subject in arriving at this meaning.

For Freudian psychoanalysis and its other derivatives, meaning is not the central problem of the subject's existence. It is rather the relationship that the subject takes up to its own unconscious desire. Analysis assists the subject in taking responsibility for this desire that is nonetheless alien to it. One must recognize oneself in the unconscious desire that always appears like a foreign entity within. As psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan says, "psychoanalysis can accompany the patient to the ecstatic limit of the '*Thou art that*'" (2006, p. 81). This recognition is not the discovery of meaning in one's life, as existentialism would have it, but instead it involves the identification with a desire that resists sense altogether. The psychoanalytic patient identifies itself with a kernel of nonsense that defines it, while the existential psychoanalytic patient finds the hidden meaning of its life projects.

The opposition between psychoanalysis seems at this point irresolvable, but the psychoanalytic idea of taking responsibility for one's unconscious desire reveals the point at which the two theories again come together. One of the fundamental tenets of existentialism is its insistence on individual responsibility: the subject cannot avoid responsibility for its acts because it is nothing but its acts. Psychoanalysis, for its part, envisions a similar idea of responsibility, and it even takes this idea further than existentialism. For psychoanalysis, the subject is responsible not only for what it intends to do but also for what it does not intend, for the apparent accidents that befall it. This extension of the concept of responsibility represents the point where existentialism and psychoanalysis share a common ground and the point at which psychoanalysis becomes even more existentialist than existentialism itself.

## Critical Debates

The pivot point for the relationship between psychoanalysis and existentialism is Jacques Lacan. He is known for authoring a "return to Freud" via structural linguistics, but what is less

well known but equally important is his attempt to integrate the questions of existentialism into psychoanalysis. He foregrounds the problem of subjectivity and the subject's anxiety, which are the linchpins of existential inquiry, and he reformulates these questions in psychoanalytic terms. In contemporary theory, this is the dimension of Lacan's thought that his most famous disciple, Slavoj Žižek, highlights. Any discussion of the relationship between existentialism and psychoanalysis must take Lacan and Žižek as a key point of departure, even if they tend to avoid overt references to existentialism.

Lacan develops his return to Freud amid the full flowering of existentialist philosophy. Sartre and existentialism dominated the philosophical scene when Lacan's thought developed, and Lacan both injects Sartre's thinking about responsibility into psychoanalysis and points out the contrast between the psychoanalytic and the existentialist conceptions of subjectivity. Lacan develops his critique of Sartre in his most famous essay, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function."

In this essay, Lacan sees the connection between existentialism and psychoanalysis, but he also claims that the former participates in a fundamental illusion. He claims that it "ties the illusion of autonomy in which it puts its faith to the ego's constitutive misrecognitions" (2006, p. 80). The problem, as Lacan sees it, lies in existentialism's assertion of conscious mastery, the idea that consciousness does not rely on an Other that constitutes it and deprives it from the beginning of its autonomy. From the psychoanalytic standpoint, freedom can only consist in freely embracing one's desire. It cannot extend to acts whereby one constitutes one's world. Though the opposition between Lacan and Freud's psychoanalysis and Sartre's existentialism is stark, it is possible to imagine their reconciliation.

This task has fallen to Slavoj Žižek, perhaps the foremost Lacanian theorist in the world today. Though Žižek rarely makes explicit theoretical overtures in the direction of Sartre or existentialism, Sartre's philosophy of freedom suffuses Žižek's thought and provides a touchstone for his understanding of the psychoanalytic project. Žižek speaks of freedom in the same way as Sartre, but he tries to do so in a way that does not contradict the insights of psychoanalysis.

This effort becomes most apparent in *The Indivisible Remainder*, ostensibly a work on Friedrich Schelling. Here, Žižek associates freedom not with acts that occur within time (which are necessarily unconscious) but with the act that begins the subject's temporality. He says, "a free Subject has to have a Ground which is not himself, he has first to contract this Ground and then to assume a free distance towards it via the act of primordial decision which opens up time" (1996, p. 35). Like Sartre and the existentialists, Žižek posits a free act at the origin of the subject's temporal world, but he retains the psychoanalytic idea that the ground for this act must be given to the subject as an a priori. This attempt to reconcile existentialism and psychoanalysis represents the most promising avenue to date for their tenuous marriage.

Though existentialism no longer has the following that it did during the mid-twentieth century, it remains a fecund source of insight for psychoanalytic theorizing. Žižek's appeal stems in large part from his ability to tap into this philosophical reservoir. The task for other psychoanalytic theorists is one of furthering this reconciliation between these two seemingly disparate and yet philosophically aligned doctrines, both of which represent the most profound responses to the modern groundlessness of being.

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## Experience

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### Introduction

Experience is perhaps the most disputed concept in this encyclopedia. At first sight, it might seem obvious that the word "experience" names *the* thing-to-be-explained by psychology. If the "what" of chemistry is chemicals and the what of geology is rocks and fossils, then the what of psychology must be experience, mustn't it? Not at all. History shows that the repudiation of experience as the discipline's defining object has been an effective launchpad both for experimental/scientific psychology *and* for a powerful section of today's critical psychologies. However, over recent years, such repudiations have had to front an increasing counterflow from the popular culture of self-disclosure in which personal experience is the principal coin – witness the rise of identity politics, reality TV, talk shows and vox pop, social media and blogging, exposés, travelogues and confessional (auto)biographies, the self-help movement, psychotherapy, and interviewing as a technique for social research. An awareness of the tangled relationship between psychology and experience has thus become indispensable to any critical understanding of the discipline.

### Definition

Part of the tangle is that the word "experience" has a number of contrasting meanings, some of which are peculiar to the Academy. Thus, philosophers theorizing about knowledge have argued for centuries over the relative contributions of experience versus reason to the formation of ideas. British empiricists like Locke and Hume argue (against "rationalists" like Descartes or, later, Kant) that human knowledge is not inherited or constructed from first principles but derived solely from the senses, that is, "from experience" in a now special sense (Williams, 1977, pp. 98–101). Here, however, we need only distinguish between two main meanings. The first refers to key events in the past. "Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes" quips Oscar Wilde. This kind of experience is always already formed into particulate "experiences" that have accumulated over time, taught lessons, and shaped who people (say they) are. This is the *formative* or *diachronic* (i.e., "through time") sense of experience. A second sense of experience refers to an ongoing process of *experiencing* what is happening in the here and now. Somewhat like the synchronic dimension of language, this sense includes not only temporal presence (and absence) as in "the realization of this and this instant, but the specificity of present being, the inalienably physical, within which we may discern and acknowledge institutions, formations, positions, but not always as fixed products" (Bradley, 2005; Williams, 1976, p. 128).

### Keywords

Essentialism; discourse; empiricism; individualism; structure of feeling

### History

The history of the concept of experience in psychology is largely a history of rejection: "the

emergence of psychology can be said to be founded on the repudiation of its own object, experience" (Stephenson & Papadopoulos, 2006, p. 6). This rejection is often traced to the advent of American behaviorism, but behaviorism merely condensed more prevalent dynamics. Beginning in the late 1800s was the construction of an abstract mathematized object of analysis for psychology, an average individual, without personal characteristics, defined by the statistical analysis of aggregated numerical data. Behaviorism also sidelined the defining differences between humans and animals, devising the observational regime which blithely bypasses language, history, culture, work, politics, society, and art. Added to this is the asymmetrical "scientific" subject–position behaviorism appropriates from the natural sciences, where "the psychologist" arrogates to themselves all powers of observation, interpretation, theory making, language, agency, and creativity while casting their "subjects" as mute, anonymous, and passive responders to experimental stimuli (Bradley, 2011). A corollary here is that anything that is not a scripted experimental "response" cannot furnish valid evidence for psychological understanding – meaning any personal account of experience is dismissed as "anecdotal" (Hetherington, 1983).

Given the denial of experience that helped constitute psychology as science, insistence upon experience is an obvious move when critiquing the discipline's scientism. As early as 1888, Paul Natorp proposed that the immediacy of undifferentiated experience was the proper object of critical psychology, in this way opposing the dissolution of experience by objectivizing methods. William James (1890, pp. 219) elaborates the argument, castigating psychophysicists' pet idea that sensations were the elementary building blocks of consciousness as "abandoning the empirical method" at the outset. Sensations are artificial, diaphanous abstractions from the one empirical (experiential) reality: the multiplicitous "stream of thought," teeming with objects and relations. This jostling stream was empirical psychology's true starting point. The concept of experience ultimately became a signature idea for James (1903, 1904, pp. 2–4), both in his research into religious attitudes and as philosopher of "radical empiricism," where he argued experience to be *the* "primal stuff or material of the world," ghostly "consciousness" being "the name of a non-entity, [with] no right to a place among first principles."

James and Natorp drew on a powerful tradition of German "life philosophy," to which Dilthey is central. Life for Dilthey is essentially production: it renders itself in structures of meaning. Hence, any understanding of meaning consists in "translating the objectifications of life back into the spiritual life from which it was drawn" (Gadamer, 1991, p. 66). These "objectifications of life" *are* experiences (*Erlebnis*). Every experience is like an adventure. It is something "taken out of the continuity of life and at the same time related to the whole of one's life" (op. cit., p. 69). Here, the paradigm of experience is represented by works of art which can rip anyone who experiences them out from their usual way of living, thereby revealing a new understanding of existence. Life manifests itself in experiences. Hence, the interpretation of experience is the only way to understand life. This idea has proven seminal to modern developments in hermeneutics, phenomenological psychology (via Husserl), existentialism, and ontology (e.g., Heidegger).

More recently, several tributaries of what we now call critical psychology have employed a rhetoric of experience. Thus, second-wave feminism is sometimes said to have been based on the authority of women's experience – for example, experiences of rape in marriage and child abuse – often elicited in all-women "consciousness-raising" groups. Likewise, the anti-psychiatry movement spearheaded by the likes of R.D. Laing used a rhetoric of experience to impugn the inhumanity and intellectual bankruptcy of traditional approaches to "mental illness," arguing that modern sciences and societies could only make sense of the destructiveness of family life and labels like "schizophrenia," if they learnt to focus on the otherness of other

people's experiences rather than constructing scales to measure observed "behavior." "Experience is the *only* evidence" (Laing, 1967, p. 16). Similar critical psychological projects have been built around the need to voice and justify the experiences of other oppressed minorities, including the racially oppressed, the unemployed, indigenous people, homosexuals, infants, and children.

## Traditional Debates

### Early Experience

Related to philosophical debates about the origins of human knowledge (empiricism versus rationalism; see above) are questions about the impact of "early experience" on human development. A variety of psychologists have claimed that the earlier an experience, the more profound its consequences (e.g., S. Freud, J.B. Watson). Yet this is to assume that the mind is either entirely unstructured at birth (being "a blank slate") or that its structures solidify before we grow up. On the other hand are those psychologists who argue against the idea that early experiences are necessarily "deep" in a psychological sense. Examples include (a) those who believe that human behavior is largely "hardwired" by our genes and so "early experience" is psychologically irrelevant (for the conceptual confusions constituting the "nature–nurture" controversy, see Bradley, 2005; Oyama, 1985), (b) those who believe that the process of genetic unfolding structures the kinds of experience that are psychologically relevant at different ages by defining "critical periods" for susceptibility to experience (e.g., attachment, language acquisition, schema formation in Piaget's theory), and (c) those who argue that a level of maturity is required before experience can affect one "deeply" (e.g., Winnicott, 1957; life-span developmental psychology).

### Reductionism and the Empirical

The history of the word *empirical* might imply that it meant "based on experience." Indeed, centuries ago, the word *experience* encompassed both what we now call "experience" *and* "experiment" (up to the 1700s; this is still the case in French). However, as the special sense of "experiment" that English speakers now associate with modern science developed, "experiment" and "experience" have become opposed in the vocabulary of psychology. Hence, when psychologists say that theirs is an "empirical" science, they often mean it acknowledges only data that comes from (quasi-)experimental laboratory studies, *rejecting* as unscientific any focus on everyday experience. Against this view are those who find that – to the extent devotees of psy devise artificial or disempowering conditions in which to study what people do, use a small set of nonobvious a priori terms with which to describe their doings and dissolve others' particularities into aggregated statistics – they reduce human existence to a set of ahistorical ciphers. That this is a centuries-old controversy is proved by reading James (1890).

### Listening to Others

The rise of qualitative research, where psychologists elicit how non-psychologists experience their worlds, challenges the traditional subject–position of psychologists as "masterful" expert observers (Morawski, 1992). Focus groups and semi-structured interviewing imply that non-psychologists may know more about their lives than psychologists do, shifting the researcher from master to supplicant, from naming and controlling to listening and interpreting. The very idea that psychologists should abdicate their precious magisterial power in the interests of understanding others and, with it, their purported access to impartial truth can arouse bitter opposition from diehards, as any academic who has tried to institute qualitative research in reactionary degree programs can attest.

### Telling It Like It Is

Within qualitative research there is a now-old debate about the status of what one is told. Approaches based in phenomenology may assume that, once one has asked someone about their experience, what they say describes that experience and can thus be categorized and

analyzed "from the bottom up." Themes are drawn "directly from the data." All preexisting theory is eschewed and the researcher's own preconceptions are bracketed off. The assumption is that when asked to talk about their experience, people "tell it like it is." Critics of this approach maintain that it ignores any intersubjective dynamics between researcher and researched, including the psychosocial power dynamics that surround psychology, research, and disclosure to strangers (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). For others, the very idea that eliminating preconceptions paves a path to "better" knowledge misunderstands the hermeneutic process – as one's preconceptions as a researcher are precisely what give one access to the circle of interpretation through which new understanding is gained (Gadamer, 1991).

### Case Studies

The study of experience(s) lends itself to the detailed "idiographic" examination of single examples or a "case-study" approach. But case studies often attract criticism as a weak method in the social sciences. Key weaknesses are said to be that case studies (a) don't accommodate theory construction, just practical knowledge; (b) are biased towards confirming the researcher's views and so don't promote true science; and (c) cannot be used to ground generalizations (see next section). Contrary to (a), it can be argued that the search for general theory in the social sciences has proven forlorn and misunderstands psychology's status as a science, practical knowledge of individual cases being far more revealing than attempts at general theory. Note too that Galileo, Newton, Darwin, Freud, Einstein, and Bohr all used single case analysis in building their theories. Against (b), we may observe that it only takes one black swan to refute the proposition that all swans are white (Flyvberg, 2006).

### Generalization

Generalization, specifically the construction of general laws, is sometimes claimed to be the hallmark of science. The results of studying experience are said to be context-specific and hence inimical to generalization. This judgment can be contested in various ways. First, the idea that social and natural sciences fit the same mold is disputed (Bradley, 2005). Second, case studies *can* ground general discoveries (see above; Flyvberg, 2006). Fleming's discovery of penicillin was prompted by a single observation. But perhaps most importantly, the way in which one acquires general understanding in psychology is misunderstood if viewed through a statistical lens. Firstly, any significant difference between the means, for example, of IQ tests on girls and boys, does not allow us to make any general claims of the kind "girls are more intelligent than boys," unless qualified by a host of caveats. Secondly, the general significance of psychological research, even experimental research, has more to do with what Flyvberg (p. 228) calls "the force of example" than is commonly acknowledged. Most of the discipline's enduring experiments are effectively case studies, best read as one-off dramas which capture something we feel to be important about human experience. Think of Harlow's mother-deprived monkeys, Zimbardo's "prison experiment," or Milgram's "obedience to authority" studies. Universality in psychology, as in art, is largely a product of poetics (Bradley, 2005, p. 175ff).

## Critical Debates

### Between Ethics and Politics

Critical psychologists take up different positions with regard to politics. These have consequences for how one views experience. Some psychologists see no need to relate their work to any larger political program. For these, an emphasis on studying the experiences of others, particularly silenced minorities, may be justified simply by an ethical sense of fair play. Others see doing psychology as a critical part of challenging the *status quo*. But *how* such a challenge should be mounted is the topic of endless debate (see below). To take just one example, Carol Gilligan's championing of women's experience as showing women have "a different voice" from

men, and, by implication, a different psychology, seems to other feminist psychologists a false step, because it "essentializes" male–female differences that are culturally produced (Kitzinger, 1994).

### Foundation or Deconstruction?

A variety of psychologies, including critical psychologies, assume that experience provides some kind of foundation for the discipline, an indisputable origin for knowledge. Examples are phenomenological or political beliefs that what people (say they) experience is a bedrock that cannot or should not be analyzed further (see above). "What could be truer, after all, than a subject's own account of what he or she has lived through?" (Scott, 1991, p. 777). The problem with such fundamentalist rhetoric is that it incorrectly assumes (a) people can and do "tell it like it is," (b) the "givenness" of the identity or subject–position taken up by the speaker, and (c) the validity of all the categories informants avail themselves of in their testimony. It also assumes that it is individuals who "have" experiences, not "subjects who are constituted through experience" (op.cit., p. 779). Against this fundamentalism are those who hold that experience is the "process by which, for all social beings, subjectivity is constructed" (op. cit., p. 782, citing de Lauretis). As such, experience is not the origin of psychological knowledge but, as in psychoanalysis, a portal *to* such knowledge: the thing we most need to analyze and explain.

### Repudiation of Experience, No. 2

Beyond this stand critical psychologists who reject the study of experience entirely. Any psychologist who focuses on experience is in thrall to the current neoliberal regime of social and political regulation. They are "naïve, and fail to take account of historically specific constructions of subjectivity" (Stephenson & Papadopoulos, 2006, p. 9). Viewed thus, talk about "experience" is held to be irretrievably individualistic. Are not the so-called reports of one's experience merely "linguistic constructions guided and shaped by historically contingent conventions of discourse?" Gergen scolds (1985, p. 274). From here it is but a short step to abandoning experience and shifting to discourse as the critical object of psychological interest.

### Beyond Discourse?

So is experience really just an epiphenomenon, scum on the Nile of discourse? Or is it a psychical epicenter, like the eruption of Krakatoa: real – all too real to the people affected by it – but only explicable as the product of deep and extensive subterranean forces, invisible from the surface? Telling here is your view on the possibility of experience extending "beyond discourse." For those who treat Derrida's "there is nothing outside the text" dogmatically, the answer is clear. Discourse is all; experience is just a word with no external reference point; there can be no experience outside language. For those who understand Derrida (and Ferraris, 2001) differently, as saying no mark makes sense on its own (there is always a context), experience is significant precisely because it *does* extend beyond verbal articulation. If the latter reading beckons, we need to acknowledge the terrain that Williams (1977, pp. 128ff) identified as *structures of feeling*: inarticulate, embryonic, and fugitive aspects of social experience – what is "this, here, now, alive, active, 'subjective'" – that precede or escape "the fixed and the explicit and the known." Such formations of social experience, existing "in solution" – before their precipitation into articulated forms of language and society – are what give historical sense to a generation, or a historical period, for those living through it. Structures of feeling draw in the collective, infancy, and the body (Shusterman, 1997). Often they are first symbolized through works of art.

## International Relevance

It will be clear that the English word "experience" as discussed here has had a fate that intersects with but differs significantly from the fates of cognate words in other languages, like German (e.g., *Erlebnis*) and French (e.g., *experience*).

## Practice Relevance

"Learning from experience" is essential to all informed and professional practice. But it has a fraught history in the training of (clinical) psychologists. Traditionally undergraduate psychology has adopted a technical–rational pedagogy which derogates and indefinitely postpones the getting of practical professional experience. Yet the kind of understanding ("*phronesis*") gained through experience opposes and transcends "the kind of instruction that follows from general theoretical or technical knowledge" (Gadamer, 1991, p. 355). The value of experience is that it endows practitioners with a kind of moral character that enhances their openness to and capacity for action when challenged by new experiences in unprecedented situations (Bradley, 2009).

## Future Directions

Opposition to the study of experience in historistic, discursive forms of critical psychology (e.g., "governmentality studies") treats the concept as straw: necessarily originary, individualistic, and ahistorical. Such critical psychologies are thereby incapacitated when addressing both contemporary structures of feeling and "conscious, agentic attempts to read and act on one's experience" (Stephenson & Papadopoulos, 2006, p. 8). A more nuanced understanding of experience will render (critical) psychology more intellectually coherent, more accessible, and more helpful to others.

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## Online Resources

There are myriad online sources of first-hand experience in the form of blogs: travel blogs; addiction blogs; spirituality blogs; paranormal blogs; Alzheimer's blogs; dying blogs etc. By way of example, have

a look at Gail A. Hornstein's "Bibliography of First-Person Narratives of Madness in English (5th ed.)" http://www.gailhornstein.com/files/Bibliography_of_First_Person_Narratives_of_Madness_5th_edition.pdf

This includes, for example. http://www.mindfreedom.org/kb/mental-health-abuse/Racism/InOurOwnVoice

Likewise, there are a zillion "qualitative research blogs" online. For a guide see http://www.qualitative360.com/news-and-blogs/11-editor-s-pick-top-qualitative-research-blogs

## Expertise, Overview

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### Introduction

Differences between experts and novices have been studied in laboratory and field settings, especially in cognitive psychology. At the same time, critical theorists have reinterpreted expertise research data as intuitive, situated responses and analyzed how expertise functions in social discourse.

### Definitions

Psychologists derive the definition of expertise from the idea of an expert. Theorists (e.g., Ericsson, 2006; Weisberg, 2006) usually define experts as individuals who are skillful or well informed in a domain and who have had prolonged, intense experience in the domain. Recognition of expert status by others (eminence) can also be part of the definition (Simonton, 1996). "Expertise then refers to the characteristics, skills and knowledge that distinguish experts from novices and less experienced people" (Ericsson, 2006, p. 3).

Social constructivists have looked specifically at how expert authority functions in discourse. For example, building on Foucault's (1965/1988, 1963/1994) and Danziger's (1994) work, Rose (1998) defined "psy expertise" as "the capacity of psychology to provide a corps of trained and credentialed persons claiming special competence in the administration of persons and interpersonal relations, and a body of techniques and procedures claiming to make possible the rational and human management of human resources in industry, the military, and social life more generally" (p. 11).

### Keywords

10-year rule; Expert; expert performance; expertise; memory; memory chunks; phenomenology; psy disciplines; psy expertise; self; social construction; talent

### Traditional Debates

The core concerns for psychological investigations have included the development of expertise, its impact and its characteristics.

#### The 10-Year Rule

In studying chess players, Simon and Chase (1973) found that to reach world-class status, players needed about 10 years of immersive practice. Ten or more years have been found to be necessary in other domains (for review see Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993), leading to what has become known as the 10-year rule.

#### Practice Versus Talent

Most of the studies establishing the 10-year rule have been correlational and, therefore, do not prove that the practice leads to the expertise. Conceivably someone could practice extensively but fail to achieve because of lack of talent. Furthermore, prodigies and autistic savants would seem to develop expertise with less practice (Winner, 1996).

The Leverhulme Project (Slaboda, 1996) shed some light on the talent question, at least in relation to musical achievement. The study examined biographical data of 257 young people who played classical music in England, divided into

five different levels of accomplishment, from students at a competitive music school to students who gave up on practicing music. The study found little evidence of talent contributing to expert performance. For example, there was no evidence of the hardworking failures.

Even for musical achievement, this evidence still does not address the motivational question (why do all that work) or the limit cases (e.g., autistic savants), however. Most theorists conclude that talent plays some role in achievement, as does extensive experience, even while arguing about the relationship (e.g., Hunt, 2006; Weisberg, 2006; Winner, 1996).

### How Experts Think

In early research on expertise, de Groot (1978) found that chess experts did not consider more moves than nonexperts. That study gave subjects a chessboard from the middle of a game and asked for the best, next move. The expert players selected optimal moves more often than less-accomplished players and selected the moves faster. Many times the master chess players reported that they just saw or recognized the right move. De Groot found that players with greater expertise drew on internal representations of other games and quickly focused on a few possible moves.

Research also found that expert chess players are significantly better than novices at reproducing a board setup from the middle of a game after a brief glance. These findings brought up the talent question in another form. Is chess expertise linked to strong memory? To examine that question Chase and Simon (1973) provided experts with nonsensically random board setups. The experts were only slightly better than novices at remembering these random setups. Chess experts have an exceptional memory for chess games, but not an extraordinary memory in general. This and similar research on other domains of expertise have led many psychologists to believe that experts' exceptional memory comes from the way the information is organized. Experts organize information into larger, more integrated chunks than novices.

As a result of practice, aspects of experts' work also become automated – not requiring conscious guidance or monitoring (Feltovich, Prietula, & Ericsson, 2006). In addition, experts also tend to classify problems strategically, by how they would solve them; novices tend to classify problems based on surface aspects. Some researchers believe that metacognition – awareness of one's own thinking – is also an important aspect of expert efficiency (Feltovich et al., 2006).

### Limits of Expertise

Even though experts seem to use abstract representations of problems within the field of expertise, those representations do not facilitate transfer of knowledge to other contexts. This is the flip side of the talent question. Does gaining skill in one domain lead to overall skill improvement? The research consensus: no, it does not. For example, Sims and Mayer (2002) compared the spatial abilities of expert Tetris players to novices. Tetris is a computer-based game that requires mental rotation of certain shapes. The Tetris players performed better only when the shapes from the game, or very similar shapes, were used.

In addition to domain specificity, experts can encounter other limitations. The same tendency to see deep, strategic structures can lead to poor recall of surface elements, "glossing over" (Chi, 2006, p. 25). Functional fixedness, inflexibility, and bias can also accompany expertise.

## Critical Debates

### Challenges to Traditional Models

Some researchers see expertise research findings themselves as challenges to accepted paradigms in cognitive psychology. For example, discoveries concerning the amount of information experts can retrieve run counter to laboratory-produced evidence about the limits of attention and short-term memory. In addition, the complex representations believed to be involved in expert performance are also argued to mediate continued learning, challenging traditional learning

models that assume expertise as simply an extension of the processes of everyday skill acquisition (Feltovich et al., 2006). Beyond these recognized issues, the findings concerning lack of learning transfer outside the domain of expertise, extend the need for caution in generalizing laboratory findings about cognitive abilities.

### Phenomenological Alternative

Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1983, 2005) have proposed that novices rely on abstract rules but the experts do not. The development of expertise is not internalization of sophisticated rules and heuristics, but movement from general rules to evermore nuanced understanding of particular cases. In this development experts move beyond rational application of rules to "an immediate, intuitive, situational response" (p. 787).

This phenomenological perspective takes seriously the experts' reports of simply seeing the answer, which de Groot first found in his study of chess experts. Dreyfus and Dreyfus are, however, at odds with traditional views on the importance of metacognition. In asking experts to describe how they think, these authors argue that researchers are asking the experts to remember rules they no longer use.

### Social Constructivist Views of Psychological Expertise

Of all forms of expertise, psychological expertise has been one of the most prominent objects of constructivist analysis. Foucault's early works (1965/1988, 1963/1994) traced the history of the discourses that led to the definition of madness as a medical problem and the accompanying rise of the medical gaze. These lines of analysis have continued with researchers such as Rose (1998; 1999) and Hacking (1995, 2002), looking at the roles of psychology in defining ways that the self is constituted. Hacking has looked at how categories applied to human beings, such as psychiatric diagnoses (e.g., multiple personality) or labels (e.g., genius), create new ways of being for the people within the category. The result is a "dynamic nominalism": "numerous kinds of human beings and human acts come into being hand in hand with our invention of the ways to name them." (2002, p. 113) (See also "▶ Looping Effect"). Rose makes a broader analysis of the history of the psy disciplines in practices of subjectification and, like Hacking, has emphasized practical implications. Rather than focus on the types of subjects that are produced (e.g., self, individual, or agent), he argues for emphasis on "what humans are enabled to do through the forms into which they are machinated or composed" (1998, p. 182).

These analyses of psy expertise undermine the assumption that there is an essential psychology of the individual. Instead, the psy disciplines contribute to, and limit, the ways selves are constituted through psychological theories, labels, and diagnoses, as well as institutional and clinical practices. One such label is, of course, "expert."

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## Exteriority

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### Introduction

The notion of "exteriority" may be useful in critical psychology when it refers to something considered crucial, even the most crucial, but which would nevertheless remain outside an institutional, cultural, theoretical, ideological, or psychical "interiority" that is presupposed, conveyed, produced, or reproduced by psychology. This interiority may consist in that of the economic or political system, legitimate intellectual environments or academic institutions, Western civilization or dominant ideologies and hegemonic perspectives, conventional or noncritical psychological theories, and, especially, what such theories would be capable of knowing, envisaging, describing, and explaining, for instance, the contents of consciousness as opposed to the unconscious, the inner world as separated from the outer world, and the individual psyche as independent from society, history, and the economic system.

It goes without saying that for each element that is conserved in psychology, at least some other element must be kept out. An infinite number of ideas, objects, aspects, and circumstances

that are decisive for psychology simply cannot be assimilated into the discipline. So they resist absorption and must be excluded from psychological interiority or from that which psychology conceives as "interiority." In critical approaches, this interiority will be criticized, discussed, or challenged from exterior points of view, or simply by considering exteriority, by disapproving its segregation and its overlooking, or – to the contrary – by denouncing totalitarian attempts to absorb or colonize it, by questioning the separation between interiority and exteriority, or even by rejecting the idea of the psychological inner world and its mental processes.

## Definition

In psychology, the notion of "exteriority" usually refers to the state of being exterior to a psychic or psychological interiority. More precisely, exteriority denotes a field, reality, standpoint, landmark, object, or quality of an object that remains either outside the psyche as conceived by psychology, outside the system that would govern mainstream psychology, or beyond the sphere, scope, accounts, representations, or objects of psychology itself. Exteriority may simultaneously connote, in critical psychology, omission, isolation, or marginalization from a psychological interiority, but also the irreducibility or resistance to this colonizing and totalitarian interiority and even its concealed reality or unrecognized true nature.

## Keywords

Alienation; exclusion; exteriority; interiority; psychoanalysis; psychology of liberation; resistance; segregation; transcendence; unconscious

## Traditional Debates

We can distinguish at least four notions of exteriority that were elaborated outside the field of psychology but were later recovered in critical approaches to the discipline. These notions are owed to four influential, twentieth-century French thinkers, namely, the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and the philosophers Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Emmanuel Levinas. These four thinkers all broke with the classical negative conception of exteriority as that which results from a sort of alienation, estrangement, or separation, and must be overcome by the totalitarian interiority of Hegelian consciousness, Marxian or Marxist historical dialectics, and Heideggerian ontology.

Contrary to Heidegger, Levinas (1971) claims the "radical exteriority" and "transcendence" of an "absolute Other" who is revealed through the face of each individual, is unknowable, cannot be totally comprehended, and shows an ethical or metaphysical infinity that remains always exterior to any kind of theoretical or ontological totality (pp. 8–15, 24–45). Lacan, Deleuze, and Foucault also privilege exteriority. However, in their view, exteriority does not lie in the presence of a fellow human being but rather in discourse, in knowledge, or in culture as that which determines and embraces human beings and their relationships with each other.

Conceiving social relations as connections between signifiers in the exteriority of language, Lacan (1964) focuses on this exteriority and places the essence of the psyche, the "unconscious" defined as "discourse of the Other," on "the outside," in the same exteriority of language that constitutes social relations (pp. 147–148). Foucault (1969) also focuses on this outside when he confines his "archaeology of knowledge" to an "analysis of statements" in "an exteriority that may be paradoxical since it refers to no adverse form of interiority," either "mind" or "core of subjectivity" (p. 167). This Foucauldian *exteriority without interiority* was taken up and reinterpreted by Deleuze (1986), who reduced interiority to "the inside of the outside" or an "infolding of exteriority" (pp. 104–105), such that only exteriority would exist. As for interiority, it would not really be interiority at all but a hidden exteriority or a kind of deceitful illusion. This coincides with the Lacanian critical conception of the

psychological interiority of consciousness as an imaginary reification of the symbolic exteriority of the unconscious.

## Critical Debates

Both the Lacanian and Foucauldian-Deleuzian assimilations of interiority to exteriority would prove fruitful in critical psychology and critical approaches to psychology. For instance, on the basis of Foucauldian exteriority, and drawing upon Deleuze's idea of infolding, Rose (1996) assumes that "the 'interiority' that so many feel compelled to diagnose is not that of a psychological system" but of "a kind of infolding of exteriority," which "indicates a relation without an essential interior" (p. 37). Similarly, but in a Lacanian perspective, Dunker and Parker (2009) "refuse the opposition between exteriority and interiority," consider that "we can treat what is putatively 'interior' as being constructed and maintained through the operation of social processes," and question the "construction of interiority," the examination of which would "require a study of processes of psychologisation, perhaps at some moments as a form of ideology" (pp. 64–65). Dunker and Parker, like Rose, subordinate, and even reduce, psychological interiority to exteriority – specifically social exteriority – which would be infolded or constructed as interiority through a process of psychologization that would be criticized by these and many other critical authors (see Gordo & De Vos, 2010).

In a different tradition, the Levinasian idea of exteriority would also leave its mark on critical psychology, primarily through its reinterpretation by Enrique Dussel (1977). This Argentinian-Mexican philosopher insists, with respect to Levinas's "metaphysic exteriority," on its "social, historic, and popular" essence, as well as its "unemployed, poor, and oppressed" situation in peripheral countries (pp. 76–91). Here "exteriority" does not refer to something outside of the subjective sphere, but it corresponds to "the subject" in "its exteriority," the "human being" in its "interior transcendentality" that is on the "periphery," outside "the system," beyond the horizon of the "capital" and its "instrumental totalization" of the world (pp. 77–78).

In Dussel's vision, the imperialistic interiority of the capitalist system would be incapable of interiorizing, absorbing, or colonizing everything contained in the subject, in people, or in cultural groups. There would always remain something subjective and social outside the system, out of the way, outlying or marginal, excluded, and resisting. According to Dussel (1977), this "exteriority" would actually be "the only adequate field for exerting critical consciousness" (p. 240). Dusselian philosophy of liberation thus imparts a critical inflection to the Levinasian conception of exteriority, which may then be used in critical approaches to mainstream, traditional, or postmodern social psychology. This is the case of the work of Maritza Montero (2002), with its insistence on the "acceptance of otherness" (pp. 49–50), as well as that of Burton and Flores Osorio (2011), who envisage a "second psychology of liberation" inspired by Dussel, and no longer specific to Latin America, that makes a special point of considering exteriority as a place of "exclusion as well as resistance" (p. 32).

Flores Osorio (2007) exhorts psychologists to choose the perspective of the excluded and resisting exteriority and, from this perspective, oppose and question "Eurocentric and North-American views" of "hegemonic psychology," which "functions as an instrument to perpetuate colonization" and "to make people accept conditions of exclusion and oppression" (pp. 46–52). This opposition and questioning should be made by a "critical" work understood as "a theoretical-practical and politically engaged investigation that seeks social transformation" (p. 35). The correlative logic would not be dialectical, but *analectic* (from the Greek root *ano-*, *beyond*), and would always "affirm the exteriority" (or *that which is beyond*) through an "ethics of liberation" and "critical praxis" in "psychological practice" (pp. 46–48).

The practical focus of critical psychology would thus be consistent with both the Latin American tradition of liberation psychology and

the conception of resisting exteriority offered by the Dusselian philosophy of liberation, though it would diverge from the more theoretical angle of those critical psychologists who draw on the Lacanian and Foucauldian-Deleuzian notions of exteriority as something that embraces both psychical and political interiorities and transcends both the differences between psychical interiority and physical exteriority and those between politically hegemonic interiority and marginal exteriority. In reality, without, or beyond, these differences, it becomes difficult to conceive an exterior practical resistance of critical psychologists to interior mainstream psychology, as such a resistance would logically require a clear and unambiguous differentiation between the resisted interiority and the resisting exteriority.

To be sure, the second psychology of liberation justifies its praxis by accepting the Dusselian distinction between the excluding, colonizing-oppressing interiority and the excluded exteriority that resists colonization and oppression. It is worth repeating that such a distinction might be questioned from the perspective of those critical psychologists whose Lacanian and Foucauldian-Deleuzian ideas of exteriority discard the existence of an interiority distinct from exteriority, since the latter is seen as the true nature of both political and psychical interiorities. This view would lead to theoretical discussions of how exteriority becomes the excluding, colonizing-oppressing interiority by infolding, concealing its own exteriority, and presenting itself as the dubious inner world of individual psychology and global neoliberal ideology. Liberation psychology, in contrast, holds that we should struggle practically against that which cannot be discarded, i.e., the interiority of global neoliberal ideology, which constitutes a tangible and perceptible system that spreads into the outer world and partly colonizes the inner one.

It is as if Dussel's exteriority, or interior subjective transcendentality, were something that resists the intrusive objective immanence of a system that would be situated in what Deleuze, Foucault, Lacan, and their followers in critical psychology call "exteriority." Nevertheless, this Lacanian and Foucauldian-Deleuzian exteriority corresponds not only to what Dussel understands as the interior immanence of the system but also to what he conceives as exteriority resisting the system, as the transcendentality of "a sex, a gender, of a generation, a social class, a race, a nation, a cultural group, a historical age" (Dussel, 1977, p. 83). Dusselian exteriority is thus inseparable from language, discourse, and culture and so cannot be severed from what Lacan, Foucault, and Deleuze understand by exteriority, which would itself be divided, in the vision of Dussel and his followers in psychology, between center and periphery, the system and other systems of culture, colonizing-oppressing interiority and resisting exteriorities, the dominant Eurocentric psychology, and the psychology of liberation.

However, can we still speak of "psychology" when there is only a divided exteriority, when this exteriority is the reality or true nature of psychological "interiority," and when we resist the ideological oppressing-colonizing interiority of the system? Probably the best way to resist this interiority in practice is to theoretically refute and reject it (Pavón-Cuéllar, 2010). But how can we resist that which has been rejected? And what is the use of abstractly refuting that which should be effectively resisted? On the other hand, what is the use of resisting that which can be refuted? And how can we resist the colonizing-oppressing interiority of the system, which is also the interiority of psychology, when we assume ourselves to be psychologists? These are points of discrepancy between those who conceive of exteriority in a Lacanian and Foucauldian-Deleuzian perspective and the liberation psychologists who adopt the Dusselian conception of exteriority, non-problematically assuming themselves to be psychologists.

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# Extimacy

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## Introduction

The term *extimacy*, an English translation of the French neologism (*extimité*) coined by the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1959–1960), may be used in critical psychology for the purpose of problematizing, questioning, challenging, and even rejecting and going beyond the traditional psychological distinction between exteriority and psychic interiority or intimacy. Instead of this fundamental distinction and the resultant fixed conceptual dualities that cross and constitute psychology, extimacy indicates the nondistinction and essential identity between the dual terms of the outside and the deepest inside, the exterior and the most interior of the psyche, the outer world and the inner world of the subject, culture and the core of personality, the social and the mental, surface and depth, behavior and thoughts or feelings. All expressions of the duality exteriority-intimacy would be hypothetically replaceable by the notion of extimacy, which precisely joins *ex-teriority* with *in-timacy*, and states explicitly the interpenetration and mutual transformation of both spheres. These spheres are no longer what they were in conventional psychology. They actually fade away. Exteriority is rather intimacy, but intimacy, as exteriority, is rather an extimacy that is no longer either intimacy or exteriority.

Although the origin of the idea of extimacy can be traced to Saint Augustine and his conception of God as "more interior than my most interior being" (Confessions, III, VI), the dominating intellectual concerns in French structuralism and post-structuralism seem to be the decisive condition for the appearance and development of the notion of extimacy. Today, this notion can be conceived as just one of the best and most radical examples of the systematic assimilation of interiority to exteriority that we find, not only in Jacques Lacan but also in Michel Foucault (1969) and Gilles Deleuze (1986).

## Definition

In Lacanian theory and the uses of this theory in critical psychology (e.g., Parker, 2004, 2005), the term *extimacy* refers primarily to the presence of exteriority in the intimacy, or deepest interiority, of the subject, and secondarily to the resultant nondistinction and identity of the exterior and the intimate or most interior. The term may also designate, in a noncritical psychological-psychoanalytical perspective (e.g., Tisseron, 2001), the human desire to show or exteriorize the intimate life.

## Keywords

Exteriority; extimacy; interiority; intimacy; object *a*; other; psychoanalysis; real; thing

## Traditional Debates

The notion of extimacy was coined by Lacan (1959–1960), on February 10, 1960, to designate "this central place, this intimate exteriority, this extimacy, which is the Thing" (p. 167). Lacan identifies extimacy with the Thing after enigmatically describing this "Thing" as the "excluded interior" (p. 122), the "subject's inside" that becomes "the first outside," the "first exteriority around which the subject orients his way" (p. 65), the "first landmark" (p. 68) that "returns always to the same place" (p. 92). Since the Thing is always there, it becomes a sort of landmark for our journey through life. It is the fixed center of our movements. This point of reference is *extimate*, which means that it is intimate to us while being exterior at the same time. In reality, this extimacy does not simply reside in our outside world, but is the navel, the source of this world, as it is for us. The Thing becomes our first outside because it has been excluded from our inside. Indeed, its exclusion is what creates our exteriority. We may see, then, that in the Lacanian perspective, all things considered, the extimacy of the Thing is – temporally speaking – at the origin of the subject's exteriority and – spatially speaking – at the fixed center of the subject's life.

The Thing is extimate inasmuch as it constitutes the subject's intimate experience that gives meaning and existence to the external things; the "personal" interior, origin and horizon of the "impersonal" exterior, the "subjective" beginning and the end of the "objective" environment. Lacan explains this by conceiving the Thing, on the one hand, as the "mythical mother's body" that is "always searched for" (Lacan, 1959–1960, pp. 82–85, 127), and, on the other, as the "first thing that separates from that which is named and articulated" (p. 100), "the primordial real which suffers the signifier" (p. 142), but also "the signifier" itself and "the emptiness" inherent in the signifier (pp. 144–145), "the emptiness in the centre of the real" (p. 146), the central cavity of "the vacuole" (p. 179). This vacuole is that around which everything revolves. Though everything is organized by the signifying structure of language, there is still something real in the heart of everything.

## Critical Debates

Lacan conceives the extimate Thing as the real vortex of the human symbolic universe. Thus, the extimacy of the Thing refers to the position of the Lacanian real as such, first the real carved out by symbolization, and then the real empty center of the subject's world structured by the symbolic system of language. According to Lacan (1959–1960), this extimate real center of the gravity of our action, which is neither inside nor outside, would be concealed by "the imaginary" underlying "every psychology," which "is nothing more than a mask, and sometimes even an alibi, for the effort to focus on the problem of our own action, something that is the essence and the very foundation of all ethical reflection" (p. 27).

By simplistically distinguishing the mental inside and the material outside, or individual intimacy and social or cultural exteriority, traditional and conventional psychology would already be disguising that which is always at stake in our action, namely, something extimate that Lacan (1968–1969) would later name "object *a*," something that will always "join the intimate to the radical exteriority," something that would have an "edge structure" (pp. 248–249). The Lacanian extimate object *a* would not only be at the edge of ourselves, it would also be the edge itself, the edge between our intimacy and an exteriority conceived as that which is excluded from our intimacy.

The edge would be something in itself, something decisive, even the most decisive, which would always be hidden by the psychological distinction between the inside and the outside. This distinction would conceal that which has traditionally been illustrated, in psychoanalysis, by the orifices of our body, as the paradigm of a logical place where the inside meets the outside, though the outside is still inside for it springs up from the inside. Here, at the edge, there is an immanent connection, an inherent intersection, a Möbius-strip continuum between the inside and the outside, an identity between the "psychic

inner world" and the "physical outer world." The nonproblematized psychological distinction between the two worlds would simply ignore an identity of this nature. This distinction would even exist for the purpose of overlooking the edge and what it reveals, that is, "the vacuole, the interdiction at the centre," what is "closer to us but nevertheless exterior to us," and for which we require "the word *extimate*" (Lacan, 1968–1969, p. 224).

The French Lacanian psychoanalyst Jacques-Alain Miller (1994) considers, explicitly, that the "expression 'extimacy' is necessary in order to escape the common ravings about a psyche supposedly located in a bipartition between interior and exterior" (p. 75). In addition to recognizing this bipartition as "unsatisfactory," we should also "slide into this interior-exterior bipartition that we need, for our own use, to substitute for it another relation" (pp. 75–76). This relation, according to Miller, is the one designated by the term *extimacy*, which "says that the intimate is Other – like a foreign body, a parasite" (p. 76) – the parasitical presence of language, the "unconscious" that would be concealed, not only by psychological masks, but also by "religious covers" like that of the Augustinian God (p. 77). Behind this God who resides in the inside of the inside, in the *intimum cordis*, or the intimate heart of man, would stand the intimate presence of the outside inside us, the extimacy of language and culture, and the religious alienation of the believer from her/himself.

Millerian extimacy refers to the alienated heart of a subject whose deepest identity lies in the Other of language and culture. Lacanian extimacy, on the contrary, designated the "subjective" heart of an "objective" external world whose center, that which is furthest from the subject, paradoxically lies in that which is most intimate to her/him. Hence, Lacan focused on the presence of the inside in the outside, while Miller points out the presence of the outside in the inside. It seems, however, that both places are the same. They are the same edge between the inside and the outside. If the heart of the outer world is that of the subject, then this heart will logically be alienated in the outer world.

Ian Parker draws on Lacan's and Miller's conceptualizations of extimacy to realize the importance of this notion for both critical work and discourse analysis. In the latter case, this British critical psychologist explains the relevance of "extimacy" by redefining it as the "intimate exteriority of the subject in discourse," a discourse that includes "the most intimate to the subject," which is "outside" or "extimate to the subject, not reducible to it" (Parker, 2005, p. 172). As for critical work in general, "extimacy" would explain, for instance, the critical potential of psychoanalysis, which "was able to develop simultaneously as something 'inside' Western culture and as something 'outside' and critical of it" (Parker, 2004, p. 159). This *critical extimacy*, this simultaneity of being inside something as well as outside it, and critical of it, would be the same position that Parker and others assign to critical psychology, such that we may say that critical psychology, from this point of view, should be *extimate to psychology*, as it should simultaneously be outside the discipline and inside it.

The word extimacy has recently been used with different meanings by other critical authors in psychology. Watson (2009) finds in Lacan an approach to gender that is neither exclusively "biologistic" nor "constructivist," because "not all of the body can be symbolized and it remains partly extimate (and therefore highly influential!) to the system of language" (p. 133). Here the body is *partly extimate* to language inasmuch as it comes to be something "biological" or "external" to it, while remaining inside language and being intimately constructed by it.

Watson's corporeal extimacy, like Parker's critical extimacy, refers to something – body or psychoanalysis – that is extimate to something else – language or culture – such that it is no longer the Lacanian–Millerian extimacy of something – the Thing or language – extimate to someone – the subject. This first notion of extimacy is recovered by Hook (2011) to refute the "the inner/outer distinction," the "stringent separations between external objects and the subject's ostensibly 'internal' emotions," that would disregard "what Lacan refers to as extimacy; that is, a relation of intimate exteriority in which that most foreign or objectionable element in the other is a function of the subject's own

excluded interior" (pp. 111–114). This clear definition helps to show the close relationship between Lacanian extimacy and Freudian projection or Kleinian projective identification. However, unlike these mechanisms, extimacy is neither a specific psychic process nor a relationship between the subject and the other. Rather, it is a logical space that would be involved in all psychic processes and relationships with the others, with oneself, with language, with the world, between things, between concepts, and so on. These relationships include scientific and theoretical connections and reflections, as in Parker's *critical extimacy*, or in the way Malone and Kelly (2012) use extimacy to "inform the research practices with science considered as feminism" by "reflexively seeking to reform the relation of subject to object and attempting to represent an encounter with that which has been excluded, and that which, rather than being Law-like, is Other" (p. 98).

Independently of the critical uses of the notion of extimacy in a Lacanian tradition, and with no explicit reference to them, the French psychologist and psychoanalyst Serge Tisseron (2001, 2003) offered a completely new definition of the term, one that is becoming increasingly influential in noncritical academic environments (e.g., Mateus, 2010; Puyuelo, 2010). Extimacy is here confined to the designation of a "tendency" that is "essential to the human being," and "consists in the desire to communicate the inner world," a communication that would then "enrich intimacy" (Tisseron, 2001, pp. 52–53). The traditional distinction between intimacy and exteriority is thus preserved. Extimacy becomes just a question of *communicating* an *inner world* that remains different from the outer world. This is, at the very least, a good example of the simplification, trivialization, domestication, and ideological neutralization of a complex and critical notion, which thus becomes just another commonplace that can then be reabsorbed into mainstream psychology.

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