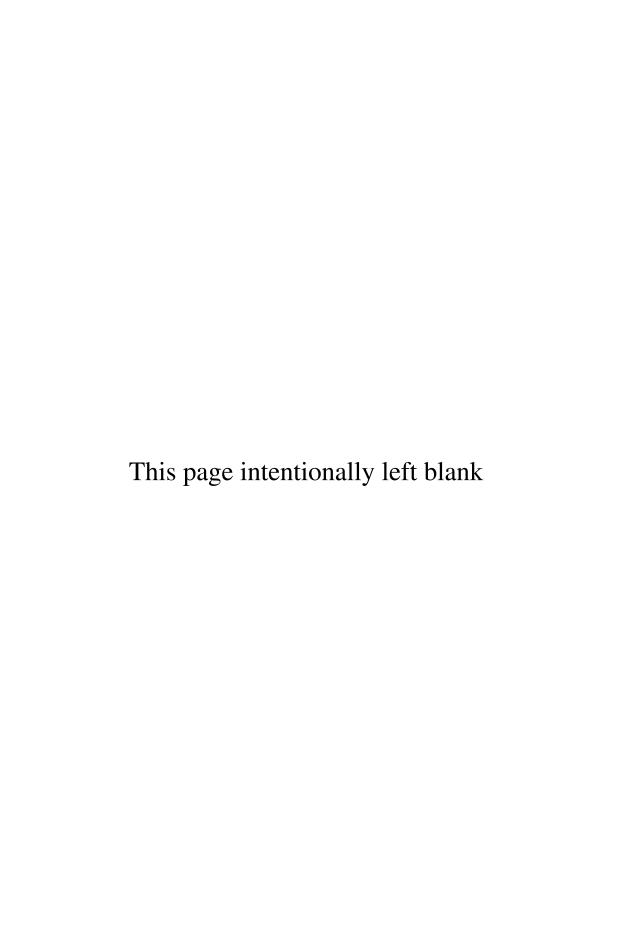# Handbook of Critical Psychology

Edited by Ian Parker

Handbook of Critical Psychology

Critical psychology has developed over time from different standpoints, and in different cultural contexts, embracing a variety of perspectives. This cutting-edge and comprehensive handbook values and reflects this diversity of approaches to critical psychology today, providing a definitive state-of-the-art account of the field and an opening to the lines of argument that will take it forward in the years to come.

The individual chapters by leading and emerging scholars plot the development of a critical perspective on different elements of the host discipline of psychology. The book begins by systematically addressing each separate specialist area of psychology, before going on to consider how aspects of critical psychology transcend the divisions that mark the discipline. The final part of the volume explores the variety of cultural and political standpoints that have made critical psychology such a vibrant contested terrain of debate.

The *Handbook of Critical Psychology* represents a key resource for researchers and practitioners across all relevant disciplines. It will be of particular interest to students and researchers in psychology, psychosocial studies, sociology, social anthropology, and cultural studies, and to discourse analysts of different traditions, including those in critical linguistics and political theory.

Ian Parker was co-founder and is co-director of the Discourse Unit (www.discourseunit.com), and is Professor of Management at the University of Leicester, and Managing Editor of *Annual Review of Critical Psychology*. He edited the four-volume major work 'Critical Psychology' for Routledge in 2011, edits the book series 'Concepts for Critical Psychology', and also authored the 'Psychology after Critique' series.

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Handbook of Critical Psychology

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Introduction
Principles and positions

Ian Parker

This handbook provides a comprehensive review of the rapidly expanding field of critical psychology, and will serve as a key resource for researchers, teachers, and students. The book as a whole comes as close as is possible to defining the scope of critical psychology. There are important reasons why that task is actually unachievable, and I will address some reasons in this introduction. Even an 'introduction' to critical psychology is fraught with dangers, as many authors have recognized when they have embarked on that endeavour, and they have most often retreated to a definition of it as primarily being a more 'social' form of psychology (e.g. Gough et al. 2013; Gough and McFadden 2001; Hepburn 2003; Tuffin 2004).

That we take social context as a starting point for our critique of mainstream psychology – a discipline that routinely reduces explanation to the level of the individual – should be no surprise, and this 'social context' has provided a springboard for researchers who have a much more ambitious agenda, which ranges from innovative studies of subjectivity to radical political change (Stainton Rogers et al. 1995; Ibáñez and Íñiguez 1997). Some journals in the field, as a reflection of these debates, have explicitly traced a route toward research into subjectivity that would depart from assumptions made in psychology (e.g. *Subjectivity*), others have set their sights on the conditions that make the discipline of psychology function (e.g. *Annual Review of Critical Psychology*), some do both of these things (e.g. *Radical Psychology*) and some provide a direct connection with political activity (e.g. *Psychology in Society*) and with therapeutic practice (e.g. *Journal of Critical Psychology, Counselling and Psychotherapy*).

Impossibility and multiplicity

Compendia of critical psychology have always reflected the specific sub-disciplinary background, geographical location, and political interests of editors (e.g. Parker 2011; Teo 2014), to the extent that some have chosen to topicalize that diversity rather than try to cover over the differences (Dafermos et al. 2006, 2013). This has also been the case for specific interventions which bring together multiple voices (e.g. Sloan 2000; Walkerdine 2002), and this volume is no exception. Some of the earliest path-breaking collections did even aim in their first incarnations to serve as a 'handbook' for the field (e.g. Fox and Prilleltensky 1997; Fox et al. 2009), and we are indebted to them for showing us that the most we can hope for here is to fail better.

What we can say for sure is that in this book, the individual chapters by leading and emerging scholars around the world plot the development of a critical perspective on different elements of the host discipline of psychology. The book addresses most separate areas of psychology, aspects of 'critical psychology' that transcend the divisions between areas of research that mark the discipline, and the variety of cultural and political standpoints that now make critical psychology into a vibrant, contested terrain of debate. You will notice that as we try to encompass the multiplicity of competing sub-fields of psychology, pretend to offer overarching frameworks, and bring different cultural perspectives into the frame, we are already betraying what an impossibly grandiose project we are tangled in.

First, mainstream psychology as a discipline is divided into warring specialties that are year by year splitting and multiplying. This means that it is not only difficult to keep track of every attempt to capture what the real domain of psychology should be – whether it should be concerned with 'cognition', 'development' or 'personality' or 'social' aspects of behaviour, for example – but each attempt renews itself and then repeats its own failures to win territory from all the other sub-fields with such speed that if we tried to map every variant of the discipline in this book, our map would be out of date by the time the book was published. Second, there is no one agreed field of 'critical psychology' that is able to stitch together all these domains and provide a transcendent framework through which we would be able to understand the disarray in our host discipline.

Critical psychology has emerged, as you will see in the different chapters in this book, as a response to problems posed by each sub-field of the discipline, and so the theoretical and methodological resources it mobilizes are tailored to each specific problem. The third problem we face when we try to be exhaustive and inclusive is a function of the globalization of psychology, both as a discipline and as a commonsensical series of metaphorical tropes through which people talk about their childhood, their feelings, and their relationships. The globalization of psychology also entails a 'psychologization' of the globe (De Vos 2012; Gordo and De Vos 2010), but in such a way that the response of each specific culture exacerbates the problem. Each cultural response to the arrival of psychological discourse and practice gives a different twist to what 'psychology' as such is assumed to be, and the forms of 'critical psychology' that arise also proliferate in order to voice their own particular concerns with what psychology is doing to them (Teo 2005).

Nevertheless, this handbook makes a pretty good start, and will operate as a state of the art account of critical psychology, an opening to the lines of argument that will take us all forward in the years to come. Something emerges here that will be surprising to mainstream psychologists who like to position 'critical psychologists' as only thorns in their side, as if critical contributions were only distractions from the real work of psychology: critical psychology actually provides a model of good research into human subjectivity and social relations that all psychologists can learn from. It is an uncomfortable fact, one that will evidently be disturbing to contributors on the more extreme rejectionist end of the argument in critical psychology, that this handbook will in some circumstances serve to re-energize psychology itself. Those who have turned to critical arguments in order to gently nudge their colleagues in a more progressive dimension will be pleased, of course, and even the overall project could be excoriated for ending up with a too-balanced collection of perspectives which range from those who want to accommodate to psychology and those who want to get rid of it altogether.

'Critical psychologists' of different kinds emphasize either a 'critical' approach to psychology as such or a 'psychological' approach that is critical in its ethos. This handbook embraces both perspectives and all the shades of opinion between, and thus provides a resource for understanding what the stakes of the debate between different wings of critical psychology are.

Here in this introduction I take some tentative steps toward defining what 'critical psychology' is, and also necessarily unravelling such a definition as we go along. So, this is an opportunity not to provide one watertight definition, but to formulate some principles of a critical psychological take on mainstream psychology. You will find different contributors adopting explicitly or implicitly, and with varying degrees of emphasis, these principles as their own axiomatic assumptions around which they build their own arguments.

A 'critical' approach to psychology

Some critical psychologists are wary of stepping into 'psychology' as such as the terrain on which they want to fight their battles, and some so dislike the fundamental principles of psychology that they would characterize 'critical psychology' as being more part of the problem than it is part of the solution (e.g. Parker 2007). So, on the one hand, the handbook exemplifies a 'critical' characterization of our host discipline which can be summed in the following points, and you will see that here there is deep suspicion that psychology as a discipline has not only taken the wrong path to understanding subjectivity but is also implicated in some of the worst aspects of modern society. The name of the problem is 'psychology', and rejection of attempts to reform the discipline must also tackle the nature of the modern society of which it is a key component. Part of the debate then turns on how this society itself should be understood: as a 'modern' regime of surveillance and confession (Foucault 1975/1979, 1976/1981), as a capitalist economy driven by the pursuit of profit which necessarily entails exploitation (Bensaïd 2002; Marx 1867/2010), or as a heteropatriarchal system revolving around the exercise of power (Butler 1990; Millett 1977), to mention just three perspectives that recur through this book (including among them some who would attempt to reclaim something from psychology).

The first point the rejectionists would make is that psychology's gaze is directed at those outside the discipline who are assumed to be non-psychologists and who are routinely deceived and misrepresented. A first principle of 'critical psychology', then, is that there is a deep problem in the way that relations between those 'inside' the discipline are separated from those viewed as being 'outside'. The separation of the real psychologists from their objects of study – those who are sometimes brought into the experimental laboratories to perform certain prescribed tasks in research studies or who are asked for their responses in questionnaires and interviews – leads either to a dehumanizing of these others in which they are reduced to being objects or to a romanticizing of them as the place where 'psychological' processes are really supposed to be taking place. It is this one-way street – psychologists describing, measuring, and speculating about others who are positioned as 'other' – that structures contemporary psychology (Prilleltensky 1994).

Second, psychology reduces phenomena to the level of the individual, but there is a curious double-reduction at work here; this reduction proceeds both downwards from the level of social processes and upwards from the level of physiological functions. So, as a second principle of critical psychology, there is refusal to fall in line with the way that mainstream psychologists defend their own specific domain of study as if it were the only thing that really matters. On the one hand, debates in sociology are seen as resources rather than a threat from a neighbouring discipline that offers a mistaken or only partially-correct understanding of societal phenomena. On the other hand, 'biology' and contemporary neuroscience are seen as offering a different way of accounting for, instead of providing, the scientific 'evidence' for phenomena that are correctly conceptualized by the psychologist. In both directions we notice that there is some unease on the part of mainstream psychologists at the accounts that these rival disciplines provide, and there are attempts to produce models of psychology operating at exactly the right level

of analysis – that of the individual – that will seize territory from these other fields of work. For some critical psychologists the solution is not so much to replace psychology with sociology or biology, but to redefine the space for interdisciplinary or 'transdisciplinary' research into subjectivity (Curt 1994).

Third, psychology reproduces an abstracted model of behavioural sequences and cognitive mechanisms in which each individual is assumed to operate as a miniature version of the operational forms that define positivist investigation. The third principle of critical psychology is then to provide methodological as well as conceptual critique of mainstream psychology. The focus of critical work should not only be on the failures of the traditional models of the individual to explain how and why people behave they do, but to examine how psychologists go about building those models and gathering data about behaviour using flawed research designs. This does not necessarily mean that 'qualitative' research is vaunted as a progressive alternative to the mainstream laboratory-experimental paradigms of research, thought that has been important for some critical psychologists, but rather that the way that psychologists understand and implement their own 'quantitative' procedures is thrown into question (Danziger 1990).

Fourth, psychology pretends to merely describe human activity, but this description requires a degree of declared or surreptitious interpretation that prescribes a correct version of events. A fourth critical psychological principle concerning the role that interpretation plays in mainstream psychological research is therefore twofold; the value-laden interpretations that psychologists make about behaviour are challenged (we draw attention to the way that political presuppositions are used to frame how studies are set up and the accounts of how people are positioned in them by the researcher), and the slippage from an interpretation of the way things are now to the way things should be is also challenged (and so we question the ways that notions of 'normality' and 'health' are used to endorse present-day forms of behaviour). An interpretation always carries with it undeclared, and often ideological, assumptions about its objects of study, and in the case of psychology it invariably carries with it the assumption that the psychologist knows best (Billig 2008).

Fifth, psychology subscribes to a form of objectivity – fake neutrality – which obscures the enduring role of personal, institutional, and political stakes in the formulation of research questions. The fifth principle of critical psychology is that the position of the researcher needs to be closely studied so that we can get a better understanding of why it is that psychologists ask the kinds of questions they do. This principle is sometimes developed within an alternative research paradigm that values 'reflexivity', something that is important not only to qualitative but also to good quantitative research, and in that kind of work the researcher reflects on the limitations that their own personal history and structural position in relation to their objects of study place on the account they can give of what they observe. Some critical psychologists would expand the scope of the critique to look at how the agonizing reflexive work of the researcher actually comes to reinforce the privileged position they adopt and, worse, encourages the researcher who looks deep into themselves to discover the limitations of their description to subscribe all the more deeply to a 'psychological' explanation for what is going wrong (De Vos 2012).

These first five principles of critical psychology concerning gaze, reductionism, positivism, interpretation, and neutrality amount to an indictment of the mainstream discipline. The quite understandable anger that drives these different aspects of critical psychological work then leads many researchers, who take these arguments to their logical endpoint, to conclude that there is nothing of value if you want to take seriously the perspectives of those outside the discipline who should be accorded the status of human 'subjects' in a full philosophical sense of the term, to build a complete holistic account of human experience, to develop research drawing on other research traditions that are empowering, to produce the kinds of interpretations that are open

and aimed at changing the world, and to position oneself as an active agent conscious of the political position one is arguing for. Psychology as such is then treated as the problem, and all the more so when it pretends to be part of the solution.

A 'psychological' critique

On the other hand, the handbook showcases arguments for a new form of psychological practice that is 'critical' in its ethos, an ethos that can be summed up in the following points. These next five principles taken together as a package could serve to temper the rather negative assessment of psychology that the first five principles lead us to, and some critical psychologists would see their role as offering positive alternatives. Again, however, I should emphasize that these different aspects of the critique and principles for critical research are adhered to by different critical psychologists with different degrees of intensity. Some of those who are most in favour of the first five principles will also, at different points in their work, subscribe to these next five principles.

The point is made by those on the more 'constructive' wing of critical psychology, for example, that critical psychology can forge alliances between academics, professionals, and users of services to build a respectful, empowering, practical approach. This sixth principle of critical psychology therefore concerns how we overcome the separation between those who think they know best and those upon whom the supposedly correct knowledge is often imposed. This means questioning the power of academics and professionals to define the agenda in psychological research, and constructing forms of knowledge from the experts by experience who are able to best see what mainstream psychology does to people and what its limits are (Prilleltensky and Nelson 2002).

Some critical psychologists therefore argue for the development of a culturally attuned practice that embeds bodily and life experience in social context, and this sets in place a further principle of critical psychology in which people are encouraged to think outside the box of the self. That is, an alternative 'psychology' (if that is what we still want to call it) would treat the box of the self as the limited space which the 'individual', conceived of as undivided and separate from others in much of mainstream psychology, inhabits. Human activity, according to this seventh principle, would be seen as entailing an understanding of and participation in society and the wider culture, with an understanding of 'culture' here as something formed through a history of colonialism and resistance that make each of us what we are (Spivak 1988).

The aim is thus to provide a resource for overcoming alienation and restoring the humanity of those who seek psychological help, with an eighth principle of critical psychology concerning practical steps for facilitating recognition of the deeper, most destructive aspects of contemporary life of which mainstream psychology is a part. This is done, however, in such a way that this recognition simultaneously builds new forms of relationship that sustain the critique. Each aspect of alienation – competitiveness, mind-numbing work for others, disconnection of the mind from the body, fear of nature – is in this way dissolved, as people who are usually treated as 'objects' by psychologists are engaged as active agents working together creatively with a holistic appreciation of their own nature and their place in ecological processes (e.g. Kovel 2007).

This means that an alternative critical psychology would, for many practitioners, put the project for social change at the heart of its ethical practice in forms of action research. The ninth principle, that the way that researchers work with people should 'prefigure' the kind of social relationships they want to build together instead of reproducing a culture of obedience in which the psychologist knows best, is therefore ostensibly about 'methodology' in psychology. But the ramifications of this principle, which combines 'research' with 'action,' take critical psychologists much further; at each point in the formulation of research questions and development of

theoretical models there is an attempt to bring those who actually use psychological services into the equation as, for the first time, privileged partners (Kagan and Burton 2000).

Finally, laying the basis for a tenth principle of critical psychology, the aim is to develop forms of self-activity that build upon the 'standpoint' of users of psychology and connect with the subjectivity of those who wish to help them. This tenth principle, then, is that psychologists can only break from the partial view of the world their discipline inculcates by becoming active reflexive agents themselves in partnership with people in the real world. Those who argue for this perspective aim to embed academics and practitioners in the same contradictory reality as those they hitherto tried to understand. This principle entails a settling of accounts not only with 'psychology' but with forms of politics that mistakenly screen off the world of personal pain from big power (Rowbotham et al. 2013).

These second five principles of critical psychology concerning alliances, culture, alienation, action research, and standpoint amount to an agenda even perhaps for the redemption of psychology itself. We could view this set of ten principles as enabling a balance between harsher judgment of the shortcomings of psychology so far (which the first five principles voice) and an attempt to build something more positive out of the wreckage of our critique (which the second five principles aim for). On the other hand, we do also need to acknowledge that there are tensions between these two sets of five principles, and, even if the ten together help define what critical psychology is, it is clear that there are deep contradictions in the emerging field of work that this handbook takes as its area of operation.

Critiques and standpoints

The internal complexity of psychology as an academic discipline and professional practice demands a level of detailed and sustained critique that is able to address different 'sub-disciplines' and that is able to acknowledge that critical psychology itself is divided and contested. There is no one agreed 'critical psychology', but rather a field of debate from which we can develop a number of arguments that are useful in different kinds of alternative research, including working with social movements. This handbook values diversity, and is designed to give a comprehensive overview of critical psychology while opening up the possibility of new versions of it. Critical psychology has developed from different standpoints (such as connections with anti-racist and feminist research, or with liberation psychology) as well in difficult cultural contexts (with specific histories of psychology in different regions of the world posing quite distinct questions for critical psychologists), and these are addressed in the following pages.

Separate specialist areas of psychology are addressed in the handbook's section on 'varieties of psychology and critique', in which each chapter focuses on a different area of psychology. This first part of the book is divided in turn into three different components. First we examine 'the mainstream' of psychology as the core of the problem, and you will find many of the authors of these chapters deploying a conceptual device that is designed to capture the way that psychology operates not only as a theoretical framework but also as a social practice. This conceptual device is the 'psy-complex', which is the material and ideological meshwork of psychological ideas and institutions that structure academic departments, professional interventions, and popular-cultural representations of mind and behaviour (Ingleby 1985; Rose 1985). There are then the second set of chapters, which concern 'radical attempts to question the mainstream', and in which we acknowledge the various ways that psychologists have engaged with questions of subjectivity and social change and tried their best to ameliorate the worst of psychology as a normalizing and pathologizing discipline. Here the emphasis is on the promises of alternatives from within psychology, and the way that a critical perspective is needed to keep track of the failures and

betrayals of these promises. We conclude this first part of the book with an exploration of 'adjacent parts of the psy-complex', wherein the contributors address the professional disciplines that operate alongside psychology. Here we broaden our understanding of the context in which psychologists work to take account of the way the psy-complex includes prescriptions for good behaviour in the fields of psychiatry, psychotherapy, education, social work, and self-help.

The chapters in the second part of the handbook, which focus on 'varieties of critical psychology', are concerned with the way that distinct forms of critical work have been developed as alternatives to mainstream psychology, and here the task of contributors is to review the emergence of a particular approach and then show how that approach tackles the division of mainstream psychology into specialist sub-disciplines. These chapters provide a curious antidote to the temptation of seeing the first five principles of critical psychology as the most radical and the second five principles as somehow more accommodating of the discipline. Rather, in this second part of the book we see determined efforts to refuse compromise with mainstream psychology and to start from scratch in the formulation of something quite different. In some cases, critical psychologists see their work as involving the retrieval of something that was valuable from the old discipline and using it as one of the building blocks of a new 'critical psychology' (e.g. Kovel 1988; Newman and Holzman 1993). In other cases we find something quite new being elaborated from theoretical resources and cultural traditions outside the discipline (Brown and Stenner 2009; Henriques et al. 1984/1998). These alternatives are competing to redefine what psychology is.

The last part of the book, on 'standpoints and perspectives on psychology and critical psychology', utilizes different positions from which to provide alternative visions of what has gone wrong and what needs to be taken into account, and whether that would then amount to a new psychology or an abandonment of the project begun at the end of the nineteenth century. These contributions mobilize forms of knowledge and practice that show us alternative routes to good research that we might take if we conclude that psychology as such has reached the end of the road. First, from different 'perspectives' we learn about resources for rethinking what 'psychology' is from different traditions of research, and then, in the concluding section of the book, on 'places', we see how psychology has taken different form in different parts of the world and how 'critical psychology' also varies according to the specific kind of problems it confronts.

There are clearly different ways of asking critical questions, and different answers that either refuse the questions that psychology asks or find ways of reformulating them. The critique that we are developing engages with and unravels all aspects of psychology, asking the following questions: how is 'psychology' produced as a commonsensical resource for individuals to make sense of themselves and others and of possibilities for changing social conditions? How are social processes reproduced and maintained at the level of interpersonal interaction and individual experience, at the level of 'psychology'? How are patterns of activity structured to replicate power relations regardless of and even despite the immediate intentions of an individual 'psychology'? How can theoretical articulation of the place of individual 'psychology' and social structure be developed to provide some critical distance from ideology? How can research into the political functions of 'psychology' operate in such a way as to maintain a degree of autonomy of activity and experience from political interference? In this way we discover how being 'critical' is finding a place in and against psychology.

Further reading

Parker, I. (ed.) (2011) *Critical Psychology: Critical Concepts in Psychology, 4 Volumes*. London and New York: Routledge.

Website resources

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Part I

Varieties of psychology and critique

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Part Ia

The mainstream

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Quantitative methods
Science means and ends

Lisa Cosgrove, Emily E. Wheeler, and Elena Kosterina

The hegemony of quantification within psychology actually has its roots in the Western Enlightenment period – when faith fell out of fashion and reason took its place. During this time mathematics also underwent a transformation from a discrete, insular discipline into a universal language that could be applied to other disciplines, allowing it to become the language of quantification in any scientific field (Frängsmyr 1990). This history set the stage for psychology to embrace quantitative methods and thereby help prove it was a 'real' science.

And certainly, Western psychology did come to accept quantitative methods as the route to knowledge early in its disciplinary history. Two major sources are typically cited as influential in the transformation that swept psychology in the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries: psychophysics and mental testing. Gustav Fechner is credited as the father of psychophysics, a field which took as its mission the measurement of psychological phenomena via discrete units of physical sensation (for a history of Fechner's career in psychophysics, see Heidelberger 2004). Mental testing was the earliest iteration of psychological assessment in the form of intelligence testing, or the first attempts to capture mental capacity in discrete, measureable units (see e.g. Goodenough 1949 for a more thorough description of the origin of mental testing). The revolution lay in the belief that the leap from the internal world of the research subject to a tangible, behavioural representation was justified and scientifically sound.

Many historians have noted important contextual influences that allowed psychophysics and mental testing to come into existence and be widely embraced. Hornstein's (1988) history points out that neither movement was without its detractors or without debate, but each profoundly shaped the future of experimental psychology nonetheless. The wider cultural embrace of technology as a result of industrialization, along with the increasing need for social control, were political forces that supported the use of psychological science. Hornstein argues that the acceptance of these methods allowed psychologists of the time to focus on the methods of their science rather than its theory. This focus allowed them to avoid the uncomfortable and unanswered question of whether psychological phenomena were, in fact, measurable, and if these measures had any real meaning. Embracing quantitative methods in both psychophysics and mental testing provided considerable benefits to the profession, including facilitating communication between researchers as a result of standardized methods of experimentation and evaluation.

The link between widespread acceptance of quantitative methodology and the positivistic paradigm in psychology also owes some debt to the professionalization of psychology at the end of the nineteenth century. This process involved, in part, distancing psychology from the discipline of philosophy, as the natural sciences had long since done, and from philosophy's introspective methods of knowledge production as a means of garnering legitimacy and its related benefits (Coon 1993). This professionalization process came with an attendant set of values, ones that were key to psychology's place at the science table: positivism, objectivism, and the belief in value-free knowledge (Hoshmand and Polkinghorne 1992; Morawski 2011).

Largely in the latter half of the twentieth century, criticism of quantitative methods themselves as well as their dominance in psychology arose most often from advocates of qualitative methods (e.g. Ponterotto 2005a). These critiques addressed the limitations of quantitative methods, arguing for the use of qualitative ones, but did so in a way that dichotomized and often pitted the methods against each other in methodological debates. For example, quantitative researchers have argued for the advantages of these methods (e.g. the increased ease of standardization, generalization, and dissemination of results, and their congruence with evidence-based practice). The assumption that a quantitative approach is objective and value-neutral, however, has come under fire. Specifically, the claim of value-neutrality glosses examination of the ways in which quantitative methods may reify social inequalities (Fine 2011), and produce research results that have limited clinical (Hunsley 2007; Ioannidis 2005) as well as multicultural (Burman 2007) utility.

Critical psychology's contributions

As critical psychologists have noted, the central role of quantification within psychology is inexorably linked to the discipline's need to be seen as a 'real' science, and concomitantly, the prestige associated with scientificity (Morawski 1985; Teo 2009; Toomela 2010). Unlike other scientific disciplines, however, psychology has had to grapple with a fundamental ontological question: what is – and what should be – psychology's proper subject matter, behaviour or consciousness (lived experience)? What are psychology's epistemic commitments as it struggles to define itself and interpret its goals as a science? Thus, the contributions that critical psychologists have made in terms of critiquing quantitative methods must be seen as part of a much larger debate about the relationship between epistemology (how the world/experience/behaviour is known and represented) and ontology (what the world/experience/behaviour 'really' is). Here we will review critiques of quantitative methods within the context of how science is interpreted in psychology. We also discuss how phenomenological, feminist, and critical psychologists have helped to deconstruct the 'quantitative/qualitative divide,' and we address some of the political, ethical, and social policy implications of transcending this divide.

Psychology as a human science

The meaning of science within psychology has been contested since the discipline's break with philosophy. Yet this contestation has not received adequate attention within mainstream psychology. As a result, critiques of the hegemony of quantification – frequently referred to as the quantitative/qualitative divide – have focused on issues of methodology. However, as described below, the 'quantitative imperative' (Michell 1990, 2003) developed out of a particular view of science and thus is as much an epistemic and ontological achievement as it is a methodological one.

Edmond Husserl, often referred to as the founder of phenomenology, described what he saw as an epistemological 'crisis' in psychology and the social sciences more generally in the early 1900s:

without a proper philosophical grounding the focus was shifting from description to causality. This shift led psychology to commit the dangerous error of 'naturalizing' consciousness – upholding the subject/object dichotomy and treating lived experience as if it were a thing that could be measured (Husserl 1970; Jennings 1986; see also Cosgrove and McHugh 2008). Husserl, and later other phenomenological psychologists (e.g. Giorgi 1985), argued not for a simple return to psychology qua philosophy, but rather argued for a *philosophically grounded* empirical psychology. The problem was not that psychology turned toward science per se. Rather, the problem was that it turned toward a particular version of science – a positivist empiricist model that objectified its subject matter, believed that the methods of the natural sciences were the only valid route to knowledge, and failed to appreciate the sociopolitical grounding of experience. Husserl laid the groundwork for later phenomenological psychologists to argue that psychology should be (re)conceptualized as a (philosophically grounded) *human* science – one which understood the limits of purely psychological explanations of lived experience.

Thus, since the beginning of the discipline's break with philosophy, there were attempts to address the larger epistemological and political issues at stake. Indeed, if these issues and concerns had not been marginalized within mainstream psychology, perhaps the field could have avoided the reductionism inherent in the quantitative/qualitative debate, for conceptualizing psychology as a philosophically-grounded human science does not mean that one must eschew quantitative methods. Quantitative methods may be a helpful resource provided that researchers using these methods adopt what Westerman and Yanchar (2011) refer to as an interpretive (rather than objectivist) view of inquiry. An interpretive view of inquiry is one that is consistent with a reflexive, contextual approach and does not succumb to a classical view of measurement (i.e. quantification is the only valid and reliable route to knowledge). Westerman and Yanchar (2011: 144, emphasis added) sum this point up well: '[N]umerical data will be useful if they are *endemic and thus relevant to the lived experiences under investigation*, that is, if they are based on everyday, practical numeracy'. From this perspective, statistical significance is not the Holy Grail, but is simply another way for psychologists to use scientific inquiry in the service of social justice. Laboratory research and quantitative methods can be employed in a way that is consistent with the narrative emphasis and philosophical anthropology of a human science approach. Insofar as researchers understand that statistics tell stories and serve rhetorical purposes (Billing 1994), and in so doing produce certain realities/meanings and marginalize others, there is nothing inherently incompatible with using quantitative methods to investigate what Husserl termed the *Lebenswelt* or lifeworld.

Guild interests, positivism, and quantification

The over-emphasis on quantitative methodology must also be understood in terms of the field's guild interests. For example, the recent push for prescription privileges for psychologists can be seen as promoting guild interests in a way that sustains the hegemony of quantification; many critical psychologists see this push as being dictated by the pressure of managed care, and by loyalty to the tradition of positivism and quantification (Ball et al. 2009; Cushman 2000; Hayes et al. 1995). In the applied psychologies, (e.g. clinical psychology), the positivist view of science was reified in the Boulder scientist-practitioner model, which makes clear a division between the 'science' of positivistic, quantitative research and the methods of psychology in practice and emphasizes a one-way flow of knowledge from researcher to practitioner (Chwalisz 2003; Hoshmand and Polkinghorne 1992). The Boulder model was promoted as unique to the training of psychologists and thus served the profession's guild interests; it afforded a level of prestige and helped differentiate psychology from related mental health fields.

Guild interests are also manifest in mainstream psychology's uncritical endorsement of the evidence-based practice (EBP) movement. Critical psychologists have noted the conflation of EBP with quantification and measurement, and the lack of theorizing about the ethical and conceptual framework that grounds it. Yet mainstream psychology has embraced EBP; it is strongly encouraged by leading agencies in the profession (APA 2006; Hunsley 2007), reflected in the content of training curricula (Pontoretto 2005b), and required in order to be competitive by funding agencies. The National Institutes of Health (NIH), in its research guidelines, defines research integrity in terms of a value-neutral definition of objectivity and emphasizes the importance of statistical procedures and replication of 'experiments' in publications (NIH 2007, 2012). Also, when funding agencies encourage the use of mixed-methods designs, they require researchers to provide evidence of validity of their qualitative data by using the conceptual framework of a quantitative approach – such as using software programs to structure sampling and demographic information and to categorize narrative data quantitatively. Despite the emphasis on mixed methods, many authors acknowledge the difficulties of integrating the two methodologies because of unexamined differences in their philosophy (Sale et al. 2002). It is necessary to critically examine implicit differences in their underlying conceptual, normative, and ethical frameworks. Otherwise, invitations to combine approaches through the use of 'mixed methods' simply reproduce the positivist tradition (Giddings and Grant 2007).

Feminist contributions and quandaries

It is important to emphasize that confidence intervals, *p*-values, and MANOVAS are not the enemy. Quantitative methods – such as comparisons of group means – can be used in the service of social justice. For example, advocates of quantitative research such as feminist empiricists could use the practice of comparisons of group means to try and better understand 'within cell differences' (e.g. differences among women) and 'between cell similarities' (e.g. similarities between men and women or girls and boys) (Stewart and McDermott 2004). Quantitative methods could therefore be used to disrupt inaccurate beliefs in gender differences and be used to inform public policy. For example, Hyde (2005) reviewed meta-analyses that compared males and females on a variety of constructs in support of the 'gender similarities hypothesis'. In contrast to the popular gender differences model, Hyde found support that men and women are largely similar; 78 per cent of the results from meta-analyses on gender differences yielded effect sizes of 0.35 or smaller. Hyde also reviewed research supporting the influence of context on the appearance of differences between men and women and discussed the results of her review in terms of the social and political costs of the gender differences model. Although Hyde does not identify as a critical psychologist, her research is grounded in a similar framework; she interrogates the social and political costs of the epistemic commitments she makes as a researcher.

However, some feminists have been harshly critical of the ways in which the 'institutionalization of a quantitative perspective in psychology' (Hornstein 1988: 3) has led to oppressive stereotypes, social practices, and institutions. For example, standpoint theorists maintain that gender differences exist and researchers should challenge stereotypes by using qualitative methods to identify, describe, and celebrate gender differences. Feminist standpoint theorists appreciate the fact that quantitative methods:

> were introduced at a time when psychology was struggling to transform itself into a science and American society was engaged in developing new means of controlling an increasing heterogeneous population. . . . [P]sychology has of necessity had to form alliances with such agents of social control as government, education and the military. . . . [I]t is not surprising

therefore that American psychology has increasingly advanced a view which has emphasized control, prediction, and classification.

(Hornstein 1988: 24)

Thus, historically there has been a clash between feminist empiricists like Hyde (2005) who believe that researchers should 'fight with science's own tools' (Hubbard 1988) and standpoint theorists who maintain that narrative approaches are more consistent with a social justice focus. This clash is an example of how polarizing the quantitative/qualitative divide can be when the predominant focus is on methods rather than on the normative frameworks and epistemic commitments that should ground our methodological choices.

   Initial attempts to bridge this divide within feminist psychology, as well as in psychology more broadly, led to calls for 'methodological pluralism'. (Indeed, the very phrase 'mixed methods' is still de rigueur in academe.) Advocates suggested a rather simplistic solution: the call for pluralism was essentially an additive approach. Both statistical techniques as well as narrative methods could be used to understand psychological phenomena. However, implicit in the call for pluralism was the belief that quantitative methods were needed (and privileged) in the search for objective data and causes of behaviour. Qualitative approaches were helpful insofar as they could give the researcher access to participants' 'subjective' experiences. The call for pluralism still left the terms (and power dynamics) of the debate intact – the subjective/objective dichotomy remained unchallenged and 'real,' 'hard' data could only be obtained through quantitative measures. Moreover, the recommendation of methodological pluralism as a counter to the 'institutionalization of quantification' is grounded in naïve realism (Michell 2003). A naïve realist view assumes that experience is something one 'has', and that one can know the world/experience and represent it accurately, whether by words or numbers.

'Beyond the pluralist compromise' (Morawski 2011: 272)

Many feminist and critical psychologists have argued that because of the hegemony of quantitative methods, real dialogue in the field about the *relationship* between epistemology and methodology has been undermined (see e.g. Morawski 2011; Ussher 1999). There is a clear need for a more nuanced discussion of power dynamics, representation, and how best to capture the sociopolitical grounding of experience. Unfortunately, however, the quantitative/qualitative divide tends to pit one side against the other in a debate solely or predominantly about methods. For example, qualitative researchers often position themselves as being uniquely able to obtain more valid and useful data; they can give voice to marginalized groups in a way that investigators using quantitative methods cannot. However, as Brinberg and McGrath (1985: 13) astutely note, 'validity is not a commodity that can be purchased with techniques'. Critical psychologists have shown that it is not only quantitative researchers who are committed to a naïve realist view (see e.g. Michell 2003; Morawski 2011); some narrative approaches position the researcher as an 'omniscient narrator and summarizer' (Flyvbjerg 2001: 86) of individuals' experiences.

   In contrast to the 'pluralist compromise,' critical psychologists recognize the impossibility of any method, in and of itself, as a guarantor of truth. They argue that it is theoretically weak and politically problematic to accept mainstream psychology's individual-society dualism, to assume that the individual is a fixed entity 'rather than the product of historically specific practices of social regulation' (Henriques et al. 1998: 13). Critical psychologists thus emphasize the relationship between knowledge and power. In fact, over twenty years ago Prilleltensky (1989) insightfully described the ways in which psychology's failure to fully interrogate this relationship led the field to reinforce, rather than challenge, the status quo – regardless of the psychologist's

approach. For the critical psychologist, the question of what it means to generate knowledge in an unjust world (Lather 1991) needs to be at the foreground of all psychological inquiry.

Therefore, one way out of the pluralist compromise is to challenge the naïve realism that pervades *both* quantitative and qualitative approaches (Michell 2003). If psychological research is to live up to its emancipatory potential, researchers must recognize that experience can be epistemically substantive but never epistemically self-sufficient (Alcoff 1997). That is, consciousness [experience] is constituted; it is 'something produced rather than the source of social ideas about the world' (Henriques et al. 1998: 8). Researchers will be less likely to be tethered to a particular methodology if they avoid the 'false ontology of experience' and see subjectivity itself as being produced. Thus, from a critical psychological perspective, moving beyond pluralism should not be equated with giving qualitative methods equal status. Regardless of one's method (narrative or statistical), certain epistemic commitments must be made: one must use an interpretive framework, challenge the individual-society dualism, and understand the subject as a product of positions and discourses.

Conclusion and future directions

As demonstrated in this chapter, throughout much of its history the discipline of psychology has been struggling to establish its own 'scientificity' primarily through its quantitative orientation. Critical psychologists have shown that disciplinary insecurity and a lack of theorization of key concepts such as validity and objectivity have contributed to the field's obsession with quantitative research designs. The assumption within mainstream psychology is that validity and reliability can be purchased – with quantitative techniques. This assumption has been referred to as 'methodolatry' (Bakan 1967), and 'methodologism' (Teo 2009), and has led to the perception that methodology, ontology, and epistemology are separate domains and independent from one another. However, it is impossible to develop robust research designs and choose appropriate research methods without considering the interdependence among all three domains. Teo (2009: 44) sums this point up well, '[Methodologism] is a research practice in which the subject matter is secondary but the method has primacy'. Thus, one of the main goals in critical psychology is to resist unhelpful and reductive dichotomies (e.g., the qualitative/quantitative divide) and to bring greater attention to the importance of exploring the epistemological bases of our methodological and research design choices.

Resisting the pull of unnecessary dichotomies also has practical implications. Critical psychologists need to engage more with mainstream psychologists who use quantitative approaches. Such collaborations will continue to invigorate dialogue about methods and theory; researchers using quantitative methods will be less likely to reify the individual/society dualism and these collaborations will help critical psychologists develop new and innovative ways to incorporate quantitative methods within an interpretive framework. For example, there has been a recent influx of members from Divisions 24 (Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology) and 32 (Humanistic Psychology), among others interested in qualitative inquiry into Division 5 (Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics), forming a new Section within that Division so as to facilitate dialogue and further development of collaboration between diverse methodological orientations. The goal of an explicit collaboration among these divisions is congruent with and extends a Husserlian approach: to develop philosophically grounded empirical research agendas and projects. That is, quantitative data can be analyzed in terms of the *construction of the lived experience under investigation*. Focusing on the constitutive aspects of individuals' experiences challenges the individual/society dualism by understanding the subject as being a product of dominant positions and discourses. For example, Cosgrove and Riddle (2004) used quantitative

methods to investigate the relationship between adherence to conventional notions of femininity and women's likelihood to position themselves as 'having' Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)/PMS. Rather than start from a naïve realist perspective and assume that femininity is an independent variable and PMDD/PMS is a 'real' biopsychiatric phenomenon, they took as their starting point the idea that both are constructions.

Another way in which critical psychologists can continue to contribute to our understanding of quantitative methods and their appropriate use is in applying and theorizing Bayesian methods as an alternative to conventional statistical approaches. Bayesian statistics represent an alternative approach to probability that is congruent with a postmodern epistemology. (For a more thorough discussion of Bayesian statistics, see Lynch 2007.) Hypotheses are generated contextually by predicting the probability of a hypothesis given the experimental data. That is, the probability of the hypothesis is based on previous research as well as probability estimates of the hypothesis being true or false. This formulation stands in contrast to the frequency approach to probability and significance testing found in conventional statistics, which guide interpretation using estimates of the results of many repetitions of the same experiment. While critics of Bayesian methods argue that they are too 'subjective,' chiefly in the choosing of a prior distribution, they provide a more contextual interpretation of study results into conclusions about research hypotheses (Haig 1996). Taking a critical perspective on quantitative methods can continue to expand methodological knowledge, by identifying experimental situations in which a Bayesian approach to inference is most appropriate and, alternatively, when simple significance testing is not.

Thus, critical psychologists have moved the field forward by showing us that our obsession with methods undermines full consideration of the relationship between epistemology and methodology. They have invigorated the quantitative/qualitative debate in psychology, not only by critiquing 'methodolatry' but also by identifying the problems associated with a classical view of measurement, resisting unhelpful dichotomies, and bringing questions of power to the foreground. Indeed, a critical perspective on the dominance of quantification in mainstream psychology can enhance our ability to theorize the production of social differences and injustice.

Further reading

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Website resources

American Psychological Association's "Quantitative Psychology" report: http://www.apa.org/research/tools/quantitative/index.aspx?item=1

Felix Schönbrodt's website – A collection of blogs and resources on contemporary findings in statistical methods in social sciences: http://www.nicebread.de

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2

Cognitive psychology
From the bourgeois individual to class struggle

Michael Arfken

In terms of the impact of an intellectual movement, few developments in the history of psychology compare to what has come to be known as the cognitive revolution (Gardner 1985). Since the middle of the twentieth century, nearly every aspect of psychological research and practice has come to bear the imprint of the emergence of the digital computer, the rise of cybernetics and information-processing theory, and the mechanization of the human mind. Insofar as cognitive psychology has come to colonize nearly every facet of psychology in general, it is clear that any program worthy of the name 'critical' must interrogate the commitments and assumptions underlying orthodox theories of cognition. To do so, it is necessary to appreciate many of the changes and transformations that have contributed to the development of modern cognitive psychology.

The evolution of cognitive psychology

According to the classical model of cognition – or what is commonly referred to as *cognitivism* – psychological processes are fundamentally computational processes involving the systematic manipulation of discrete symbols (Johnson-Laird 1988; Newell and Simon 1981; Pylyshyn 1984). The origin of these symbols can be traced to the sense data that individuals encounter as they navigate their world. By converting this data into symbolic form, it becomes possible to systematically transform what would otherwise be a chaotic collection of sense data into a relatively coherent representation of reality.

These symbolic transformations are guided by mental rules that organize information in a systematic fashion. Although individuals are sometimes aware of these mental rules, more often such rules operate below the level of awareness. For cognitivism, providing a psychological explanation for systematic variations in thought and behaviour ultimately involves identifying variations in the *content* of these rules. In contrast, the view that human thought and behaviour is guided by rules involves a commitment to a singular *form* (rules) that provides a basis for psychological explanation. So while cognitivism recognizes that mental rules are socially, culturally, and historically contingent, this is predicated on the view that all human thought and behaviour is fundamentally rule-governed. Indeed, this commitment is not only treated as a universal feature of human mental functioning, but it has also become a template for what constitutes a legitimate psychological explanation.

There are several advantages to using the digital computer as a model for human mental processes. To the extent that a scientific explanation is construed in mechanistic terms, the computational processes occurring between the input of information and the output of orderly behaviour can potentially be reproduced on a physical machine. In principle, this makes it possible to furnish an exclusively mechanistic explanation of our psychological processes. Moreover, one can abstract principles from this process that need not be tied to any particular physical medium such as the computer or the brain (Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1988). This means that researchers can pursue an empirical research program largely divorced from neurophysiology.

While classical models of cognition view mental processes as proceeding in a series of discrete steps, *connectionism* suggests that as mental activity reaches higher levels of complexity, it becomes advantageous to develop models of human cognition in which these processes both operate in parallel and are distributed rather than localized (McClelland et al. 1986). According to connectionism, the basic building blocks of cognition are units which maintain a certain level of activation. Units with different numerical weights are linked together through a network of connections, and the activation of any individual unit has the potential to excite or inhibit the activity of other units. When a unit becomes active in the presence of a novel stimulus, it initiates a spread of activity across the entire network. This activity can change the parameters of the entire network so that further encounters with the stimulus bear the imprint of previous experience (Bechtel 1987; Smolensky 1988).

Proponents of connectionism argue that in some instances, distributive models of cognition appear to provide a more realistic model of human performance. For example, by emphasizing the weight of activation for different units of a network, connectionism seems to be in a better position to simulate the smooth degradation of performance that is characteristic of a wide array of human activity. Moreover, while classical models of cognition continue to excel at basic tasks requiring reasoning and problem solving, connectionism has shown promise in other areas of human mental functioning, such as pattern recognition (Bechtel 1987).

There is considerable debate surrounding the relationship between cognitivism and connectionism. Some advocates of connectionism argue that given what we know about the brain, distributed models of cognition seem much more plausible at a neurophysiological level than traditional information–processing models (McClelland et al. 1986). Others have argued that connectionism is perhaps best understood as a subsymbolic paradigm that addresses the microstructure rather than the macrostructure of cognition (Bechtel 1987; Smolensky 1988). Still others have argued that while connectionism may be adequate at the level of neurophysiology, a serial/modular view of cognition remains a more robust psychological explanation of human mental functioning (Pinker and Mehler 1988).

Despite important differences between cognitivism and connectionism, both tend to begin their analysis at the point where information has already been captured through a separate perceptual system. The emerging field of *embodied cognition* is in some respects a reaction to this largely disembodied view of human cognition. According to one embodied approach – grounded cognition (Barsalou 2008) – traditional models of cognition treat perception and conception as independent systems. Such an amodal view of cognition fails to appreciate the extent to which perceptual and conceptual systems are integrated so that our experience is grounded in the very nature of our embodied engagement in the world. As we have seen, cognitivism's commitment to a computational view of mental functioning makes it necessary to transform the non–symbolic information received through the perceptual system into symbolic form. In this process of transduction the perceptual modality through which the information is received becomes irrelevant. Grounded cognition argues that by integrating perceptual and conceptual

systems, it becomes possible to develop cognitive models that address the embodied nature of our experience while remaining congruent with the latest neurophysiological research.

Cognitive psychology and its critics

While connectionism and grounded cognition point to some significant problems surrounding the classical view of cognition, it is clear that a number of assumptions guiding cognitive psychology as a whole remain largely unchallenged. Indeed, the evolution of cognitive psychology can best be understood as a series of reforms in which internal critiques have been deployed to salvage a set of core commitments regarding the nature of human thought, knowledge, and experience. In contrast, the most radical critiques of cognitive psychology have tended to zero in on the underlying philosophical anthropology that makes something like cognition the point of departure for many of our modern institutions, from liberal democracy and political economy to moral theory and jurisprudence. For these more radical critiques, the evolution of cognitive psychology must be transformed into a revolution that challenges the epistemological foundation of modern thought (Taylor 1995).

To begin with, critics have drawn attention to the orthodox view of *perception* within cognitive psychology. Central to cognitive psychology is an assumption that our encounter with the world is fundamentally indirect, so that in our everyday activities we initially encounter not people or objects but rather a collection of sense data that must be enriched in order to construct a coherent representation of the world. Leading the charge against theories of indirect perception are ecological psychologists, who argue that our perception of the world is fundamentally direct and involves the detection of information already available in the environment (Gibson 1979; Michaels and Carello 1981, Reed 1996). Central to this critique is a redefinition of the very notion of perception, so that organisms perceive not so much a series of time slices or snapshots but instead events extended in time. One of the most important consequences of this novel view of perception is that it becomes necessary to interrogate orthodox assumptions regarding the relationship between organisms and their environments.

Within cognitive psychology, organisms and environments are traditionally viewed in spatial terms so that organisms − much as physical objects − are treated as occupying a certain space within a particular environment. For cognitive psychology, this moves in the other direction as well, since it is assumed that organisms carry around internal representations of their environments. Ecological psychologists argue that traditional cognitive models produce an animal-environment dualism that supplies the very justification for indirect theories of perception. As an alternative, they suggest that the point of departure for exploring perception should be a synergistic system made up of both the animal and the environment (Michaels and Carello 1981; Turvey and Shaw 1977). Here activity points not to a process residing in our heads but instead to a practical engagement between an organism and its environment.

The traditional emphasis on sense data and animal-environment dualism has important methodological consequences for cognitive psychology. If we assume that perception refers to cognitive processes that enable individuals to construct a coherent representation of the world, priority will be accorded to producing artificial contexts where maximum control of the conditions can be assured. For Gibson (1979), the attempt to study perception in a controlled environment with exposure devices, headrests, and tachistoscopes tends to make us think that perception can be broken into a series of time-frame moments and reassembled in the mind. Yet this view of perception arises not from any facts about perception but as a consequence of a commitment to an atomistic and mechanistic view of psychological explanation. In this sense, ecological psychology remains a powerful critique of cognitive psychology not only because it

calls into question these atomistic and mechanistic assumptions, but also because it provides an alternative framework for the scientific investigation of perception.

By redefining perception as a practical activity, ecological psychologists have challenged the atomistic and mechanistic assumptions that inform not only traditional theories of perception but also our very understanding of the nature of psychological explanation. In a similar vein, scholars drawing on phenomenology (Dreyfus 1992; Taylor 1995) and ordinary language philosophy (Coulter 1989; Coulter and Sharrock 2007) have pointed to issues surrounding cognitive accounts of *skilled performance*. At the heart of many cognitive accounts of skilled performance is a view that orderly and structured behaviour must follow from the application of discrete (though often implicit) rules. Viewed in this way, the project for a psychological account of human activity is largely geared towards making these implicit rules as explicit as possible. In principle, such explicit knowledge (or 'know-that') could fill the pages of a book that social actors metaphorically possess at one level or another.

At stake here is whether we must assume that all knowledge can be made explicit as a collection of rules or if it is necessary to make room for a type of practical knowledge (know-how, as opposed to 'know-that') that resists being transformed into discrete propositions and rules. Since orthodox cognitive psychology is largely dedicated to a mechanistic view of psychological explanation, the suggestion that certain types of knowledge cannot be transformed into discrete rules and propositions appears to those working within the cognitive tradition as a capitulation to mysticism and an affront to the development of a psychological science. One place where this tension is particularly acute is in research on expertise.

According to cognitive psychology, the transformation of a novice into an expert in a particular domain involves a prolonged process of accumulating a large number of relevant rules. Since an expert is defined as someone who understands exactly what a particular situation demands, cognitive psychology assumes that such knowledge must be a massive collection of rules for guiding skilled performance. Yet for Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1988), this view of expertise is the inevitable outcome of adherence to a mechanistic model of the mind. They suggest that the development of expertise is best understood as the development and refining of practical skills in an ongoing situation. This means that what remains vital for the novice (i.e. explicit rules) ultimately becomes a hindrance for highly skilled performance. While cognitive psychologists argue that this merely indicates that in the development of skilled performance mental rules become increasingly implicit, Dreyfus and Dreyfus argue that another possibility exists – that the expert does not follow rules at all. Pointing to work in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Dreyfus (1992) argues that many of the obstacles AI researchers have encountered in their attempts to simulate human intelligence on a digital computer can be traced to the mistaken view that intelligent human behaviour follows from the application of discrete rules and propositions. Here the frame or common sense knowledge problem has made it necessary for AI researchers to reflect on the philosophical commitments that inform their mental models (Dreyfus 2007; Dreyfus and Dreyfus 1988).

If we assume that the development of a scientific psychology necessarily involves translating all human knowledge into discrete rules that can in principle be programmed on a digital computer, it becomes necessary to explain how we can formalize all the rules that make it possible for individuals to navigate their world. Surveying the myriad forms of human activity, it becomes clear that our point of departure for acting appropriately in a particular situation is a sense of what is relevant or important about that situation. By framing a situation, it is possible to identify the unique characteristics that distinguish one situation from another. But within cognitive psychology, relevance or significance must in principle be something that can be formalized as a collection of rules. The consequence is that we appear to require rules for identifying rules.

But because the frames that indicate relevance are *about* rather than *in* situations, the result is an infinite regress (Dreyfus 2007). Indeed, recent developments in AI have largely arisen from abandoning the mechanistic, rules-based epistemology that guided early attempts to simulate human mental functioning (Brooks 1991; Dreyfus 2007). These efforts have in a number of cases drawn inspiration from ecological psychology and its critique of indirect perception.

One of the consequences of challenging the assumption that human activity is governed by mental rules or that our experience of the world is mediated by mental representations has been increased interest in the nature of the *background knowledge* that makes it possible for people to navigate their world (Dreyfus 1980, 1992; Taylor 1993). As we have seen, cognitive psychologists not only recognize the importance of background knowledge in providing a context for our experiences, they suggest that one of the major goals of cognitive research is to make this knowledge as explicit as possible. Yet critics argue that the very nature of this background knowledge is such that it functions only when it operates behind our backs (Dreyfus 1980). From this perspective, attempts to bring such knowledge into the foreground amount to little more than a mechanistic colonization of human experience (Taylor 1995).

The struggle here is between cognitive psychologists who assume that our encounter with the world is primarily theoretical and indirect and critics who argue that the very possibility of adopting a detached, disembodied, theoretical stance towards the world is itself only made possible by our practical, engaged, embodied activities (Dreyfus 1980; Taylor 1995). By challenging the view that social activity is necessarily governed by mental activity, critics have endeavoured to show that the mental space staked out by cognitive psychology is itself a social accomplishment. This provides a means for shifting attention away from the *mental* activities of individuals and towards the *social* activities and those spaces between people that make anything like cognition possible (Taylor 1995).

For cognitive psychology, the point of departure for analysing social and cultural behaviour is the mental activity of individual social actors. Yet critics have argued that the very nature of our background knowledge is such that anything we might call mental activity must ultimately be derived from our collective *social practices* (Dreyfus 1980; Taylor 1995). The emergence of the practice turn in social theory (Schatzki et al. 2001) has propelled investigations of social activity in a number of directions. On the one hand, the primacy of social practice has created a space for an empirical research program grounded in a non-cognitive account of human interaction. On the other hand, the practice turn has also served as a catalyst for deploying grammatical investigations in an effort to destroy any coherent conception of the cognitive or the mental.

For scholars working within the tradition of Discursive Social Psychology (DSP), the topic of cognition plays an important role in a variety of contexts (Edwards 1997; Potter 1996). To begin with, DSP emphasizes the importance of locating what are traditionally viewed as cognitive processes within the realm of social and discursive practice. Here discourse is treated not as the expression of an interior mental process but instead as an intersubjective practice in which social actors produce particular representations of reality. Central to the production of these representations is the use of psychological terms (i.e. feel, knows, believes, intended) to buttress or undermine particular versions of events. Drawing on the analytical tools developed by ethnomethodology and conversations analysis (CA), these scholars have sought to establish a post-cognitive research paradigm that is sensitive to the role that ordinary talk plays in the negotiation of social reality.

Other scholars suggest that when the issues addressed by cognitive psychology are submitted to conceptual analysis, it becomes clear that what are viewed as central problems surrounding the mind and the brain are actually grammatical confusions that require conceptual intervention. For example, Coulter and Sharrock (2007) point to the tendency in cognitive psychology

to transform *achievement* words into *process* words. So while playing, travelling, and seeking are clearly processes, winning, arriving, and finding are better understood as achievements. Overlooking conceptual facts such as this make it possible to treat something like remembering or seeing as a process that requires cognitive explanation rather than an achievement embedded within a social practice.

For Coulter (1989), conceptual clarification reveals that any discourse surrounding the mental is fundamentally incoherent. While we may be excused for using mental terms in our ordinary language, Coulter argues that it is vital that we identify and discard conceptual confusions that continue to plague our professional discourse. In this regard, conceptual intervention represents a formidable challenge to the development of any coherent science of the mental.

While there are important differences between a grammatical investigation focusing on the limits of intelligibility and an empirical investigation of the situated deployment of mental vocabulary, both critiques suggest that the recent turn to social practices has important if not devastating implications for cognitive psychology as a whole. Moreover, by making their point of departure practical rather than theoretical, critics of cognitive psychology have laid the foundation for productive collaboration among a range of traditions from phenomenology and ordinary language philosophy to ecological psychology and standpoint epistemology.

From culture to political economy

At their best, radical critiques of cognitive psychology call into question the atomistic, mechanistic, and representational foundations of modern epistemology. In many cases, these critiques have gained traction by inverting the traditional relationship between action and cognition so that mental processes are themselves treated as a form of social practice. While this certainly moves us in the proper direction, it is important to avoid equating social and *cultural* practices (Arfken 2012). Insofar as cognitive psychology is treated principally as a form of cultural imperialism, resistance often amounts to little more than fetishizing the local and marginal in the hope that the mere presence of alternative perspectives will give pause to the neoliberal juggernaut. This runs the risk, as Fraser (2003) observes, of allowing political struggles to become entirely consumed by cultural critique while injustices surrounding the social relations of production run rampant. Despite some notable exceptions (Parker 2009; Reed 1996; Shotter 1987; Still and Costall 1991), critics of cognitive psychology have rarely ventured into the domain of political economy. Indeed, the overwhelming tendency has been to view modern epistemology as a manifestation of Western culture rather than an expression of the underlying logic of capitalist accumulation.

To see this, it is important to understand which substantive issues proponents and critics of cognitive psychology view as simply off limits. As we have seen, cognitivism in particular argues that our background knowledge can in principle be formalized into a collection of explicit rules that guide our everyday activities. To call this assumption into question is to challenge the very possibility of providing a legitimate psychological explanation. In contrast, critics of cognitive psychology argue that what cognitivists view as the basis of psychological explanation is actually the expression of a contingent and increasingly dominant cultural practice. While this observation is intended to destabilize Western imperialism, in reality it transforms culture into an incorrigible entity that is even more impervious to scrutiny (Pollner 1974). This is particularly clear in contemporary multiculturalism, where marginalized social practices are accorded the status of a culture in an effort to insulate them from critique. While the aim is to challenge the ascendance of a single, dominant worldview, one of the unfortunate consequences is that the possibility of establishing a foundation for challenging the legitimacy of any specific social practice (dominant

or otherwise) is radically undermined. Indeed, by focusing exclusively on cultural domination, critics have largely forfeited their ability to trace the evolution of cognitive psychology to developments in the capitalist mode of production. In this way, the politics of multiculturalism may inadvertently reproduce a system of economic exploitation (Arfken 2013; Michaels 2006).

One of the advantages of placing cognitive psychology within the context of political economy is that it makes it possible to integrate various critical elements that would otherwise remain only loosely related. As we have seen, ecological psychologists emphasize the engaged and direct way in which organisms explore their environments. In a similar vein, hermeneutic phenomenologists argue that the subject/object dualism central to cognitive psychology is itself derived from a more primordial engagement that blurs the boundary between an individual and his or her context. While these are certainly important insights, it is vital that we add another critical component. Through Marx's (1844/1964) concept of *alienation*, we can begin to see the chasm separating people from their creations, from one another, and from their world as more than an expression of a dominant cultural worldview. From the perspective of political economy the abstract and mechanical models that lie at the heart of cognitive psychology are an institutional expression of the alienation of labour under the capitalist mode of production. In this sense, cognitive psychology is not so much a cultural movement but rather an embodiment of alienation itself.

Another reason for grounding critiques of cognitive psychology in class struggle is that it prevents revolutionary concepts from being appropriated for essentially reformist purposes. A case in point is the notion of an *affordance* which is central to the ecological critique of indirect perception (Gibson 1979). In the hands of grounded cognition, affordances have been transformed into theoretical entities that are viewed not only as compatible but actually vital to an indirect theory of perception (Semin and Smith 2008). Yet when affordances are placed within the context of class struggle, we can see the rise of a market in wage labour and the transformation of use-values into exchange-values as a process of estrangement or re-affording in the service of capital accumulation. Once again, by linking the practice turn with political economy, it becomes possible to forge important links between revolutionary class struggle and ecological critiques of indirect perception (Reed 1996).

Of course, the danger in reorienting the turn to social practice towards a critique of political economy is that the contemporary reduction of the economic to the cultural is repeated in the opposite direction. To avoid this, it is important to understand that drawing attention to the economic foundations of exploitation makes it possible to dismantle the very class differentials that often serve as the vehicle for marginalizing social and cultural groups. Put somewhat differently, if the existence of a system of economic stratification is what makes it possible for one group to extract material advantage from the exploitation of another group, it becomes clear that the turn to social practice is necessarily a class as well as a cultural struggle.

Conclusion

In *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1989), David Harvey asks whether the historical transformation in the twentieth century from Fordism and scientific management to more flexible forms of accumulation represents a radical shift that gives birth to a new postindustrial age or is instead merely a course correction in which the capitalist mode of production adjusts to an increasingly global economy. Placed within the context of this question, it is possible to read the evolution of cognitive psychology against the grain. Looking at the mechanical models of the mind developed by cognitive psychology, one is struck by the similarities between these models and the organization of labour under Fordism and scientific management. Indeed, insofar

as scientific management endeavours to transform the knowledge of the labourer into a set of explicit instructions that can be used to increase the pace of work (Taylor 1911), the development of cognitivism can be viewed both as an antecedent and a consequence of transformations in industrial relations. Yet because the ambitions of capital remain entirely exposed in cognitivism and scientific management, it became necessary to construct models of the mind in which these naked ambitions are obscured. In this way, the internal critiques of cognitive psychology (i.e. connectionism, grounded cognition) serve as a useful means for further extending and entrenching a system of exploitation.

Turning to the radical critiques of cognitive psychology, we must ask whether these critiques disturb the hidden economic foundations of modern cognitive psychology or whether they actually play an increasingly vital role in obscuring those foundations. To the extent that these critiques have treated the primacy of social practice exclusively as a cultural phenomenon, the manifest differences between internal and radical critiques ultimately conceal an underlying logic that threatens the greater part of our planet with a host of problems from ecological devastation to compulsory servitude.

For Harvey, while postmodernism claims to be a radically destabilizing movement, a closer look indicates that its obsession with dissolving all moral, ethical, and political foundations leads it to view the notion of class struggle as little more than an antiquated grand narrative. The consequence is that legitimate concerns regarding the economic structure of society become little more than language games that players are free to adopt or discard at their convenience. What is often lost in much of postmodernism is that the needs of vast segments of the population have little to do with the play of difference or the politics of recognition (Michaels 2006). For those living under the crushing weight of economic exploitation, it is the social relations of production that matter most.

This is all the more important to keep in mind since the movement that perhaps is in the best position to challenge cognitive psychology – hermeneutics – has too often been hijacked by postmodernists who see the impossibility of bringing our background knowledge into view as a sceptical tool for undermining *any* system, revolutionary or not. For critical psychologists who see class struggle as more than a vestige of some bygone modern discourse, the path forward involves integrating the ontological shift in hermeneutics and the practice turn in contemporary social theory with the Marxist analysis of the social relations of production under capitalism. While the development of more radical approaches to embodiment is a promising sign, it is important to ensure that these developments bring renewed attention to the structure of human labour and the importance of class struggle.

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Website resources

Being in the World (Movie): http://beingintheworldmovie.com/
Discourse and Rhetoric Group (DARG): http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/socialsciences/research/groups/darg/
Discourse Unit: http://www.discourseunit.com/
The International Society for Ecological Psychology (ISEP): http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/ecopsyc/isep/

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3

Behaviourisms

Radical behaviourism and critical inquiry

Maria R. Ruiz

When we speak of the perspective in psychology that has come to be known as *behaviourism*, we must clarify that this assignation has been applied to characterize several psychological models that emerged over the first half of the twentieth century in the United States, including classical behaviourism, cognitive behaviourism, and radical behaviourism. Our discussion here will concern the dominant and perhaps most controversial of these, B.F. Skinner's (1945) radical behaviourism, the philosophy of science underpinning operant psychology, and the fast expanding field of applied behaviour analysis. But before turning our focus to radical behaviourism, let us briefly introduce each of the three branches and distinguish amongst them.

Three branches of behaviourism

Historically, the oldest branch of behaviourism, founded by American psychologist John B. Watson (1913), is known as classical behaviourism. Classical behaviourism incorporated Ivan Pavlov's scientific studies of conditioning and the reflex, and it is correctly characterized as a type of S-R, that is, stimulus–response, psychology. Also known as methodological behaviourism, this perspective emerged in full force with the publication of Watson's (1913) well-known theoretical manifesto, 'Psychology as the behaviourist views it'. Watson's new psychology was a radical departure from the introspective and subjective psychology of mental life that dominated both Wundt's Structuralism and the Functionalist school in America, whose leaders included William James, G. Stanley Hall, and James McKean Cattell.

The second branch of behavioural psychology, cognitive behaviourism, derives from social learning theory and the work of Albert Bandura (1977) and co-workers (e.g. Bandura et al. 1966), along with the earlier neo-behavioural models of Edward C. Tolman (1922, 1932) and Clark L. Hull (1935,1937) on latent learning and drive reduction theory, respectively. We can characterize this perspective generically as a mediational model of learning and behaviour that incorporates cognitive processes. Bandura's social learning theory follows the S-O-R-C formulation of behaviour; the 'O' refers to organismic mediational variables that process the stimulus (S) or input and influence the response (R). These variables include physical, cognitive, and mental characteristics and processes. Individuals learn not just by doing, but also by observing how others respond to specific inputs and settings. Organismic variables function as interpretive filters

for the observer whose motivation and anticipated expectations influence the effects of the observed consequences (C). Tolman's (1922, 1932) model follows an S-O-R formulation where the mediating 'O' variables include cognitive maps and information acquired through latent learning. Similarly, Hull's (1935, 1937) theory of drive reduction follows the same formulation, where the 'O' represents motivational variables.

Cognitive behaviourism is compatible with dominant cognitive models of psychology that embrace the ontological assumption of mind-body dualism that we trace back to Rene Descartes. Cognitive behaviourism has had an influential impact on theories of psychotherapy, and the works of Albert Ellis in Rational Emotive Therapy and Aaron Beck in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy are well known exemplars. The causal role of mental events in the form of disordered thoughts and beliefs is central in these approaches.

The third branch of behaviourism, and the one we will focus on here, is radical behaviourism, the philosophy of science developed by B.F. Skinner (1945), and the foundation of operant learning theory and research and the ever-expanding field of behaviour analysis. Today the field incorporates the basic science known as the experimental analysis of behaviour, and its primary publication source the *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behaviour*, 1958 – present; the applied science or applied behaviour analysis and the *Journal of Applied Behaviour Analysis*, 1968 – present; and a technology that has been organized into a set of professional practices governed by the international organization known as the Behaviour Analyst Certification Board (BACB). The BACB administers board exams to qualified applicants and certifies professionals in the practice of behaviour analysis at three levels: Board Certified Assistant Behaviour Analysts (BCABA) who hold a four year college/university degree; Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBA) who hold a master's degree; and BCBA-Ds for individuals holding doctorates in the field.

Disentangling radical behaviourism from classical behaviourism

Behaviour analysts have documented the mistaken identification of Skinner's radical behaviourism as Watsonian classical behaviourism in psychological texts (Todd and Morris 1983) and beyond (Roessger 2012; Ruiz, 1995; Todd and Morris 1992). This confusion has led to characterizations of radical behaviourism as, for example, antifeminist (Kaschak 1992; Unger 1988, 1989) and the contemporary embodiment of 'black box' psychology (see Iversen 1992). Likewise, the confusion has given rise to misrepresentations of radical behaviourism in 'academic folklore' (Todd and Morris 1983, 1992) as: (a) a form of stimulus-response psychology that (b) conceptualizes the organism as a passive recipient of external forces and (c) denies or ignores innate contributions to behaviour because of its extreme environmentalism while (d) focusing on fragmented analytic measures assumed to be elemental units of behaviour and finally (e) concerned only with overt behaviour thus denying or ignoring subjective experience including feelings and thoughts. While these characterizations aptly apply to classical behaviourism, Watson's (1919, 1927, 1930) frequent discussions of the role of heredity notwithstanding, none are applicable to Skinner's radical behaviourism.

Critiques of radical behaviourism that have misidentified some or most of its elements have contributed to a received view that masks radical behaviourism's potential as a progressive critical perspective in psychology. These also obscure the compatibility of radical behaviourism with aspects of other psychological systems that have developed constructive criticisms of dominant mainstream psychology, such as feminist psychology (see Ruiz 1995, 1998, 2003), and including critical psychology (Parker 1999). In what follows, I will focus on three of these elements: (1) the mischaracterization of radical behaviourism as a form of S-R psychology, (2) the assumption that radical behaviourists rule private experience out of their conceptual scheme, as did

Watson, and (3) the frequently mistaken epistemological identity of radical behaviourism as a form of logical positivism. In each case I will discuss how the problems associated with a mistaken identity have made it difficult, if not impossible, for critical psychologists outside our field to adopt some potentially useful radical behaviourist tools for deconstruction and critical analysis.

Behavioural units: essentialist reflexes vs. transformative operants

A central theme in Watson's account is the function of the environment as major determinant of behaviour and individual development. The philosophical foundation of classical behaviourism was logical positivism, and its subject matter was restricted to publically observable behavioural events in the form of essentialist stimulus-response units (Palmer and Donahoe 1992). These were operationally defined, and comprised classical behaviourism's fundamental units of measurement and analysis. The description of behaviourism as a stimulus-response psychology is accurate in the case of classical behaviourism, also known as methodological behaviourism. This is a distinctly different conceptualization of behaviour from Skinner's model associated with the three-term contingency, that is, the S-R-C or stimulus-response-consequence model of behaviour-environment interactions. The critical organism-environment interactions in Skinner's model consist of the relations between behaviour and its consequences (R-C). Stimulus conditions (S) present during these interactions come to set the conditions for the occurrence of the behavioural relations in the three-term contingency (S-R-C). These conditions form the context in which behaviour is said to occur. Far from being understood as fragmented essentialist units of behaviour, operants are understood as behavioural classes, the members of which may be quite different from each other in form but yet be united by common consequences or functions.

In keeping with his positivistic epistemological stance and realist view of psychological knowledge, Watson considered the purpose of methodological behaviourism to be the discovery of objective universal truths about behaviour through the application of scientific methods. Watson (1924: 18) talked about it this way:

> Behaviouristic psychology has as its goal to be able, given the stimulus, to predict the response – or, seeing the reaction take place to state what the stimulus is that called out the reaction.

Skinner, on the other hand, sought to describe dynamic workings and the emergent meaning of behaviour within a particular place and time. Speaking of how we can come to know the nature of an operant class, Skinner (1969: 131–132) contrasted methodological and radical behaviourism:

> An operant is a class, of which a response is an instance or member [and] . . . a set of contingencies defines an operant . . . A response is reinforced in the presence of a given stimulus, but we cannot tell from a single instance . . . the contingencies . . . Only by surveying many instances can we identify . . . the contingencies. This is not quite the traditional question of whether we can know particulars or universals, but it is interesting that the practice of imparting a universal meaning to the response itself as an alternative to surveying a large number of instances is close to the Platonic practice of letting ideas stand for universals.

Operants have no fixed boundaries, and members of an operant class have common effects or functions on the environment. These effects, or consequences, and not the formal properties of

the members of the class, define the operant. Therefore, two responses that look quite different, such as holding a clenched fist to another's face and an admonition spoken in the manner of a joke, may both qualify as members of an aggressively threatening operant class if they result in the listener complying with the individual posing the threat in order to avoid it. Thus, the essentialist stimulus–response units in methodological behaviourism are replaced by dynamic and variable behavioural units that emerge through environmental selection (Skinner 1969). This is a critical distinction between methodological and radical behaviourism, because selection allows for the emergence of novel forms of behaviour in radical behaviourism, whereas essentialist units of behaviour are non-transformative in methodological behaviourism (Chiesa 1992; Ruiz 1995).

In methodological behaviourism, causal relationships between the stimulus and response are established through temporal contiguity and the process is viewed as linear causation from stimulus to response. Thus, the responsive organism reactive to external stimulation (Baer 1976) is accurate in methodological behaviourism. In radical behaviourism, linear causation is replaced by what Morris (1988: 303) called 'an integrated perspective of functional interdependencies'. Therefore, temporally distant events can be functionally interrelated, as is the case when deferred consequences lead to useful rules (Skinner 1957, 1969). Thus a speaker who has used force in the past to make another comply may only need to utter a verbal reminder to mediate compliance. Radical behaviourist epistemology has a phenomenological quality (Morris 1988) that confirms the scientist is a part of the integrated field, and not outside it. Skinner (1974: 234) discussed it by noting, 'it would be absurd for the behaviourist to contend that he is any way exempt from his analysis. He cannot step out of the causal stream and observe behaviour from some special point of vantage'. Thus the scientist shares the field of discovery with the participant and holds no privileged position in the analysis, as is the case in methodological behaviourism.

Status of subjectivity: private events, not mentalism

A distinction that unequivocally distinguishes between methodological and radical behaviourism is their respective positions on consciousness and private events. Watson (1913: 158) stated his position clearly in the introduction of his manifesto, where he claimed that:

> Psychology as the behaviourist views it is a purely objective experimental branch of natural science. . . . Introspection forms no essential part of its methods, nor is the scientific value of its data dependent upon the readiness with which they lend themselves to interpretation in terms of consciousness.

In contrast, while Skinner (1974) discarded mentalism and dispositioning schemes (see Fields and Hineline 2008; Ruiz 2009) that attribute causal status to mental entities and agents, he acknowledged the importance of private events – including feeling and thinking – in a comprehensive science of behaviour. In the same text, Skinner (1974: 219) summarized his position on consciousness and subjective reality by contrasting it with Watson's:

> Methodological behaviourism and certain versions of logical positivism could be said to ignore consciousness, feelings, and states of mind, but Radical Behaviourism does not thus 'behead the organism'; it does not 'sweep the problem of subjectivity under the rug'; and it does not 'maintain a strictly behaviouristic methodology by treating reports of introspection merely as verbal behaviour'; and it was not designed to 'permit consciousness to atrophy.'

For Skinner, the challenge posed by private events (1974: 233) was how to access them, as he explained:

> A science of behaviour must consider the place of private events as physical things, and in so doing it provides an alternative account of mental life. The question, then, is this: What is inside the skin, and how do we come to know about it? The answer is, I believe, the heart of radical behaviourism.

Critics have generally construed Skinner's rejection of mind and its derivative Cartesian agent as synonymous with rejection of subjectivity and private experience. As a result, the radical behaviourist understanding of private events has remained out of reach to the wider audience. Skinner dismissed dualistic distinctions between objective and subjective reality, and concerned himself with how we come to have knowledge about our private experiences. A key question is how members of the verbal community, who have access only to public events, teach us to communicate effectively under stimulating conditions occurring privately, or within the skin. A critical treatment of these questions, of course, must not regard the task as a simple instrumental one, but must also address the social and power contingencies that influence how individuals from different groups are taught to develop voice. The point here is that the radical behaviourist approach to subjectivity and self-knowledge might offer useful tools that could be adapted to help advance feminist epistemologies grounded in the experiences of women and other marginalized groups (see Ruiz 1995, 1998).

Epistemology: pragmatism, not logical positivism

Watson's alignment with logical positivism implied, for one, that he expected his scientific work to produce certain and objective knowledge of universally applicable principles and facts. The meaning of a psychological term was given in its operational definition and its truth established by the correspondence in the observations of two or more scientist-observers.

Although we should recall that very early on Skinner (1938) used the tem reflex and philosophically tipped towards logical positivism, he bemoaned this alignment later on (Skinner 1989), and in speaking of Watson and other early behaviourists Skinner (1999: 671) noted that '. . . an event seen by only one person had no place in [their] science'. Instead, for the greatest portion of his scientific career, Skinner's epistemological stance was aligned with pragmatism, which he introduced in 'The Operational Analysis of Psychological Terms' (1945: 293–294):

> The ultimate criterion for the goodness of a concept is not whether two people are brought into agreement but whether the scientist who uses the concept can operate successfully upon his material – all by himself if need be . . . this does not make agreement the key to workability. On the contrary, it is the other way around.

In this work, he also introduced the term *radical behaviourism*, the three-term contingency for the analysis of operant behaviour and the acceptance of private events. Skinner's views were consistent with those of the three key figures in American pragmatism: William James, Karl Peirce, and John Dewey (Baum 1994; Leigland 1993; Moxley 2002, 2004; Ruiz and Roche 2007; Schneider 1997), all of whom shared an affinity with Darwin and reflected the influence of evolutionary theory. The parallels between a pragmatic theory of truth and Skinner's concept of the operant and evolutionary theory are striking. For Skinner, the truth criterion, or method for establishing

truth and value, is 'successful working'; or, as the behaviourist puts it, 'effective action' (Skinner 1974: 235). Scientific beliefs about reality are true only if they allow the scientist to function effectively with respect to particular goals (O'Donnell 1985). One implication of this formulation that may be useful to critical psychology is the relative nature of what facts a scientist is entitled to accept as truth. On the other hand, a close examination of this truth criterion must raise questions about values and the very tasks of goal selection and defining 'effective action'. The formulation for establishing pragmatic truth requires the critical scientist to interrogate the operative contingencies that influence the scientist's selection, and the cultural values these substantiate. It is important to recall that neither the rules of evidence of scientific empiricism nor those for formulating pragmatic truth offer guidance on this task, as they explicitly authorize and privilege the scientist as sole arbiter (see Ruiz 1995 and Ruiz and Roche 2007). However, the critical psychologist's commitment to reflexivity and dismantling power relations in the service of social justice is nowhere more important than in the process of selecting scientific goals, and, as I have claimed elsewhere:

> Although communal consensus is not a logical requirement for establishing the scientific validity of pragmatic truth a feminist [and critical] approach that seeks to transform values demands the scientist converge on the task, not as a lone decontextualized player, but as a community-conscious member of a culture whose values are reflected in its cultural practices, including the practice of science.
>
> *(Ruiz 1995: 175)*

One suggestion to balance the power is to heed John Dewey's (1958) pleas for free and open (noncoercive, nonforceful) communal dialogue. Dewey's sense of community reflects evolutionary principles and values in that he emphasized the importance of creating maximal conditions for individual variation within groups. Not surprisingly, Skinner likewise endorsed pluralism in groups and diversity in cultural practices as survival-worthy (Skinner 1971). For Dewey, the effort was to have as many diverse community members or stakeholders as possible engaging in open discussion. Agreement reached in this fashion was for Dewey the highest source of communal authority (Rorty 1999; Ruiz and Roche 2007).

Critical inquiry: domestic violence psychology and the law

The foregoing exercise in extricating radical behaviourism from methodological behaviourism is a necessary first step in proposing a complementarity of functions with critical psychology. The second step is to illustrate by using a radical behaviourist analysis as a tool for deconstruction (Teo, 1999). The normative construction of the battered woman defence in the United States is a useful illustration of the limitations of the dominant psychological model implicitly accepted and applied by the culture at large. A radical behaviourist deconstruction of the battered woman defence exposes challenges posed by psychological explanations based on an outdated model of science that incorporates mind-body dualism and dispositioning schemes (Fields and Hineline 2008; Ruiz 2009), and requires proximal causation in explanations of behaviour. When contiguous events cannot be identified to explain behavioural phenomena, agentic entities within the actor are created. In psychological science this model was inherited by contemporary cognitive psychology, the dominant paradigm in the field today. A significant limitation of this model in psychology is its inability to account for the influence of spatially dispersed and temporally distant events on behavioural processes.

In the US, the legal arguments that have been used successfully to defend battered women who kill their spouses after years of abuse have been taken from the battered woman defence. The psychological explanations that have buttressed this defence have been based on Leonore Walker's (1984) pioneering work on the Battered Woman Syndrome (BWS). The BWS is recognized by the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases (ICD–10) as a medical disorder. The syndrome is said to result from cycles of violence after which the woman experiences learned helplessness that debilitates her and interferes with her ability to leave the batterer. The critical reader will immediately recognize the conceptual slippery slope on which this most effective of defences is built: the BWS defence reframes historical events in a fashion that, ironically, pathologizes and revictimizes the woman it saves (Ruiz 2009; Schneider 2000; Stubbs 1991).

The normative psychological model that underwrites this defence assumes that the act of self-defence by a battered woman is based on individual psychic pathology. Likewise, the dominant cultural worldview that supports such explanatory schemes and makes them acceptable in American courts pathologizes the victim, not the cycles of violence by the perpetrator. A radical behaviourist deconstruction of what would appear to the feminist-minded a transparently misogynistic account, targets the outdated model of behavioural causation on which this defence rests. Fields and Hineline (2008) have discussed the conditions under which speakers in our culture – in the vernacular and in the more technical parlance of psychological theory – explain behaviour by appealing to contiguous events, or, in their absence, to contiguous events inside the actor. They refer to the latter as dispositioning, in which the dysfunctional agent functions as the source of contiguous causation. Presumably, the syndrome explains why the dysfunctional agent is unable to leave the relationship and thus engage in resistance. One general result of dispositioning practices is to obscure the role of extended behavioural relations and temporally distant events related to the behaviour being explained. While the agentic explanatory scheme fits with the legal requirements for self-defence, it flies in the face of research data showing that battered women who kill their partners generally do so following extended periods, often years, of emotional and physical abuse (see Downs 1996), and that the act typically takes place when there is no immediate threat, such as when the partner is asleep.

Conclusions

Radical behaviourism incorporates a set of assumptions about the subject matter of psychology and how, as scientists, we can come to understand psychological events and offer explanations for them. As a philosophy of science, radical behaviourism has often been confused with classical, or methodological, behaviourism, which was originally defined by John B. Watson. In this chapter I have disentangled the two behaviourisms in order to clarify the psychological worldview of radical behaviourism and suggest some ways in which it may be applied as a conceptual tool in critical inquiry. I have focused on three aspects of radical behaviourism that I see as potentially useful in this endeavour. First, the conceptualization of behaviour as inextricably embedded within its contexts, so that there can be no valid consideration of behavioural processes without at once considering contextual conditions of life. Similar to Darwinian processes, the environmental context selects behavioural adaptations while behaving organisms simultaneously change the environmental context through actions and reactions. Second, private behavioural processes are legitimate subject matter, while dualistic mentalistic constructs, which often pass as invisible bearers of privilege, are ruled out. Analyses of private events in fact represent some of the most

exciting behavioural research in the field today. One such research area is the analysis of verbal relations involved in so called unconscious cognitions (Gavin et al. 2008; Gavin et al. 2012; O'Reilly et al. 2012; O'Reilly et al. 2013; Ridgeway et al. 2010). These and other private events are integral to psychological experience.

Finally, contrasting classical behaviourism and the cognitive model in contemporary psychology, the view of science in radical behaviourism is aligned with the Darwinian account of life, time, and causation. The focus is not on fixed and unchanging relations that occur by necessity, as in S-R relations, but on changing relations that are temporally becoming something different over time (Oyama 1997). In the Darwinian model and radical behaviourism, change over extended time is understood as a transformative process. An important ramification of these models for critical analyses of resistance and oppression is the optimistic view that individual change and growth are natural processes of overcoming.

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Website resources

Association for Behaviour Analysis International: http://www.abainternational.org/
Behaviour Analyst Certification Board: http://www.bacb.com/
Cambridge Center for Behavioural Studies: http://www.behavior.org/

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4
Emotion
Being moved beyond the mainstream

Paul Stenner

We will start with common sense, since it is often said that emotion is hard to define despite the fact that most of us know – quite intimately – what it is. Artists, for instance, devote themselves not only to its expression, but also to stimulating and cultivating the 'emotions' of their publics. A piece of music, heard at the right moment, might make us shiver with nostalgia or melancholy, and a good novel might make us weep, fume, and despair at the joys and sorrows of its characters. What we intuitively call 'emotion' is the collective name for this multitude of feelings (sentiments, passions, affections) through which we are affected by actual, imaginary, remembered, and anticipated events, and on the basis of which we affect the world around us.

From common sense to art

The emotions associated with art works are in turn related to those experienced in the ordinary (and extraordinary) lives both of artists and their publics. The great French novelist Marcel Proust devoted some 3,700 pages to a novel whose guiding theme was an exploration of his own emotions, including his own jealous mode of loving. Here is how the young Marcel describes the moment he discovered from his servant (Françoise) that his live-in lover Albertine had abandoned him:

> Françoise, having heard my ring, came into the room, rather uneasy as to how I would take what she had to say . . . 'I was very worried,' she said to me, 'that Monsieur should be so late in ringing this morning. I didn't know what I ought to do. This morning at eight o'clock Mademoiselle Albertine asked me for her boxes. I dared not refuse her, and I was afraid that Monsieur might scold me if I came and waked him. It was no use lecturing her, telling her to wait an hour because I expected all the time that Monsieur would ring; she wouldn't have it, she left this letter with me for Monsieur, and at nine o'clock off she went.' Then – so ignorant can we be of what is inside us, since I was convinced of my indifference to Albertine – my breath was cut short, I gripped my heart in my hands, which were suddenly moistened by a perspiration I had not experienced since the revelation she had made to me on the little train with regard to Mlle Vinteuil's friend, and I was incapable of

saying anything else but: 'Ah! very good, Françoise, you were of course right not to wake me. Leave me now for a moment, I shall ring for you presently'.

(Proust 2000: 473)

We can probably all recognize the many emotions alluded to in this little interaction, from the uneasy worry felt by Françoise (on account of the delicate nature of what she must communicate), to Marcel's quickly concealed shock of heart-stricken panic (in the face of a transformative event that would mark him for the rest of his life). A novelist like Proust draws upon the stock of his own life experience to portray how such events are 'subjectively' experienced as more or less meaningful in the context of the unfolding texture of a life interwoven with that of others, and as part of a 'now' that is also defined by a past lodged in a broader historical epoch. Mainstream psychologists, on the other hand, have for the most part been influenced by the idea that a properly scientific account of emotions must concentrate upon observable (and preferably measurable) externalities. They have concerned themselves with providing 'objective' descriptions which are supposed to hold good regardless of the 'who', the 'where', and the 'when' of an emotional experience. The most obvious examples are neuroscientific theories that reduce emotions to specific neural circuits in the brain (e.g. Hyman 1998). These scientific theories and descriptions of what are, at best, abstract pictures of *other people's emotions* from the outside often strip away the sense of immediate subjective experience in concrete unfolding contexts that is so pertinent to our emotions. As a result, they typically end up dealing in artificial abstractions which are then re-presented as if they were more real than what is expressed by the intuitions of non-scientific thinking. As Harré (1986: 4) puts it, the tendency is for psychologists to abstract an entity and call it by an emotion word (perhaps 'anxiety' or 'shock'), when what *really exists* is always a concrete flux of activities in context: a Françoise becoming anxious about reporting a disturbing fact to a Marcel, and a Marcel concealing in turn his shocked response to the news of Albertine's departure, for instance.

Those psychologists that do attend to the 'subjective' dimension of other people's emotional experience, on the other hand, are typically influenced by a philosophical settlement of the eighteenth century which held that the unity of the human mind can be divided into three parts: cognition (concerning such things as knowledge, thought, intelligence), affection (concerning feelings, passions, pleasures, pains), and conation (concerning will, desire, and other spurs to action). Consider the widely influential definition of Nico Frijda (1993: 256): 'Emotional experience . . . can take three different forms: awareness of situational meaning structure [i.e. cognition], awareness of autonomic arousal [i.e. affection], and awareness of action readiness [i.e. conation]. Each of these can be taken to define emotional experience'. It is notable that what is absent from this definition is precisely that which most interested Proust: the place of emotion in an ongoing process in which a key ingredient is the lived experience of transition (being *moved* by the things which *affect* us and moving the things which we, in turn, affect). Cognitive, affective, and conative aspects can nevertheless easily be abstracted from the ongoing totality depicted in our Proust quotation: Françoise's worry and Marcel's shock both presuppose a 'situational meaning structure' ('cognition'). Françoise knows that Marcel may be upset and possibly angered by her news, and she is 'cognitively' aware that she might be considered culpable for not having delayed Albertine's departure or woken Marcel; second, the breath cut short and the perspiring palms indicate Marcel's awareness of his highly aroused autonomic nervous system ('affection'); and third, both Marcel and Françoise are caught in a dilemma of will whereby they must act out a socially expected role whilst simultaneously feeling an urge or 'action tendency' to do otherwise ('conation'). Marcel, for instance, suppresses his urges to cry in despair and to run after Albertine, concealing them in the utterance 'Ah! very good, Françoise . . .'

From art to 'science'

The tendency first to separate (or take for granted the separation of) and then to integrate cognitive, affective, and conative factors has become something of a standard approach amongst those psychologists who define emotions as complex response systems or syndromes. These systems are thought to involve the coordination or organization of multiple components into a temporarily unified system to address some external or internal event. For Scherer (2009), for instance, emotion is a sequence of state changes in a number of organismic sub-systems. These include the motivational system, which underpins the action tendencies that give rise to behaviour ('conation'); the autonomic system which underpins felt arousal ('affection'); and a system of higher cerebral processes which underpins appraisal ('cognition'). These sub-systems, Scherer suggests, can function relatively autonomously, but in response to events that trigger emotions, they converge into interdependence. Under these circumstances, and along with a monitor system (which supplies the conscious feeling of emotion) and a motor system (which underpins expressive reactions like smiles), they can temporarily combine to generate intense felt experiences of emotions like jealousy, anger, and embarrassment.

In a short chapter it is only possible to scratch the surface of over 150 theories of emotion that have been proposed by psychologists (Gardiner et al. 1937/1970). In a paper entitled 'A century of emotion theories', Salzen (2001) reviewed almost 100 of these theories and divided them into five types, depending on whether their prime focus is on (a) adaptive responses (focus on 'conation' and observable behavior); (b) response feedback (focus on bodily states involved in 'affection'); (c) appraisal (focus on 'cognition'); (d) neural systems (focus on cerebral states); and (e) frustration and conflict theories (focus on emotions as responses to interruptions in organized thought and conduct). To simplify this vast tradition, the following are often taken as key moments in the history of the modern scientific study of emotions:

- 1820: Thomas Brown used the relatively novel word 'emotion' to designate all feelings that are neither intellectual states (like thoughts or cognitions) nor sensations (like feeling cold or having an itch);
- 1872: Charles Darwin proposed a biological theory of human emotions as mostly residual traces of once highly functional animal expressions (the snarl of anger revealing canine teeth before a bite, 'hair-raising' fear as revealing the still discernable trace of a once much more hairy ancestor, etc.);
- 1884: William James offered a feedback theory of the affective portion of emotion (i.e. its intensive feeling) as awareness of visceral changes (i.e. changes in heart rate, perspiration, trembling, etc.) that occur as a function of the autonomic nervous system (ANS);
- 1895: John Dewey stressed that emotion is simultaneously a) 'about' an object and b) a subject's response to it. He stimulated (along with Frédric Paulhan in France) a 'conflict' approach where emotion is theorized to result from tension between incompatible lines of conduct, or from interruptions, suspensions, or breakdowns of ongoing activity sequences;
- 1921: Sigmund Freud re-stated a theory of libido (a term 'taken from the theory of the emotions' [Freud 1921: 90]) as an energy force 'stored up' in the ego but 'invested' in objects such that an emotion like love can be viewed as an object (the lover) cathected with libido.
- 1927: Walter Cannon proposed a 'central' theory that emotions are patterned responses produced by specific parts of the brain (notably what we now call the 'limbic system');
- 1954: Arnold and Gasson proposed an appraisal theory which places a moment of self-referential *judgement* before the experience of emotion (e.g. the appraisal that an event bodes ill for me will generate a felt tendency to escape its influence);

- 1962: Schachter and Singer proposed a 'two factor' theory that emotions result from a combination of undifferentiated visceral intensity provided by the ANS, qualified by cognitive sense making processes that occur in social contexts (such that intense ANS arousal might be interpreted as pleasure in a fair-ground context, and fear in context of a plane crash);
- 1963: Silvan Tomkins proposed a motivational theory of basic affects which proposes a small number of universal affects (fear, anger, joy, distress, etc.) whose mixtures and dynamics form the basis of emotional experience. Each basic affect is thought to be a drive amplifier hard-wired into neural circuitry and defined by its distinctive facial and vocal expressions;
- 1984: Klauss Scherer proposed an integrative theory of emotions as a syndrome involving the integration of multiple factors (cognitive, autonomic, motivational, etc.).

These theories do not constitute a progression, but a collection of sometimes incompatible conceptualizations. Where these approaches do not completely ignore subjective experience, socio-material context, and dynamic process, they attempt to ground these in something more objective, predictable, and controllable (like the repeatable pattern of a facial expression, an autonomic response, an instinct, or a situational attribution). Debates then rage about whether emotion is determined by central brain activity (as with Cannon) or peripheral autonomic activity (as with James), or about whether cognition is fundamental to emotion (as with Arnold) or a bit player to more fundamental 'pre-cognitive' organismic responses (as with Freud or Tomkins).

Some key critiques

Critique is endemic to the tensions and debates 'internal' to the mainstream traditions indicated above (Parkinson 2011). Here, however, we will concentrate on a number of more or less 'external' critiques of these traditions which emerged during the last few decades of the twentieth century, many of which cohered around the theme of the social construction of emotion. Classic examples here are Averill (1980) and Harré (1986). These in turn echo earlier general critiques of psychology informed by Marxism and phenomenology (e.g. Canguilhem 1958/1980; Holzkamp-Osterkamp 1991; Sartre 1938; Vygotsky 1927/1987, 1932). The constructionist critiques challenged the authority of scientific truth by affirming the partial (abstract) and partisan (siding with power) nature of psychological knowledge about emotions. They are informed by developments in the sociology of knowledge and by those forms of anti-essentialist, post-structuralist, or non-representational philosophy that emphasized the performative nature of language (e.g. Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Austin, Ryle, Derrida, and so on). To abstract an artificial entity (e.g. 'anger') from the contextual flux is not merely to 'reify' the emotions, but also to fall under the spell of a false 'representationalist' conception of language (assuming the word 'anger' represents a separable *thing*), which in turn neglects the reality *constructing* pragmatics of language (saying 'I am angry' *does things* in the communicative context of its concrete utterance).

The critiques also drew upon developments in anthropology that suggested the rather local and specific nature of 'Western' ways of thinking and acting about emotion (e.g. Lutz and Abu-Lughod 1990), and developments in history which showed that key aspects of local and specific 'Western' ways of thinking and feeling were also a relatively new historical development associated with 'modernity' (e.g. Elias 1994; Stearns and Stearns 1988). With respect to the latter, it is notable that the word 'emotion' was hardly used before the beginning of the nineteenth century, when English-speakers talked instead of affections, passions, and sentiments. Dixon (2003) shows that the growing use of the word 'emotion' was attributable to a new interest in scientific psychology amongst medics, scientists, and early psychologists. He writes not of the

discovery of emotion, but 'the creation of "the emotions" as a psychological category'. In short, the concept of emotion must not be taken for granted since it was crafted and put to use as part of the early development of the modern discipline of psychology.

The ways in which 'modern Westerners' construct emotions also embody particular values and stakes associated with distinctively modern forms of social selfhood which are associated with European capitalism and colonialism (Lutz 1996) and which are highly gendered (Cancian 1987; Crawford et al. 1992). Modern Western psychology of emotions ignores this specificity by stripping away the vitally important social and political context and offering instead an authoritatively scientific translation of human emotions based on a reification which ultimately reduces them to the level of the self-interested biological or cybernetic individual. This is not a neutral discourse that represents an independent reality, but a constitutive *part of* how modern Westerners are enjoined to construct and 'do' their emotions (Curt 1994; Despret 2004; Stenner and Stainton Rogers 1998). It is inseparable from the 'hope' that, with scientific knowledge, the responses of these human automata can be predicted and controlled – always in the name of their own well-being – through biological modifications (e.g. pharmaceutical) and psychological interventions (e.g. cognitive restructuring). The way in which this supposedly scientific knowledge is in fact shot through and saturated with social values and political and economic stakes is clear in the following quotation from Walter Cannon's famous central theory:

> The thalamic patterned processes are inherent in the nervous organisation, they are like reflexes in being instantly ready to seize control of the motor responses, and when they do so they operate with great power. They can be controlled, however, by the processes in the cerebral cortex, by processes conditioned by all sorts of previous impressions. The cortex also can control all the peripheral machinery except the viscera. The inhibited processes in the thalamus cannot set the organism in action, except the parts not under voluntary control, but the turmoil there can produce emotions in the usual manner, and possibly with greater violence because of the inhibition.
>
> *(Cannon 1927)*

In this highly influential theory, emotions are identified with neural processes in the thalamus that are symbolically associated with a militant working class. Parodying Marxist language, these potentially violent forces are presented as if ready to seize control of the means of production (in this case, the means to produce motor responses) from a ruling class associated with the rational control circuitry of the cerebral cortex. Emotions here are made to play the role of those supposedly violent insurgents, irrational children, hysterical women, and savage non-Westerners that an authoritarian state takes it as its duty to inhibit and otherwise repress. Ribot, a positivistic French psychologist, went as far as to describe emotions as 'the gypsies of our mind' – a 'dying breed' that can be likened to a 'state within a state' (Vygotsky 1927/1987).

Averill (1996) refers to this tendency to associate emotions with biologically basic and primitive mechanisms as a form of 'psychophysiological symbolism' that should not be confused with what emotions 'in fact' are. A long Western tradition treats affectivity as a bestial, bodily, and subjective source of irrationality and distortion: the 'flip side', as it were, to a high value placed on rational, deliberate action. This symbolism reflects a split between mind and body that is not simply epistemological, but also normative, since it concerns questions of power, governance, and control. In the Cartesian dualism, mind (associated with transcendent spirit) should exercise complete power over body (associated with meaningless materiality). If reason is associated with white, European, bourgeois masculinity, and if emotion with all other categories of humanity, then this is because – in practical political reality – the latter were made systematically subservient

to the former during the apex of Western modernity. This is why, to put it bluntly, much early psychology of emotion embodies the prejudices and preoccupations of a Victorian gentleman – complete with stiff upper lip – at the height of the British empire (Stenner and Greco 2013).

As this empire collapsed and the US became the new superpower, the symbolism changed and took on a character tinged with the revolutionary spirit occasioned by a break with 'old Europe' and influenced by values of mass consumerism with its seductive advertising, 'go get it' attitude, and imagery of expressive liberty. In this context – at least in so far as they motivate consumption and do not challenge the economic order – emotions take on a positive spin. The basic emotions tradition inspired by Tomkins and developed by Ekman and Friesen (1971), for example, is saturated with the biases of a romantic and revolutionary strain of thought – derived from Rousseau – for which the spontaneous emotional animal stands in positive contrast to the inauthentic rational human being weighed down by artificial convention (Fridlund and Duchaine 1996).

Evaluation of critiques

The positive agenda of this wave of constructionist critique was to theorize and study situated affective practices in their full diversity as discursive and dialogical phenomena inextricably rooted in cultural and historical power relations, and played out interactionally according to the symbolic resources of a culture (Curt 1994). The 'non-representational' epistemology shifted the empirical focus to *emotion talk*, which is considered to be a constitutive part of social reality and emotional experience rather than simply reflective of it (Stenner 1993).

This turn to language and text, however, has arguably become a limitation. The positive attention to relationality, power, and context comes at the cost of a defensive adherence to an ontology that bifurcates the world into matter (assumed to be the province of the natural sciences) and meaning (assumed to be the province of the social sciences and humanities). Language is taken to be the primary medium of meaning and hence the basic stuff of any serious social scientist. This bifurcation is most clearly expressed in Harré's (1997) distinction between two ontological 'grammars': a p-grammar applicable to persons and an m-grammar applicable to molecules. M-grammar concerns the causally deterministic interactions studied by natural scientists, whilst p-grammar concerns the intentional actions of persons construed as more or less skilled performers subject to normative constraints. The social constructionist critique of emotion research can be seen as part of an argument that emotion 'belongs' to the social sciences and not the natural sciences, since emotions, when seen in proper context, are best understood in relation to p-grammar (m-grammar constraints notwithstanding).

Things become more linguistically entrenched when this ontological commitment is converted into a methodological axiom, as occurred with forms of discursive psychology which explicitly limited its attention to a 'conceptual analysis' of the uses 'emotion categories' are put to in 'emotion discourse' (Edwards 1999). This reality-agnostic tendency towards a linguistic hardening of social constructionism has led to a flood of critiques of 'linguistic imperialism' – critiques that are increasingly going under the name of an 'affective turn' (Blackman and Venn 2010; Clough and Halley 2007; Cromby 2007). Such critiques 'speak up' for the 'non-linguistic' and 'extra-discursive,' as if social constructionism were the imperialist dominator and organic vitality the subjugated abject whose experience is silenced and denied (Stenner and Moreno 2013).

The turn to affect was partly influenced by the rapid growth of affective neuroscience which in turn contributed to a renewed interest in psychodynamic notions like the primary process (rapid and general unconscious processing) as distinct from a conscious secondary process (Salvatore and Freda 2011). With the help of PET and FMRI technologies, psychological questions, it was felt, could at last be posed in a properly scientific manner: i.e. as biological questions.

Hyman (1998: 417) thus feels able simply to ignore the 200 years or so of psychological work on emotion, creating a new 'year zero' beginning with his own tradition of neuroscientific research: '[emotion] . . . had largely been ignored as a field of study until recently. Then, several groups identified the anatomy, physiology and chemistry of the circuits that underlie fear in animals and humans . . .'. Since the excitement of the 1990s (the 'decade of the brain'), however, the dream of being able to specify which clusters of neurons underlie which emotions has run up against a more complex reality. According to Pachalska et al. (2007), 'nearly every brain function involves a complex network of brain regions and neuron clusters, sometimes widely separated from each other' such that 'most neurons or groups of neurons participate in a number of different brain functions, which do not always seem to be related to each other in any obvious way'.

Progressive possibilities

The dangers of a renewed biological construction of emotion are obvious from a critical perspective, particularly in a social context where affective difficulties associated with troubled, anxious, and depressed lives are increasingly packaged as discrete psychological and psychiatric disorders and treated pharmaceutically on a massive scale (Rose 2006). The solution, however, does not lie in a bifurcated ontology where the insistence on p-grammar or discourse analysis simply invites a return pendulum swing to the biological. Indeed, the enduring fascination of the emotions is surely attributable to their unstable and liminal features as *simultaneously* organic, psychic, *and* communicative; individual, pre-personal, *and* social; conative, cognitive, *and* affective; pre-conscious, conscious, *and* unconscious; inherited, learned, *and* deliberate; passive, active, *and* neutral (Stenner 2004). The main challenge for critical scholars in this context is conceptual rather than empirical. It is the articulation of a critical transdisciplinary approach capable of acknowledging and affirming the complexity and liminality proper to a non-representational approach, but without attaching sole significance to language. Particularly promising is the tradition of process thought articulated by Bergson, James, Whitehead, Langer, Serres, Deleuze, Stengers, and others that has roots in the seventeenth century philosophy of Spinoza (see Brown and Stenner 2009).

In this Spinozist heritage, one finds unexpected common ground between otherwise divergent traditions. What other philosophy is positively embraced by cognitivists (Frijda 1993), neuroscientists (Damasio 2004), psychoanalysts (Neu 1977), social constructionists (Brown and Stenner 2001), feminists (Braidoti 2003), and affect theorists (Massumi 2002) alike? Spinoza is interesting to critical psychologists precisely because of the way he treats experiential (affective), epistemological (cognitive), and ethico-political (conative) concerns as inseparable aspects of a political philosophy of experience grounded in a concept of power defined as the capacity to affect and be affected. Bader Sawaia (2003: 17), a Latin American feminist critical psychologist who works as an activist with urban slum dwellers, describes how her praxis lacked an adequate theoretical motor until she recognised the relevance of affectivity as 'a microcosm in which the social and the psychological worlds meet in a process of transformation' – a recognition which came with her explicit adoption of a Spinozist approach.

Neuroscientists too are coming to recognise that each event of experience entails a microgenesis entailing multiple phases such that even the most abstract flower of an intellectual thought emerges from an embodied ground and has affective roots (Brown 2012; Falmagne 2011). Spinoza argues for the decisive political and ethical relevance of concrete, local, and singular emotional experiences. Ethics is thus about affectivity, but affectivity is also about coming to *know* and *act* in the world more adequately, and reconstructing our political systems on this basis. Through our encounters, we come to know the world by way of the affects. Much like Proust, when Spinoza thinks of affects, he has in mind the human being as a socially embedded

relational whole undergoing encounters through which our powers are ongoingly modified or affected and through which we modify or affect the world. The message of a critical psychology of emotion is Spinozist: *become active*.

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Website resources

International Society for Research on Emotion: http://isre.org
Society for the Study of Emotion, Affect and Space: http://www.sseas.org
Sociology of Emotions: http://www.socemot.com
Tomkins Institute: http://www.tomkins.org

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5

Biological and evolutionary psychologies
The limits of critical psychology

John Cromby

Biological and evolutionary psychologies are separate but overlapping fields of enquiry. Text-books are where the taken-for-granted assumptions of a discipline are frequently made most explicit, and most biological psychology textbooks also include discussion of evolutionary explanations and evolutionary psychology. For example, Kalat (2009: 1) describes biological psychology as the study of the 'animal roots of behaviour', saying that 'it holds that we think and act as we do because of certain brain mechanisms, which we evolved because ancient animals with these mechanisms survived and reproduced' (3). Toates (2007) similarly places considerable emphasis on evolutionary explanations, arguing that they are one of four ways in which behaviour can be accounted for (alongside causal, developmental, and functional explanations).

Biological psychology has close links with neuroscience, and potentially considers all of the various ways in which brain and body functions, structures, and systems influence what we do. Evolutionary psychology is a comparatively recent endeavour, more specifically concerned with how these functions, structures, and systems might have become part of our species–nature because of sexual selection: that is, because they enhanced reproductive fitness, so were more likely than other adaptations to have been passed down through the generations. Thus, whilst biological psychology is a wider field than evolutionary psychology, the two are closely linked. In what follows I will speak of 'biological psychology' when considering the field in general, and of 'evolutionary psychology' when referring specifically to explanations based upon theories of selection and reproductive fitness.

In most undergraduate courses, biological psychology is presented as a relatively distinct sub-discipline. Undergraduate psychology teaching is typically organized in ways that reflect the fracturing of the discipline into sub-disciplinary fields: cognitive, social, biological, and so forth. These fields mostly map onto dualisms – between mind and body, individual and society, for example – that are widely accepted in our culture. Because scientists frequently adopt relatively narrow perspectives upon phenomena, this fracturing of psychology might appear to make intuitive sense. It can generate the superficial impression that psychology includes each of these areas equally, giving the same weight to social explanations as it does to biological ones. It may even produce the illusion that psychology is where these disparate perspectives get integrated into nuanced explanations that take proper account of influences within each realm.

Unfortunately, such integration is rare. Most psychological research which claims to integrate these perspectives is said to be based upon the biopsychosocial model (Engel 1977). However, rather than develop such a model, Engel merely proposed that this would be a good idea, and in the decades since there has been no such systematic development (Mclaren 1998). Consequently, the term 'biopsychosocial' is largely undefined, means different things in different contexts, and tends to function largely as a rhetorical justification for including variables from each realm in the same study. This leads to a second concern, which is that social causation is necessarily contingent and probabilistic rather than deterministic, and that it necessarily implicates phenomena – discourses, structures of feeling, class and gender relations, power hierarchies – that are both relatively intangible and difficult to operationalize. As a result, even where there are genuine attempts to consider social influence in these studies, it can appear comparatively weak compared to biological influence.

Moreover, in practice the sub-disciplines of psychology are relatively autonomous: their advocates read different books and journals, attend different conferences, compete for (somewhat) different funding streams, and frequently hold disparate epistemological or ontological stances. Simultaneously, their situation within universities thoroughly suffused with the competitive logic of the market means that, rather than seek integration, advocates of these sub-disciplines frequently assert their (presumed) superiority. Biological psychology can seem to have the gloss of natural science that many psychologists would like for their discipline (and in this way it currently benefits from its associations with neuroscience). It plays into cultural presuppositions that the 'real' causes of what we do lie hidden deep inside us, but might be revealed using specialized technologies such as brain imaging. More mundanely, biological psychology research requires specialized laboratories and equipment; consequently, its associated research grants are often bigger, which can make it seem more prestigious. Additionally, because citations are often more rapid in this field, managers relying on journal impact factors as quality indicators may also judge this research more highly. For such reasons, whilst sub-disciplinary imperialism is not the unique province of biological psychologists, their efforts are sometimes more influential.

In short, the relations between biological psychology and the wider discipline of which it is a part are complex and multiple. Moreover, the historical influence of biology upon psychology has been diverse and, sometimes, subtle, and the relations between them continue. For example, today's social psychological notion of the 'attitude' originated in Darwin's evolutionary writings on emotion: when first imported into psychology, it referred to a biological stance of preparedness toward a stimulus (Jones and Elcock 2001). Conversely, the abstract noun 'motivation' was first popularized by early twentieth century applied psychologists under the influence of marketing imperatives to induce consumers to 'want' new goods (Danziger 1997), and only subsequently became a prominent topic in biological psychology.

Like the other sub-disciplines, then, biological psychology has been influenced by pragmatic imperatives to supply solutions for contemporary problems and to demonstrate wider social utility. It has also been shaped by new technological accomplishments, such as genome scanning and brain imaging. These technologies, in turn, reflect funding and interests associated with groups such as the military and the pharmaceutical industry, and disciplines such as medicine. Simultaneously, as we have seen, biological psychology's constitution as a distinct field reflects wider cultural presuppositions and dualistic assumptions. So biological psychology is contingently related both to the wider discipline of psychology and to the diverse field of cultural, social, and technological interests within which it operates. Simplistic histories that present its development as little more than the ongoing march of science and progress must therefore be treated with suspicion.

John Cromby

Critiques of biological and evolutionary psychologies

Critiques of biological psychology have tended to emphasize problems of biological determinism and biological reductionism. Whilst critiques of evolutionary psychology have likewise emphasized these problems, they have also elaborated further concerns associated with the specific claims made in this field – for example, the claim that 'mind' can be sensibly understood as composed of distinct modules.

Biological determinism refers to the tendency of biological psychology to claim or imply that important differences between individuals and social groups are determined by biological differences between them. Claims have been made that many psychological and behavioural attributes are determined in this way: Turkheimer (1998) lists intelligence, homosexuality, schizophrenia, criminality, and psychopathology in general, whilst evolutionary explanations have been proposed for phenomena as diverse as pregnancy complications, stress responses, conventional beauty, the attraction of money, and the historical practice of favouring first-born sons (Betzig 1997).

Biological explanations of intelligence, for example, have a long and controversial history, with some biologists and psychologists claiming that lighter skinned people are more intelligent than darker skinned, that women are less intelligent than men, and that these differences have a biological basis (Gould 1981; Rose et al. 1984). Murray and Herrnstein's 1994 book *The Bell Curve* presented a relatively recent version of this argument, claiming that decades of more equal opportunities in the USA had created a situation where underlying biological differences were now more visible. They argued that a division was emerging between a 'cognitive elite' and an 'underclass', and that the differences between these groups were a direct effect of their different biological capabilities. Their analyses presumed that IQ and related tests (such as the US Armed Forces Qualifying Test – AFQT) all measure a single underlying factor of general intelligence – 'g' – and claimed to prove that differences in g were more powerfully predictive of life success than differences in socioeconomic status. Murray and Herrnstein compared IQ scores of black and white people in the USA, using them to argue that these measures were the most powerful predictors of the social and employment status of each group. Although they were careful to acknowledge that g may be subject to environmental as well as genetic influence, they also constantly imply that genetic differences matter most, and 'at certain places in the text, they write as though the heritability factor is as large as 100 percent' (Heckman 1995: 1096).

The claims made in *The Bell Curve* were dismissed on technical, empirical, and conceptual grounds. Sternberg (1995) summarized evidence demonstrating that variables uncorrelated with IQ – tacit knowledge, thinking style, personality – were all more important influences upon income and employment status. Moreover, whilst there is extensive evidence that measures of IQ never account for more than approximately 20 per cent of the variance in social outcomes (and in many studies, considerably less), the book's own data show that, for black and white people of average IQ – i.e. when IQ is the same in both groups – black people are 'twice as likely to be in poverty (p. 326), five times as likely to be born out of wedlock (p. 331), two and a half times as likely to have ever been on welfare (p. 332), twice as likely to give birth to a low-birth-weight baby (p. 334), and two and a third times as likely to have lived in poverty during their first 3 years of life' (Sternberg 1995: 260). Sternberg also challenged Murray and Herrnstein's assertion of widespread agreement that g simply equates to intelligence by describing four influential psychological conceptions of intelligence that do not reduce it to a single factor. He also took issue with the book's claims that g is what laypeople typically mean when they refer to people as intelligent, and that intelligence cannot be modified or improved and is very strongly heritable. Another influential analysis of *The Bell Curve* (Heckman 1995) identified five reasons why the

book fails to prove its case: g is not adequate to explain the variance in the data presented, and is not primarily responsible for social differences; the assumption that the AFQT measures innate intelligence is incorrect; cost–benefit analyses demonstrate that life and employment outcomes can be significantly enhanced by interventions that address capacities other than IQ; the analysis supposedly demonstrating that IQ accounts for more variance in outcomes than social and environmental factors is biased, flawed, and largely meaningless; and that the book's social policy recommendations are both speculative and not dependent on the analyses preceding them.

More recent determinist explanations have often been derived from studies that use brain-imaging technologies. For example, Fine (2010) engages critically with studies which claim to show that male brains display greater hemispheric lateralization (toward language in the left hemisphere, or visuo-spatial ability in the right hemisphere), whereas female brains have a larger corpus callosum joining their two hemispheres, and so are better at integration and empathy. The implication in most studies is that these gender differences are 'hardwired', innate, and biologically determined, and that structural differences in the brain, rather than gendered practices of socialization, are the origin of gender differences. Fine raises a number of incisive objections to such claims, engaging closely with the methodological and technological aspects of these studies to demonstrate that they are not actually supported by the data. She notes that whilst some individual papers do report gender differences in lateralization, a meta-analysis of 26 such studies found no significant gender differences (Sommer et al. 2008); similarly, a meta-analysis of 49 studies of corpus callosal size (using both post-mortem and imaging data) found no evidence that the corpus callosum is larger in women (Bishop and Wahlsten 1997). Fine also questions the simplistic equation of brain features with psychological qualities, observing that there is no neuroscientific evidence that relatively small differences in the quantity of inter-hemispheric neural connection would simply equate to more empathy, or that a sharper focus upon details is facilitated by the shorter neural pathways purported to be a feature of male brains.

Critics also argue that explanations in biological psychology are typically reductionist: that they drive causality down to the smallest level possible, trying to explain complex psychological phenomena entirely in terms of the actions (and interactions) of brain and body processes. For example, biological explanations of schizophrenia have implicated a dizzying range of biological phenomena that are supposed to be causal, including abnormalities of dopamine, glutamate, serotonin, acetylcholine, gamma-butyric acid, prostaglandin, and neuropeptide neurotransmitter systems, and neuro-anatomical features including enlarged ventricles, cerebral asymmetry, temporal lobe abnormalities, a thickened corpus callosum, a thinner corpus callosum, abnormalities of the basal ganglia and cerebellum, and reduced overall brain volume (Cromby et al. 2013). However, despite the many strong claims that appear in the biological psychology literature – and despite more than a century of well-funded research with access to ever more sophisticated technologies – no biological cause has been consistently demonstrated in relation to schizophrenia or any other functional psychiatric diagnosis; this why psychiatric diagnosis still depends on interview and observation, because no biological tests are available to confirm any functional diagnosis.

Regardless of this lack of evidence, biological psychology invariably posits these kinds of explanations as the causes of schizophrenia: it reductively assumes that biological events and processes are, of themselves, causal of psychological events and processes. We see this assumption in claims such as 'Mental illnesses are real, diagnosable, treatable brain disorders' (Hyman 1998) or 'schizophrenia is beyond doubt a brain disease' (Harrison and Weinberger 2005). However, not only is the evidence that schizophrenia is a brain disease lacking (and not only are there long-standing conceptual and empirical challenges to this diagnosis – Boyle 2002) there is also solid evidence of causal associations between the experiences associated with this diagnosis and

environmental, social, and relationship influences, including poverty and low SES (Harrison et al. 2001), disturbed relationships (Harrop and Trower 2003), childhood trauma, and physical and sexual abuse (Read et al. 2005).

Biological reductionist explanations of schizophrenia (and other functional psychiatric diagnoses) divert attention from these social and environmental causes, making it less likely that political or policy interventions will be pursued; consequently, resources are wasted pursuing individual biological solutions to social problems, and individuals do not receive interventions that would help most, so they frequently end up overmedicated, but undertreated (Miller 2010). Reductionism is nevertheless highly prevalent in biological psychology, especially in relation to neuroscience where Bennett and Hacker (2003) demonstrate that it frequently takes the form of simply equating the brain with the person, as though the two were simply identical: for example, by attributing psychological capacities such as deciding, believing, or choosing to brains, rather than to the persons whose brains they study. They show how this inevitably produces errors since, no matter how much we discover about the neural processes that enable activities – for example, writing a signature – a *complete* neural explanation will always be impossible, because:

> no amount of neural knowledge would suffice to discriminate between writing one's name, copying one's name, practising one's signature, forging a name, writing an autograph, signing a cheque, witnessing a will, signing a death warrant, and so on . . . the differences between these are circumstance-dependent, functions not only of the individual's intentions but also of the social and legal conventions that must obtain to make the having of such intentions and the performance of such actions possible.
>
> *(Bennett and Hacker 2003: 360)*

Evolutionary psychology has been a prominent element of biological psychology in recent years, although its influence is likely to decline considerably in the coming years. Assumptions made by evolutionary psychology include that sexual selection (rather than other influences) is the primary driving force of evolution; that, through competition, evolution results in a relentless process of improvement; that selection occurs only at the level of individuals; and that the relevant evolutionary environment for modern humans is the Pleistocene period, because no significant genetic change has occurred in our species since that time. All of these assumptions lack empirical support, and all are challenged by empirical evidence as well as by conceptual and ideological critique. For example, Gannon (2002) observes that Darwin distinguished clearly between natural selection (selection by survival) and sexual selection (selection by reproductive success). Darwin posited that sometimes these processes will be contradictory (flamboyant peacock tails enhance sexual success, but make their owners more vulnerable to predators), and sometimes they will be complementary (physical fitness may be advantageous for both survival and reproduction, so may be favoured by both natural and sexual selection).

However, evolutionary psychology consistently disregards this distinction, claiming to have 'clarified what Darwin meant' by showing that '"good" traits are those that promote an individual's reproductive fitness' (Thornhill and Palmer 2000: 5). Challenging this, Gannon cites anthropological evidence showing that, when faced with extreme adversity, human communities put reproduction 'on hold' and prioritize survival (although, she notes, even survival is sometimes subordinated to principled belief). Likewise, Gannon notes that evolutionary psychology downplays other known influences upon evolution – genetic recombination, gene flow and mutation – consistently subordinating these to sexual selection. In so doing it produces a linear narrative of improvement where evolution is consistently driven by competition to favour increased precision, efficiency, and economy (a narrative with very obvious ideological

resonances). Taking bipedalism as an example, Gannon observes that its selection in our species was clearly not conducted with precision, efficiency, or economy since our upright posture is often associated with back pain, vertebral crush fractures, varicose veins, haemorrhoids, hypertension, and circulatory and numerous other problems.

Probably the most comprehensive critique of evolutionary psychology was produced by Rose and Rose (2001). Their edited volume details empirical evidence that contradicts many evolutionary psychological assumptions, showing that evolution did not simply stop in the Pleistocene, that many human abilities are developmental rather than 'modular' in character, and that many evolutionary biologists favour notions of group (rather than individual) selection. Their contributors also critique the ideological agenda of evolutionary psychology, such as the claim that sexual selection has endowed all men with an inherent propensity to rape, and that women's endorsement of feminism is therefore a specialized brain circuit (or 'module' of mind) that evolved as a form of pre-emptive defense or protection (Thornhill and Palmer 2000: 103).

Relatedly, biologist and neuroscientist Steven Rose (1997) provided a detailed alternative to evolutionary psychology. His notion of the lifeline – the developmental sequence of an organism as it grows, changes, matures, and declines – incorporates evolutionary theory, developmental biology, cell biology, and environmental influence to produce a non-reductionist alternative to biological and evolutionary psychologies. He demonstrates that, in multi-cellular creatures such as humans, selection occurs at the level of the organism as a whole, not at the levels of genes or modular abilities. His account shows how popular accounts of 'selfish genes' are overly simplistic, erroneous, and misleading, and that evolutionary psychological claims that we behave as we do because of tendencies inherited from our stone-age progenitors are similarly speculative and ideological.

Critical responses

Viewed from a critical psychological perspective, biological psychology is both flawed and troublesome. First, its tendencies toward determinism and reductionism may preclude any proper consideration of social and cultural influences. Second, its prioritization of forces and causes hidden within individuals plays into reactionary ideological agendas that either divert attention away from inequalities and power relations – of class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability – or that 'naturalize' them by casting them as the inevitable outcome of biological difference. Third, its naïve promotion of a simplistic version of the scientific method leaves it unable to capture the nuances, dynamics, and complexities of lived human experience, making its findings inadequate as the basis for serious attempts to integrate what we know of human biological functioning with our other ways of knowing.

Evolutionary psychology is even more flawed. First, it is a distortion of the very Darwinism it claims to promote, one that both lacks and disregards evidence so as to misrepresent evolutionary science in a way that furthers ideological agendas associated with patriarchy and capitalism. Second, like biological psychology more generally, it attempts to 'naturalize' gender and other differences, presenting them as the outcome of biological processes with origins many thousands of years in the past. And third, its view of many psychological capacities as predefined in hardwired modules is not supported by consistent evidence, is not consistent with evidence about development and plasticity in the human brain and body, and produces an impoverished, mechanistic psychology within which what we perceive, feel, and do is frequently the consequence of supposed evolutionary pressures inherited from an unknown past.

It may seem strange, then, that for the most part critical psychology has largely ignored biological and evolutionary psychologies. The great majority of the discussion and analysis summarized above was conducted by biologists, mainstream psychologists, and scholars from

other disciplines (philosophy, neuroscience, economics, and the social sciences). Despite the prominence of biological psychology within the wider discipline of psychology, and despite frequent attempts by biological and evolutionary psychologists to promote narrow research agendas that promulgate their own interests, critical psychologists have for the most part not responded. Perhaps to some extent this is understandable: faced with Thornhill and Palmer's rape hypothesis, for example, it can be hard to overcome repulsion sufficiently to identify a point of contact that might enable rational critique to begin. Besides, there is no shortage of other psychological claims with which to critically engage, many of which might seem more promising in terms of the possible development of constructive alternatives. Moreover, critique may seem largely irrelevant to the many critical psychologists who already have their own version of the body – whether this be, for example, psychoanalytic, phenomenological, cyborgian, performative, relational, or discursive. For such reasons, the absence of the biological body from critical psychological accounts might go largely unnoticed, or come to appear relatively unimportant: nevertheless, it has consequences.

First, it means that most critiques are not specifically concerned with the psychological aspects of biological psychology, and so might fail to bring out the relevant social and cultural dimensions of subjectivity and experience. When these critiques come from mainstream psychology they might challenge biological reductionism and determinism, but will tend to leave individualism largely intact. Second, entirely ignoring the biological aspects of psychology can make critical accounts appear biased, defensive, and unconvincing, increasing their vulnerability to dismissal by those not already persuaded of their worth. Third, it contributes to a paradoxical situation where critical psychology – in wholly separating the material substrates that enable experience from the forms that experience takes – becomes just as dualistic as its mainstream alternative. Fourth, ignoring biological psychology makes it more difficult for critical psychologists to forge connections with critical colleagues in cognate areas such as critical neuroscience (Choudhury and Slaby 2012), a problem likely to become more acute as the influence of neuroscience over psychology continues to grow (Rose and Abi-Rachid 2013). And fifth, it marginalizes or obstructs critical attempts to deploy biological evidence constructively and progressively – for example, in feminist accounts of embodiment (Wilson 2004), or in challenges to psychiatric claims and diagnoses (Cromby and Harper 2009).

Engagement with the biological aspects of experience and subjectivity is of course difficult and needs to be supported with appropriate conceptual and methodological resources, and Harré (2002) proposed a promising Wittgensteinian framework within which biology always enables, but never simply causes, experience. He suggested that psychology can be described in terms of three distinct grammars, each with its associated realm of causality and interaction. 'Persons grammar' describes the realm of experience, morality, relationality, and the effects that ensue from our spontaneous orientation to the norms or precepts of culture. 'Organisms grammar' describes the effects of those functions our bodies conduct on our behalf without willed effort, for example, breathing or digesting: without oxygen or food our experiences would be radically transformed, but influences here are purposive rather than normative-intentional. 'Molecules grammar' describes the effects upon experience of chemical substances such as aspirin or alcohol, and molecular clusters such as synapses, influences that regulate sleep, cognitive function, perception, levels of activity, and so forth. Harré argues that these grammars are nested in accord with what he calls a 'taxonomic priority principle' which means that we can only investigate organismic or molecular grammar influences upon an activity if – in the terms of person grammar – an individual can meaningfully be said to be engaging with that activity. In this way, Harré suggests, biological influences might be included in psychological accounts without falling prey to determinism or reductionism, and without introducing implicit dualisms.

Conclusions

The need for critical engagement with biological psychology is likely to increase in the coming years as three contemporary developments affect the discipline. First, in recent decades the life sciences have been 'transformed into gigantic biotechnosciences, blurring the boundaries between science and technology, universities, entrepreneurial biotech companies and the major pharmaceutical companies' (Rose and Rose 2012: 2): industry, commerce, and biological science are now more thoroughly enmeshed than ever before, and this will have consequences for biological psychology. Second, developments in epigenetic research will also affect biological psychology significantly. Epigenetics studies how heritable changes in gene expression are produced without changes to underlying DNA, and is frequently concerned with the ways in which gene expression is regulated by environmental influences. The exponential growth in this research – which began around the turn of the millennium and shows no sign of slowing down – was spurred in part by the surprise discovery from the Human Genome Project that humans have far fewer genes than was previously thought (around 23,000 as opposed to over 100,000). Epigenetics recognizes that gene expression – all gene expression – always occurs in an environment, which not only regulates it in that moment but also (by modifying how DNA is stored in the cell nucleus) can regulate its expression in future generations. Epigenetic research is shaped by powerful interests, some antithetical to progressive politics, so there are emergent concerns here (for example, over how the term 'environment' should be defined – Papadopoulos 2011). Nevertheless, its growing prominence is likely to render evolutionary psychology ever more redundant, and will inevitably lead geneticists to place more emphasis upon influences outside the individual and her or his body. And third, the continuing development of brain-imaging technologies – though they encourage both reductionism and the naïve belief that brain state images are somehow objective representations of experience – will simultaneously demonstrate, over and again, how the brain itself is both socialized and enculturated, showing that environmentally-driven plasticity is intrinsic to any viable understanding of brain function and structure. In the coming years, it seems that many of the presumed certainties of biological and evolutionary psychology will be transformed by these developments.

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Rose, H. and Rose, S. (2012) *Genes, Cells and Brains: the Promethean Promises of the New Biology*. London: Verso.

Website resources

Critical Neuroscience: http://www.critical-neuroscience.org/
Evolutionary Psychology: A Primer: http://www.cep.ucsb.edu/primer.html
The RSA, Hilary and Steven Rose, 'The Rise of "Biotechnosciences"': http://www.thersa.org/events/video/vision-videos/hilary-and-steven-rose

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6

Personality

Technology, commodity and pathology

China Mills

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Do you fantasize about power and attractiveness, and exaggerate your own achievements? Then there's a chance you might suffer from 'narcissistic personality disorder'. Do you have a strong need to be cared for by others? Then you may well have 'dependent personality disorder'. Pharmaceutical companies advertise psychotropic drugs that will restore your self to itself and make you feel more like yourself again; reality TV show competitions offer record label prizes, but it's not just your voice that counts – it's about your personality; and makeover shows give you back your personality through styled hair and new clothes. This is a personality that can be categorized and tested, as it often is within education and job selection, and it is a personality that the psy-disciplines tells us can be disordered – 'paranoid', 'borderline', 'avoidant', or 'multiple' – to name but a few. So if drugs can restore it and we can win competitions with it – what is this thing called 'personality'?

Considering there is no 'objective' evidence of personality, despite a battery of tests, 'how can you be sure that you have a personality at all'? (Burr 1995: 21). Thus, through our (and often psychology's) attempts to understand the behaviour of others (and of ourselves), to compare this behaviour to what we assume is 'normal', to try and change this behaviour, and to anticipate future behaviour, we infer that we have something called a 'personality' – it is theoretical. Some such theories have become dominant frameworks of understanding, yet are always embedded within a worldview and entangled with decisions on how to understand people, decisions about how personality has developed, and choices about what counts as knowledge about personality (Sloan 2009: 61).

Personality psychology is a messy space where different theories coexist and compete around how they conceptualize the 'object' of study – the personality. Some differ in terms of where they think 'personality' can be found, whether they direct their gaze inside bodies, or inside brains; the outside of bodies, feeling the bumps on people's heads; or how the outside gets inside, often framed through interactions in childhood shaping our inner selves. They differ according to their time, and place, and the prevailing social norms out of which they emerge (though they might not admit it). They differ according to what they position themselves against, the other theories and ideas available at the time, what is considered old, new, or fashionable – the conditions that make it possible to think of 'personality' in certain ways (and gloss over other ways of knowing). They differ according to the relationships of the people (often white men) who

formulated them; did they study together, and who was whose professor? Bearing this in mind, I want to trace a messy and interlacing history of how 'personality' functions as a construct, and the socio-economic-politico spaces in which our 'personalities' function, or sometimes cease to function.

Bumpy heads, iron rods, and salivating dogs

'Personality' has a long history, and it's not the same construct throughout this history. In the 1700s, phrenologists felt the bumps on people's heads to locate their personalities. Then the search for 'personality' moved 'inside' brains when, in 1848, a man called Phineas Gage survived a dynamite explosion that blasted an iron rod through the frontal lobes of his brain, drastically changing his personality. Since then, 'personality' has been understood as something made up of various numbers of traits (Allport 1937; Eysenck 1947/1998) or types (Jung and Baynes 1921); as something 'located' in genes, biochemicals, and parts of the brain that show up as different colours in the neuro-images to which our gaze increasingly turns; as something in psychosexual stages linked to early childhood experiences (Freud 1933); as the concept of 'self-actualizing' persons, who are active and creative (Maslow 1943); or as seeing people as 'naïve scientists' developing and testing constructs for understanding the world (Kelly 1955).

Personality psychology credits its more 'official' beginnings in the Central European consulting rooms of Freud, meaning that personality theories are always already embedded within the therapeutic encounter. From there personality theory shifted, emigrating with many of its theorists to the USA during World War II, moving across geographical and paradigmatic borders to become a concern for 'science' (and marking one of many entanglements between personality psychology and war, see Pettigrew and Cherry 2012). While nineteenth-century North American and European theory had been more concerned with spiritual and moral aspects of the 'whole' person, the twentieth century saw the shift, alongside industrialization, to a focus on the distinctiveness of individual personalities (Pettigrew and Cherry 2012). This marked a change in how people spoke about and understood their personalities, evident in Gordon Allport's (1937) staking out of personality psychology as a scientific field. Here personality began to be understood 'scientifically' through behaviour, inspired by Pavlov's salivating dogs, and responses to stimuli that could be measured, predicted, and controlled (Skinner 1953).

This set the scene for the assumption that personality is made up of a set of basic dimensions, whether they be the 'Big Five' trait structure (McCrae and Costa 2008), or Cattell's 16 Principle Factors personality inventory (16 PF) (Cattell 1946; Cattell and Mead 2008). Thus, 'the history of personality theory is the history of a European and North American debate about the nature of human individuals and the sort of science that would be appropriate for understanding them' (Sloan 2009: 60), and whether science is the appropriate medium for understanding them at all.

However many traits we may decide our personality consists of, these mainstream frameworks make certain assumptions based on a specific worldview. Many mainstream psychology textbooks (the dog-eared and the new) inform us that the etymology of 'personality' can be traced to the Latin word *persona*, meaning masks worn by performers to either project different roles or disguise their identities. Yet in the often essentializing terms of much psychological theory, 'personality' is rarely conceptualized as a mask. Much of psychology assumes that people have a unique personality different from others; that this personality is stable and coherent (with traits that complement each other); that personality influences our behaviour; and, they often assume that personality is a 'biological given' (human nature), seen as transcultural and transhistorical (Burr 1995: 24). But the concept of 'personality' is not the same in every place and time.

In many parts of the world, 'personality' is not within people so much as between them and is less fixed and unified than multiple and fragmented.

'Personalities' across borders

For Mkhize (2004), writing from a South African context, the bounded autonomous self-contained individualism of much personality psychology contrasts starkly with other ways of knowing the self in indigenous societies, or in the Global South more generally. These other ways of knowing the self tend to be context-based, collectivist, and interdependent, where personhood is defined relationally (for example, in some parts of Africa): 'I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am' (Mbiti 1969: 214). This 'self-in-community', a form of 'being with and for others', means that 'individuals are part of a collective (community) that they create and which, in turn, creates them' (Mkhize 2004: 48). Across the Indian Ocean, within Ayurveda (a system of well-being and healing practised in India, and the cultural prism through which many people in India have traditionally viewed the person), understandings of self see the person in their wholeness and this, not disease, is the centre of ayurvedic medicine (Kakar 1982). This wholeness means that a person has not only three types of temperament with their 16 subtypes, but that these are enmeshed and entangled with the type of land on which the person grew up, with caste and lineage, and with food habits (to name but a few). The ayurvedic person lives within and partakes of different orders of being (physical, psychological, social, and metaphysical) all of which interrelate over fluid boundaries. The person is a microcosm – all that is within the cosmos is within the person, meaning a person is constituted through a myriad of interconnections: the body with the psyche, and the person with the natural environment, but also with the polis and the cosmos (Kakar 1982: 228–229).

Personality and the status quo

However, this 'sociality of personality is erased by individualistic concepts' (Sloan 2009: 70) that imagine the person as an individual container of essences and origins, describing 'personality mechanistically with an impoverished vocabulary' (58) that reduces complexity to a set number of dimensions or traits. In this way, personality psychology may operate to maintain the status quo, in part through promoting a form of individuality specific to particular cultures at particular times that leads us to believe that if all people are, for example, inherently greedy or biologically predisposed to be aggressive, then there is little point in re-imagining or reorganizing societal structures of inequality. Furthermore, through defining social problems or problems in living as private matters, the individual personality is constructed as the site for change and transformation, not society. This is to understand how personality theories may function as ideological constructions (Sloan 2009) as power moves through institutions and through our personalities, our intimate hopes and dreams. This is made ever more powerful as we come to think of ourselves as having, and act on ourselves as though we have, something called a 'personality'.

Technologies of the self

In this way, our self, regarded as fundamental to *who* we 'are', has become a target and territory of power, through which we act on ourselves and are acted on by others (Hook 2004). Rose (1996: 213) traces the ways in which politico-economic rationales become aligned with, and in part constitute, the selves each of us want to be – a 'technology of subjectivity' that enfolds into a person through action on the self (self-disclosure, self-inspection) – constituting a 'technology

of self'. For Foucault (1988), 'technologies of the self' constitute the myriad individualized ways that we understand and act on ourselves (as if we were individuals), how we know, master and care for ourselves, always under the eye of an authority or a truth, real or imagined (Rose 1996). This is a government of subjectivity, which acts tacitly, indirectly, and often through (psychological) expertise that is enmeshed with projects of government to shape and produce identities more powerful and subjectifying because 'they appear to emanate from our individual desires to fulfil ourselves in our everyday lives, to craft our personalities, to discover who we really are' (Rose 1996: 17). And, thus, as we come to experience ourselves through the capacities promoted, we become further tied to specific governmental and socioeconomic rationales (Dean 1999).

The entangling of personality with fascist and racist rationales has been a key site of concern for personality theorists. For some this concern came out of trying to understand Hitler's popularity among lower-middle-class German voters, leading Fromm (1942/2001), and later Adorno et al. (1950), to suggest an 'authoritarian personality', meaning that specific fascist ideologies were congenial to certain personality types. Moving away from assuming a personality 'type', others have questioned how racist ideologies 'grab hold' of the individual, and how inner technologies complement and enmesh with structural arrangements of power (Wetherell 1996: 199; Hook 2004).

Personalities for sale

So what are the projects of government and ideologies that theories of personality may serve? For Craib (1998: 3), the personality, constantly worked on and questioned as part of a lifetime project, is embedded within the beginnings of industrialization, the development of the market economy, and its concomitant process of individualization. This, for Fromm (1942/2001: 207), is a process where the modern industrial system unbinds individuals from those things which previously gave life meaning, creating a 'personality which feels powerless and alone, anxious and insecure', meaning that changes in economic structure are accompanied by, and embed, changes in personality structure. In experiencing alienation from their own self, people must 'sell their "personality". They have to have a "personality" if they are to sell their products' (Fromm 1942/2001: 103). Here we face the market as individual personalities (always readjusting, always flexible) (Craib 1998), and the market, as with all commodities, decides the value of our personalities, and perhaps, of the existence of personality itself.

Pharmaceutical personalities

The same market system that enables us to sell ourselves through our personalities also, by fixing us in a position of lack (always in need of improvement), enables us to buy our personalities, or to restore ourselves through a product. This is a marketing of personalization: the hair dye, or the car, that is 'the difference which will make us ourselves' (Baudrillard 1998: 87). For Barthes (1989), this constitutes the effectivity of advertising, which works by making the advertised product appear integral to the viewer's identity.

Perhaps nowhere is this more apparent than in the marketing of psychotropic medication (psychiatric drugs), where pills are portrayed as a way to restore the unity of one's being, constituting a 'synthetic individuality' (Baudrillard 1998: 88), where 'it is through the drug that the self is restored to itself' (Rose 2007: 214). Furthermore, psychotropic drugs are most successfully marketed as themselves having a personality, as 'social beings with individual personalities', where 'developing a personality for the drug' begins in the early phases of drug production (Martin 2007: 150).

Psychotropic drugs provide one means by which people can work on themselves, and be worked upon (for taking these drugs is not always voluntary, and those with the power to prescribe may also have the power to detain). The marketing of psychotropic drugs both constitutes and relies upon an increasingly biologically coloured language of personhood, where we come to understand our sadness, through the language of dopamine levels, as a condition called depression amendable to drug treatment. Ultimately, we come to understand ourselves through the language of neurochemistry (Rose 2003). This constitutes a 'neurochemical reshaping of personhood' (Rose 2004: 122), where we increasingly 'understand ourselves, speak about ourselves, and act upon ourselves – and others – as being shaped by our biology' (Rose 2007: 188), and where features of our individuality, such as 'personality . . . now appear to be amenable to transformation by the use of specially engineered drugs' (Rose 2007: 112). Thus, not only drugs but, increasingly, people can be understood as 'pharmaceutical personalities' (Martin 2007). Yet these drugs are entangled with certain conceptions of what people should be like – norms and judgments of particular worldviews are internalized in their molecular makeup (Rose 2006). These are norms that seem connected to the unitary-bounded subject as a figure of autonomy privileged by the neoliberal (masculine) market economy that further disavows relationality and interdependency.

Pathological personalities

How can a product such as a drug restore our personalities? And why would our personalities need restoring in the first place? This rests on the assumption that personality lies in biology, that biology can become faulty, and that drugs can restore this personality. That some types of personality are understood as pathological also implies an assumption that there exists a 'normal' personality, from which some personalities deviate. In fact, this understanding of personality as neurochemical itself creates new 'problem' populations of those who refuse to understand and act on themselves through neurochemistry (Rose 2007). Thus, within the market of personality, personality tests and diagnostic tools construct ever more differentiated populations and ever more possibilities and ways to be not 'normal'.

According to psychiatric diagnostic classification systems, such as DSM-5 and ICD-10, there are multiple ways for personality to be disordered, including 'multiple personality disorder'. Here personalities can be 'odd or eccentric', 'dramatic, emotional or erratic', and 'anxious or fearful' (American Psychiatric Association 2000). Furthermore, one of the ways that 'personality' may be pathological or 'abnormal' is for it to be 'too normal', a 'normotic personality' constituted by 'the numbing and eventual erasure of subjectivity, in favour of a self that is conceived as a material object among other man-made products in the object world' (Bollas 1987: 135). Yet as 'personality' increasingly becomes a commodity, perhaps the normotic personality becomes less pathological and more a recipe for success in the neoliberal market economy.

These personality groupings (as eccentric or erratic, borderline or schizoid) are umbrella terms that cover people who happen to have in common sets of behaviours that are considered antisocial, meaning that personality types are deduced from the behaviour that they are supposed to explain (Parker et al. 1995). Furthermore, such attempts to pinpoint distinct personality types, such as the psychopathic personality, often overlook the fact that what is considered to be antisocial is understood in specific social contexts that may change over time (Levenson 1992). This is problematic, as Levenson (1992) points out, because if deviance is understood through a failure to conform, then those people who, for example, opposed Apartheid in South Africa, could be seen as deviant and thus 'disordered'. In addition, values which may be anti-social (in that they are harmful to the social body), such as destroying the long term sustainability of the

economy for quick profits, may actually be seen as 'normal' because they reflect current political commitments (Levenson 1992).

Hacking (1995) uses the metaphor of an ecological niche to think through the fact that in certain times, in certain places, certain experiences are understood as 'symptoms' of certain kinds of 'illness' – meaning that they are 'transient' not for the individual's life but within social life, and are, for a time, experienced as 'real'. Taking this further, Hacking (2006) elaborates on the subject positions made available within the ecological niches of 'mental illness', the bringing into being of specific ways of being a person that may have not been possible before. Hacking explores this through the label of 'multiple personality disorder', providing two alternative lenses through which to explore questions over the 'reality' of this disorder. Thus, we either assume that, 'A. There were no multiple personalities in 1955; there were many in 1985'. Or that, 'B. In 1955 this was not a way to be a person, people did not experience themselves in this way, they did not interact with their friends, their families, their employers, their counsellors, in this way; but in 1985 this was a way to be a person, to experience oneself, to live in society' (Hacking 2006). Thus, multiple personality disorder became a way to be a person, illustrating for Hacking (2006: 2; also see Hacking 1995) the mechanisms by which 'our sciences create kinds of people that in a certain sense did not exist before' . . . a process of 'making up people'. Thus, even if 'personality' is a social construct, it is often lived and experienced as if it were 'real', meaning that 'we give the concept of "personality" real existence through the way in which we live it and act it out in our encounters with each other' (Burr 1995: 29). And while some personality types may flourish for a time within an ecological niche and then disappear, others are more 'sticky' (Rosenhan 1973) and stay 'for life'. The 'for life-ness' of psychiatric diagnosis is illustrated in Tucker's (2009: 9) concerns about the pervasiveness of diagnostic identities, such as 'schizophrenic', and how, compared to more transient and fluid identity categories, they become the dominant identifying feature in multiple contexts, carrying with them 'identity-threatening connotations'.

Thus, 'personality' psychology is enmeshed with technologies that disseminate particular ways of being: the personality tests and diagnostic check lists that provide us with a language for naming and understanding our 'personality' ('normal' or not), affecting how we come to relate to ourselves and to others (Rose 1996). This language, which increasingly shifts from a 'psycho-babble' to a 'biobabble' . . . 'has pervasive consequences for the ways we view and experience ourselves and not just for the labels we give to our discontents' – it shapes our most intimate relations with our 'selves' (Healy 2004: 10). Thus, the 'personality', so 'fundamental to our concept of what it means to be a person' (Burr 1995: 17) (although as we have seen, this depends on who is considered to fall within 'our'), shapes our views about what life is and about the ways that society should or could be organized. And therefore,

> Through minimising the influence of the social, our culture has fostered a climate where the internal world of the individual has become the site where the problems of society are raised and where it is perceived they need to be resolved.
>
> *(Furedi 2006: 1)*

Here, *social* 'problems' come to be reconfigured as *individual* 'problems', which, when framed as being caused by 'disordered' personalities whose biochemicals have gone awry, construct possibilities for us to transform ourselves through medication – to take pills for life's ills. This becomes particularly evident in the diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder, which is given to far more women than men, and often to women who have experienced childhood sexual abuse. This means the diagnosis, through locating the 'problem' as inside women and divorced from the

social context in which the diagnosis is made, 'individualizes and pathologizes women for their responses to oppression' (Shaw and Proctor 2005: 483).

Furthermore, the concept of 'personality' works to enable certain ways of being and of understanding, and overlooks or disallows other, alternative frameworks. As we have seen, the dominance of personality psychology from the 'West' (the minority world), often transposed onto the Majority World, overlooks understandings of situate personality as entangled with the polis and the cosmos, with webs of relations and ancestors, or with the land on which we live (Mills 2014). In their privileging of unified autonomous selves and personalities made up of traits and types, these theories disallow ways of understanding personalities as multiple and fragmentary; personality as a 'congealed moment of social process' (Sloan 2009: 70); or as 'an effect of memory and our search for meaning and pattern in our relationships' (Burr 1995: 30).

If personality psychology often works to serve the status quo, and to encourage individuals to work on themselves instead of transforming society, then it becomes urgent to ask, 'How can we theorize about personality in a manner that contributes to the construction of a humane and just society?' (Sloan 2009: 57). Oullette (2008) suggests the answer to this may lie in the development of a critical personality psychology, to be achieved (an effort already partly underway) through a recasting of the history of personality theory to include: approaches and theorists usually over-looked or excluded (Teo 2005); scholarship outside of, and sometimes critical of, psychology; research on existential issues; narrative and historical research that understands people within a web of social relations; psychoanalytic approaches that understand people as socially enmeshed and not biologically determined; and work that seeks to understand people as embedded within often violent social contexts and power relations, for example, globalization, capitalism, and war. Drawing on these resources, for Oullette (2008: 1–2) it is possible to imagine an agenda for a 'critical personality psychology that is responsive to pressing social justice concerns, capable of working with and for those who have been socially marginalized and neglected in research, and critical of mainstream psychology'.

A key element in the project of rethinking 'personality' may also need to engage with issues including: what language (and whose language) can we, and could we, speak of knowing our-selves? Who are we referring to when we say 'we' – who is included and who is excluded? And how can we 'be' 'otherwise'? By re-imagining 'personality', we may also be rethinking the organization of social structures and global power imbalances; and thus re-imagining ourselves, and the multiple possibilities for living (together) otherwise.

Further reading

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Website resources

BBC Science: Human Body and Mind – Personality tests and surveys: http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/index_surveys.shtml

Foucault and 'Technologies of the Self': http://www.theory.org.uk/ctr-fou6.htm

healthtalk.org – A resource run by DIPEx, with more than 2,000 videos, audio clips, and interviews with people and families, who have a wide range of health conditions, including first-hand experiences of people living with the label of 'personality disorder': healthtalk.org

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Developmental psychology

The turn to deconstruction

Erica Burman

Formed amid emerging European nation-states at the tail end of their colonial powers, psychology – and perhaps particularly British psychology – was deeply involved in providing the state with instruments for surveying and evaluating the state of its colonial populations, as well as assessing its home-grown workers and conscripts for waging its wars. As further evidence for the relation between cultural and methodological orientations, we should also not forget how many of the key statistical tests and criteria for 'significance' that continue to structure psychological research were invented by British psychologists such as Galton (who was Darwin's cousin), Pearson, and Spearman. These British architects of quantitative psychology were also advocates of eugenics (Rose 1985), a fact that – along with the recognition by 1980 that Cyril Burt, another key British psychologist (in fact the first British person to be employed as a psychologist) closely associated with the highly controversial debates over the heritability of IQ had forged his results (Hearnshaw 1979) – invites some sober reflection on British social science practices.

Similar fault lines of reformulation and transition have attended cross-national migrations of key psychological models. The selective reception and insertion of Piaget's genetic epistemological framework into English-language contexts offers an exemplary case study of such processes (Burman 1996a, 2008a). This also includes the suppression of Piaget's links with psychoanalysis (Schepeler 1993). His clinical or critical interview, a flexible language and context-sensitive approach, was rendered into a standardized test apparatus that presumed a general, uniform sequence of ages and stages. This move not only made the logical error of shifting Piaget's project from the epistemological to the psychological domain (Lourenco and Machado 1996), but it also thereby allied it to the modernist project of progress. Although Piaget was not averse to addressing the wider political implications of his model (particularly in relation to questions of democracy and societal development, Piaget 1933; see Vidal 1987), the preoccupation with training or acceleration through an assumed stable, unilinear developmental trajectory was famously derided by Piaget and the Geneva school as 'the American question' (Bryant 1984).

While, undoubtedly, methodological differences were in part responsible for such misinterpretations (eventually Piaget and his co-workers refused to debate with researchers who had

not used his methodological approach to investigating children's understanding), these clearly also map on to wider cultural and political differences in the domains of application. English empiricism combined with an antipathy to theory, giving rise to a decontextualized (although, as we have seen, highly culturally inscribed) model of the subject, which then became the most compatible theoretical underpinning for a scientistic framework for legitimizing psychology (Norton 1981). Along with other anthropologically inflected accounts of action and skilled behaviour (Rogoff 2003), and the interpretive turn (Harré 1983), these gave rise to the 'crisis' in social psychology of the 1970s (Parker 1989). But if 'deconstructing developmental psychology' has emerged as a specifically British form of critiquing developmental psychology, then this is because of a particular set of cultural–political ties between British academics and French theory.

Wider English-language currents

Before exploring these ties, it is important – especially given the influence of US psychology on British psychology – to acknowledge other English language resources that informed critical and alternative debates in developmental psychology. By the 1970s and 1980s, versions of Vygotsky were in circulation (notably as introduced by Bruner, Wertsch, and Cole), while activity theory was being taken up especially in northern Europe and, though it took slightly different forms, in the US too, along with the increasing arguments for ecological psychology (Bronfenbrenner 1979; Bronfenbrenner et al. 1986) and attention to communities of practice and situated practices (Lave and Wenger 1991; Rogoff 2003). These brought a range of resources that increasingly challenged the individualism and decontextualization of 'the' developing psychological subject.

In the US, Klaus Riegel's (e.g. 1976) attempts to formulate a dialectical psychology were among the first attempts to connect critiques of models of individual development with those of societal development, fuelling new 'ideology critiques' (see also Buck-Morss 1975; Broughton 1981a, 1981b). Kessen's 1979 article 'The American child and other cultural inventions' generated an important set of interdisciplinary debates, as the landmark volume edited by Kessel and Siegel (1983) testifies (both Kessel and Kessen were co-authors with Bronfenbrenner in 1986). Kessen later addressed how shifting cultural-political currents were reflected in changing models of infancy and child research (Kessen 1993), and Broughton's (1987) important (but under-referenced) collection marked out new critical territory. The number of critical conceptual and historical analyses of developmental psychology (e.g. Vandenberg 1993) in the early volumes of the journal *Theory & Psychology* (the editorial base of which – significantly – continues to be Canada) highlight how this issue was, and continues to be, seen as of significance (e.g. Tsou 2006; Vianna and Stetsenko 2006).

More widely, debates about social constructionism (e.g. Gergen 1973; and Shotter 1980) enabled deconstructionist ideas to take root (notwithstanding the diverse claims structured within different varieties of constructionism, Danziger 1997). In the UK, attempts to 'reconstruct' psychology *preceded* its deconstruction, providing important critical perspectives on psychology (e.g. Armistead 1974) with reflections also in developmental psychology and education (Woodhead 1999). In the UK, developmental psychology critiques that challenged asocial cognitive approaches to understanding children emerged, bringing a new emphasis on contextualization (Donaldson 1978). Volumes such as Richards (1974) provided wider interdisciplinary framing of such criticisms, and the follow-up text edited by Richards and Light (1986) consolidated this (and included a key chapter by Urwin 1986). Such intellectual work occurred alongside, and of course was influenced by, the current of political turmoil in the 1960s, including the rise of second wave feminism, and the black power and gay liberation movements, which were

marked by radical engagements with psychology via such publications as *Rat, Myth and Magic* and *Humpty Dumpty*.

Changing the subject of psychology and the French Turn

While 'deconstruction' as an approach is associated specifically with Derrida (1978), the term has been taken up much more broadly within English-language contexts to describe a critical approach that reflects the wider 'turn to the text' in social science contexts and – in the context of psychology – is associated with the rise of discursive and other interpretive approaches from the mid-1980s onwards. While Derridean analysis subverts and destabilizes the prevailing binaries structuring psychology as a prime exemplar of Western logocentrism (nature/culture; female/male; passion/reason; black/white, etc.), the term became a shorthand for a wider critical movement, mobilizing political, cultural, and philosophical arguments to highlight the cultural-political problems structured within psychological frameworks and the continuing impacts of their legacies. This current took an overtly political reading of Derrida's work, also widely taken up by feminists, and at the time largely functioning under the rubric of 'post-structuralism' (e.g. Weedon 1987; see also Burman and Maclure 2005).

The new post-structuralist and deconstructionist approaches generated a new theoretical lexicon that specifically challenged prevailing psychological categories and frameworks. These included shifting from discussing 'self' to 'subject' and 'subjectivity'; from 'identity' to 'identification' – to emphasize the flexibility, partiality, and instability of these processes. While I have so far indicated various contributory routes into 'deconstructing developmental psychology', the publication in 1977 of a new journal entitled *Ideology & Consciousness* (self-published by its editorial collective) was critical in the UK context. Subtitled (on the back) *A Marxist Journal*, it aimed to 'advance political and theoretical struggle' around both social theory and current domains of practice, seeking 'to develop alternative approaches and methods for understanding the social relations in which we are engaged' (1977: 1). Significantly, the first theme identified for this project was 'The critique of psychological theories and practices such as those of, or derived from, Piaget, Skinner, Chomsky, Bernstein and so forth . . . making visible their epistemological presuppositions and premises, and by examining the practices which they inform' (1).

While *Ideology & Consciousness* was addressed to a wider remit of disciplines, the co-authored book *Changing the Subject* applied its critical perspectives specifically to psychology, the double meaning of its title encapsulating its argument of the need both to change the discipline of psychology and to formulate a materialist theory of subjectivity capable of social change (Henriques et al. 1984/1998).

Key resources and concepts

Having reviewed the introduction of particular forms of 'deconstruction' in English-language psychology that have implications for critical psychological work, I will now move on to highlight some key concepts and resources this set in motion.

Foucault's ideas profoundly influence deconstructionist approaches to psychology, as my account of Rose's (1985) historical analysis already indicates. Foucault's accounts of the emergence of key institutions by which the modern state governs the boundary between normal and abnormal (the prison, the mental hospital) include those directly affecting the assessment of children and families (the school, the child guidance clinic). Other important English-language accounts mobilizing historical analysis to critically re-read current theoretical presuppositions in

psychology include Morss (1990) on the significance of the selective readings of Darwin which suppressed his focus on variation in favour of adaptation, and Steedman (1995) on how the trope of the child, and in particular the girlchild, came to personify interiority in Western culture. As already indicated, Marxism is a somewhat more hidden or controversial resource within such accounts, but is claimed by some, including Parker (2007) and Newman and Holzman (1993), and alluded to by Morss (1996).

In particular, the notion of 'the psy-complex' has been particularly fruitful. This was formulated contemporaneously in 1985 by both David Ingleby and Nikolas Rose to highlight the emergence of psychology within modernizing state apparatuses as an administrative technology of assessment and surveillance. This analysis points to developmental psychology as a key technical knowledge mobilized by social policymakers to assess and mould children as future worker citizens – a trend continued by some of the radical educational literature focusing on the notion of 'developmentality' (Fendler 2001). 'The psy-complex' as a mode of (self) knowledge addressing reflexive, self-regulating subjects (or governmentality, Rose 1990) forms the basis for more recent analyses in terms of psychologisation (De Vos and Gordo López 2010).

On the other hand, there has been a longstanding and explicit feminist engagement with deconstruction, across disciplines as well as specifically in relation to psychology (Spivak 1990; Elam 1994). Feminists have long critiqued both the effects and terms of psychological models (of the child, of the family, etc.), ranging from highlighting the cultural and gendered assumptions structured into models of rational autonomy as the pinnacle of psychological development (e.g. Walkerdine 1988) through to the radicalized presumptions of models of motherhood (Phoenix 1987, see also Burman 1996b). The longstanding and sustained character of feminist critiques of developmental psychology (e.g. Phoenix et al. 1991) has rarely been explicitly named, with the Miller and Kosofsky Scholnick (2000) volume a notable exception. It is significant that, in its early days, interest in discursive approaches was strongly associated with feminist interventions (see also Squire 1990; Burman 1990, 1996a).

Psychoanalysis has been a third resource informing deconstructionist critiques of developmental psychology. Harris (1987) illustrates how a psychoanalytic understanding of mental functioning as surpassing consciousness not only challenges the cognitive underpinnings of rationality and puts into question the unitary character of the subject, but also highlights its links with industrial capitalism. While many deconstructionists were drawn to a Lacanian version of psychoanalysis (especially via its feminist rehabilitation, see Mitchell 1974; Grosz 1990), Bradley (1989, 1993) mobilised Kleinian theory to challenge the romance of the tranquil adorable baby and Urwin (1984/1998, 1986) offered both original syntheses of Lacanian and developmental perspectives and historical analyses of the relations between developmental psychology and psychoanalysis in Britain (Urwin and Sharland 1992). As elsewhere in social theory, psychoanalysis has informed the reflexive turn that challenges objectivist claims and instead insists that knowledge presumes a situated knower, a view from somewhere (that is usually the standpoint of the dominant), which brings into focus the question of the emotional investments structured within particular concepts of childhood, as well as challenging psychology's claims to specific expertise by highlighting the relationship between commonsense everyday cultural assumptions and supposedly technical disciplinary knowledge.

This strand of work also links with discussions of psychoanalytic culture (Parker 1997) and psychologization and the 'affective turn' under neoliberalism (De Vos and Gordo López 2010). But while in some contexts psychoanalysis may function as 'the repressed other of psychology' (Burman 2008b: 5), its critical character has to be read as a contingent resource mobilized in relation to particular times and places (as is appropriate to any genuine notion of deconstruction); obviously, positioning psychoanalysis as a critical alternative to psychology fails to work

in contexts (such as many South American countries) where psychoanalysis has been the main form of psychology, and has been allied with repressive regimes.

After deconstruction?

A frequent response to deconstructionist debates is to ask what should be put in place of the existing forms of developmental psychology. Here Foucault's (1977: 230) point that 'to imagine another system is to extend our participation in the present system' is apt. Nevertheless, without reconstructing or revising current models, deconstructing developmental psychology facilitates new agendas and alliances that prompt action and reflection, even if they refuse a reconstruction or rescue of the discipline. While space limits permit only very brief treatment, I will end by indicating some current opportunities for engagement and intervention that have implications for how a 'critical developmental psychology' might work.

First, critical and deconstructionist debates in developmental psychology offer new possibilities of alliance and engagement with the emerging discipline of childhood studies that has been influential in Britain (James and Prout 1990; Jenks 2005). Heavily influenced by sociology, anthropology, and history, these debates have been marked by a strong antipathy to traditional developmental psychology, seen as the originator of a model of the child as deficient, and only concerned with what the child will become in later life. Critical developmental psychology approaches offer a new position for debate about the role and status of psychology within this important field, a further context for which has been the passing of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989. While the rise of concern with children's rights has met with some provocative criticisms in political theory (see Pupavac 2002), a focus on children's participation and engagement within psychological research certainly brings new critical agendas to developmental work.

Critical and deconstructionist ideas have also generated equivalent debates within education, both methodologically (Davies 1994; Lather 1999; Maclure 2005) and in terms of reinterpreting educational policy (Dahlberg et al. 1999; Dahlberg and Moss 2005) to import a concern with ethical and politically engaged practice (MacNaughton 2005) and also to highlight the relevance of postcolonial theory (Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Cannella and Viruru 2004). They invite attention to the production of attributions of knowledge about, or to, children, including destabilizing claims to 'give voice' to children (Alldred and Burman 2005; Jackson and Mazzei 2009). Many opportunities arise for collaboration and coordination between parents and across professions working with children and families, as indicated also by Billington's (1996, 2000, 2006) work in educational psychology, and offer connections with debates emerging in disability studies (Marks 1996; Greenstein, in press). Such alliances make material the call to go beyond developmental psychology's abstraction from specific contexts and to attend instead to its plural, diverse forms. This is turn requires an engagement with cultural theory and anti-racist, feminist, postcolonial, and queer practice (Janssen 2010), addressing how cultural representations of childhood function within contemporary politics (Baird 2008; Stockton 2009; Hutnyk 2004; Castañeda 2002).

A third strand of inquiry invites a reconnection with the project envisaged by Riegel and others to move from local critique to international coalitions via addressing the political economy of development. For better or worse, current discourses of development connect children to national and international policy contexts, and criticisms of the limits of developmental thinking arising from economic development discussions are equally relevant to, and indeed extend the remit of critique within, developmental psychology (Sachs 1992; Mehmet 1995).

Equivalent questionings of the trajectory of development apply across individual, societal, and state levels, but perhaps it is at the most macro level that we see the limits of notions such as 'progress' that occupied so central a place in modern developmental psychological theorizing (Salvadori 2006; Saith 2006). The attention to colonial histories and current impacts of globalization has the merit of both connecting and topicalizing the diverse contexts of English-language developmental psychology, and connecting them with forms of developmental psychology. Developmental psychological knowledge is increasingly mobilized within transnational policies (Kumar and Burman 2009), and critical deconstructionist critiques are increasingly relevant (see also Burman 2008c).

Fourth, shifting developmental psychology's focus from the singular developing child to contexts for children's diverse developments not only brings the gendered labour of development onto the research and policy agenda, but also facilitates connection with explicitly feminist and women-centred approaches. This would help to counter the covert gender blindness or at times explicit antifeminism of some childhood studies, which in turn warrants the longstanding feminist suspicion of child-focused interventions (as noted by Thorne 1987; Burman 2008d). Instead, we can see emerging crossdisciplinary feminist engagement with forms and functions of childhood policies and practices, and their relations with feminist agendas in contexts as diverse as the US, the UK, and Australia (Burman and Stacey 2010; Castañeda 2002).

Finally, a key challenge facing these deconstructionist approaches lies in resisting the revival of empiricism structured within the return of evolutionary psychology, which coincides with a global political context of economic recession and increasing emphasis on the unchangeability of social and individual conditions. In particular, new collusions between psychology and psychoanalysis are claimed to be warranted by new brain imaging technologies. Here deconstructionists need to turn their attentions to unravelling the mobilization of spurious methodological and theoretical claims linking attachment theory with the diagnosis and prediction of attachment disorders (e.g. Fonagy 2001). These threaten to combine with other 'child fundamentalisms' (Baird 2008) that not only escalate normative definitions of who is deemed fit to parent via claims to scientificity prompted by the technology, but paradoxically also in that process compromise the very theories that are said to inspire them.

Note

This chapter, extracted and adapted from a much longer chapter published in French (Burman 2012), focuses on the development of a critical tradition in developmental psychology through the use of 'deconstruction' in English-speaking countries.

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Mumsnet popular accounts of motherhood and childhood: http://www.mumsnet.com/

Erica Burman

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Social psychology

A commentary on organizational research

Parisa Dashtipour

What is social psychology? The kind of answer you will get to this question will depend on who you ask, the epistemological and theoretical perspective they hold, and it will, to a large extent, also depend on the region of the world they live in and the university or faculty they work in. Social psychology is not a unified discipline; there is not one social psychology, but many social psychologies. However, despite the diversity of the field today, the positivistic approach is more pervasive and dominant than other approaches. This is the perspective which is usually taught in standard psychology courses and textbooks in most parts of the world and it is this version of social psychology that informs various applied fields, of which organizational behaviour is one of the most popular. Organizational social psychology involves the application of social psychological theories and methods to understand, inform, and ultimately improve organizational practices. Organizations are ubiquitous to everyday life and are the main instruments of capitalism. As long as social psychology is deployed to solve management problems, a critique of social psychology must include a solid critique of organizational social psychology.

This chapter will begin with a short historical overview, showing that social psychology was born out of an early interest in crowds or groups (Stainton Rogers 2011). It will then review the critiques made against mainstream social psychology, concentrating on the social identity perspective. The final part of the chapter will expand on the critical agenda by focusing on the applied field of organizational social psychology. The chapter will end by suggesting that organizational social psychology should renounce its fixation with groups *within* organizations and pay serious attention to critical management scholars who point to the relationship between broader societal ideologies and organizational life.

A longstanding interest in groups

Social psychology as we know it today began to appear between the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. A group of people who contributed significantly to the establishment of social psychology as an independent field of study was the so-called *folk psychologists*. In the 1860s, Heymann Steinthal and Moritz Lazarus studied the psychology of ordinary people and collectives. Their work was driven by the basic principle that individuals who belong to the same group tend to think in a collective rather than an individual manner. The interest in the

collective mind was reinforced by Gustave Le Bon (1895/1947), who drew on Tarde's (1890) concept of suggestibility and the 'group mind' to claim that in crowds people lose their individuality and capacity for independent rational thinking and become subjected to the irrational wills of the crowd. These very early theorists and their interest in group and collective behaviour have been significant in the later development of social psychology. In 1908, the psychologist McDougall published what is often seen as one of the first social psychological textbooks in English (McDougall 1908/1960). Drawing on other social scientists, such as Le Bon, McDougall was significant in helping to establish social psychology as an independent discipline that would scientifically investigate crowds (Farr 1986). In the book *The Group Mind* (1920) he claimed that collectives that are relatively organized generate mental forces that are not exactly the same as the sum total of the attitudes of each individual group member.

However, soon enough, the interest in group and collective phenomena began to diminish as the discipline focused more on the individual. Allport (1927) dismissed the group mind thesis by arguing that the locus of study in social psychology should be individuals, because it is individuals and not groups that act, think, and feel. In his book *Social Psychology* (1924), he proposed a behaviourist approach based on the experimental method and underpinned by the assumption that social psychology should be concerned with observable behaviour and not waste its energies on unobservable mental states. The behaviourist approach faded away in the 1940s when, during and after World War II, a number of notable European Gestalt psychologists fled to the USA and established a different type of experimental approach that was less based on behaviourism and more on concepts such as group dynamics and group norms. Social psychology was thus yet again dominated by a focus on groups. Kurt Lewin, who has been a prominent figure within the field of organizational behaviour, was interested in the impact of groups on perception and action. Lewin, alongside Muzafer Sherif, established experimental social psychology as we know it today (Stainton Rogers 2011). In the 1940s and the decades to follow, social psychological theories and approaches developed as a response to the sociopolitical issues of the time, such as the Holocaust. The experiments conducted by Muzafer Sherif, Solomon Ash, and later, Stanley Milgram and Philip Zimbardo explored issues of influence, conformity, and obedience, and could therefore be considered as critical in orientation (Hepburn 2003: 20).

Criticizing the critical work

Despite the critical potential of earlier work, the positivist perspective prevents social psychology from capturing real-world human experience. Many contemporary social psychology textbooks, such as Hogg and Vaughan (2002) – which is one of the most popular textbooks available on the market – introduce the discipline with Allport's (1935) (in)famous definition of social psychology: social psychology is 'the scientific investigation of how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others' (Hogg and Vaughan 2002: 2). This definition highlights two issues. The first is the focus on science and the second is the social–individual division. Social psychologists tend to insist that their work is scientific, and they imply that experiments, or quantitative studies, should be prioritized over other research methods. Science is an approach concerned with hypothesis testing and causality, and it values 'objective' observation. In standard social psychology courses and textbooks, science is viewed as an alternative approach to dogma (e.g. Hogg and Vaughan 2002: 6). Students are often taught that the scientific experimental method is the most suitable method, as it leads to objective generalizable knowledge about human behaviour. But the problem with experiments is that they create a false divide between the social and the individual, and this division is implicit in Allport's definition. In search for generalizable results, experiments tend to take

individuals away from their social context, which leads to a decontextualized understanding of mind and behaviour.

A relatively large group of social psychologists today reject positivism and refuse to believe in generalizable statements. Social psychology is therefore, as Harré (1997) states, characterized by two conflicting perspectives: one that aims to arrive at causal, universal explanations to human experience, and another one which is critical of universalist claims and aims to explore the context-specific nature of mind and behaviour by emphasizing culture and language. These two approaches are often called *psychological social psychology* and *sociological social psychology*. It is generally agreed that the latter approach is dominant in Europe and the former in the USA.

To a large extent, it was the so-called crisis in the discipline that led to the solidification of these two strands and to the development of critical social psychology (Spears 1997). The crisis is often stated to have begun with Israel and Tajfel's (1972) criticism of mainstream individualist approaches. Another scholar who has been significant in setting the terms of the debate is Gergen (1973), who challenged the reliance on positivism, arguing that social psychology is more akin to history than to the natural sciences. One of the main issues that concerned scholars at the time was that social psychology had become little else than a technical scientific endeavour that was far removed from real-world issues (Hepburn 2003). Researchers were criticized for being too focused on individual cognitive processes, and for employing narrow theoretical and methodological perspectives. Even though the crises did not lead to any serious solutions to the problems that were raised (Augoustinos and Walker 1995), they did contribute to the development of a specifically 'European' social psychology that was explicitly social in its approach. The late Serge Moscovici (1972), one of the pioneers of this European perspective, was also a critic of North American research because of its individualist and capitalist underpinnings.

One paradigm that emerged out of the crisis was the social identity theory (for reviews of this theory, see Brown 2000; Hornsey 2008; Reicher et al. 2010; Tajfel and Turner 1986). This theory was initially developed to make sense of the findings of a series of famous experiments known as the 'minimal group paradigm' which focused on intergroup behaviour (Billig and Tajfel 1973; Tajfel 1970; Tajfel et al. 1971). Later, self-categorization theory (Turner 1985; Turner et al. 1987) was developed as a branch of social identity theory and explored group processes in general. The influence of social identity theory has in recent years increased and it is today one of the most popular perspectives in social psychology (Hornsey 2008). This theory is often perceived as a critical approach, partly because it was born out of an interest in prejudice, oppression, conflict, and social change. It also challenges much of the individualism in social psychology by emphasizing the impact of the social group on psychology. Despite this critical edge, however, the theory largely centres on cognitive processes. Parker (1997) points out that, ironically, individual psychology and cognitive processes have become increasingly important in European research on social identity and groups. Social identity theory tends to present contextual and social issues as external to the individual, existing merely as a set of stimuli to which the individual responds. Self-categorization theory in particular tends to break the world down into separate levels and variables for use in experimental manipulation and statistical analysis (Condor 2003), and relations between groups are thought to exist as a series of outside stimuli that are cognitively processed within the individual mind. For example, 'maleness, masculinity, gender differences are all described as a "set of relations being represented". They constitute the input to a representational process occurring within the individual' (Brown and Lunt 2002: 9). Researchers have also challenged the universalistic assumptions that underlie the social identity paradigm. Although some of Tajfel's writings cautioned against universal psychological explanations and 'truth claims', 'social identity theory is a universal theory, both in terms of its key concepts and its core assumptions about individual motivations' (Billig 1996: 346).

Discontented with the cognitivism, individualism, and universalism of mainstream European social psychology, a group of scholars influenced by social constructionism and discourse theory have developed something which is termed discursive social psychology. Discursive social psychology is a vast field and is itself deeply divided between, for example, those who adopt a 'bottom-up' approach and focus on the intricate details of everyday discourse (e.g. Potter and Wetherell 1987) and those who promote a more 'top-down' approach by emphasizing the significance in exploring what societal discourses do to us (e.g. Parker 1992) (see Branney 2008: 576). What both of these perspectives share is a focus on language and discourse and a dedication to qualitative research. The discursive perspective has been an important critical strand; it has challenged mainstream approaches, including the social identity paradigm, for neglecting communication and language (Condor 1996; Wetherell 1996: 280, see also the discursively orientated social identity research by Reicher and Hopkins 1996; 2001). From the discursive point of view, language is constitutive of social life and thus social psychology is defined as what happens between people and in language, rather than within individual minds. While the bottom-up version of discursive social psychology has in recent years become more part of the mainstream (Parker 2012), those unhappy with discursive psychologists' prioritization of discourse over subjectivity (e.g. Frosh 2001) have contributed to the development of yet another critical approach referred to as 'psychosocial studies' (Frosh 2003; Frosh et al. 2003; Gough 2004; see also Henriques et al. 1984/1998; for a review of this field, see Frosh 2010, chapter 7).

Organizational social psychology

The above-mentioned challenges to mainstream social psychology have been important in demonstrating the continued prevalence of individualism and cognitivism, and they have helped to disrupt the faith in experiments as the ideal method. In this section, I expand on the critique of mainstream social psychology by examining some of the ways in which the discipline has been applied to understand organizational behaviour. This is significant because social psychology is not simply an academic exercise. As a component of the 'psy-complex' (Ingleby 1985; Rose 1989), it participates in the regulation of everyday life, including organizational life. It is largely by examining how the discipline has been applied that we can make explicit the ideological basis of its knowledge production.

Contemporary social psychology focuses on a variety of topics, including attitudes, perception, social influence, and prejudice (see for example, Hewstone et al. 2012). Applied social psychology involves the practical application of theories, research methods, and intervention techniques to shed light on and solve various real-world social problems. Applied fields include immigration, education, gender relations, and mental health. The discipline has been particularly influential in the area of organizational behaviour. It could be stated that this interest in organizations is as old as social psychology itself; its seeds may be found in Steinthal and Lazarus' work on the influence of social organization on individual mentality. What concerns social psychology is often considered as directly relevant to organizations. Organizational behaviour − a field of study which is becoming increasingly popular (Knights and Willmott 2012) − is to a significant extent shaped by research and theories that originate in social psychology. The latter has had a massive impact on the way in which organizational issues are understood and addressed. Social psychologists attempt to particularly understand the psychological factors underpinning individuals' behaviour in organizations. Areas of interest include leadership, group processes, motivation, organizational change, organizational culture, and organizational performance.

Courses in social and organizational psychology are often presented as different than the more traditional organizational or industrial psychology perspectives because they take into account

the social and contextual influences on performance (see for example Social-Organizational Psychology course description at Columbia University: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/orgpsych/index.asp?Id=General+InformationandInfo=What+is+Social-Organizational+Psychology-%3F). Despite this emphasis on context, organizational social psychology risks psychologizing organizational phenomena when it claims to 'use psychological insight to build an understanding of the minds of organizational members' (De Cremer et al. 2011: 6). Furthermore, insofar as it aims to 'provide conceptual tools and theories to tackle . . . managerial and organizational challenges' (De Cremer et al. 2011: 5), social psychology could be regarded as acting in the interest of management. This is evident in the assistance that social psychology claims to offer organizations, especially in managing outliers that do not fit the stated organizational vision. As De Cremer et al. state, 'when individual beliefs differ from organizational beliefs, it becomes critical to know how to merge those beliefs into a central, motivating culture' (De Cremer et al. 2011: 7).

Social identity theory is, however, a potentially critical approach to organizational social psychology. In the decades since Ashforth and Mael's (1989) influential paper, there has been an enormous interest in the application of social identity theory to organizations (see for example, Albert et al. 2000; Haslam 2004; Haslam et al. 2003; Herriot and Scott-Jackson 2002; Hogg and Terry 2001; Van Dick 2001). In organizational studies of identity, social identity theory is today the most well-known and influential approach (Alvesson et al. 2008). Social identity theorists have been driven by a concern for *both* the psychological and the social aspects of organizational life, and are therefore seen as opposed to the individualism of the organizational/industrial psychology perspective. Furthermore, in contrast to the latter, the application of social identity theory to organizations is based on the assumption that issues of power, politics, and conflict are central to organizational and working lives and should therefore be highlighted and studied, rather than glossed over.

In *Psychology in Organizations* – a book which is nowadays listed as essential reading in organizational social psychology courses – Haslam (2004) reworks some of the most popular organizational topics from the perspective of social identity theory. Haslam shows that much of what traditionally has been perceived as an outcome of individual psychology, such as motivation, commitment, decision-making, leadership, and stress are actually an effect of group processes. This is an important book in social psychology, not least for its critical outlook and its challenge of some aspects of managerial doctrine. Haslam states that the psychological internalization of the group means that individuals can 'engage in meaningful, integrated and collaborative organizational behaviour . . . The fact that groups transform the psychology of the individual is seen not as a necessary evil but as an essential good' (17). Social identity theory goes against traditional theories – including Janis' (1982) idea of 'group think' – by emphasizing that the influence of groups may lead to creative and socially enriching practices. On the one hand, this idea can be seen as progressive given that identification with a group is critical for the development of 'collective consciousness', social solidarity, and social cohesion, and for the occurrence of collective action. If people in organizations define themselves as individuals, rather than as members of groups, they are more likely to be driven by a motivation to enhance themselves as individuals, to focus on their personal success, and the attainment of personal resources. When social identity is salient, however, people are more likely to strive for collective gains, are more prone to be sensitive to other people's opinions, and show loyalty and commitment. The emphasis on groups and social identity is thus significant, especially as it challenges the mainstream focus on individual competition and the glorification of career development and personal financial and material growth. There is, however, a risk that this turns into an idealization of the group. We should be wary of the fact that the process of identification – viewing oneself as part of a

group – that social identity theory often highlights as associated with positive outcomes is exactly what is necessary for the manipulation and control of employee behaviour and sub-jectivity. Any theorization of identity should centre on the relationship between identity and control of employees (Alvesson and Willmott 2002). One of the reasons why social identity theory has not adequately made this control aspect more explicit may be due to its positivist approach that views identity largely as a given, rather than as the continuous project of power. Thus, although it attempts to highlight politics and conflict as determinant factors in organi-zational life, its ultimate aim is to predict behaviour and to provide remedies to organizational 'problems'. Regardless of well-intentioned challenges to the managerial prerogative and despite a focus in political processes, it still based on an instrumentally rational view of the organization.

Just like much of the general literature on social identity theory, Haslam's book is permeated with a tension between the desire to remain dedicated to a critical agenda – one that takes seriously the political and social embedding of mind and behaviour – and the persistence of a research program that claims to *explain* and *define* human experience, and that therefore takes part in the managerial mission to direct and control behaviour. Social psychologists participate in the political life of organizations in the very moment they state that theirs is not a project about politics (see Haslam 2004: 226). Politics is exercised when research claims to offer practical solutions to managerial concerns, such as motivation, group productivity, and decision-making (see Haslam 2004: 227). Notwithstanding the good intentions of the social psychologist, sug-gestions such as 'productivity on a group task will increase to the extent that group goals are congruent with a salient social identity' (2004: 227) can be deployed in an attempt to manip-ulate and change behaviour within organizations in ways that further the interests of certain groups. In the very beginning of his book, Haslam justifies the need for social identity theory by appealing to the discourse of efficiency (Haslam 2004: 1). The application of social identity theory remains thus, to a large extent, a technical exercise, and ultimately aimed at improving management outcomes. Despite its critical potential, the social identity approach to organiza-tion studies is in the end a functionalist one, driven by an assumption that there is a relationship between identity and behaviour and therefore managers can utilize identity in order to generate behaviour that is to the benefit of the organization.

Conclusion: critical management studies as inspiration

When investigating its 'applied' aspect, the role of ideology and power in social psychological research and theory becomes readily apparent. Organizational social psychology is largely driven by a desire to develop general universal laws about how people in organizations function. Even those perspectives that attempt to bring to light the dominance of context do not avoid employ-ing a discourse permeated by generalizable truth-claims about how organizations work and how they can perform better.

Organizational social psychology often adopts a rather restricted understanding of the social and of politics. Despite recognizing that politics is endemic to organizational life, it is often 'micro-politics' – the politics that occurs between people or groups within organizations – which is of concern. As a result, the way in which broader structural factors, including an examination of how historical and cultural forces, shape identities within organizations tends to get overlooked. Analysis that focuses on problems within organizations and neglects wider structural issues will inevitably be partial. Organizational social psychology needs to pay serious attention to critical management scholars who have in the past few decades posed a challenge to traditional theories of management (Alvesson and Willmott 1992). These scholars oblige us to consider the 'system-wide', neoliberalist ideologies that influence management logics,

perceptions, and cognitions within organizations. Trying to comprehend social psychological processes in organizations without seriously recognizing such dominant 'extra-organizational' dynamics will inevitably be a futile exercise. Rather than being preoccupied with instrumental concerns, organizational social psychology needs to be driven by emancipatory interests. Furthermore, instead of deploying energies into producing theories, methods, and prescriptions in the hope that they will offer 'solutions' to managerial problems – instead of being preoccupied with prediction and control – social psychologists should aim to reveal the politically charged, messy, contradictory, and ambiguous side of organizational life under capitalism.

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Website resources

Mead project. Classical writings by social psychologists, including Allport and Sherif: http://www.brocku. ca/MeadProject/inventory5.html
Social Psychology Network. Links to a wide variety of social psychology websites. It is a good source for exploring the kind of issues that social psychologists are interested in and the type of research they do: http://www.socialpsychology.org/

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9

Abnormal psychology
A psychology of disorders

Susana Seidmann and Jorgelina Di Iorio

The earliest traces of psychology as a field of knowledge can be found in the domain of philosophy. Since the classical age, philosophers have reflected on the human being, human nature, the relation of the human being to their context, and on thought as the expression of their insertion in the world.

It was only in the second half of the nineteenth century that psychology separated from philosophy, emerging as an autonomous scientific discipline. Historical and social conditions – the promotion of the bourgeoisie and of scientific knowledge by the power structure – put an end to metaphysical speculation and gave rise to a scientific approach to the natural world and the human being. The autonomy achieved by scientific disciplines such as physiology, astronomy, and biology, provided psychology with a model for its own development, linked to a model of study of the natural sciences (Seidmann 2000).

At the dawn of experimental psychology, Wundt (1879 in Seidmann 2000) overcame the resistance to consider psychology a science by making it possible, it seemed, to measure and quantify the contents of consciousness. Psychological phenomena were explained according to the canonical experimental sciences of those days, which were grounded in the positivist epistemology prevailing in the medical and biological sciences. The experimental method would later be complemented with psychometric tests and standardized questionnaires to study all psychological functions. As Cole (1999) explained, there was a search for a unified science and a unified methodology, modelled after the natural sciences.

As a result of this influence, the twentieth century saw a strengthened psychology that contributed to creating room for knowledge, control, and naturalization, thus leading to descriptions of human phenomena based on values of *normality* and *abnormality*. Patterns were systematized for organizing human perception, learning, and development, and these patterns were claimed to be true and valid for every person, everywhere, and in every historical period.

As a *normal social science*, psychology reproduced the principles of classical psychiatry, thus pathologizing subjective suffering. However, it focused not only on clinical practice, but also on the evolutionary processes of human development such as birth, adolescence, old age, sexuality, pain, and death. What mattered was evaluating and measuring psychological processes in terms of certain 'normal', general, and transcultural parameters. Everyday life began to be organized according to explanatory narratives of feelings and events as *normal* or *abnormal* – evaluated as

good or bad, respectively. Normality was regarded as an expected way of living, modelled from outside in terms of how frequent or rare the observed behaviours were.

These principles became points of reference for qualifying as abnormal everything that was imperfect, inconvenient, and infrequent, thereby preventing members of society from developing in ways considered 'satisfactory'. In addition to describing what things were like, the theoretical aspects of psychology prescribed what things should be like. Normality denoted the type of mental activity by means of which knowledge, abilities, habits, attitudes, and even ideals were acquired, retained, and utilized. Thus, persons could gradually adapt and be adapted to the environment.

Academic structures reproduced the knowledge/power structures that had validated knowledge about people. The courses of study of psychology first had a distinctive biological, experimentalist, and positivist character, associated with the approach to pathology and then to a further pathologization of the existing naturalist models.

Such definitions of the *normal* and the *abnormal* have given rise to a branch of psychology that focuses on the behaviours developing from these pre-established patterns. The theoretical concept of normality stems from practical applications in which behaviours are defined in terms of health and illness. Psychiatry was considered the discursive basis for psychology to define what is and what is not normal in the different contexts where people interact – the family, the school, the workplace, the courts. This has opened the door to the pharmacology market: medication to treat depression or combat anxiety, pills to reduce excesses, anguish, insomnia, weariness, manias, and obsessions, and even to lessen behaviour or learning problems in children. What is considered pathological is medicalized by providing biological explanations for social and psychological phenomena. Such a process stemmed from the dominant medical power and knowledge which arose from relational systems that expanded within psychology and other fields of knowledge and intervention over human beings.

Abnormal psychology reflects the modernist vision characterizing the twentieth century, which aimed to know a 'rational, orderly and accessible self' (Gergen 1992) by defining normality in terms of three distinct, but complementary aspects: *normality as health*, denoting the absence of symptoms, disorders, or disabilities; *normality as an ideal*, that which is optimum, desirable, harmonious; and *normality as average*, that which is statistically common – what the majority does, has, or is. Grounded in the developments of biology, this field of psychology seeks the constitutive mechanisms of the person assimilated to a machine, in particular a computer.

Disruption, difference, and excess gave rise to correcting and normalizing knowledges and technologies within psychology. Relying on experimental procedures, the identification of general psychological laws, and the use of inferential statistics enabled research and approaches to evolve unaffected by social and historical transformations. Although some approaches do not ignore culture, they assign it a minor role, that of an 'independent variable or as an aspect beyond the framework of the discipline, and put aside the central role played by social and cultural phenomena in the construction of the human reality' (Gergen 1994: 34).

Abnormal, pathological, and dangerous: the social construction of the diagnostic criteria

Abnormal psychology as a dominant model in psychology provides rigid definitions of illness, considered to be individual disorders, or even disabilities requiring a specific cure. It is central to find a way to act upon and remove whatever disturbs the *normal development of events*. These fixed definitions only permit restricted responses for the action (Gergen 1996). Therefore, the model involves treating mental illnesses on the basis of stable formulas – medicalization, segregation,

and hospitalization – which are considered timeless and which disqualify other approaches. The abnormal, then, is a shortcoming to be suppressed, rather than a number of problems to be understood.

Normal and *abnormal* grew out of categories that explained health and illness, with prevailing biological – that is, 'biologicizing' as the making of something into a biological category – and individualistic accounts. From this perspective, psychological disorders are defined as psycho-pathological symptoms that have an impact on multiple areas of everyday life. Illness is, from this point of view, a natural, biological event, not a sociohistorical one. Within the framework dictating symptom-diagnosis-treatment, diagnostic classification manuals such as DSM IV and CIE-10 classify everyday life on the assumption that all behaviour is susceptible to definitions of disorder (Carpintero 2011). This implies that the types of mental suffering which indeed exist – certain behaviours, ways of thinking, and emotions that may seem strange as they depart from the socially dominant model – may be legitimated as normal at a given historical moment.

The idea of normality appears as the result of an individual condition or situation, and not as a social construction. Such a definition is common currency in a psychology that corresponds to the hegemonic medical model (Menéndez 2009). This model refers to the practices, knowledges, and theories of what is known as scientific medicine. Since the end of the seventeenth century, scientific medicine has managed to subordinate a whole set of practices, knowledges, and ideologies, which were dominant until then, and to be recognized as the only scientifically legitimated way to address an illness. Biologism – a reduction of understanding to biological conceptions – constitutes the factor ensuring that the model is supposedly in keeping with scientific rigor, and also the differentiating and hierarchical factor that places itself above other explanatory models. What is immediately manifested is pondered upon without reference to the social relations that determine the phenomenal nature of an illness.

According to Foucault (2005), a disciplinary mechanism came to be built around the illness, whereby diagnosis is constructed without subjecting it to a truth test. The diagnosis carries personal, juridical, and social stigmas that, given their presumed risks, create the category of abnormality. That which is considered pathological meets with hostility and mistrust. In addition, the fear that generates the atypical results produces overdiagnosis of the pathology as a way to control reality. Stigmas are generated because of the need to create categories as a way to be protected from the intolerance to the different. Thus, new explicative realities are socially built.

Goffman (1963/1970) usefully conceptualized *stigma* by referring to negative physical, mental, or social attributes that are socially created to categorize individuals. A discrepancy arises between the virtual social identity and the real identity, because some aspects attributed to the other fail to conform to the widespread and socially accepted stereotype. Thus, an attribute stigmatizing the other ensures the normality of those to whom the attribute is attached, thus fostering distance and clashes in social relations. The other is no longer perceived as a whole, but rather belittled for having discredited attributes. The stigma banishes the other from 'normal' everyday life, which entails a process of social exclusion. Whatever is regarded as *irregular* must be corrected, excluded, and eventually even locked up.

Normalizing certain social groups requires implementing surveillance devices supported by power mechanisms: controlling individuals, diagnosing them, classifying their mental structures, and putting into action specific techniques (Foucault 2006) wherever it is that difference emerges (school, family, work, sexuality). Therefore, there is an underlying ideological position in this normalizing concern, which in 'moral' terms (from the Latin '*mores*', customs) describes what things are like and prescribes what must be done to keep them that way.

This *governance* of individuals, children, families, and sexuality, among other phenomena, that characterizes abnormal psychology is associated with the concept of power. Power, as a social

relation, involves the ways in which the others are defined, that is, the discourses that enable certain social actors to influence asymmetrically the decisions and lives of others. The implementation of a 'truth' present in the representation of the world, the subjects, and the relations between them, has oppressive and constraining effects on certain social groups. It is these power relations that produce the *effects of truth* (Foucault 2012).

There is a great controversy about the boundary between the normal and the pathological, depending on the parameters considered for each historical period. As has been described, the normal and the abnormal were constituted as explanatory categories of health and illness. Following Canguilhem (2005), we see that health and illness do not differ in essence, as ancient doctors may have believed, and they should not be regarded as separate principles, as entities vying over the living organism, because it is only in a matter of degree that these two ways of being differ.

From our perspective, both situations are constituted by cultural definitions. They are constructed in intersubjective relations, giving rise to different realities. Abnormal psychology deals with those who are 'mad', different, and those who contravene definitions of reality and therefore pose a threat to the status quo. Marginalization in social life has taken on different appearances (Foucault 1964/1967): the leper in the Middle Ages; the insane in the Modern Age; the poor, the lawbreakers, the drug users, and those with different sexual practices in the present time. All of them must be excluded as they pose a threat to the prevailing definition of reality, which is undoubtedly always in line with a certain kind of political definition describing the world of social relations.

In short, strangers are expelled or confined in social spaces where they cause no discomfort to those who label them. In this way, the *abnormal* easily bears the burden of the stigma, given the otherwise unfounded fear aroused by difference and segregation. The human being in these conditions finds it difficult to accept diversity. Diversity is not regarded as the expression of an epoch or the way of living of a social group, but as imposed by the dominant power models.

The relations between the normal and the abnormal are also present in the field of education. Duschatzky (2007) shows two ways of constructing reality: teaching through the institutionalized school and teaching at the margins of collective life. The former is ruled by a stringent normative order, which plans everything that might occur. It is the discourse of the *must be* producing an idealized *is*, where the resentment of exclusion arises. The latter creates subjectivities that reject institutional rules. These *errant* subjectivities are connected with what befalls the social process, and are able to transform it productively in a shared project, these subjectivities develop social bonds. They are the teachers who reach out to the community, in search of the students who dropped out of school – those considered *abnormal* by the establishment. They situate them in their own context of everyday experience and propose activities based on their needs and potentials. It is a *post-state experience, a reorganization of the power machinery*.

The mental health field is also riddled with political positions that create new forms of social relations, given the empowerment of users of the mental health system, psychiatric hospitals in particular. The *Frente de Artistas del Borda* (an artists' association of Borda Hospital in Buenos Aires) (1984), *la Colifata* Radio Station (1991), PREA (Rehabilitation and Assisted Discharge Programme 2000), and *El Pan del Borda* ('Borda´s Bread') (2002), among others, constitute proposals that challenge the social imaginary of insanity and contribute to dehospitalizing patients through participation and involvement. Despite these innovative experiences, for those socially defined as abnormal a great distance persists between a socially attributed objective reality and individually assumed subjective reality.

Socialization processes (Berger and Luckmann 1972) entail a distribution of knowledges and roles in terms of what is established as 'adequate' in a social structure. However, 'abnormality',

or 'inadequacy', turns into a biographical possibility when discrepancies arise between what is attributed and what is assumed. Berger and Luckmann (1972) posited that society would provide the therapeutic mechanisms to treat those 'abnormal' cases. Such a claim ensures that true or potential *deviants* remain within institutionalized definitions of reality. This requires a body of knowledge that includes a theory of deviation, a diagnostic apparatus, and a conceptual system for the 'cure' of the souls: that is, 'abnormal psychology'.

The resistance of the abnormal facing the hegemony of the normality

Following Foucault (2012), we now understand that dominant positions also make resistant positions emerge as alternatives to what is socially legitimated and validated within the sciences. Here we have some grounding for a critical psychological response to the problems we have described. This tension between the 'hegemonic' (or dominant system of ideas) and the non-hegemonic within psychology may be summarized by four antinomies or *themata* (Moscovici 2004) expressing central controversial themes: subject/object, structure/process, nature/culture, and simplicity/complexity.

The subject/object pair refers, on the one hand, to the way in which psychology defines the situations or phenomena that it addresses. While the latter position, 'object', stresses definitions marked by deficit, the former focuses on capabilities and possibilities. On the other hand, it refers to the relation to what is to be understood, which implies the neutrality/implication, distance/proximity pairs from the observer's perspective on the observed. This first pair is in turn associated with the structure/process pair, involving psychological explanations about what is observed, manifested, measurable, as opposed to a psychology interested in social processes, in the historical understanding of what is produced, negotiated, and maintained in social exchanges.

The nature/culture tension involves explanations of human behaviours stressing either the acquired or the inborn. Finally, the simplicity/complexity pair integrates the pairs mentioned above by referring to coexisting ways of understanding that reduce explanations about mental life to the causal and predetermined, as opposed to a paradigm marked by multicausality and recursiveness.

Thus, diverging, and still current, logics of thought have emerged within psychology, with which human activity and suffering are defined: *object/structure/nature/simplicity* vs. *subject/process/culture/complexity*. When it comes to mental suffering, the first logic, which is typical of normalizing discourse, is represented by asylum practices. Although existing worldwide discourses sound inclusive and respectful of human rights (CELS 2008), they are still naturalized and legally accepted strategies to dispose of the strangers who jeopardize the 'established' reality. For the asylum system, being different is considered a social failure, and it is the target of an enormous wave of social violence, 'a relation of oppression and violence between power and non-power, resulting in the exclusion of the latter by the former' (Basaglia 1972). This infringement creates a group of 'citizens without rights', whose social relations are not characterized by horizontal reciprocity, but by the stigma, that is, 'the object of violence'. This does not so often occur with affluent citizens, as economic power also involves technical power.

It is in this situation of social subjection that new models of social inclusion emerge: community psychological experiences that stress the courage and the need for active participation, where those who are different become key actors in their own lives, thus strengthening their genuine potentials. The pioneering experiences of therapeutic communities in England in the 1940s were one critical response to the dominant official psychology. In Trieste, Italy, Franco Basaglia (1972) defined the therapeutic approach as 'dialectically living the contradictions of

reality', describing how the distance between the normal and the abnormal is linked to the values of those who attach the labels.

Other critical voices emerged during the 1960s, also in England, including Cooper, Laing, and Esterson, who advocated *antipsychiatry* as a repercussion of the great social movements taking place in France and other countries at the time, which go under the name of 'May 1968'. David Cooper, for example, argued that 'schizophrenia' was a label leading inexorably to violence and exclusion. He regarded this designation as a 'microsocial crisis', in which the 'schizophrenic patient' was confirmed in his or her different, pathological, and strange identity, in a relational context marked by a strong family influence on the illness.

In Argentina, Enrique Pichon Rivière, one of the distinguished founders of the Asociación Psicoanalítica Argentina (Argentine Psychoanalytical Association) in the 1940s, later moved away from that association and perspective. He criticized traditional psychiatry and proposed a new psychopathology, including new clinical approaches and harsh political criticism of the psychiatric establishment at the beginning of the 1950s. His political observations were based on the effects of repressive policies on the psychotic patients 'stored' in asylums. Their segregation, marginalization, and pathologies originated within the institutional dynamics. He developed social psychiatry through the restorative creation of associative bonds among the patients, who took on new active roles as a means to recover their health. This is how several therapeutic communities were created to foster the active participation of patients.

Another experience with medical authority that makes it possible to reflect upon the social conditions in the production of normality/abnormality is the well-known Rosenhan (1988) experiment; 'Mentally healthy' persons, or 'pseudopatients', who pretended they were hearing voices, were admitted in mental hospitals. After a period of time, when the symptoms had disappeared, they were diagnosed with schizophrenia in remission and discharged. There was no doubt about their illness condition among the psychiatrists, and thus the possibility that these patients were healthy was ruled out. Rosenhan argued that the physicians were more likely to consider a healthy person ill, than to consider an ill person healthy, which implies that not being aware of the illness would be more dangerous than not being aware of health. This highlighted the social construction process of different realities, by means of which the person considered 'ill' is unable to shed this designation, given the stigma that difference carries in interpersonal relations and the difficulty in acknowledging social responsibility in its creation.

Challenges: the ethical-political dimension in psychology

The epistemological question about the nature of the relation between psychology and what it seeks to know – human activity – makes it possible to understand how the 'other' is conceived, thus raising new questions associated with ethical–political considerations within the discipline. This dimension involves the definition of the other and his or her inclusion in the production of knowledge: who is the other? What is his or her place? Who knows something and how is it known?

Since its origins as a scientific discipline, psychology has attempted to normalize human life according to criteria based on a certain notion of biological development. This has given rise to studies that define it from the perspective of evolutionary development, which would be unaffected by historical social transformations. Although other studies have taken into account such transformations in the construction of subjectivity, they consider them pathological or social problems beyond the scope of the discipline (Di Iorio and Lenta 2013).

The hegemonic perspective of normalization, which reproduces the idea of a single possible-desirable subject, detrimentally affects those who do not meet the expectations of those with

the power to define objects and subjects (Frigerio 2006). Medicalization, which then turned into psychologization of social problems, was the format developed for social control in the discursive hegemony of psychology. As opposed to configurations positioned in normalization, the rendering of people into passive beings, reduction to the individual level, and objectification, there are proposals arising from a transdisciplinary understanding, which embrace plurality and subjects that are active in their contexts.

The tension between social reproduction and transformation correlates with discursive hegemony in psychology. Some epistemological and ideological aspects constitute unspoken agreements related to historical, cultural, and sociopolitical matters in which psychology takes part. No neutrality exists in science, because methods and designs indicate how to understand and evaluate just as they fundamentally reveal the logic behind the production of meaning guiding the process of knowledge construction.

It is a challenge to accept the other as someone unexpected and unequal, and to prefer dialogue over segregation (Wiesenfeld 2000). In this way, resistance would focus on the creation of participatory projects and strengthen the ability to build new ways to address unequal conditions. Participation, defined as 'a value, a process, a technique and an activity' (Sánchez Vidal 1996), entails a sense of active belonging to a social activity or process, a high level of commitment to its goals, and political and ethical support, inasmuch as it advocates change, improvement in the quality of life and access to rights.

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Website resources

On the 'democratic psychiatry' tradition which includes the 'antipsychiatry' perspective of R.D. Laing and approaches to deinstitutionalisation by Franco Basaglia in Italy, *Asylum: The Magazine of Democratic Psychiatry*: www.asylumonline.net

On the hearing of voices (usually treated as a first-rank symptom of schizophrenia in medical psychiatry), the international support network 'Intervoice': www.intervoiceonline.org

On mental health and human rights (about medicalization and non-drugs approaches on mental health, stigmatization, and discrimination): http://www.cchrint.org/ and www.cels.org.ar

On social constructionism: http://www.taosinstitute.net/

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Forensic psychology
Clinical and critical

Sam Warner

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Forensic psychology operates at the interface between psychology and the law. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in this area of psychology. This is not least because the application of psychology to understanding criminals and criminal behaviour has been increasingly popularized through fictional television programmes, movies, and books. For example, most people know about criminal 'profiling' through reference to the work of the FBI's Behavioral Research and Instruction Unit (BRIU) at Quantico, USA, in programmes such as 'Criminal Minds'; in reference to individual depictions of maverick psychology profilers in programmes such as the British 'Cracker'; or in films and books such as the era-defining 'The Silence of the Lambs'. These fictional media representations shape our perceptions and beliefs about crime and justice, and the role of the forensic psychologist. For example, when 'Cracker' was first aired on British TV (1993–1996) one British University noted that, although the overall number of applications to their undergraduate psychology programme did not increase, over 90 per cent of applicants during this period referenced forensic psychology as a reason they wanted to study psychology – previously, forensic psychology had been mentioned in a minority of applications (Entwisle, personal communication 1996). In fact, 'offender profiling' represents a small part of forensic psychology.

Forensic psychology includes all aspects of psychology that are applicable at each stage and in each context of legal and criminal processes (Canter 2010). This is in respect to understanding both offenders and victims of crime and working with criminals in terms of investigation, risk assessment, conviction, containment, punishment, treatment, and rehabilitation. The term 'forensic psychologist' is used to refer to any psychologist who works with criminals and to those that work within or with the criminal and civil justice systems. Some psychologists undergo specific training in forensic psychology and usually work in prisons. Some are clinical psychologists who specialize in forensic work, such as working with mentally disordered offenders or within child protection. Clinical forensic psychologists tend to have a wider remit and a more consistent engagement with matters of mental ill-health.

Critical forensic psychology refers to a particular form of forensic psychology that recognizes that all knowledge is socially constructed and marked by vested interests. It is a response to mainstream forensic psychology, which often fails to articulate its vested interest, and in so doing often simply reproduces, rather than challenges, the status quo. Critical forensic psychology can

be understood as 'A response to modern psychology from the inside that enriches its discipline. It is a deconstructive moment in its institution that is not anarchic but affirmative, in the sense that it attempts to think it through' (Larner 2002: 16).

This, then, represents an approach that is both critical in its desire to question the otherwise assumed truths of forensic psychology (such as who represents the criminal classes), and applicable in its sustained attempt to provide an analytic of practice that enables rather than undermines (e.g. Warner 2009). In this chapter, I begin by exploring the relationship between disciplinary power and the State, and the reproduction of socially structured inequality. I then consider key aspects of forensic practice with so-called mentally disordered offenders that can be transformed through a commitment to progressive, socially located, and recovery orientated interventions. This involves recognizing the foundational role of personal history in the production of the mentally disordered offender, which I explore in respect of training, risk assessment, and intervention.

Disciplinary power and the iteration of inequality

According to Foucault (1977), discipline is an aggregate of power, which regulates the behaviour of individuals in any social context. This is achieved by systematic organization of space, time, and activity, and is enforced through complex practices of surveillance (O'Farrell 2005). Internment in prisons, youth offending institutions, and secure mental hospitals function to shore up binary mechanisms of exclusion. As Foucault (1977: 196) argues:

> Generally speaking, all the authorities exercising individual control function according to a double mode; that of binary division and branding (mad/sane; dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal); and that of coercive assignment of differential distribution (who he is; where he must be; how he is to be characterized; how he is to be recognized; how a constant surveillance is to be exercised over him in an individual way, etc.). The constant division between the normal and the abnormal, to which every individual is subjected, [and] the existence of a whole set of techniques and institutions for measuring, supervising and correcting the abnormal brings into play the disciplinary mechanisms to which the fear of [difference and perceived threat are directed].

Disciplinary power is directed to branding and altering the so-called abnormal individual. Through this process of iterative identification, the normative boundaries of society are maintained. Subjects, under the law, learn who they are not and who they should be, and by internalizing this disciplinary gaze they become self-disciplining. Forensic psychologists are therefore agents of the State that operate as part of the discursive mechanisms of control, which police the boundaries between what is constituted as right and wrong, normal and abnormal. If forensic psychologists are to do more than reproduce division and inequality it is crucial to recognize how division and inequality structure the field of criminality.

Constructing criminality: disadvantages and disparities

We are not all equal subjects under the law. This is evidenced by disparities in sentencing and incarceration of prisoners and mentally disordered offenders. Men commit more indictable offences than do women and there are vastly more men incarcerated in prison than there are women. For example, in the UK women make up about 5 per cent of the prison population (Women's Breakout 2015).

According to the UK Office for National Statistics, as few as one in four adults experience some form of mental disorder (the Mental Health Foundation/MHF 2007). Yet people with mental health problems are disproportionately represented in prison populations. The MHF estimates that up to 90 per cent of British prisoners have a diagnosable mental illness, substance abuse problem, or, frequently, both. Male prisoners in the UK are 14 times more likely to have a mental disorder than men in general, and female prisoners are 35 times more likely than women in general. This is reflected in other Westernized economies. For example, Kristof (2014) reports that more than half of all prisoners in North America have mental health problems, and this rises to three-quarters of female inmates. As such, Kristof argues, incarceration – or criminalization – is an unintended effect of mental distress. Torrey et al. (2014) report that US prisons now hold 10 times more mentally ill people than state hospitals do. There is some evidence to suggest that the overrepresentation of people with serious mental health problems in prisons is linked to policies of deinstitutionalization and the retraction of psychiatric hospitals. This phenomenon has been described as transinstitutionalization (see Seth 2011).

There are also disproportionate numbers of prisoners from Black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds. For example, the NAACP (2014) reports that African Americans are incarcerated at nearly six times the rate of white offenders. This proportion split has also long been reflected in prison statistics for the UK (see Osmanand and Harris 2002). Although women are often treated as if they are more 'mad than bad' and directed into secure hospitals and away from prisons, BME women are disproportionately represented in prisons and may thus be thought of as being treated as more 'bad than mad', and in effect deserving of punishment rather than treatment (see Warner 2009). For example, Candler and Austin (2014) report that in North America nearly two-thirds of women on parole are white, whilst nearly two-thirds of those confined in prisons and jails belong to an ethnic or racial minority.

Poverty is also implicated in experiences of injustice. According to Open Democracy (2014: 1), 'poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing a chronic lack of resources, capabilities, choices, security and power, all building on each other in a feedback loop of disadvantage'. Not only does poverty lead to an increased need for survival-crime, poverty also disadvantages defendants in many countries where legal aid is being cut and a two-tier system of justice is established. Typically, men and women in prisons are poor, have limited education, limited access to employment, have disrupted relationships, and are likely to be victims of crime (see Candler and Austin, ibid.) – often reporting histories of violence and abuse.

For women offenders in particular, domestic and sexual violence is a frequent feature of their lives. Women's Aid (Norman and Barron 2011) provides evidence that between 50 per cent and 80 per cent of women in UK prisons have experienced sexual abuse and/or domestic violence. This is also reflected in secure mental health services, where up to 100 per cent of female mentally disordered offenders report histories of sexual abuse (Wilkins and Warner 2001).

It is clear that disadvantage structures the landscape of containment. As such, any radical intervention requires a society-wide programme of change that addresses economic, gender, and race inequalities. At the very least, forensic psychologists must be ready to challenge discrimination through recognizing prisoners and mentally disordered offenders as people-in-context and refusing the too-ready individualization and internalization of criminality and mental disorder. This then provides the grounds for a critical forensic psychology that is orientated to socially locating people and their difficulties, in order to identify, challenge, and resist practices of differentiation and discrimination.

Reformulating expertise and experience: centralizing the voice of the service-user

In order to reformulate the landscape of forensic psychology, it is necessary to revise traditional notions of knowledge and expertise. I have demonstrated that we are not all equal subjects before the law. Rather, the practices of law tend to rely on and reinforce already established social inequalities. Knowledge about prisoners and mentally disordered offenders is never neutral but, as indicated, is shaped by vested interests. It has long been argued by feminist theorists, such as Haraway (1991), that a more complete knowledge of any given subject is achieved by viewing that same subject from subjugated positions that can provide critique of dominant understandings that otherwise function as the truth. Such an approach necessitates a departure from objectivity to an explicit engagement with partiality. It is about being clear about one's own vested interests – the communities of knowledge – that can be used to inform a critical understanding of forensic work (see Warner 2009). For example, feminism can be used to focus attention on gender inequalities in treatment and provision for incarcerated men and women. Because women make up a minority of the prison estate, their experiences and needs have too often been overlooked in the design and implementation of carceral services. Recently, attempts have been made to identify the particular needs of women offenders. For example, in the UK, the government commissioned an investigation into this issue (Corston 2007; House of Commons Justice Committee 2013) and this has led to the development of guidance for working with women offenders around issues of particular significance and salience. For example, following the Corston Report, Women's Aid (2011) produced guidance for supporting women offenders who have experienced domestic and sexual violence. Increasingly, it is being recognized that male offenders are also often traumatized by childhood experiences of interpersonal and sexual violence (e.g. see Douglas et al. 2013).

It is important, therefore, to develop targeted services for both dominant and marginalized offenders. Our ability to finesse service design and delivery is enhanced when adults and young people who are made subject to forensic psychology are enabled to contribute their understandings to the knowledge-base. The value of accessing service-user experience and expertise is increasingly being recognized and has led to the steady growth of the use of survivor-experts in illuminating the territory of trauma, mental health, and incarceration. For example, Wish, established in the UK in 1987, is a national, user-led charity working with women with mental health needs in prison, hospital, and the community. Wish (2014: Website homepage) provides:

> independent advocacy, emotional support and practical guidance at all stages of a woman's journey through the Mental Health and Criminal Justice Systems. Wish acts to increase women's participation in the services they receive, and campaigns to get their voice heard at a policy level. It is unique in its long-term commitment to each individual, as they move through hospitals, prison and the community.

It is not only charities that value user-perspectives. Increasingly, universities work hard to integrate user contributions into their training programmes. This is evidenced in current approaches to training practitioners to work with people diagnosed with personality disorder, a significant subgroup of mentally disordered offenders. For example, both the undergraduate and master's programmes in 'personality disorder' run by the Open University in the UK, place the service-user at the centre of the student's learning experience by involving service-users at every stage of development, design, and delivery of courses. This partnership approach underpins a richer, more contextualized understanding of service-users. In respect to mentally disordered offenders,

including those diagnosed with a personality disorder, this has coincided with a dispersal of focus from a here-and-now concern with offence triggers and cycles, to a more nuanced approach that aims to include direct work around past experiences of abuse and neglect that may act as primary influences on subsequent offending behaviour.

Assessing risk: the role of social framework evidence

A critical forensic psychology not only views offenders as persons-in-context, but also fully recognizes the need to contextualize the knowledge-base of experts and the opinions they give. No longer is it possible to hide behind the cloak of expertise (trust me; trust my test). Rather, experts are enjoined to explicate from where their opinion is derived: the various sources of information (the person him/herself, and the verbal and written reports of others), and the various forms of knowledge (theory, research, and practice) through which information may be read and evaluated. The type of report produced through this process of triangulation is detailed and nuanced. Ambiguity is engaged with, rather than seen as a problem to be avoided (Warner 2009). Risk assessments are never definitive, and are always time-limited (circumstances keep changing). This means that any 'prediction' of risk must be socially located and indicate under what circumstances, when approached in which ways, how offenders may act, and hence what they might need in each of those various scenarios to ensure safety and positive development.

Anticipating different possible futures and articulating the various levels of risk and need therein is not just a feature of a post-structuralist forensic psychology. It is fundamental to most current risk assessments. For example, the HCR-20 V3 (Douglas et al. 2013) is the latest version of a comprehensive professional guideline for violence or threat assessment and management, and is the most widely used risk assessment in the world. It is based on the structured professional judgement model and incorporates data on key historical, clinical, and risk factors associated with violence. The aim is to provide a framework through which to structure clinical judgement. The three identified aspects cover past, present, and future factors, respectively, and the aim is to identify risks associated with different future scenarios and the different management strategies associated with each situation. The HCR-20 V3 encourages assessors to provide situated knowledge about mentally disordered offenders. A critical forensic psychology would go further to articulate the social knowledge frameworks (Raitt and Zeedyk 2000) that underpin the reference points used to structure clinical judgements. For example, if I talk about mental illness or personality disorder, I explain my understandings about the reductive effects of diagnosis and why it can be more helpful to directly address the underlying experiences (setting conditions and triggers) that push service-users into so-called symptomatic behaviour. I do not assume that I share with the Courts a common understanding of mental distress.

Addressing current need: relational security and harm minimization

Whether in secure mental hospital, prison, or out in the community, a partial aim of any intervention with offenders is to reduce risk of recidivism and increase their potential for rehabilitation. Increasingly, there is recognition that mental pathology is not solely located within the individual but is a function of the environment individuals inhabit. Some environments are more toxic and challenging than others. As such, any critical forensic psychology must be socially situated and orientated to enabling safer, less harmful contexts for care. At its most bleak, some have argued that prisons are simply a new form of slavery. For example, Pelaez (2014) notes that in America a prison population of up to 2 million – mainly Black and Hispanic men – are working

in various industries for very little money. Additionally, there is considerable evidence that both male and female offenders are subject to violence and sexual assault within secure environments (e.g. Wolff and Shi 2009; Warner 2009 respectively) and that self-harm and suicide increase on incarceration (e.g. Hawton et al 2013; Warner 2013). It is crucial, therefore, that secure services make every effort to safeguard their residents. This means having robust measures to counter exploitation and violence. It also involves having detailed policies that enable safety and which minimize the toxicity of the environment.

A key principle of secure mental health services is that individuals should be managed in the least restrictive environment possible in order to facilitate their safe recovery (NHS 2013). Increasingly, safety is understood to be a function of a range of security measures encompassing physical, procedural, and relational aspects. Relational aspects are the most difficult to define, but can be thought of as the quality of care provided by forensic services, linked to resource availability (Kennedy 2002). Facilities that provide individuals with safe, local, and supportive environments that enable good links and clear pathways into and out of secure and community services are preferable. This is one aspect of a harm minimization approach that is currently being used to work with people who self-harm. Whilst secure services often have a duty of care that means they are legally bound to stop inmates self-harming, relational aspects of harm minimization are increasingly being adopted within secure services. Harm minimization is recognized by the UK as a legitimate intervention regarding self-injury (NICE 2011).

From a harm-minimization perspective, self-injury is understood to fulfil an adaptive function in managing feelings (either when they overwhelm or when people have become too numb). It is therefore counter-productive to stop people self-harming, because this can engender a greater need for self-harm. Hence, people are encouraged to utilize the least harmful method of self-injury that works for them and harm cessation is only used when service-users are judged to be actively suicidal. Harm minimization can be enabled behaviourally (in terms of having a clean cutting instrument, for example); cognitively (in terms of understanding one's own triggers and how the body works); and emotionally (in terms of giving due consideration to how environments and professional relationships increase or decrease the likelihood of self-injury). Forensic psychologists can be instrumental in enabling greater safety by helping service-providers to reflect on how they make service-users feel, and by enabling service-users to understand their own triggers, both in terms of issues in the present and in terms of unresolved trauma from the past (see Warner and Spandler 2012).

Addressing underlying issues: trauma and abuse

As indicated, for very many offenders in secure services, violence and abuse have been relatively constant features of their lives. Traditionally, treatment for violent and sex offenders has been cognitive-behavioural in orientation, 'here and now' based, and offence-focused (e.g. UK Ministry of Justice 2010). Addressing unresolved trauma associated with early experiences of victimization was viewed as sanctioning avoidant-behaviour on the part of offenders. Yet there is some recognition (from within largely a critical forensic perspective) that without a comprehensive and holistic intervention that encompasses a whole-life approach, any cognitive behavioural programme will have limited impact. This is because the past is always implicated in the construction of needs, desires, and behaviours in the present. Attention to the past enables the 'why' questions of behaviour, the unconscious motivations, to be addressed alongside the more conscious pathways into offending. This type of approach has been used with young people who engage in sexually harmful behaviour by the children's charity service Barnardos in the UK. They adopt an attachment-based approach that builds strength in the client through enabling

a more positive and secure sense of relationship. This enables the client to address underlying trauma, which is instrumental in provoking and maintaining the harmful behaviour. In this way, offences are not ignored, but rather are located within a psychosocial complex. Such an approach is client-focused, rather than formulaic.

The majority of women in prisons have committed a non-violent offence – about 80 per cent in the UK (Women's Breakout 2015). As noted, very many women in secure services have been victimized in childhood and into adulthood. It is crucial that they access psychology services that can enable them to make sense of their experiences in the past and the present, address unresolved trauma, and build different futures for themselves and their families. Women are primary caregivers for children. As little as 9 per cent of children are cared for by their fathers while their mothers are in prison, and this can have a devastating impact on women and children alike (ibid). It is little wonder that women in secure care exhibit high rates of self-harm. Again, it is important that any intervention address concerns in the past and the present. If women are not in safe environments, they cannot begin to reflect on earlier experiences of powerlessness and abuse. Nevertheless, women in secure care value the opportunity to talk about issues such as child sexual abuse. And systems that are issue-based rather than diagnosis-led are preferred by many incarcerated service-users. This is because they directly focus attention towards those factors that prompted the journey into secure care in the first place (e.g. Warner 2009).

Conclusions

Forensic psychology is radicalized when it encourages a situated approach to understanding offenders. Offending behaviour is produced in psycho-political space, and intervention has to take account of all contextualizing aspects. Without a full appreciation of socio-structural economies that position some individuals as being more at risk of offending and more at risk of carceral detention, forensic psychology will be no more than a mechanism of State disciplinary power. Forensic psychologists have the opportunity, however, to be instrumental in developing services that ensure offenders are understood in their whole-life contexts. This involves both understanding the need to address early life abuse and trauma, as well as making every effort to ensure present-life safety and future opportunities. This, then, is about creating environments that not only minimize harm, but aim to transform survival into recovery.

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Website resources

FBI's Behavioral Research and Instruction Unit: http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cirg/investigations-and-operations-support/briu
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Part Ib

Radical attempts to question the mainstream

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Qualitative methods
Critical practices and prospects from a diverse field

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Brendan Gough

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Qualitative research in psychology is not inherently critical; in fact, it can (and has been) used to test and confirm theory-driven quantitative research, and to buttress mainstream psychological concepts. But: throughout the history of the discipline, and especially since the late 1960s, qualitative research has often offered alternative ways of doing psychology, of critiquing the discipline, promoting marginalized voices, and prompting social change. These critical interventions have taken myriad forms, and we now have a field of qualitative research which is diverse, fragmented, and rapidly evolving. Before exploring current critical trends in qualitative research, however, it is important to provide a context for the historically recent emergence and proliferation of (critical) qualitative methods.

Although psychology as a discipline was founded on a natural science model in nineteenth-century Germany, qualitative human science research has been conducted since the early days. In Wundt's (1921) *Volkerpsychologie*, for example, two strands of psychological science were envisioned: one featuring experimental research (e.g. on perception), the other focusing on complex psychological functions and requiring observation and interpretation. Despite the dominance of behaviourism in the early twentieth century, and cognitivism in the latter part, qualitative research was championed by various scholars situated broadly within social psychology, including William James, Wilhelm Dilthey, John Dewey, and Gordon Allport (see Marecek 2003). Another key figure of course was Sigmund Freud, whose incendiary psychoanalytic approach presented a distinctive (and controversial) blueprint for qualitative research in the form of the clinical interview/case study, and more latterly forms of psychosocial research (e.g. Henriques et al. 1984/1998).

It was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, that the idea of doing research qualitatively began to take hold and make progress from the margins of psychology towards (but not reaching) the centre. This period in Western history is associated with collective protest, unrest, and social change, and in this climate scientific psychology was targeted by a variety of critics within and outside the discipline. For example, humanistic psychologists in the USA lamented the experimental fixation on measurement, prediction, and control, and the concomitant reduction of human experience to performance on a narrow set of predefined tests. Instead, they advocated methods which encouraged research participants to describe their experiences in

written accounts, for example, or verbally during interviews, thus granting research participants more freedom, respect, and dignity compared to laboratory experiments; in fact, the humanistic impulse in this work was concerned with improving as well as understanding individual experience (e.g. 'flow' or 'peak' experience: Csikszentmihalyi 1990). These early critiques and 'experiments' with alternative, qualitative methods were variously influenced by US American human potential pioneers (Rogers; Maslow) and continental philosophers (e.g. Husserl; Heidegger; Sartre; Merleau-Ponty). The critiques led to the development of humanistic, existential, and phenomenological forms of qualitative research, most notably in the USA (e.g. Giorgi 2009: Descriptive Phenomenological Method), but also in the UK (e.g. Smith 2004: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis). Feminist researchers have also been at the forefront of developing experiential methods, writing subjectivity into research, and promoting reflexive, participatory approaches (e.g. Gilligan et al. 2003: Listening Guide). Semi-structured interviews (e.g. Smith 1995) are the method of choice here for collecting data, promising a democratic, flexible research encounter in which both researcher and participant interests can be satisfied.

Another type of psychology critique was arguably more radical and political. Here the focus was on psychology as a disciplining institutional force, complicit in the subjugation of 'problematic' subjects, ranging from women, gay and lesbian groups, and minority ethnic groups to the mentally ill, the disabled, and the disenfranchised. The deployment of psychological tools to assess, categorize, and treat these groups was decried by many scholars and activists outside the discipline, informed by feminism, Marxism, antipsychiatry, and anti-racist and LGBT movements. Feminist scholars, for example, began to challenge the androcentrism and misogyny embedded in much psychology theory and research (Haraway 1991), and began to pioneer alternative, women-centred approaches to research where women's voices were foregrounded and gender stereotypes dismantled (e.g. Gilligan 1982). In the 1980s, the critical and research endeavours centred around discourse and representation in the midst of a more general 'linguistic' or 'postmodern' turn in social theory, influenced by the work of Michel Foucault. Discourse analytic research emerged as a way of interrogating prevailing societal discourses and their effects, particularly on marginalized groups. Feminist researchers were again at the forefront of these developments (see Wilkinson and Kitzinger 1996), deconstructing discourses of heterosexuality and sex difference perpetuated by psychology, medicine, and other institutions which constituted women as subordinate to men. In general, there was a rejection of biological arguments about 'natural' differences (between men and women; between racial groups; between gay and straight, etc.), and an embrace of a broad 'social constructionist' stance towards the world, informing the nature of qualitative research (Burr 1995). Although qualitative interviews feature in constructionist qualitative research, other data collection/selection methods have been used, with a focus on social interaction and discursive (re)production, including focus groups and naturalistic conversations (both off- and online), as well as media texts (newspapers/magazines/online content).

So, we can make a (crude) distinction between 'experiential' and constructionist qualitative research (see Madill et al. 2000), with the former often regarded as more individualist and less critical, and the latter construed as more socially oriented and critical. However, this is a complex debate, which obviously depends on the definition of critical, and it is not difficult to find examples of experiential research which critiques mainstream psychological theory (e.g. Flowers and Buston 2001), or constructionist research which does not explicitly identify with critical psychology (e.g. some conversation analytic work – see Parker 2005). It is probably best to think of a continuum wherein specific projects rather than methodologies (discourse analysis; grounded theory; phenomenology, etc.) can be located, not least because there is so

much variation (and sometimes conflict) within a given methodological terrain. The situation currently is one of ever-increasing diversity and innovation which can only be incompletely categorized (see Madill and Gough 2008), one where the use of visual, mobile, and online qualitative methods is accelerating (see Reavey 2011).

Review

It is fair to say that critical psychological research has been mainly associated with particular methodologies: discursive, narrative, psychosocial – and particular agendas e.g. feminist, LGBT, and anti-racist informed action research projects. To reiterate: this is not to say that qualitative research using grounded theory methods, thematic analysis, or phenomenology cannot be regarded as critical – there are examples of such approaches being deployed to critical ends – but in general these approaches are (and have been) more easily assimilated into mainstream psychological discourse and practice.

Discursive research is varied, both within (social) psychology and across the social sciences (see Wetherell et al. 2001). The focus here is on critical forms of discursive research which are associated with UK social psychology from the late 1980s (e.g. Potter and Wetherell 1987). A distinction is typically made between discursive psychology (e.g. Edwards and Potter 1993), which re-specifies psychological phenomena (thoughts, memories, attitudes, emotions, and so forth) as discursively constructed during social interactions, and critical of Foucauldian inspired discourse analysis, which focuses on the reproduction, reworking, and resistance to salient societal discourses (e.g. Parker 2002; Hook 2001). There has been much debate concerning these two traditions, especially during the 1990s; for example, discursive psychology has been criticized for failing to fully examine the political implications of psychological discourse (e.g. Parker 2015), while Foucauldian discourse analysis has been charged with flooding data analysis with the analyst's own categories (see Potter 1997). Several discourse analysts have opted to take a hybrid approach, drawing on concepts and practices from both traditions to progress detailed yet critical analyses (see Wetherell 1998).

It is worth illustrating how different discursive approaches can produce a critical impact. Discursive psychology presents a thoroughgoing critique of mainstream psychology by relocating 'cognition' from inside the head into a social, public domain; as Edwards (2005: 260) comments, discursive psychology works to 'avoid psychological theorizing in favour of analysis based in the pragmatics of social action'. There is a critically useful focus on the rhetorical strategies used to present viewpoints as factual or natural, 'practical ideologies' (Wetherell et al. 1987) used to rationalize a status quo in which certain privileged groups benefit while others are subordinated. According to this approach, for example, 'prejudice' moves from cognitive deficit (e.g. perceptual shortcuts) to the realm of discourse, social interaction, and argumentation. A recent study by Goodman and Burke (2011), for example, highlights the complexity of prejudice in practice by focusing on Facebook posts about asylum-seeking and immigration to the UK. In their data, the authors point to the contemporary taboo against prejudice (Billig 1988) as opponents of asylum-seekers work to position themselves as reasonable by, say, presenting their opposition in economic and practical (not racist) terms – a phenomenon referred to as 'discursive deracialization' (Augoustinos and Every 2007).

Foucauldian discourse analysis, in contrast, identifies broader societal discourses promoted within institutional sites (media, government, legal, medicine, and so on) through myriad 'texts' (interviews, media content, government policies, for instance) with an emphasis on how such discourses 'interpellate' or capture people within particular positions and relationships (e.g. Parker

2002; Hook 2001). This work is informed by Foucault and other social theorists (e.g. Louis Althusser) with a central focus on subjectification, or how people become inscribed as particular types of subject (mother, criminal, patient, victim, as probable types), and the constraints (and possibilities) which are implied with each subject position. A psychiatric discourse, for example, will classify certain unusual practices as 'abnormal', whereupon the subject in question may then be cast as 'mentally ill' and subjected to a psycho-chemical treatment regime. To varying degrees, subject positions can be resisted, depending on the discursive – and material – resources available to the subject within a given social location. Thus, a dual emphasis on Foucault's couplets: discourse/power, power/resistance. A particular concern here is with psychologization – the pervasive cultural and institutional reproduction of people as unitary rational subjects in charge of their own destinies, whose 'attitudes' and 'personalities' shape their life opportunities. The term 'psy-complex' has been adopted here (Rose 1998) to describe the reach and significance of this phenomenon within neoliberal consumerist societies (see also De Vos 2012). All manner of issues, from unemployment to health and well-being are now construed in terms of individual choice and responsibility, as if social and structural constraints were invisible. The growth of the 'positive psychology' movement (Peterson and Seligman 2004) underlines these points. Positive psychology reimagines the humanistic psychology project pioneered by Rogers and Maslow but with a focus on the measurement and promotion of certain character traits, or 'virtues' (Peterson and Seligman 2004). The discourses which structure such texts have been analyzed by McDonald and O'Callaghan (2008), who argue that positive psychology represents a new form of governmentality and 'psy-expertise' which conforms to neoliberal economic and political principles. This is social control at a distance, promoting self-regulation and the development of a neoliberal character which is independent, enterprising, dynamic, flexible, and productive.

Forms of narrative research have also been defined and deployed in critical ways. Critical narrative analysis moves away from experience-centred approaches towards a more culturally oriented treatment of narratives, informed by critical theorists such as Foucault (see Andrews et al. 2008). The focus on stories and storytelling implies an agent (or narrator) who uses stories to make meaning and apply structure to experience, albeit with the form and content of narratives to some extent shaped and constrained by context and resources. Langdridge (2007), for example, advocates a 'critical narrative analysis' which respects research participant accounts, notes politically significant aspects of narratives, and invokes analyst concepts in order to situate and challenge wider discourses which inform narratives presented. Similarly, Andrews et al. (2008) advocate a narrative analysis which centres around social change: 'Narratives themselves can be important components of social change, and narrative research may contribute to social change . . . to address medical, social and educational problems, to build communities and resolve crises, to aid reconciliation and to improve understanding in situations of conflict and change' (www.uel.ac.uk/cnr). Critical narrative analysis has been applied in various settings; for example, Hall (2011) uses a feminist narrative analysis to identify positive stories from survivors of childhood maltreatment (see also Crossley 2000), while Murray (2008) prioritizes a psychosocial approach which involves community as well as personal stories in the promotion of healthy neighbourhoods.

The term 'psychosocial' is widely used within qualitative research (and even mainstream psychology) so we must take care to specify what this means and how particular psychosocial research projects may elaborate a critical analysis. From a critical perspective, a psychosocial approach dispenses with a distinction between the individual and the world they inhabit: the two are inextricably intertwined. For some scholars, the preoccupation with language in discursive approaches makes for an impoverished subject, where biography, emotion, and embodiment are downplayed. In the words of Hollway and Jefferson (2000: 19): 'meanings are both common

and unique, social and biographical, discursive and defended'. Scholars such as Hollway have turned to psychoanalytic theory to 'fill' this 'empty' subject (e.g. Henriques et al. 1984/1998), although the reliance on and nature of psychoanalytic concepts varies between researchers, and the psychoanalytic turn is rejected by several psychosocial scholars (e.g. Finn and Henwood 2009; Edley 2006). Psychoanalytically constituted qualitative research builds in a focus on early experience (e.g. Hollway and Jefferson 2000), but risks privileging the psychological over the social, and does not generally take on board insights from constructionist and discursive psychology. Other researchers draw on psychoanalytic theory without losing sight of social and discursive contexts, including Frosh and colleagues in their work on masculinities (e.g. Frosh, et al. 2002), and Gough's (2009) case study of a father-son relationship. Other psychosocial researchers eschew the psychoanalytic altogether, preferring discursive or relational appropriations of subjectivity: 'imaginary positions and psychodiscursive practices' (Wetherell and Edley 1999); 'personal histories that involve relational and inter-generational tensions and connections' (Finn and Henwood 2009). To some extent, this range of psychosocial research can be regarded as critical in producing analyses of subjectivity which are situated, complex, and dynamic, and which stand in contrast to simplistic, reductionist psychological theories of self. It is also worth mentioning other, more theoretical (but critical) adaptations of psychoanalytic (particularly Lacanian) theory within social psychology (e.g. Parker 2011; Hook and Neill 2008).

Another field of (mainly) qualitative research which is explicitly critical in design, agenda, and impact is action research. The actual methods are less important than the social change(s) intended, and indeed quantitative and mixed methods have been used to progress a number of community projects (see Brydon-Miller 1997). A succinct definition of action research is offered by Kagan et al. (2008: 32): '[it] attempts to combine understanding, or development of theory, with action and change through a participative process, whilst remaining grounded in experience'. A key component of action research is collaboration with group/community members, fostering a democratic environment where participants (co-researchers) have an equal say and help conceive the problem/s to be addressed and the research methods to be adopted (see Rheinharz 1992). There is a methodology historically influenced by social psychologist Kurt Lewin and radical educationalist Paolo Freire which is termed 'Participatory Action Research' (PAR) and which explicitly pursues positive social change among marginalized communities. For example, Fine and Torre (2006) describe a PAR project focusing on the impact of college in prison on the women students, the prison environment, and prisoners' post-release outcomes. Other PAR projects have worked with young adults using psychiatric services (Delman 2012), residents of care homes for older people (Ottmann et al. 2011), and indigenous groups living in rural and remote communities (Wearing et al. 2010).

Reflections

Given the sheer diversity of qualitative research methods, and the debates between different advocates of different methodologies (and between different versions of the same broad methodology), it would be foolish to make a general claim about the critical nature of qualitative research. At the same time, the critical dimension of a given (qualitative) research project can take many forms, such as challenging a mainstream psychological construct (e.g. discursive psychology work on memory), using interviews and focus groups to give voice to a particular community (e.g. feminist work with sex workers), or deconstructing media representations of a minority group (e.g. asylum seekers). So, specific qualitative methods for data collection and analysis can be used for specific critical ends; no given qualitative method(-ology) is inherently critical − it depends on how the method is deployed. Sometimes the critical character of a

qualitative research project can be announced clearly, focusing on language and power (e.g. *Mapping the Language of Racism: Discourse and the Legitimation of Exploitation*; Wetherell and Potter 1992), while on other occasions the critical element can be softer, focusing on narrative and/or experience (e.g. "I was terrified of being different": exploring gay men's accounts of growing up in a heterosexist society'; Flowers and Buston 2001).

Whatever qualitative methods are used, to qualify as critical there should be a critique, whether implicit or explicit, of mainstream psychological concepts and methods, and an articulation of alternative (not complementary) theory. Critical qualitative research may highlight the messy, fluid, and unquantifiable nature of phenomena (e.g. Hollway and Jefferson 2000); cast light on researcher subjectivity – and how this can be deployed as a resource rather than viewed as a source of 'contamination' or 'bias' (see Gough and Madill 2012); situate 'psychological' events in relevant social, cultural, and biographical contexts, evoking a psychosocial, relational stance which undermines the psychologization of everyday life (see De Vos 2012); experiment with research processes and presentation, including reflexive, performative and democratic formats, thus condemning mainstream attempts at 'scientific' procedures and writing traditions (e.g. QI); and expose the role of psychology in subjectifying categories of people within institutions (e.g. medicine, media, education) (Parker and Spears 1996). Critical qualitative research may assume an experiential or constructionist stance in order to challenge taken-for-granted 'knowledge' through giving voice to research participants and publicizing alternative knowledges concerning the topic in question. It can foster resistance to dominant discourses and promote social change through collaborative research projects, involving community members in tackling local, 'real-world' issues. As well as helping to transform the lives of people on the margins, critical qualitative research can change the discipline of psychology. In tandem with the rise in qualitative research in the last twenty-five years or so, the discipline of psychology has been evolving into a more pluralistic, inclusive, and accommodating space. That is not to downplay the continued dominance of quantitative research and associated quality metrics, the rise of cognitive neuroscience, or the all-pervasive psychologization on offer, but there is evidence of qualitative methods penetration within institutional settings (e.g. the British Psychological Society: Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section; the American Psychological Association: Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology), some success with mainstream journals (e.g. *Psychological Methods; Health Psychology*), critical/qualitative speakers being given a platform at mainstream psychology conferences, and so on.

In textbooks and journal articles on qualitative research, there is often a concern about quality – how can we assess 'validity' or 'rigour'? There is widespread agreement that established modes of validating quantitative research are inappropriate for qualitative research (measuring inter-rater reliability, etc.). In recent years, quality criteria checklists have been generated for qualitative researchers (e.g. Elliott et al. 1999), with items such as 'triangulation', 'participant validation', 'reflexivity', 'transferability', and 'negative case analysis' being touted. But: which criteria work best for critical qualitative research endeavours? This is a complex question. For example, participant validation, in which research participants (e.g. interviewees) are invited to comment on draft analyses in order to give their approval (or not) seems to be a straightforward means of empowering participants in the research process. However, in many cases participants may feel reluctant to evaluate the analysis, perhaps deferring to the perceived authority of the researcher, or out of politeness, or due to lack of time or interest. It depends in part on the extent to which the participants were involved in the research project as a whole – were they simply interviewees with little or no role in project conception and design or implementation, or did they act as co-researchers, as in many action research projects? The notion of triangulation, whereby different sources of data or different points of view are 'triangulated' to yield a common perspective/

analysis, clearly values consensus and uniformity over diversity and conflict, and from a critical position we might question whose ideas are being showcased – and whose are silenced or marginalized.

The issue and practice of reflexivity is also vexed. Reflexivity has been mooted as the defining feature of qualitative research, a counterpoint to the dispassionate subject of science, detached from research processes and products (see Finlay and Gough 2003). However, there are many different 'reflexivities' which may or may not be construed as critical. In an important early paper which helped to define the terms of the debate, Wilkinson (1988) distinguishes between three forms of reflexivity: personal, professional, and disciplinary. Within the personal category, researchers reflect on their investment in the research topic and monitor the impact at different stages of the research process: in this way, the research is contextualized for the reader. In the professional mode, researchers attend to their practice as researchers – what methods of persuasion are used to recruit research participants? How do participants and researchers react to each other during the research encounter? Why are some interviews/focus groups so different? And so on. Variability within and between different research stages underlines the social, intersubjective nature of research projects. The third level, disciplinary reflexivity, concerns how the researcher positions themselves with respect to the discipline within which they are working (or working against): why have particular theories/methods/practices been adopted, and what do these choices imply about the type of research being conducted and the nature of the knowledge produced?

So, reflexive qualitative research is critical in that it rejects the mainstream stance of researcher detachment and articulates alternative visions of research which cast light on processes and practices typically rendered invisible. However, there is a danger that reflexive researchers are so engaged with self-analysis that wider research questions and problems concerning, say, marginalization and social change, are glossed over or forgotten about entirely. Thus, a certain amount of discipline may be required, a 'one step up' reflexivity which does not degenerate into an endless introspective spiral (see Pels 2000).

Limits

The growth and increasing acceptance of qualitative methods within psychology is both a cause for celebration and concern. In light of the expansion in journals and texts publishing qualitative research, psychology students and researchers are more exposed to and appreciative of qualitative methods. However, we also live in the age of neuroscience, and neuropsychology is dominant across psychology curricula, with qualitative methods shunted to the sidelines or simply not taught in some departments. Similarly, although mainstream psychology journals (produced under the auspices of the APA and the BPS, for example) do publish some qualitative research, this is still limited, and in the main only a narrow range of methods are featured, primarily 'thematic', experiential methods. In addition, qualitative research is often used in the service of mainstream psychological theories to add colour to quantitative data by providing extracts which are themed according to a priori theoretical drivers. The use of qualitative methods is therefore largely selective and strategic – a technical deployment which glosses over complexity, subjectivity, and fluidity. Indeed, a so-called post-positivist frame is used to judge the 'validity' of qualitative research, drawing on 'measureable' indicators such as inter-rater reliability. This means that only sanitized, realist forms of qualitative research which complement rather than undermine existing psychological theory are included in mainstream journals, leaving other specialist and interdisciplinary journals to consider constructionist and critical forms of qualitative research which deconstruct the psychological. This situation is mirrored in psychology

departments, where qualitative research articles, especially those published outside mainstream psychology journals, are devalued or misunderstood in the drive for papers in 'high impact' journals for inclusion in institutional research audit (the Research Excellence Framework in the UK). As a result, qualitative psychologists are often not returned in these assessment exercises, or are returned in other units where there is more acceptance and recognition of qualitative methods (e.g. social work and social policy; public health). Clearly, this situation has implications for career progression and achievement for critical, qualitative psychologists.

So, the situation of apparent (but actually conditional) acceptance of qualitative research in psychology generates something of a dilemma for the critical psychologist – to push for greater recognition of diverse qualitative methods within psychology, and in doing so push forward critical agendas, or to forgo psychology altogether and communicate with critical colleagues in interdisciplinary arenas where psychologization is abhorred? There are pros and cons of both approaches, of course, and there is no reason why both pathways cannot be adopted by the same person on different occasions. Any breakthroughs in publishing qualitative research in mainstream journals are potentially significant – it remains to be seen whether, say, discourse analysis becomes a 'psychological' method of choice rather than an approach favoured by colleagues and critics in other disciplines. On the other hand, if we ignore the discipline of psychology and collaborate with scholars elsewhere, there is potential to break new ground, methodologically, theoretically, and critically. Interdisciplinary conferences and journals built around specific themes provide opportunities for innovation and expansion of concepts which would otherwise not be possible. Journals such as *Qualitative Research* and *Qualitative Inquiry* feature papers from across the social and human sciences and contribute to the interrogation and development of qualitative research practice and performance. Finding a home, a department where critical, qualitative research is respected – and a wider community where critical qualitative research can be discussed – can be fraught, and for some critical qualitative psychologists this can be inside psychology, while for others this is within alternative (inter)disciplinary places.

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Website resources

British Psychological Society: Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section (QMiP): http://www.bps.org. uk/networks-and-communities/member-networks/qualitative-methods-psychology-section
Qualitative Research in Psychology (a leading journal in the field): http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/uqrp20/ current
Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology: https://www.facebook.com/qualpsy

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Theoretical psychology

A critical-philosophical outline of core issues

Thomas Teo

Theoretical psychology is a sub-discipline and a practice that has a place within as well as outside of mainstream psychology. Arguably, research psychologists and practitioners apply, develop, and reflect on theory all the time, implicitly or explicitly. In that sense, most psychologists are to a certain degree theoretical psychologists. In a more academic sense, one could argue that psychologists who think about theory are theoretical psychologists. Theoretical psychology has become meta-theoretical and thinking about theory is not constrained to logical or analytical thinking, but includes philosophical, sociological, political, economic, critical, and historical reflexivity about theory and practice in psychology, or the discipline and profession of psychology. Because metatheory is reflective of theory and practice and often challenges established notions, theoretical psychology is also critical.

The term *critical* itself has at least three different meanings: For natural-scientific psychologists, the idea of critical thinking refers to the application of scientific thinking to the world; for hermeneutic-oriented psychologists or psychologists who follow traditional philosophical programs, critical thinking about psychology means challenging the hidden assumptions and the problematic dominance of scientific psychology (Slife et al. 2005); critical psychologists who understand themselves as following a political-economic tradition challenge psychology on the background of power, politics, and society (e.g. Parker and Spears 1996). In the following sections, I lay out some core issues for critical psychologists by using a traditional philosophical distinction, arguing that theoretical psychology needs to reflect on ontological, epistemological, ethical-political, aesthetic, and substantive issues in psychology.

Ontology-laden reflections

Thinking about the nature of psychology

Any theoretical discussion would be too narrow if it focused solely on a discipline that was founded in the second half of the nineteenth century. From the *discipline of psychology* one needs to distinguish what can be understood as *psychological topics* (e.g. memory*)* that have been discussed for centuries or even longer around the world (in the West, the classical Greeks already systematically debated psychological issues) (see Richards 1996). Yet psychological topics are

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not only covered in the discipline of psychology but also in anthropology, sociology, education, political science, economics, and so on. Finally one needs to mention *professional psychology*, or the application of psychological knowledge in practice through experts, which emerged on a large scale only in the second half of the twentieth century in some Western nations. From a historical point of view, theoretical psychologists have paid most of their attention to the academic discipline.

From a reconstructive background, one notices that the subject matter of psychology has changed over time: psychology has at various times embraced, for instance, the soul, consciousness, mental life, subjectivity, behaviour, experience, cognition, and the brain as its core. Yet critical psychologists are less interested in an a priori defined subject matter than they are in the question of how the academic discipline and professional psychology have contributed to the subjectification of individuals (e.g. Rose 1996). There is a relationship among the knowledge produced in psychology, the self-understanding of persons, and power. What psychologists define, research, and conclude defines the very identities of subjects, a process which cannot be understood without power. For example, the possibility of labeling somebody a 'moron', which used to be a technical term at the beginning of the twentieth century in the United States, was not only a tool of supposedly objective description but also a tool of exclusion and social policy (see Gould 1996). Once an individual accepts such a label for himself or herself, subjectification and psychologization have been 'successful' (see also De Vos 2012).

More traditional topics in theoretical psychology on the nature of the discipline concern questions about the unified or fragmented status of the discipline, and about the healthy or crisis-ridden development of psychology. This has led to major debates, with peaks in the 1930s and 1970s, about the crisis and fragmentation of psychology, debates which have never died out (Goertzen 2008). Although there exists a consensus in critical discourses about the problematic status of mainstream psychology and its sub-disciplines, there is no consensus as to whether psychology should be a unified, fragmented, or pluralistic discipline. For example, German critical psychologists tried to overcome the fragmentation of psychology by developing a conceptual network of core categories that grasp the subject matter comprehensively, historically, and objectively (Holzkamp 1983). Social-constructionist critical psychologists have argued that unification is impossible, may reflect a monotheistic approach to the world, and that pluralism is an inherent feature of psychology because there exist diverse approaches on how to grasp psychological matters (Kirschner 2006). Ward (2002) argued that the lack of unification, or the disorganized and unfocused state of psychology, which theoretical psychologists have identified as sources of its crisis, has contributed to the success of the discipline because it has allowed easy alliances and quick adaptations to various needs. From a critical perspective it is of interest how psychology has become a successful commodity that can be advertised, marketed, sold, and consumed.

What does it mean to be human?

One stream of theoretical reflection focuses on the limited understanding of human nature in psychology. It has been argued that mainstream psychology operates with a mechanistic, atomistic, and reductionistic model of human mental life and that important ideas representing human subjectivity are based on technological or physiological models. As a methodological consequence, the focus on variables and on isolated aspects of the human mind does not do justice to the integrated character of mental life in concrete individuals in their conduct of life in everyday reality, which always takes place in history, culture, and society. Conceptualizing the sociohistorical reality as a stimulus environment to which one reacts or as an external

variable with effects does not make sense because individuals are *embedded* in such contexts (Holzkamp 1983).

Another stream of reflection focuses on providing a positive answer by suggesting that human nature is basically societal, an idea that was emphasized by K. Marx (1818–1883), and is shared by hermeneutic philosophers (e.g. Taylor 1989) and hermeneutic psychologists (Martin et al. 2010), as well as critical psychologists (e.g. Holzkamp 1983). For current theoretical psychologists the tasks remain: how to conceptualize society, how to compare and integrate the concept of society with the concepts of culture and history, and how to think about the 'embeddedness' of individuals in such contexts. Different categories have different implications and a critical concept of society implies a reflection on power and inequality and on their consequences in psychology.

To a lesser degree, critical psychologists have tried to answer the traditional question of what it means to lead a happy life. In classical Greek theories happiness meant a life of reason; in Christian theories it meant rejoicing and serving God; in liberal theories happiness meant a free life based on a cultivated and interested mind (in subjects ranging from nature, arts, history, the past, present, and future, to collective themes); and in conservative individualistic theories of human nature happiness meant to submit to authority (if you are powerless) or to aim for (absolute) power (if you are powerful). With J.J. Rousseau (1712–1778) we find a shift from happiness to the question of the sources of unhappiness. Whereas Rousseau considered unhappiness as a result of civilization, Karl Marx (1983) saw unhappiness as a result of alienation in a capitalist economy. Some critical psychologists have taken this issue again to the heart by suggesting that psychology should aim for well-being (Prilleltensky 2012), which suggests that wellness is a value that is linked to what it means to be human.

From a historical point of view, theoretical psychologists understand psychology as a project that co-defines or co-constructs what it means to be human (see also Smith 2007). S. Freud (1856–1939), B.F. Skinner (1904–1990), evolutionary psychologists, humanistic psychologists, neuroscientists, as well as critical psychologists, have attempted to define what it means to be human. All have contributed to the psychologization of society, meaning that we do not understand ourselves and human problems through social, political, or economic categories or theories but through psychological ones. The 'success' of psychology in the twentieth and twenty-first century consists in redefining what it means to be a human, and more importantly, in changing the self-understanding of individuals based on theories, concepts, methods, and practices of psychology. Indeed, psychology has changed what it means to be human and, in that sense, human nature.

The nature of psychological concepts

This problem has been debated in the context of whether psychological concepts are natural or human kinds. Danziger (1997) has demonstrated that psychological concepts have a history, culture, and society, neither falling from the heavens, nor discovered, but constructed for social purposes. Hacking (1994) identified a *looping effect* between individuals and concepts, meaning that people begin to understand themselves through those scientific concepts and reinforce the study of those categories through science. Martin and Sugarman (2009) summarized the literature in arguing that psychological concepts are socially constituted, value-laden, and that there is reactivity between concepts and subjects. Critical psychologists add that this reactivity needs to be understood on the background of control, surveillance, and power.

The problem of psychological concepts can be located more generally within the problem of the nature of language. Traditional views on language suggest that statements about the world and about mental life are determined by specific characteristics of the world and mental life.

Social constructionist psychologists have argued that words do not mirror the world and that the way we describe the world is the outcome of politics, culture, and relationships (Gergen 2009). Based on a late-Wittgensteinian philosophy of language, social constructionists have argued that the rules of the system of language are learned, shared, and used by individuals within a given community and that words gain their meaning within game-like relationships.

Epistemology-laden reflections

The consequences of 'positivism' in psychology

Some critics have labelled mainstream psychology as *positivist*. This is not a completely accurate description if one takes the history and goals of positivism into account, but there are commonalities that mainstream psychologists share that reflect certain aspects of positivism. Mainstream psychology can be characterized as a psychology of variables (Holzkamp 1983), meaning that psychological concepts are transformed into measurable variables, the functional relationship of which is assessed through correlational, experimental, or other studies. The idea of establishing this functional relationship goes back to Ernst Mach (1838–1916), the Austrian physicist and pioneer of positivism (Winston 2001). This does not mean that psychologists who do not use variables in their research are automatically critical, as they can be non-mainstream yet traditional (e.g. some humanistic approaches).

Another important legacy of positivism in psychology is the *methodologism* of psychology (Teo 2005), meaning the primacy of method. This suggests that methodological concerns are more important than substantive reflections. Danziger (1985) called it a *methodological imperative* that guides the discipline of psychology. A resulting abstract formalism in research can be identified in journal articles that are often void of meaningful content because the focus on methodology makes mainstream psychology ahistorical, asocial, and acultural. Indeed, mainstream psychology attempts to exclude subjectivity through various strategies, including deception (Pettit 2013). Critical psychologists such as Holzkamp (1983) have argued that objectivity in psychology means to include subjectivity.

Mainstream psychologists assume that they mirror the outside world without bias and that they conduct empirical studies without preconceived notions, theories, or values. Paradoxically, positivist philosophers of science understood that empirical research is theory-laden. In focusing on method and methodology and in excluding the context of discovery (why a researcher is interested in a research question), the context of interpretation (the quality of discussion), and the context of application, the mainstream excludes ontology, epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics and assumes value-neutrality, including the notion that psychological knowledge is without politics, culture, and society. Yet the seemingly sterile knowledge that is often produced in psychology is not neutral but has political ramifications (Teo 2008).

The alignment of psychology with the natural sciences, which was also a political move in the nineteenth century for a 'new' science, made psychologists think that they produce natural-scientific explanations. However, a closer look at the many so-called explanations in psychology shows that explanations in psychology are in fact interpretations that are grounded in particular cultural-historical contexts. The assumption that data are objective, without an understanding of the hermeneutic surplus that goes into the construction and interpretation of data, has, for instance, led to epistemological violence against a variety of groups in the history of psychology (Teo 2008). For example, interpreting data of difference in terms of a Zeitgeist or a particular academic community led to the fact that Blacks, women, gays, persons with disability, and so on, were constructed as inferior. Epistemological violence was committed because data were

interpreted by an academic community to the detriment of a specific group, even when alternative and equally viable interpretations of difference were possible. Sadly, these violent interpretations of data were presented as knowledge, handed down to the media, the public, and to students.

Social categories and knowledge production

Social epistemologies, adopted by many critical psychologists, suggest that social characteristics (gender, class, culture, modernity, etc.) play a role in how we access the social and even the natural world. Critical psychologists argue that an *ensemble of societal, historical, and cultural relations* and one's situation influence what psychologists study (topics, problems, objects, events, theories, methodologies, concepts, hypotheses, applications, histories, etc.) and why they study it; these characteristics influence how they study it (data, methods, reliability, validity, tests, measurements, samples, observations, statistics, etc.); and these characteristics influence how results are interpreted and the applications that are derived from research.

Colonialism and psychological knowledge

In recent years, postcolonial ideas have gained traction in critical discourses, particularly in some social sciences and humanities (e.g. Jabri 2013). Some critical psychologists have engaged with the topic (e.g. Hook 2012). Indeed, the discipline of psychology is fraught with forms of racism, ethnocentrism, and hidden colonialism. Colonial interests also are responsible for most early psychological knowledge about colonized people (Richards 2012). An imperialist strategy that universalizes knowledge (common in psychology) was combined with coercion, sometimes with inclusion, but never with hearing and learning from the conceptual frameworks of the colonized people (Said 1979). Even when it is admitted that European history is not world history, the onus is placed on historians from the periphery to address the centre, whereas the centre does not need to address the periphery (Chakrabarty 2000). In Western psychology, there exists the assumption that the most dominant psychology, American psychology, is also world psychology, and that, for instance, clinical categories can be used without modifications around the world.

The project of indigenous psychology emerged from a postcolonial critique of Western psychology while assuming that indigenous psychological knowledge is more relevant to the local population than are imported theories (Enriquez 1992). One can even go further in arguing that not only China's or India's psychologies are indigenous but that the same concept applies to European or American knowledge. This argument is based on the notion that all psychological concepts are culturally embedded, including critical psychologies (Teo 2013), and that the only way of addressing this problem is by participating in forms of reflexivity that have become common in certain disciplines of the social sciences but are still marginal in a discipline that understands itself as a natural science. On the other hand, critical psychologists have pointed out that reflexivity needs to be practiced carefully (Burman 2006).

Ethical-practical work

Should psychologists care about resistance?

In psychology, *is* and *ought* are inherently intertwined (see also Brinkmann 2011; Sloan 2000). Some psychologists working under severe conditions of inequality, poverty, and oppression have suggested that praxis must have primacy over theory. For Martín-Baró (1994), the theories of the North should not define the problems of Latin America, but rather South American

problems should demand and guide their own theorization. His preferential option for the poor calls for a primacy of praxis that works on the objective needs of the majority of the people. It calls on psychologists to work on the liberation from the social structures that oppress people. Psychology needs to theorize inequality and social injustice and focus its energy on such issues. Similarly, Paulo Freire (1997) wanted to raise awareness about oppression, a process he called *conscientization*.

For Foucault (1997), liberation is impossible because we are all trapped in the same game of oppression. Instead of trying to escape that game, we have the option to resist the rules of the game. Resistance then becomes a practice of freedom and includes such simple acts as saying 'no' to a rule presented to 'me'. According to Foucault, we can also resist in struggles against forms of ethnic, social, and religious domination; against forms of exploitation in the production sphere; and against the submission of subjectivity, which has become more prevalent in the West.

On a more general level, theoretical psychologists need to theorize the science-politics nexus. Although there is no scientific reason why a commitment to a 'good politics and good science' scenario should be rejected – a rejection that would be based on an ethical-political decision itself – the theoretical problem remains about the elements of good science and good politics (see Teo 2005). While theorizing this problem, critical psychologists continue to challenge the idea that science is devoid of politics and is value-free or value-neutral. Such assumptions of value-neutrality are based on ignorance (philosophical) where researchers are unaware of the interconnection of science (psychology) and politics; on denial (psychological) where a desired separation of science and politics leads one to deny the real influence that politics has on one's own science; or on an immunization strategy (ideological) in order to protect research from identifying its political embeddedness.

The role of money and values in the psy-disciplines

The most obvious outside influence is the role that financial interests play in spheres of psychology, psychiatry, psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, and so on. A prominent example discussed in recent years is the analysis of the relationship between Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) panel members and the pharmaceutical industry (e.g. Cosgrove and Krimsky 2012). Theoretical psychologists need to develop ethical-political arguments for why corporate money-driven classifications are problematic and detrimental to persons (see Granek 2013).

Another more recent example of the relationship between power, money, and values can be seen in the American War on Terror, when so-called enhanced interrogation techniques (i.e. torture strategies such as waterboarding) were performed under the supervision of psychologists (Soldz 2008). The American Psychological Association (APA), the largest professional organization for psychologists in the world, which is, according to its ethical code, committed to doing no harm, quickly abandoned its principles under the Bush presidency. The preemptive obedience that the association displayed was in contrast to other American professional organizations. The fact of collaboration raises important ethical-political questions about the discipline of psychology as well as its practitioners. Theoretical psychologists need to address this willingness of the APA to abandon its principles, the dependency of American psychology on government funding, and the culture that perpetuates the belief that psychology can be impartial.

Is psychology about problem-solving or problem-making?

Žižek (2006) pointed out that critical thinkers need to challenge the questions that are asked. I have argued that science in psychology is often not about problem-solving but about

problem-making (Teo 2005) and that one should begin with questions that contain assumptions (is group x inferior to group y?). The process of problem-making can be called problematization. Psychologists can participate in a political problematization of a group (or person), a theoretical problematization, but also – a point that most empirical psychologists do not understand – in the empirical problematization of a group. If one tests whether 'one quarter Indian blood individuals' perform worse on IQ tests than 'pure Whites', over and over again, and if one finds differences, then that empirical work, its naturalism-laden questions, and the resulting interpretation all lead to the problematization of a group that was constructed in the first place.

Epistemological violence is not only an epistemological but also an ethical–political problem. Psychologists need to reject a psychology *about* and choose a psychology *for* and *with* people (e.g. they need to shift from understanding 'race' as a problem to understanding the problems that minority individuals encounter in a given sociocultural context). For such arguments, critical social scientists have developed methodologies of the oppressed (Sandoval 2000), and critical psychologists have endorsed methodologies that challenge the status quo and aim for social justice (e.g. Fine 2006).

Aesthetic challenges

Art has a more ambiguous status in theoretical and critical reflections. Critical psychologists need to show that art offers innovative ways to address social problems. Traditional continental philosophers such as Gadamer (1960/1997) have argued that art is a form of truth that cannot be captured via the natural-scientific route and that aesthetic experience is a form of practical knowledge. Yet art has also been perceived as a tool for the expression of the upper classes, and cultural capital has been seen as an important concept for understanding how distinctions are fabricated (Bourdieu 1984). Horkheimer and Adorno (1982) have pointed out that the mass production of art did not lead to the possibility of freedom but to its opposite, and that art has been commercialized to its extremes, has been defrauding the masses, and has been reduced to amusement in capitalist societies. It is difficult for the critical theoretical psychologist to theorize venues for liberating aesthetic experiences that are not simultaneously elitist.

A model, albeit one that needs historical updating, would be of art talking about art. In Peter Weiss's (1975) novel the reader can follow working class teenagers in Germany from 1937 to 1945 and their appropriation of mainstream art into an anti-fascist aesthetics of resistance. More than one hundred pieces of art – including paintings, literature, theatre, and architecture – are discussed to allow the critical reader new ways of theorizing resistance without focusing on fabricating distinctions in the interests of the powerful. But one does not need to limit aesthetic experience and resistance to the concept of class and one can address violence in the context of minorities (see, e.g. the work by Charlotte Salomon; 1917–1943), gender (see, e.g. the paintings by Nancy Spero 1926–2009; or by Griselda Pollock, born 1949), politics (see, e.g. the institution critique by Hans Haacke, born 1936), 'race' (see, e.g. the silhouettes by Kara Walker, born 1969), or immigrants. Doris Salcedo (born 1958) installed a long crack in the floor of the Tate Modern and called it *Shibboleth* to represent the border that separates the outsider, the foreigner, or the immigrant from the one who claims that he belongs here. Theoretical and critical psychologists could look at the artwork of Wim Delvoye (born 1965) who, with his *Cloaca*, shows how a capitalist art market can literally produce 'shit' and sell it packaged neatly to the market. Indeed, art is still an undertheorized domain in theoretical and critical psychology, even though Foucault (e.g. 1988) drew attention to an aesthetics of existence some time ago.

Substantive deliberations

Critical theoretical psychology can be described as *deconstructive* and *reconstructive*. However, theoretical psychology can also be *constructive* when developing new critical concepts and theories. Arguably, one important task for theoretical psychology is to develop a theory of subjectivity (see also Schraube and Osterkamp 2013), a term that refers to the psychological experiences, activities, and possibilities of a concrete subject in the conduct of life. For that reason, such a theory needs to be interdisciplinary. A theoretical analysis of subjectivity reveals that subjectivity is contextually embedded in the world, meaning it is cultural-historical, socioeconomic, active, and embodied. Subjectivity needs to be analyzed on the background of intersubjectivity that is dialogical and empathetic. A critical concept of subjectivity based on the (mental) life of concrete subjects needs to include agency, reflexivity, and praxis as well as the body (e.g. habitus, performativity, etc.; see Butler 1989) and what it means to live in a neoliberal world. A theory of subjectivity needs to include the process of subjectification, or the ways in which history, society, and culture contribute to the creation of the appearance of an autonomously experienced subject. Finally, a theory of subjectivity needs to theorize the fact that subjectivity as a lived expression ends with death, but that it may continue to operate in products, materialities, imaginations, and memories. Thus, a theory of subjectivity needs to include epistemologies, ontologies, ethics, and aesthetics of *nothingness*.

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Website resources

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Subjectivity: http://www.palgrave-journals.com/sub/index.html

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13

Humanistic psychology

A critical counter culture

Keith Tudor

There is an argument that humanistic psychology is the original critical psychology. It was founded in response to and as a critique of the first two dominant forces of psychoanalysis and behaviourism, hence its moniker 'third force psychology'; it questions reductionism and atomism; it is heavily influenced by phenomenology and challenges the notion of 'reality'; and it represents subjectivist as distinct from objectivist approaches to psychological and social science, that is, nominalist views of ontology or the essence of things, voluntaristic views of human nature, anti-positivistic epistemologies, and ideographic methodologies. It has also shaped and promoted new forms of critical psychological practice, including: consciousness-raising and encounter groups, radical approaches to psychiatry (RAP) in RAP centres, red therapy, and ecotherapy.

Whilst origins of humanistic psychology date back to the early 1960s, the origins of humanism date back to the classical civilizations of China, Greece, and Rome, whose values were renewed in the European Renaissance – and, in context, as Aanstoos (2003) has observed: 'contemporary humanistic psychology can be seen as the third wave of humanism'. In her *Humanist Anthology*, which contains writings from the sixth century BCE (those of the ancient Chinese philosopher, Lao Tze) to the twentieth century CE, Knight (1961: xiii) suggested that three beliefs mark humanism: that there is no supernatural God; that 'man' must face his problems with his own intellectual and moral resources; and '[t]hat authority, supernatural or otherwise, should not be allowed to obstruct inquiry in any field of thought'.

Carl Rogers, a key figure in the development of humanistic psychology, put this last point well when, in defence of experientialism, he wrote: 'Neither the Bible nor the prophets – neither Freud nor research – neither the revelations of God nor man – can take precedence over my own direct experience' (Rogers 1967: 24). For Knight, these three humanistic beliefs give rise to two corollaries: that virtue is a matter of promoting human well-being and that the mainsprings of moral action are social instincts: 'those altruistic, co-operative tendencies that are as much part of our innate biological equipment as are our tendencies toward aggression and cruelty' (xiii).

Although she wrote this half a century ago, just before the founding of the third force of humanistic psychology, Knight's analysis still holds true and offers a useful frame within which we may locate the theory and practice of humanistic psychology today.

A (very) brief history of humanistic psychology

In the 1950s, a number of psychologists, most notably Abraham Maslow, were finding it difficult to get published due to the dominance in psychology of behaviourism. In response to this situation, Maslow began to contact other like-minded psychologists and, in 1954, compiled a mailing list of about 125 people with a view to exchanging papers. In the early 1960s the individuals on this list became the first subscribers to the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, which was launched in 1961 (see DeCarvalho 1990). Maslow called the list 'the Eupsychian Network' because, as he later reflected (Maslow 1962/1968: 237):

> all these groups, organizations and journals are interested in helping the individual grow toward fuller humanness, the society grow toward synergy and health, and all societies and all peoples move toward becoming one world and one species. This list can be called a network because the memberships overlap and because these organizations and individuals more or less share the humanistic and transhumanistic outlook on life.

DeCarvalho (1990) has dated the emergence of humanistic psychology as a 'third force' in American psychology to November 1964, when an invitational conference was held (28th–30th November) in a small country inn in Old Saybrook, Connecticut. It was attended by 18 people, and chaired by Robert Knapp from Wesleyan University, Connecticut, with Norma Rosenquist, the Secretary of the American Association of Humanistic Psychology (AAHP), and Miles Vich, the Editor of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, in attendance. It is worth noting what those individuals brought to that conference and, more broadly, to a psychology that they identified as humanistic: George Allport; Jacques Barzun; James Bugental; Charlotte Bühler; Victor Butterfield; Rene Dubos; George Kelly; Alvin Lasko; Abraham Maslow; Floyd Matson; Rollo May; Carl Moustakas; Gardner Murphy; Henry Murray; Carl Rogers; Edward Shoben; and Robert White. For more on the history of humanistic psychology, see DeCarvalho (1990, 1991), Moss (1999), Schneider et al. (2001), and Cain (2002), and, for a collection of papers on the future of humanistic psychology, see House et al. (2013).

With a theory or theories of human nature based on the organism and self which view the individual as a unique, truth-seeking, integrated, and self-regulating whole with a right to autonomy with responsibility; an emphasis on human capacities and potentialities; with concepts of the person which included being aware, creative, embodied, holistic, and responsible, having free choice, making sense and meaning, and, as primarily social beings, a powerful need to belong, humanistic psychology offered a critique both of the pessimistic Freudian view of humans as driven by a nature and desires beyond their control and of behaviourism's determinism and reductionism. With its aims of therapy and of growth based on self-awareness and actualization (or the view that the organism tends to actualize), which includes authenticity, an autonomy which acknowledges interdependence, emotional competence, completion, the furtherance of creativity, respect for difference, integrity, and wholeness, humanistic psychology offered a critique of the limited aims of insight (psychoanalysis), and social adjustment (behaviourism). With its emphasis on the centrality of the therapeutic relationship as the primary agent of therapeutic change, founded on the therapist's contactfulness and engagement, genuineness or authenticity, nonjudgemental acceptance, and empathy, humanistic psychology offered a resource for overcoming alienation; this also functioned as a critique of the one-person psychology of both classical psychoanalysis and behaviourism, and the one-sided, one-up power position of both the psychoanalyst and the behaviourist. With its emphasis on holism, interrelationship, and context, humanistic psychology offered the possibility of a culturally attuned practice which embedded

and embodied life experience in social context, and challenged the cultural neutrality of both psychoanalysis and behaviourism.

Humanistic psychology and positive psychology

This summary might suggest that humanistic psychology is a positive psychology and, indeed, it was Maslow (1954) who first used the term in the last chapter of his book *Motivation and Personality*, entitled 'Toward a positive psychology', in which he outlined a research agenda which has much in common with more recent iterations of the concept (Seligman 1999). Whilst some psychologists point to the humanistic origins of positive psychology (Resnick et al. 2001), others are less keen to acknowledge the roots and commonalities between the two, and, indeed, are more concerned with distinguishing between the humanistic and the positive. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) have been highly critical of humanistic psychology on the basis, they claim, that it has generated no research tradition, is narcissistic, and is antiscientific. These claims have been well refuted by Taylor (2001: 16) who, in turn, offers a critique of the restricted and restrictive meaning of the 'positive' in positive psychology based on its unquestioning acceptance of (scientific) positivism, and, therefore, a reductionist epistemology; its reliance on positive reinforcement and, thus, behaviourism; and 'the somewhat naively dualistic opposite of anything negative, especially with regard to bad behaviour and faulty cognitive thought processes'.

Where we are now

Fifty years on, humanistic psychology is well established. It is a recognized tradition with a number of schools of therapy or modalities (e.g., biodynamic, gestalt, person-centred, psychodrama, psychosynthesis, transactional analysis), with well-established training courses or programmes. It has generated a considerable literature, including three professional journals (see below for titles), and has a presence within mainstream organizations, including the American Psychological Association (Division 32) and the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) (its Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy College).

With this growth and influence has come both a maturity and a certain loss of identity. Originally founded as a 'discontent' in response to both psychoanalysis and behaviourism, the early meetings of the AAHP (later the Association of Humanistic Psychology (AHP)) were marked by a tendency to define itself in terms of what it was not – although it is worth noting that Maslow (1962), who coined the phrase 'third force' psychology, described humanistic psychology as 'epi-behavioural' and 'epi-Freudian' (*epi* meaning 'building upon'). As Bugental (1964: 22) put it: 'Humanistic psychology generally does not see itself as competitive with the other two orientations; rather, it attempts to supplement their observations and to introduce further perspectives and insights'. The aspiration that humanistic psychology builds on the other two forces and is supplementary and, perhaps, complementary finds expression in much more dialogue and respect between the different forces, orientations, or traditions (see, for example, McWilliams 2005; Orange 2010; Loewenthal and Samuels 2014). At the same time, this has led to a certain loss of distinction between the three forces and a certain merging – and blurring – of differences. Also, whilst there is a sense in which some practitioners in the psy-professions (counselling, psychiatry, psychology, and psychotherapy) define themselves as humanistic, and though in the early days (from the mid-1960s into the mid-1980s) it was possible to train specifically as a humanistic practitioner/therapist, these days more people identify with their particular and specific modality or sub-modality (biodynamic, gestalt, etc.) and not more generally as

'humanistic'. For instance, of the total of 7,500 psychotherapists registered with the UKCP, only 181 identify themselves as a 'humanistic psychotherapist', and of these only a few identify only as such. The vast majority of psychotherapists (over 3,000) who belong to organizations in the UKCP's Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy College identify themselves by one specific modality (or more) and not as a 'humanistic psychotherapist'.

Radical humanism

There are a number of forms, types, or branches of humanism, and they are not all radical. Whilst humanism has been associated with secularism, a philosophy or stance which embraces human reason, ethics, social justice, and philosophical naturalism, there are also forms of religious humanism (Buddhist, Christian, and Judaism) which, by and large, emphasize the inherent dignity of all human beings, the humanity (rather than the deity) of religious figures, and alternatives to theism. Other forms of humanism include Renaissance humanism, African humanism, socialist humanism, transhumanism, and post-humanism. From a sociological point of view, the intellectual origins of radical humanism – the radical humanistic paradigm as identified by Burrell and Morgan (1979) – may be traced to the tenets of German idealism and the work of Immanuel Kant, who considered the ultimate reality of the universe spiritual rather than material in nature. This perspective led radical humanists to focus on the essentially alienated state of mankind, a perspective which has been picked up by radical therapists in transactional analysis and early gestalt therapists, and is also represented by many indigenous practitioners.

Other key concepts and theories associated with radical humanism include: objective idealism (from Georg Hegel and the early work of Karl Marx); French existentialism (deriving from the work of Johann Fichte and Edmund Husserl, and most clearly expressed in the work of Jean-Paul Sartre); anarchism individualism (Max Stirner); and critical theory (based on the sociology of both Georg Lukács and of Antonio Gramsci, and the work of the Frankfurt School). What distinguishes radical humanism from other forms of humanism in humanistic psychology is first (echoing the radical humanist critique of secular humanists and, specifically, their fixation on the anti-religious aspect of their thinking) its reflexivity about humanism itself; and, second, its explicit political/social/cultural analysis and stance. I illustrate this with regard to three contributions which humanistic psychologists (a term I use broadly to encompass practitioners in the psy-professions) have made to the field of psychology – regarding the therapeutic relationship, the education of therapists, and research in therapy – and through which they have questioned mainstream psychology and, thereby, helped to have developed what may be thought of as a critical humanistic psychology.

The therapeutic relationship

It is now commonplace to acknowledge that research in therapy suggests that the therapeutic relationship is the key factor in the outcome of therapy. As Samuels (2013: xi) has recently reported it: 'It's the relationship, stupid!' What is less common is an acknowledgement of the fact that the work of humanistic psychologists, and specifically that of Jessie Taft with regard to the therapeutic relationship (Taft 1933), predates the more recent interest in what has been referred to as 'the relational turn' (see Greenberg and Mitchell 1983) by half a century.

Influenced by George Mead and Otto Rank, Taft coined the term 'relationship therapy', a phrase with which Rogers (1942) described his 'newer psychotherapy' which began to emphasize the significance of the therapeutic relationship over particular therapeutic techniques. Rogers went on to conduct research into this and, as a result, formulated certain relational 'therapeutic

conditions' (Rogers 1957, 1959) which, in turn, have been the subject of further research. More recently, and in the spirit of reflexivity, a colleague and I have critiqued the nominalism and reification of *the* therapeutic *relationship*, suggesting instead that this is better conceptualized as an activity which has continuity and, therefore, better represented as 'therapeutic relating' (see Summers and Tudor 2000).

The emphasis on the facilitative and even curative nature of the therapeutic relationship – or relating – derives from the humanistic view of human nature and especially the concept of the organism (which cannot be understood separate from its environment) (see Tudor and Worrall 2006) and, arguably, a self which, as it develops, becomes ever more engaged with others and the world. This sense of interconnectedness is reflected in the importance of the social group (Adler) and human kinship (Maslow), of relationship with the other (Buber), of the trend to homonomy or belonging alongside that of autonomy (Angyal), and of *Mitwelt* or the social world (Binswanger). From this it may be understood that, despite the criticism levelled at humanism and, more broadly, Western psychology, of an over-emphasis on the individual and a self-obsessed self, humanistic psychology actually represents the person and a psychology which are concerned with self-and-other and the world. In order to represent this, I have added to Stark's (1999) taxonomy of one-person, one-and-a-half person, and two-person psychology, a 'two-person-plus psychology' (Tudor 2011) which acknowledges the impact of the external world and the client's context on and in the therapeutic encounter.

Finally, given the centrality of power to critical analysis, it is significant that a number of humanistic psychologists have addressed the issue of power in the therapeutic relationship, notably Rogers (1977/1978), Steiner (1981), and, more recently, Proctor (2002).

Education

Humanism has been hugely influential on the field of education. The *literae humaniores* – literally, 'more humane literature' – was the name given to the undergraduate course at the University of Oxford which focused on the Classics (also known as 'Greats') i.e., Ancient Rome, Ancient Greece, Latin, ancient Greek, and philosophy. The spirit of a more humane and liberal or free education (from the Latin *liber* meaning 'free') was based on the mediaeval concept of the liberal arts and the liberalism of the Age of Enlightenment, and was generally viewed as encompassing: the classics, (English) literature, the humanities, and moral virtues. Humanistic tenets have been applied to elementary and secondary education, including social justice as a primary focus of praxis (e.g. Greene 1975; Nemiroff 1992).

In the field of psychology, Rogers was one of the few founders of a school of or approach to therapy to have also written about education, and his book *Freedom to Learn* (Rogers 1969, and subsequent editions) still stands as a radical approach to education and, not least, the education of therapists. The person–centred approach to education: i) acknowledges that the student or trainee tends to actualize as they experience and negotiate their learning; ii) supports the inherent directionality of the experiencing student; and iii) is based on the co-creation by the student/s and teacher/trainer/s of certain facilitative conditions to support the learning environment. As such, this approach

> represents a radical shift in educational philosophy and practice which is antithetical to concepts of education which create a dependent relationship between 'expert' teacher and ignorant student, which are curriculum led, and which seek to 'ambush' the student through formal examination.
>
> *(Tudor and Merry 2002: 45)*

What follows from this is a particular concern about the *process* of education. Rogers (1983) identified the aims of what he referred to, significantly, as a 'more human education' as, typically, being a *movement*: towards a climate of trust in the classroom; towards a participatory mode of decision-making in all aspects of learning by all participants; towards helping students prize themselves; towards developing excitement and curiosity in intellectual and emotional discovery; and towards developing in teachers the attitudes of facilitating learning and helping personal growth. The outcome or goal of what he referred to as 'democratic education' included assisting students to become individuals who are able to take self-initiated action and to be responsible for those actions; who are capable of intelligent choice and self-direction; who are critical learners, able to evaluate the contributions made by others; who have acquired knowledge relevant to the solution of problems; who, even more importantly, are able to adapt flexibly and intelligently to new problem situations; who have internalized an adaptive mode of approach to problems, utilizing all pertinent experience freely and creatively; who are able to cooperate effectively with others in these various activities; and who do work, not for the approval of others, but in terms of their own socialized purposes (Rogers 1951).

This represents the outcome of a critical pedagogy (see Freire 1972) or, more accurately, an andragogy which, in its focus on the adult facilitation of adult learners, encourages and indeed demands critical thinking and praxis.

Research

Humanistic psychology has contributed to a different paradigm of research. As humanism emphasizes personal and subjective experience, so its research has tended to focus on describing what happens in and with, rather than to the person.

The humanistic research tradition dates back arguably to William James (1942–1910), and certainly to other more recent influences, including the following: (1) from the early 20th century, gestalt psychologists, such as Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Köhler, and Kurt Koffka – who studied perception, psi phenomenon, productive theory, and developmental psychology; (2) from the 1930s to the 1960s, personologists and, specifically, Henry A. Murray*, whose work gave rise to projective testing; (3) from the 1950s, the personality social psychologists, including Gordon Allport, Gardner Murphy, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and others, whose work gave rise to numerous assessment measures regarding personality and therapy, including quantitative Q-sorts, and all of whom were particularly concerned to frame their work in scientific terms, but who also disputed traditional and monotheistic views of 'science'; (4) from the early 1960s, the development of research methods based on phenomenology, and, specifically, the work of Clark Moustakas, who developed the heuristic research method, and, in doing so, acknowledged that his work was explicitly influenced by that of Rogers; and (5) from the late 1960s, the scientific research on meditation and its techniques – which Taylor (2001: 20) has suggested 'clearly shows the extent to which humanistic psychology has spawned a significant research tradition'. Based on nominalist (as distinct from 'realistic') views of ontology, and on voluntaristic (as distinct from deterministic) views of human nature, humanistic psychology draws on anti-positivistic epistemologies (such as phenomenology), and ideographic or symbolic methodologies (such as heurism) and related methods (such as Moustakas' six phases of heuristic research). Humanistic psychology thus represents a psychology and research theory and practice that promotes, in Rogers' words, 'a human science', and that is critical of mainstream models, such as the medical/psychiatric model, and its assumptions, such as the compartmentalizing of

people into 'parts' and part symptoms, and its methods, such as randomized control trials, which aim to control for certain elements of life and interventions.

In all three areas – concerning the therapeutic relationship (or therapeutic relating), the education of therapists, and research in therapy – humanistic psychology has questioned mainstream psychology and, thereby, contributed to the development of a countercultural, critical and humanistic psychology.

How useful is humanistic psychology?

Humanistic psychology has been – and still is – useful in offering alternative views to a mainstream psychology which is still dominated by and, in a number of ways, perpetuates conservative and even reactionary views of the person and society. It has been useful in challenging psychoanalysis and psychodynamic psychotherapy, with the result that a number of analytic authors have made bridges between these two 'forces' (see Gomez 2004; McWilliams 2005; Orange 2010). It has been useful in challenging behaviourism, with the result that some behavioural psychologists are talking and writing more about the therapeutic relationship in cognitive and behavioural therapies (see Gilbert and Leahy 2009).

Here I highlight three specific contributions that make humanistic psychology useful and critical.

Its emphasis on holism and wholeness

As individuals actualize their potentialities, they become more fully human and closer to what Maslow (1971/1993) described as 'values of Being', the first of which he identified as 'wholeness'. As Aanstoos (2003: 121) has acknowledged: 'this holistic vision is precisely what is most needed to resolve crucial issues of the next generation, including globalization, health, ecology, and spirituality'.

Its acknowledgement of health

That there is health alongside illness, salutogenesis alongside pathogenesis, sanology alongside pathology, and so on, acknowledges the inherent directionality, actuality, and potentiality of the social human organism. This promotes a view of the contactful, engaged, authentic, empathic, active, reflective (reflexive), *and critical* human being described (somewhat differently) by Maslow and Rogers. According to Rogers (1977/1978), the 'political person' is someone who has both courage and responsibility, whilst the 'person of tomorrow' (Rogers 1980) has, amongst other qualities, a certain scepticism (regarding science and technology) and is anti-institutional.

Its increasing concern with the ecological

Humanistic psychology is meeting the criticism (as noted below) levelled at humanism of its undue focus on humans, and at humanistic psychology of its undue promotion of autonomy and independence. A search of all articles published in the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* over the past 52 years revealed that the word 'interdependence' appeared 26 times in the past 14 years (2000–2013), compared with 27 times in the previous four decades (1961–1999). This concern that we are interdependent (human) beings offers more links not only to others, but also to other traditions, such as indigenous wisdom traditions, as well as to the planet itself.

Limits and limitations

The most obvious and fundamental limitation of humanism is that, as its name suggests, its concerns are confined to the human realm – and, indeed, the use of the word 'realm' may reflect an assumption of sovereignty of humans over the nonhuman world. That humanism and humanistic psychology is anthropocentric and open to the charge of 'speciesism' has been discussed by Shapiro (1990) and Fisher (2002). Perhaps a measure of the response to this criticism is the increasing interest in the interface between humanistic psychology and ecopsychology and, indeed, whether ecopsychology and the various forms of ecotherapy are a form of 'humanistic' psychology in the broader sense of the term (see Tudor 2013b).

A second limitation – and critique – of humanistic psychology is that it is – or was – highly individualistic. This was perhaps most clearly epitomized in Fritz Perls' gestalt prayer: I do my thing and you do your thing / I am not in this world to live up to your expectations, / And you are not in this world to live up to mine. / You are you, and I am I, and if by chance we find each other, it's beautiful/ If not, it can't be helped (Perls 1969: 4). Whilst this certainly reflected something of the man himself and a certain self-obsession in the 1960s culture of narcissism (see Lasch 1979), within a few years other humanistic therapists had responded to Perls' prayer with alternatives which described a more engaged and interconnected view of the 'I' (see Tubbs 1972).

A third critique is that humanistic psychology and its therapies have, by and large, not fulfilled their critical and/or radical promise. Despite its initial critique of both psychoanalysis and behaviourism, many humanistic therapies and therapists have taken on much that is psychoanalytic (e.g. the unconscious, transference and countertransference, projective identification), and behavioural (e.g. contracts, feedback, modelling), with little critical reflection, assessment, or even awareness of the origins and implications of the words and concepts they use. Despite the fact that humanistic psychology originally questioned psychologies whose model of science was taken from physics (see AHP 1963), and suggested 'a human science' (Rogers 1967), and a science 'at the edge' (Brockman 2003), many of its exponents presented their theory in traditional, 'scientific' ways (see, notably, Rogers 1959). Despite the countercultural influences on the emergence of humanistic psychology, such as feminism and other radical political movements, humanistic psychologists and therapists have, with rare exceptions (such as the Independent Practitioners' Network in the United Kingdom), tended to organize themselves in traditional associations – and, indeed, have often been leading exponents of the increasing professionalization of the psychological therapies and of professional recognition through statutory regulation and state registration. Some might speculate that these examples only reflect the inherent conservatism of the humanistic project; others will argue that humanism and humanists have simply had to adapt and protect in order to survive in a psychological world and in psy-professions dominated by the first two forces of psychology.

Such critiques and reflections are crucial in order for those of us who define ourselves as humanistic psychologists or therapists – or humanists (see Tudor 2013a) – to continue to reflect critically and to maintain both a humane and critical psychology and praxis.

Looking forward

In the past two years there have been a number of acknowledgements of the fiftieth anniversary of early occasions in humanistic psychology and last year, many of us acknowledged the meeting in Old Saybrook. This has been a time of looking back and reassessing the origins and impact of this third force in psychology, yet its greatest contribution lies ahead. If it is to be a critical

one, humanistic psychology has to maintain its reflexivity. In his preface to *Toward a Psychology of Being*, Maslow (1962/1968: ii–iv) wrote: 'I consider Humanistic, Third Force Psychology to be transitional, a preparation for a still "higher" Fourth Psychology, transpersonal, transhuman, centered in the cosmos rather than in human needs and interest, going beyond humanness, identity, self-actualization, and the like'. Whether present or future generations will judge that we have achieved this or not, Maslow's statement reflects the aspirational and 'inside out' therapeutic perspective represented by a contemporary and critical humanistic psychology.

Further reading

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Website resources

The Humanistic Psychologist: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/hthp20

Journal of Humanistic Psychology: http://jhp.sagepub.com/

Self and Society: An International Journal of Humanistic Psychology: http://ahpb.org/index.php/about-self-society/

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14

Political psychology

Critical approaches to power

Maritza Montero

Although political psychology has a well-established place in some regions of the world, the definition of its field is contested. That means political psychology is an interesting space for research. Having blurred boundaries is not a problem; sciences are not closed. But the lack of a clear border between political psychology and political science, an aspect that has accompanied political psychology since the 1970s, is nowadays considered by some political psychologists as problematic. Deutsch and Kinvall consider that it is 'defined not only by its subject-matter', but also characterized by the 'interrelationship between political and psychological processes' (2002: 17), and in this they follow the steps of Stone (1974), and Hermann (1986). At the same time, and in the same book (Monroe 2002), Krosnick and McGraw (2002) denounce the acceptance of a twofold idea of political psychology, one made up of psychological political science and political psychology, and argue that those domains should have as boundaries 'the fundamental priorities of the research enterprise'. For them, political psychology should then be 'true to its name' (Krosnick and McGraw 2002: 79–80). Political psychology's authenticity would then reside in the presence of psychological values and goals, and, as happens in science, it is still under construction.

The lack of psychological perspectives in some political researches, as well as the proximity of political science, is not only an Anglo-Saxon problem. In papers in the specific field of political psychology at many international conferences, one can find that some of them hardly touch political aspects on the one hand, or 'psychology' is just mentioned in the title, a word simply helping them to be included in the programme, on the other. Certainly, political issues concern political psychology, while also being of interest for political science, but this is often without a clear psychological perspective in either the realm of theory or methodology. The iterative condition of political problems makes it possible that certain problems need to have the dimension of both political psychology and political science. It seems that blurred boundaries will be with us for a long time.

The origins of political psychology

Political psychology was first established in France at the beginning of the twentieth century by the sociologist Gustav Le Bon (1911/1971) as a way to deal with the psychological effects of

politics in social life. He defined political psychology as a science of government charged with avoiding or controlling mistakes and errors, so frequent and so costly, that were made by politicians in government. A few years later in the USA, a different line of political work was created, which combined psychopathology and politics and emphasized the life histories and psychopathological aspects of politicians in charge of the most important tasks in the State. Harold Lasswell, whose clinical and political work *Psychopathlogy and Politics* is considered the main pillar for US political psychology, did not exactly mention 'political psychology' as such, but rather politics, political science, political biography, political agitators, political convictions, and the State, and proposed a notion of psychopathology linked to personality studies. He also looked to the possibility that politicians be instructed in the judicious or wise employment of their minds in order to reduce prejudices and to develop a logical way of thinking by self-observation and questioning. That sort of political psychology did not produce a corresponding successful practice, but it certainly influenced psychologists. Both authors, Le Bon and Lasswell, therefore had a critical idea of what was happening with politics, and proposed ways to correct it. In Germany, a platform for the critical construction and analysis of political ideas and behaviour was developed by the Frankfurt School, a group of politically oriented philosophers and sociologists directed by Max Horkheimer. Their centre was the Institute for Social Research, first in Weimar, later in Frankfurt, and they produced a line of thought characterized by studying critical works of philosophers such as Kant, Hegel, and Marx, and, contemporaneous to the researchers in the Institute, Lukács and Heidegger. Psychoanalytical and psychological ideas which were characterized by the Institute's critique of mainstream developments were presented. When Nazism forced these researchers to flee their country (mainly to the United States), they contributed to the first substantial psychological analysis of ideology and its effects on the psyche, which were then analysed by psychologists. *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al. 1950/1964) is an important example of this line of work.

The Frankfurt School also developed lines of critique regarding the way in which human beings construct knowledge and how social life and its conditions affect them, thus opening a critical view of society and the creation of social conditions that produce images of reality influenced by dominant ideologies. Those ideological images have positive or negative effects, and there is always the possibility of transforming society by way of the activation of human interests. Their critique pointed to the constraints created at the same time that those images were constructed, thus producing benefits for some people while leaving others out. What is considered good and what is considered bad also here depends on the possibilities human people have to voice their problems and to propose and discuss ideas.

Le Bon wanted to prevent or avoid politicians' errors and mistakes, and Lasswell presented a perspective treating them as mental health problems. Despite these motives, the proposals do not seem to have been taken much into account, and many politicians still do what they have always done. In this form political psychology, along with the other social sciences, does not seem to have had any impact, much less have been studied by many politicians. The Nazi party did not want to learn the teaching of the Frankfurt School, but was keen enough to persecute them. One of their aims was to eradicate the Institute in Frankfurt; they dispersed its main participants, brilliant researchers who had to seek refuge in order to save their lives.

What has political psychology done since these beginnings?

Despite these failures in the realm of politics, political psychology has over the years been feeding into social psychology, social sciences, and classical research methods absolutely necessary in almost all branches of psychology, such as questionnaires, interviews, surveys, case studies,

scales, and biographical methods. Since the 1960s, there have been studies into how political opinions and ideas are constructed, for example. Psychologists interested in political psychology have engaged in research on the political socialization of children, and into the influence of parents and peers. Studies of national identities and nationalism, conservatism and liberalism, elections and electoral campaigns, voting, the character of presidents and the political behaviour of important politicians were, and still are, popular. In some cases, research related to dictators, oppressive governments, their deeds and their effects, their policies and political behaviour (and sometimes even their private behaviour), have dire consequences for authors. Critical views then may come from outside the countries concerned, but even abroad there is what can be called self-censorship. Sometimes, even important journals of political psychology have tried to assume a 'neutral' position, rejecting the publication of articles related to dictatorships, totalitarian governments, the segregation of certain ethnic groups, or anti-capitalist criticism. This can be reflection of fear (if the journal or editorial house is in the country or has economic contacts with that country or place). Fear of having an opinion, or fear that one might offend some powerful group, may be an important factor in determining what is and what is not published. In relation to these issues, power and its asymmetric nature in politics and daily life is always present and needs to be addressed in 'critical' approaches to political psychology.

Poverty, as a global condition presented in local situations, and present all over the world, is also an area of research for political psychology, though it has not been one of the most salient in conferences and handbooks (Carr and Sloan 2003). Poverty is a complex phenomenon accompanied by exclusion, and it is present not only in 'underdeveloped' countries, but in almost all regions of the world. It can have an economic core, or can be produced by crises due to natural phenomena or political disasters such as wars, oppression, and segregation. It can be related to both individual and social issues such as teenage pregnancy or lack of education.

Politics and power

The most important problem of politics concerns the use of power. Power is an essential part of human life. People need it to be able to achieve positive benefits, both for society or for individuals. The German sociologist Max Weber coined a definition of power in the first quarter of the twentieth century, arguing that it is: 'the probability of imposing one's own will, within a social relationship, even against every resistance and whatever it may be the foundation of that probability' (1925/1964: 228). In spite of the inclusion of the word 'probability' in this definition, the power is its main condition. That asymmetry is expressed in the idea that in social relationships, some individuals, people, groups, gender, ethnic groups, and so on, prevail over others. This even in spite of the many examples that history presents us regarding the fall and decadency of those who considered that they had immanent power.

The Weberian conception of power has also been adopted in an almost universal way. It prevailed during the past century and is the most popular today, in psychology as everywhere. Even a radical psychologist like Ignacio Martín-Baró used this conception: he wrote, that power is "the condition of social relations based in the diferential possesion of resources allowing some people to achieve their class or personal interests, imposing them to others" (1989, p. 101). By 1989 he introduced the notion of a difference in resources, as well as attending to the fact that serving the goals and interests of an actor may actually be as important as their 'will'. Nevertheless, he was always concerned with the asymmetry between partners in a relationship (Martín-Baró 1984).

Power is neither unilateral nor immanent. It is not some essential aspect that some people are born with, and that other people will never have. That conception of power is an ideological

conception, one which presents it as some kind of gift of command, or as if it were an object. Perceiving power as a thing or as a place also expresses a form of alienation in which things or positions are superior to the people that created them. It does make it possible to distinguish and to challenge public manifestations of power, but makes hard to see that power at work in small groups, in daily relationships between peers, in families or within couples, the places where power is actually displayed, sometimes leaving its mark forever. But there are also places where people can develop resources leading to power.

A concern with *asymmetric power*, in contrast, is based on the idea that some people, groups, or social categories are powerless. Power then is seen as a continuum, one of its poles marked by its concentration, and the other defined by its absence. The first has force while the other is weak, thus reinforcing inequality in social systems and inequality in politics, since that basic definition presents it as the capacity to manage government, acquiring power to solve problems, to decide about them, to organize society. Asymmetrical power resides in imbalance and concentration of what is necessary and socially wanted at one particular pole, and in the possibility to have control over those on the other side of the social relationship. Those relations have different aspects according to the ways of exerting dominion. They can be *force relationships* based on the possession of more weapons and military forces, or of more political force according to the place of key actors in hierarchies and the support coming from other members of society, thus gaining control and direction within the political system. They can be *conflictive relationships* where there are different and contrasting ideas between groups in such a way that the autonomy of one group collides with the decisions of the others.

Asymmetry leads to a dead end for political change. Power should be exerted in order to produce well-being, by distributing, in the best possible way, knowledge, goods, and services, so that all members of the group have access to them. Marxist theories of ideology have explained how obstacles are put in the way of this equitable process: an asymmetrical situation through the production of ideas that could be induced in the poorer sections of society, in such a way that those people convince themselves that certain conditions in social organization are not only necessary, but also the right and only way.

Asymmetry in power

There are anti-democratic asymmetries, totalitarian and dictatorial asymmetries, and democratic asymmetries. In the last system, 'democratic asymmetries', innovative ideas are not always well received because of fear of change and threats to power positions. Psychological and psychobiological researchers have studied political domination and submissive behaviours, as well as leadership and the psychology of specific leaders. The idea of power being the natural privilege of one, or a few, or of a particular group or nation, has been influential in politics as an ideological notion.

At the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, an organizational perspective was presented in France, with a theoretical–methodological analysis of *strategic power relationships* (Crozier and Friedberg 1977: 69). Although these relationships sustain resources, allowing each one to manipulate the other, they also allow each of them to have access to desired resources. Crozier and Friedberg's strategy here resides in 'the margin of liberty that each part possesses compromised in a relation of power', thus generating a greater flexibility in power relationships and also, at times, greater tension. For them, power is characterized as being linked to exchange and, consequently, to negotiation. This is due to their emphasis on instrumental relations, which implicate many affective phenomena conditioning their development. That relation is non-transitive and reciprocal, marked by the force one actor searches for in order to take something from the

other, but it does not mean that both of the participants will necessarily and passively accept it. The power relationship, according to Crozier and Friedberg, resides in the extent of the zone of doubt created by the liberty and autonomy of each actor.

The problem here, and in Friedberg's (1993) later work, is the lack of balance in a relationship. Balance is not an entropic modality, although it uses imbalance as a play of contrasting capacities, thus producing a *negantropic* (the contrary of entropic) arrangement. Everything people do tends towards imbalance, and such is the case with asymmetric power. But, at the same time, people need to generate symmetry not only to have access to goods, but also to freedom and independence. Exactly the same are searched for in conditions of asymmetry, but with the condition that some have access to a great amount of the goods in a specific place or even around the Earth. That same inequality exists in the quality of the behaviour exchanged within the asymmetrical space, and Friedberg (1993) refers to something he calls 'the Other', and introduces the idea that there is a relational and non-transitive nature of power; for him, power is not separable from relationships. Power can only be transitive: 'It depends on the relation, not on the hierarchy' (1993: 114).

This is the part where the non-mentioned excluded, oppressed, abandoned, outsiders (the 'Others' in general) enter. If they do not know how to negotiate, how to trade, how to organize themselves, or how to know what their resources are, they can be lost or duped. Friedberg then says that 'Negotiation does not need to be consciously lived by the participants (in it)' (1993: 115). That is why, in liberation psychology, consciousness is the most important aspect to develop political, ethical, and psychological understanding and action. For Friedberg, 'There is a non-reducible nexus between power and interdependence between power and cooperation' (1993: 115). So, power can be bilateral and multilateral, and there should be something like negotiation. Exchange is necessary, because the relation will not exist without it. He then constructs a new definition of power, saying: 'Power can be and should be defined as the capacity of an actor of structuring processes of interchange more or less enduring, in his favour, exploiting the difficulties and needs of a situation to impose favourable interchange terms for his interest' (1993: 117). That is an example of the nature of balance as used in asymmetrical power.

Power is found in social structures and in asymmetry of resources. That asymmetry is the main unbalancing aspect in power relationships, and the possibility to overcome asymmetric power and is an aspect acknowledged by James and Craig (1979), Lukes (1974/2007), Serrano-García and López-Sánchez (1994), and Montero 2003. If asymmetry were not present there would be no political corruption. All people need to exert power, and do it in many non-corrupt ways in their everyday life. Michel Foucault was quite right when he said that power is omnipresent and immanent, that it comes from everywhere (Foucault 1984: 113).

Asymmetry derives from the intention and deeds directed to the use of it as only for one person or for only a specific group or nation. The problem itself resides in politics, and in the possibility that all human beings have of exerting power in such a way that they can force other human people to submit to their will. It also lies in the privatization of knowledge, in the creation of social classes, in the distinction between groups according to knowledge, and even in the health conditions of people. It is present in the classification and evaluation of people in line with decisions made by some groups and without the participation of other groups who are qualified to judge, and without considering the capacities that those classified may themselves have. What is produced then is a form of social organization according to the specific interests of a few.

Symmetry in power

Since the 1960s, the idea of symmetry in power has had some supporters. The fact is that those who seem to be dispossessed, deprived of all power, and who have a lower place in society, being

denied not only physical but also the intellectual access to knowledge and other goods within a society, are also able to overcome their condition. Between the 1980s and 1990s, the notion of power was revised, moving from mere radical denunciation of asymmetrical power effects without any movement trying to change it, to critical conceptions which aimed at bringing out its problems and overcoming its oppressive characteristics.

In 1974, for example, Steven Lukes presented a 'radical view' of power, and then in 2007 he reviewed that book, presenting an idea of power that could be considered as a defence of symmetry. Lukes proposed a form of power that was not mainly based on obedience by way of menace and sanctions, power that was carried out from places of authority, by force, influence, and manipulation. His ideas take a non-Weberian path, and instead present a 'tri-dimensional' view of power, defined as dispositional, as 'an aptitude or capacity that can be exerted or not' (Lukes 1974/2007: 130).

For him, power is a condition pertaining to the whole of humanity. Power is everywhere in multiple ways, and every human being has the potential ability to generate power to do things, to transform society and to undo it. Power is then a capacity, but not the exercise of that capacity, and one could be powerful by satisfying and promoting other people's interests. The problem then resides in considering power as the 'imposition of inner inhibitions' (Lukes 1974/2007), meaning processes such as habituation, in the sense described by Bourdieu (1972), naturalization (the way that beliefs, wishes, and ways of behaving are induced by external agents and come to be part of one's own personality), and alienation-ideologization (in such a way that domination and obedience are obtained as if by people's own free will). People accept such conditions of power as the 'natural' way to be, not being aware of the origin of such ideas and behaviour, and they then accept power within social situations, considering it necessary, natural, and indispensable, even as protecting society, and they thereby internalize their subordinated status as a consequence of power (Lukes 1974/2007: 52). However, at the same time, Lukes insists that social actors be considered as dynamic, and emphasizes the way that actors can have motivations in spite of oppression and deprivation; they may produce unexpected changes in society in spite of dictatorships.

Power in action

Power is manifested in many ways. It is present in the first steps in life, in the most trivial daily tasks; it is everywhere. At every moment in society, its members are exerting some kind of power or are the object of that exertion. That omnipresent condition makes it necessary to rethink what power is and how it should be used, and it is necessary to know that every human being suffering from the abuse of power also has powerful resources that may produce transformation and changes at any moment and any place: 'Power is a problem not only when it is abusively used, in a dominant and oppressive way, but also when one ignores that one possess it' (Montero 2003). Theories of ideology help us to see this relationship between power and hegemony as being bound up with distorting effects which lead to relationships in which a person can be the subject of submission or be used as an instrument to obtain ends one has not elected. That kind of behaviour may be so habitual that it becomes socially naturalized.

In the field of political psychology in Puerto Rico, Irma Serrano-García and Gerardo López-Sánchez (1994, 1991) produced a model of the 'symmetric' position of power. First, they locate the difference in access to resources that provides the material basis of social relationships. To that, as has been done by other researchers, they add a conception of power as a social relation. They define power as: 'A personal or indirect daily interaction in which people manifest their social consensus and the ruptures between their experiences and their consciousness'

(Serrano-García and López-Sánchez 1994: 178). They emphasize that there is a materially defined historical relationship which is prior to any specific interaction, and in this relationship there are agents in a conflict which is created by the control and exclusive use of a resource which can be material or immaterial, dominated by one and wanted by the other. That material base includes objects and services, as well as institutions in charge of their distribution.

A central concept in their theory is that of *consciousness*, a fundamental concept for psychology, defined as the 'individual or group apprehension of the prevailing ideology' (Serrano-García and López-Sánchez 1994:181). That consciousness may be either 'submissive and practical', or 'critically integrating', or 'critically liberating'. The importance of consciousness resides in the fact that the power relation is based on it, since there is the need that the agent deprived of access to a resource recognizes and constructs the situation as unequal, producing dissatisfaction. The agent must feel a necessity to have that resource and so covet it. In this way Serrano-García and López-Sánchez constructed a theory of power with a psychosocial base, placing its origins in psychological processes linked to a relationship creating a mode of social action and a mode of being a social actor. The level of consciousness alerts us to the inequality produced by the differential in handling resources, and leads us to an understanding that one can have access to the resources as well as to an awareness that social situations are changeable and dynamic, thus impelling the actors to change them according to their interest. This conception of change is central to critical political psychology.

Relationships are considered in their social context as a part of a wider network of relations that should be taken into account. There are therefore three prerequisites for this understanding of those internal processes that not directly observable until the desired resource is identified: 'necessities and aspirations'; 'consciousness of the asymmetry of resources'; and 'identification of desired resources'. Manifestations of interest in consciousness originate the relation and conflict keeps it going (Serrano-García and López-Sánchez 1994). This theory draws attention both to the interested agent and to the controlling agent. There is power in the agent controlling and dominating a resource, and in the agent that feels the inequality. Identifying that situation opens the way to a different relationship that will produce answers and changes, although that is not always easy to obtain. Some power relations may involve a struggle for years and even centuries (an example of which is slavery).

It is necessary for critical political psychologists, among others, to keep open the possibility of accessing resources, and it is also necessary to keep to the forefront of our work a conception of the levels of satisfaction and aspirations of the people, something that is neither achieved by decree nor by popular consensus. In such circumstances one should explore the fears, myths, helplessness, suspicion, and insecurity that may be at the base of apparent indifference. The rhythm of change in social groups, their history and context, should also be included.

Conclusions

Critical aspects of political psychology should be a rich territory for a critical study. Politics, government, and citizenship are aspects of work that usually develop debates and critical analysis, but academic political psychology is, so far, very cautious or not much interested in those fields. There are, however, political psychologists that do very interesting work about such processes. Marx and Engels' works are increasingly well-known among those who are 'critical' in political psychology, and the same can be said of the work of Gramsci, Lukács, and those working in the tradition of the Frankfurt School as well as those who use Foucault's ideas. Social constructionism, for example, was quickly embraced by the psychological community, even if many only did lip service to it. I have concentrated on 'power' in this chapter because it concerns politics and

is an important phenomenon through which to advance social equality, fairness, and respect. These aims of critical work confront the naturalization of the idea that power can only be on one side of society, which has the natural capacity to impose ideas and norms on everyone else. Asymmetrical power and its social, economic, and psychological consequences are political as well as political–psychological problems.

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Community psychology
Subjectivity, power, collectivity

David Fryer and Rachael Fox

In this chapter we address the topic of *community psychology* from a *critical* standpoint. First, we briefly explicate 'critical' frames of reference influential within community psychology and, in particular, the one within which we engage here as authors critical within and of community psychology. We then clarify what we are talking about when we discuss community psychology by reference to influential characterizations which are dominantly regarded as authoritative. We then consider some opportunities afforded by community psychology for enabling and promoting critique within and of the disciplinary practices of 'psy' and of oppressive practices. Finally, we consider problems with community psychology when considered within a critical frame of reference.

Critical frames of reference within community psychology

Max Horkheimer positioned critical psychology as concerned with liberation of 'human beings from the circumstances that enslave them' (Horkheimer 1982: 244). Most community psychologists would agree with that but disagree about what enslaves human beings and so about what freedom from enslavement would entail. Many community psychologists claim that human beings are enslaved when their capacity for agentic self-determination as individual social and moral persons-in-context is restricted and disabled by powerful social forces, such as those operating through inequality, poverty, unemployment, or racism, with negative consequences for 'wellness' and social justice. Most versions of community psychology could be claimed to be 'critical' in the sense that they claim a commitment to 'liberation' of people from pathogenic, socially unjust enslavement through social and structural intervention which 'empowers' (e.g. Dalton et al. 2001, 2007; Nelson and Prilleltensky 2010; Orford 1992; Rappaport 1977). Whether these versions do actually liberate is quite another matter, of course.

Some community psychologists are fundamentally concerned with 'enslavement' by capitalism and draw heavily upon Marx, Marxian, and/or Marxist texts. Horkheimer (1982), one-time Director of the Institute for Social Research, more widely known as the Frankfurt School, whose members combined interests in Marxism, psychoanalysis, and anti-positivism, and Klaus Holzkamp (1983), former Professor at the Free University of Berlin, who is often positioned as a founder of 'critical psychology', are both still influential in some versions of community

psychology. Kagan et al. (2011), for example, who titled their recent book *Critical Community Psychology*, write with regard to using 'critical' that they have 'set up two ideal types, with a clear bias as to the one that we are more comfortable with' (12). The 'more comfortable' type for them is introduced by reference to 'the Frankfurt School of Marxist intellectuals concerned with questions of culture and its relation to society (e.g. Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, Fromm, Habermas)' writing that in that context 'what is meant by the term "critical" is an approach that tries to understand a social reality through introduction of another, more penetrating frame of reference, one that has to do with a general theory of human society (or at least late capitalist society) understood in terms of contradictions between different social interests and economic processes of exploitation, capital accumulation, and so on' (12). Marxism is also a powerful influence on the work of contemporary South African community psychologists Seedat et al. (2001), who included a chapter entitled 'Towards a Marxist community psychology' in their textbook of community psychology.

Other community psychologists, including the authors of this chapter, position enslavement within a frame of reference which draws upon the work of Michel Foucault and has been developed by scholars like Joao Biehl, Judith Butler, and Nikolas Rose. Whilst they do not all accept the term 'postmodern', they are critical in many respects of modernist frames of reference and regard enslavement as having multiple loci of accomplishment, including compliance achieved through subjection/re-subjectivation, oppressive power-knowledge systems which take both productive and restrictive forms, and the broader project of governmentality (Fryer and Stambe 2014a; Fryer and Stambe 2014b;; Marley and Fryer 2014; Nic Giolla Easpaig et al. 2014; Stambe et al. 2012).

Some versions of critique within community psychology are mutually inconsistent. Mainstream community psychology is problematic from both Marxist and Foucauldian standpoints. Marxist community psychologies are problematic from a Foucauldian standpoint because the Marxist approach to power is regarded as problematic and Marxism is regarded as a modernist grand narrative riddled with governmentality-achieving prescriptions and proscriptions. From a Marxist point of view, Foucauldian critique is positioned as problematic. Kagan et al. (2011: 12) characterized 'another common use of "critical"' . . . 'at its worst (and most postmodern) as "almost" meaning "say what you like" . . . part of the "society of the spectacle", of consumerism, of capitalism itself'.

What we are talking about when we discuss 'community psychology'?

In a popular United Statesian community psychology textbook, Nelson and Prilleltensky (2005, 2010) summarize 'themes that have been consistent over time' in community psychology. According to Nelson and Prilleltensky, community psychology is distinguished from 'traditional applied psychology' by: *ecological levels of analysis*; problems being 'reframed in terms of *social context and cultural diversity*'; *focus upon* '*competence/strengths*'; early, preferably *preventative, intervention* to promote '*competence and wellness*'; emphasis on '*self-help/community development/*social action'; positioning of the 'client' as an '*active participant who exercises choice and self-direction*'; positioning of the professional as a '*resource collaborator* (scholar–activist)'; and an '*emphasis on social ethics, emancipatory values and social change*' (2005: 5). Similar accounts of community psychology can be found in most United Statesian textbooks (e.g. Dalton et al. 2001, 2007; Kloos et al. 2012; Levine and Perkins 1997; Rappaport 1977).

This account is mirrored on the website of the Society for Community Research and Action – Community Psychology (SCRA), Division 27 of the American Psychological Association

(http://www.scra27.org/about). The SCRA 'vision' includes the statement that SCRA will have an 'impact on *enhancing well-being and promoting social justice* for all people *by fostering collaboration* where there is division *and empowerment* where there is oppression'. The SCRA 'mission statement' and the society's four principles also include the following terms: 'its members are committed to *promoting health and empowerment* and to *preventing problems*'; '*respect for diversity among peoples* and settings'; '*Human competencies* and problems are best understood by *viewing people within their social, cultural, economic, geographic, and historical contexts*'; '*active collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and community members*' ; and 'promote *competence and well-being*'. The version of community psychology found in Nelson and Prilleltensky (2005, 2010) and on the SCRA web pages is again mirrored extraordinarily closely by the entry on community psychology in Wikipedia.

Individual *international* textbooks echo this account. For example, in *Community Psychology and Social Change: Australian and New Zealand Perspectives*, Thomas and Veno (1996: 25) summarize the core values and principles for an Australian and New Zealand community psychology as: '*empowerment, social justice, diversity* and *cultural pluralism*, cultural awareness, social innovation, evaluation, *community development* and *participation, collaboration and partnership*, an *ecological approach*, systems perspectives, *prevention and localisation*'.

'What do people actually do when they are doing community psychology?', Orford (1992: 8,4) asks rhetorically, in his influential British textbook. He answers that his Table 1 'provides one answer in brief, and the remaining chapters of this book . . . provide the same answer at much greater length'. Roughly summarized, the chapters address: *ecological levels of analysis and intervention*; *social support*; *power and control*; *methodological eclecticism*; *collaborative working*; *prevention*; organizational change; *self-help and non-professional help*; and *community empowerment*.

One could continue ad infinitum, giving examples of similar accounts of community psychology. Does this constitute a form of convergent validity? Have versions of community psychology sprung up independently in different places at different times and converged on the most effective and coherent ways to 'do' community psychology? We pursue such issues later but for now we consider the following:

Some opportunities afforded by community psychology for critique

Whenever and wherever it is taught, community psychology can open a space in the undergraduate psychology degree for engagement in critique by under- and postgraduates, when critical psychology would be much more difficult or impossible to get into the syllabus. For example, in terms of content, through community psychology, the teacher has the potential to introduce into the undergraduate psychology syllabus at least traces of: 'history of the present' of psychology; philosophy of science; sociology of knowledge; text based research methods; emancipatory disability research; feminist theory; anti-psychiatry; Marxist thinking; post-structural thinking; and decolonizing methodology. Community psychology provides opportunities to begin critique of: the dogma of value-free science; intellectual colonization; positivism; universalism; victim blaming approaches; the medical model of disability; and the hegemonic psy construction and reproduction of the decontextualized individual. Through how community psychology is taught, there is the potential to provide opportunities for undergraduates to appreciate that vast amounts of sophisticated effective work addressing 'psychological oppression' is done by people without psychology, or indeed any, degrees. The existence of an approach which is conceptually, methodologically, and politically different from the mainstream but also itself mainstream in that it is recognized as a legitimate part of the discipline (by Section status in the British Psychological Society, by College status in the

Australian Psychology Society and eligibility for practice endorsement with the Psychology Board of Australia, by Division status in the American Psychology Association, by Associate Membership status of the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations in the case of the European Community Psychology Association [http://www.efpa.eu/associate-members] etc.) communicates to students the possibility of employment in community psychology with potential to engage in aspects of critique. Courses in community psychology in higher education institutions also potentially allow the employment of critical psychologists to teach community psychology. Community psychology conferences provide spaces for critical subgroups to meet and debate. Community psychology *Sections* or *Divisions* or *Colleges* can allow critical voices to potentially influence national policy. Community psychology forums (e.g. https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=COMMUNITYPSYCHUK) can provide spaces for the development of critique and solidarity. In practice, the radicality of critique which has flourished in such spaces has so far been modest and community psychologists are as prone, maybe more, to close critique down as any other manifestations of the psy-complex, but community psychology affords opportunities for critique at least in theory. Most importantly, community psychology can sometimes survive, albeit against tremendous odds, where critical psychology would be less likely to survive and create spaces for resistance. A community psychology master's programme has been established at Birzeit University in the West Bank, in which community psychology is positioned as taking a stand against repression and state violence, and naming the source of oppression and doing so under military occupation. As the developer of this programme, Makkawi puts it as(this volume): 'envisioning critical psychology in the Arab World in general, is better conceived through critical community psychology as an emerging alternative to colonial psychology'.

Community psychology: some problems

As shown above, there are huge numbers of uncannily similar or even near identical definitions and explications of community psychology, explicitly or implicitly, in textbooks, in journal articles, on professional society websites, on forums, given by lecturers in class, or implicit in the practices, procedures, and techniques of practitioners. These apparently authoritative definitions are repeated by the most famous and well-travelled celebrity professors in invited presentations at prestigious conferences, in the most cited textbooks and the journals which count most in the Key Performance Indicator stakes. But how is such authority to define and explicate constituted and legitimated? Whose interests are served by the legitimation of such definitions and explications? Should that authority be resisted? What are the consequences of such community psychological knowledge claims, related practices, technologies, enunciated values, organizational structures, means of subjection and governmentality and so forms of power thus constituted and deployed in theory and action?

Within our critical frame of reference, some definitions and explications being repeated more often, in more forums, with more assurance than others tells us more about the communication and other privileges of the definers than it does about the definitions: the dominant definitions of community psychology are the definitions of the most powerful vested interests.

The most prestigious community psychology journals are United Statesian (*American Journal of Community Psychology* and *Journal of Community Psychology*). The majority of community psychology textbooks are written by United Statesian authors. There are more graduate courses generating credentialed community psychologists in the United States than anywhere else. The most powerful community psychology professional organization (SCRA) is United Statesian. In turn the SCRA, which has its own dedicated and influential formal, *Journal of Community*

Psychology, and informal magazine, *The Community Psychologist*, convenes the biggest national biennial conference of community psychology, manufactures the most awarded community psychology academics, and promotes community psychology origin stories which position the beginnings of community psychology in the USA amid domestic US political events.

Not surprisingly, a United Statesian version of community psychology has become globally dominant. This is not disputed even by United Statesian community psychologists, but neither is it positioned by them as problematic. Writing in the influential *Handbook of Community Psychology*, edited by Rappaport and Seidman (2000), Wingenfeld and Newbrough were able to refer to community psychology, or closely related work, in: Aotearoa/New Zealand, Argentina, Asia, Australia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Mexico, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Poland, Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, South Africa, Spain, the UK, the USA, and Venezuela. Reading Reich et al., (2007) would lead one to add: Cameroon, Ghana, Greece, India, Japan, Portugal, Spain, and Turkey to that list. That would still exclude France and Palestine, where interesting current developments are locally identified as community psychological, and Austria, where a version of community psychology was, arguably, developed in the 1930s (Fryer 2008a; Jahoda and Fryer 1998).

Wingenfeld and Newbrough (2000: 779) discursively positioned United Statesian community psychology as 'a sub-discipline of psychology' 'created at a conference' in the USA. They assert that 'the development of community psychology in most of the countries discussed here was stimulated by internal social needs, developments, and conceptualizations *and influences from the U.S. sources*' (780). Only in two countries do they argue otherwise: 'Poland and Cuba are the two countries where influences from U.S. community psychology have been minimal' (Wingenfeld and Newbrough 2000: 780). That may have been the case in 2000, but not today: *International Community Psychology: History and Theories* (Reich et al. 2007) contains a chapter on community psychology in Poland (Bokszczanin et al. 2007). It has only one reference: Dalton et al. (2001). The authors refer to a survey they did of psychology departments in Polish universities, inviting respondents to provide 'their own definition of community psychology' (352). The authors wrote: 'to assess the fidelity of these definitions, we used as an anchor a broad definition of community psychology as a discipline seeking to understand and to enhance quality of life for individuals, communities, and society', adding in a footnote 'we chose Dalton et al.'s definition because of its elegant inclusiveness of the multitude of aims and values generally associated with community psychology in the West' (352).

Orford (1992: 4) admits of Table 1, which he says provides the source of answers to the question of what people actually do when they are doing community psychology, that 'this table is taken, much modified, from one in Rappaport's (1977) book'. In like vein, Raviv et al. (2007) wrote in *Community Psychology in Israel*: 'the principles of community psychology, to which we shall refer throughout the chapter, are based on the principles delineated by Levine and Perkins (1997) and mainly include early identification, prevention, mental health consultation, crisis intervention, and the use of community resources and strengths' (Reich et al. 2007: 335). Here we see US community psychology being transposed lock, stock, and barrel to Israel.

The contrast between Israeli United Statesian community psychology and Palestinian community psychology, as explicated by Makkawi (2009), is very stark. Writing in the *Journal of Critical Psychology, Counselling and Psychotherapy*, Palestinian community psychologist Ibrahim Makkawi suggests 'it is possible to place the various traditions of community psychology on a continuum, where at the individualistic and reductionist end of the continuum we can locate the USA school of community psychology, whereas, at the transformative and liberationist end of the continuum we locate the Latin American school of community psychology' (Makkawi 2009: 76). He continues: 'the Palestinian experience with protracted colonialism, occupation

and oppression shares a great deal of similarities and interrelated international colonial practices with the people of Latin America as well as that of South Africa' (Makkawi 2009: 77).

Wingenfeld and Newbrough (2000) also assert: 'community psychology in the United States strongly influenced Australia and New Zealand', that in Canada 'the re-emergence of community psychology in the 1970s was associated with influences of community psychology in the U.S.' (following the abandonment in the 1950s of 'a community orientation and strong emphasis on prevention initiated by Canadian pioneers'!). 'Abandonment' of one community orientation and replacement by a United Statesian community orientation is, of course, in need of critical historical scrutiny in the context of discussion of intellectual colonisation. Wingenfeld and Newbrough (2000: 780, 782) also assert that 'the Interamerican Society for Psychology provided the vehicle for interchange between U.S. and Latin American psychologists about work in the community'. An indication of the urge to dominate the definition, explication, and constitution of community psychology is provided by the vigorous defence and reinstatement of a United Statesian approach to community psychology in response to challenges to it made transparent on Wikipedia. For an instructive lesson regarding the symbolic importance of this issue to some, see the history of changes via the 'view history' tab and in particular: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Community_psychology.

As most versions of community psychology found around the world summarized at the start of this chapter are in large part a product of United Statesian intellectual colonization, it is not surprising that they have much in common. It might be argued that this is not a problem if the United Statesian intellectual export is effective, unproblematic, and of universal relevance.

We do not believe this dominance is unproblematic. The United Statesian form of community psychology not only draws on the mainstream Anglo-Saxon positivist modernist psychological disciplinary tradition, literatures, and frames of reference, rather than critical ones (Coimbra et al. 2012: 139), but also reinscribes and reinforces acritical psy.

The United Statesian intellectual export of community psychology is especially problematic in the way it engages with oppression and power. Whilst some United Statesian community psychologists position their approach as opposing oppression at a community level, engaging with, for example, the consequences of: homelessness (Toro et al. 2008); disability (White 2005); and heteronormativity (Harper 2005), engagement with 'power' is often uncritical, despite claims to the contrary. In a critical examination of one framing of power within an influential community psychology frame of reference by Prilleltensky (2008), Fryer (2008b: 243) concluded: 'the notion of power recommended has been found to be ill-defined, circular, question-begging, problematic in terms of community psychology with its dependence on need satisfaction, rooted in an underlying interpersonal relationship model, infected with individualism and psychologism, and problematically stuck within the old debate about agency and structure. It is suggested that power is better understood as a property, or dynamic, of social systems than of the individuals within it and that the apparent power of individuals is best understood as the subjective manifestation of the societal distribution of power'. See Fryer and Laing (2008) for a critique of a mainstream acritical community psychology approach to disabling practices; and Fryer 2014; Fryer and Stambe 2014a; Fryer and Stambe 2014b for critiques of mainstream psychological work on unemployment.

Dominant community psychology rhetoric emphasizes transparency and accountability, but acritical community psychologists seldom problematize the disempowerment embedded within their own fields and practices. As Parker (2007: 144–145) observed, pragmatic issues to do with community psychologists being obliged to 'gain access' to a community and to avoid being thrown out so that they can complete work agreed in advance as a condition of funding usually result in 'patterns of violence' remaining hidden and preexisting systems of power in the

community, sometimes oppressive power systems, being left unchallenged or even reinforced. Fox (2013) reveals some such structures of power and problematic practices in community research with young people, and argues that academic community psychological research is hampered by dominant discourses in research itself as well as the field. Coimbra et al. (2012) suggest that 'community' can be used to justify othering and subordination and that the very notion of community, and how it is deployed, is in need of critique. Although community psychologists tend to emphasize action, intervention, and prevention, at least rhetorically, to a far greater extent than critical psychologists, much of the action of community psychologists is politically conservative, ideologically problematic, and acritical in theorization. More progressive and more important social action research is arguably done by: critical feminist psychologists (e.g. Burman and Chantler 2005); community activists (e.g.; Fryer, D. and McCormack 2012; Fryer, D. and McCormack 2013; McCormack 2009); emancipatory disability activists (e.g. Oliver 1992); and survivors of psychiatry (Stambe and Fryer 2014; Stambe et al. 2012).

In conclusion

Foucault (1978/1990: 266) states that 'critique is the movement by which the subject gives himself [sic] the right to question truth on its effects of power and question power on its discourses of truth'. Our bigger project in relation to community psychology means, in terms of this, that when we use the word 'truth' in relation to community psychology we use it as a verb: we are thus interested not in which community psychology claims are 'true' but rather: which community psychology statements have been truthed (given the status of truth); how the community psychological 'truthing' was or is warranted (how community psychology authority was or is constructed and deployed); which regimes of truth have been enacted by community psychologists and what the consequences are for whom in which ways; whose interests are served by truthed community psychology statements, and the power relations which are inseparable from interconnected community psychological claims that have been truthed; which interconnected systems of truthed community psychological claims have been 'knowledged' (given the status of knowledge), and which community psychological practices and techniques have been evidentialized (given the status of 'known evidence-based effectiveness').

For us, the dominant, ubiquitous, mainstream version of community psychology discussed above, which is widely claimed by its proselytizers to: promote wellness; liberate; promote social justice; and to 'empower', is actually, as Seedat et al. (2001: 4) assert, characterized by 'discriminatory approaches', 'hegemonic and epistemological domination', and 'an accommodationist position seeking greater influence within the mainstream fraternity' and does not challenge the 'restrictions and outcomes imposed by exploitative economic arrangements and dominant systems of knowledge production', instead drawing on the mainstream Anglo–Saxon positivist modernist psychological disciplinary tradition, literatures, and frames of reference, rather than critical ones. It is problematic in all the above respects but, compared with Marxist and Foucauldian versions, most problematic because it is a re-inscription of a superficially liberalized version of the mainstream psy-complex, 'the heterogeneous knowledges, forms of authority and practical techniques that constitute psychological expertise' (Rose 1999: vii), with its origins in the United States, indeed, a version of psy which may turn out to be integral to governmentality through subjection and compliance in the twenty-first century under a neoliberal order. As Whitmarsh (2013: 303) observes, 'compliance is . . . becoming a principal public health issue of the twenty-first century, and compliance posits a figure with a responsibility to continually work to discipline the self into a biomedical subject'. Increasingly, Whitmarsh observes, global health expertise and governance organizes 'around a cultural and psychological concept

of the community. Compliance techniques attempt to affect community behaviours and cultural attitudes . . . expertise on predispositions' (prevention approaches) 'intersects with the current emphasis on access to "information" to fashion a new subject of compliance'. Within a critical frame of reference, people – community members or community psychologists – do not live outside, or prior to, community psychological power-knowledge but rather are continuously (re)constituted by being 'power-known' and coming to 'know', and be, themselves, i.e. power-knowledging themselves discursively through the discourses and associated dispositifs available to and inescapable by them, including community psychological discourses and dispositifs. Subjectivity, whether of community members or community psychologists, is not, within our critical frame of reference, a problematic alternative to objective knowledge, as it is to positivist–inspired acritical quantitative community psychologists, nor a source of authenticity, as it is to post-positivist acritical qualitative social scientists who appeal to the notion of 'lived experience', but rather a continuously reproduced phenomenon whose social constitution and reconstitution is to be explained and whose implications are to be subjected to critique.

Although United Statesian community psychology is problematic, much important work is going on in the USA in relation to understanding subjection/resubjectivication and compliance. Butler's work is foundational. As Butler (1997:2) writes: '"Subjection" signifies the process of becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject. Whether by interpellation, in Althusser's sense, or by discursive productivity, in Foucault's, the subject is initiated through a primary submission to power'. Butler observes that 'although Foucault identifies the ambivalence in this formulation, he does not elaborate on the specific mechanisms of how the subject is formed in submission'. Butler pursues this issue through critical scholarship, but Biehl (2005) pursues it through critical anthropological research involving 'on-the-ground study of a singular Other' in which he uncovered the 'immense parcelling out of the specific ways communities, families and personal lives are assembled', exploring 'how inner worlds are remade under the impress of economic pressures' (Biehl 2005:8), and how 'inner and outer states are inescapably sutured' (Biehl 2005:10) (see also Biehl, Good, and Kleinman 2007). The most sophisticated, progressive, and exciting contemporary community psychology in the sense of approaches which engage with subjectivity, power, and collectivity are arguably not done today by community psychologists, or by psychologists at all, but transdisciplinary critical activists and scholars.

Further reading

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Website resources

British Psychological Society Community Psychology Section: http://cps.bps.org.uk/
Society for Community Research and Action/Division 27 of the American Psychological Association: http://www.scra27.org/
UK Community psychology discussion list: http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=COMM UNITYPSYCHUK
Wikipedia definition of community psychology: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_psychology

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Organizational psychology and social issues

The place of the place

Mary Jane Paris Spink and Peter Kevin Spink

For most psychologists and the professional public at large, organizational psychology is seen as a derivative of – or even a synonym for – work psychology. From the very first volume of the *Annual Review of Psychology* in 1950 until well into the late 1990s, key words such as work, industrial, personnel, organization, training, development, and engineering would continually be present in review titles that had as their focus questions arising in work-based relationships in large, hierarchical businesses, and government and military bureaucracies. For critical psychology this focus – which still continues to inform courses, classes, and textbooks – poses a number of issues and concerns. By associating organization with work and the latter with paid employment in large hierarchical bureaucracies (the basis of much of the earlier discussion about the welfare state), not only do work and organizational psychologists ignore the many other ways that people seek to sustain livelihoods (Spink, P. 2011) but they also ignore the many other reasons for which people gather together. Worse still, when they eventually do get around to these and related issues the answer is – more often than not – to seek solutions framed by the same original assumptions: that is, of a specific type of economic relationship with an entity – organization – within which behaviour takes place.

The shift

The shift from organization as a descriptor of an everyday social activity – organizing – which happens in schools, churches, communities, choirs, football teams, social movements, and family outings to its current role as a generic title for that which all of these are seen to have in common – organizations – is subtle and takes place slowly over much of the second half of the twentieth century. This shift is a result of at least three different disciplinary processes: first, the drift of organizational studies from the various areas of the humanities and the social sciences to the business schools, along with a massive increase in grants and career opportunities; second, a drift away from the more complex public and social issues that were around in some of the early studies of organizational processes, such as, for example, Selznick's study of the Tennessee Valley Authority in the 1940s (Selznick 1949). Whilst the first two are influences external to psychology, they nevertheless had significant impact in terms of the formation of the wider field with which organizational psychologists identified themselves and within which they would also seek

work. The third is an internal process for which nobody else can be blamed: the individualization of social psychology and the consequent uncoupling of the person from social process, one of the overall themes of this volume.

The result is a very restricted, individually focused, hierarchical, and work-related notion of organization that places psychologists in a difficult position when it comes to the complexity of dealing with the area of social issues. The viewpoint is that of 'within' organizations where what is 'outside' is a client, consumer, market, or society. There may be some discussion of inter-organizational issues – influenced by intergroup relations literature – and the difficult challenges posed for those who are in daily contact with the public, but the inside location of the viewpoint is clear. It is for this reason that our critique begins in the organizational field but is addressed to psychology as a whole.

Today, increasingly, psychologists are involved in many different spheres of public action. In communities, in public agencies, as activists and volunteers, they cross with not only the actions of governments for the public but also those actions that the public develop for the public and those that they develop when pressuring public sector agencies and governments to act on public concerns (including the formation of those concerns). How do they deal with these very different, highly complex, and certainly far from hierarchical settings in which policies, plans, and actions crisscross each other and in which they are required at times to play some very key roles? In their undergraduate programs, most of them will at some point in time have at least one course or seminar on organizational psychology in which any one of very similar textbooks will be used, all of which will focus on people in organizations (mainly business, rarely public, and at times voluntary or third sector). Is it these courses and seminars that will inform their actions or is there an alternative?

In this chapter we set out the case for an alternative position that, we argue, requires the re-coupling of our notions of personhood with those of place. For this discussion, we draw on our own work in two linked areas: that of everyday organizational studies and the relationship between public sector organizations and community based organizations in service provision and poverty reduction in rural and urban settings (Spink, P. 2003; Spink, P. and Best 2009) and that of the use of the language of risk in everyday affairs with specific reference to people living in areas subject to water based hazards and land slippage (Spink M. J. P. 2007; Spink, M. J. P. 2010). We argue from a theoretical post-constructionist perspective in which materialities and socialities are seen as co-present in different political ontologies, which may cooperate, be imposed or negotiated in different ways. But we also argue from the experiences of recent years where the complexity of social, material, and institutional vulnerability has been very present in our studies in densely populated areas in São Paulo, Brazil.

We begin with a phrase '*The head thinks where the feet walk*' coined by a Catholic priest and activist in *Jardim Ângela*, part of the extended south zone of the Municipality of São Paulo, where a significant part of the population built their own houses – and their churches – from scratch. This is a process that has been repeated all over Latin America, where it is estimated that in many large urban conurbations somewhere in the region of 50 per cent of housing is self-built (Hernánadez et al. 2012; Ward et al. 2014).

His point is doubly incisive. First as a reminder that we are a walking species, we spend all our time connected to the ground in some way, we do not drift around in the air and when we fly we do so in machines within which we stand or sit. Second as a reference to the difference in location between the policy specialists who work in the offices of São Paulo City Hall in the city's downtown area and the residents of Jardim Ângela, some thirty kilometres away and between two and four hours by bus, depending on the traffic. We use his phrase as a pointer to the need to critically reconnect psychology to the materiality, sociality, and institutionality of

the places where our feet move and that are constitutive of psychological action. We argue that understanding how place is performed by very distinctive and often competing and heterogeneous networks of humans and nonhumans ('actants', to use Latour's [2005] approach), with a multiplicity of conflicting social languages, provides a very different approach to questions of territoriality from those presumed in the traditional person-environment dualism, helping us not only to rethink and reposition organizational psychology but also much of psychology at large.

A place for the place in critical psychology

In 1960, Lynch published the results of his many walks and conversations with people about the cities in which they lived (Boston, New Jersey, and Los Angeles). Instead of starting from official plans and maps he got people to draw their maps; to describe where they went; what they would tell visitors to see and what they pointed out as relevant as they walked together around the block. From these he identified certain recurring elements: paths; edges; districts; nodes; and landmarks that went to make up their cities – the different public images held by different groupings of citizens. 'Paths' are the channels through and along which people move; 'edges' are the limits, boundaries, breaks, and distinctions which can also become barriers; 'districts' are the big chunks of two dimensional space which people are inside (and also outside); 'nodes' are points of convergence, crossover, strategic spots for convergence; and 'landmarks' are external references, singled out amongst others for various reasons. Around the same time, psychology was beginning – with a push from the earlier behaviour setting studies (Barker and Wright 1951) and Kurt Lewin's (1952) psychological ecology – to make its own incursions into a new field that would receive great visibility from Craik's 1970 'New directions in psychology' article on environmental psychology. Unfortunately, and despite Craik's arguments for assuming a more 'molar' approach to the environment and behaviour and to the author's preference for an ecological perspective that valued the intricate patterning of behavioural and environmental relations, the new directions assumed the dominant model of simple causality and strong individuality: concern was either with what people do to the environment or with what the environment does to people. This implicit definition of the field continues to inform current environmental psychology texts, in which the discussion of place continues largely absent (cf. Steg et al. 2012).

Whilst noting that the opportunity was lost, it is worth registering, in defence of many of those involved, that at that time, the very idea of studying everyday life in everyday habitats was a peripheral concern for many of the other social sciences, not just psychology. Garfinkel (1967), for example, was heavily criticized by his sociological colleagues for taking practical reasoning seriously and suggesting that sociology had got it wrong by treating the average person as socially incompetent. Habermas's work on discursive competence would only appear in English in the 1980s along with De Certeau's treatise on the practice of everyday life and the very interesting companion volume, in co-authorship with Giard and Mayol, on the micro-histories of everyday arts (1998). In anthropology, it would be the burst of activity brought by the discussion of social networks that led the way to everyday action and common sense in the early 1970s (Boissevain 1974; Geertz 1983). In history it would be the switch away from the history of kings and queens to what was termed history from below that would build the bridges to the booming European Social Theory arena (see Burke 1992) and to the structuration arguments that would turn consciousness into an assumed competence in a discursively performed world (Giddens 1979).

For psychology, any alternative path at this time would have been a very difficult and lonely one. Indeed, it was to require a tremendous effort by the European networks to bring social

psychology anywhere close to a potentially critical stance, but here, at least by the 1990s, there were opportunities for new approaches (Billig 1982; Edwards and Potter 1992; Ibañez and Iñiguez 1997; Parker and the Bolton Discourse Network 1999).

New possibilities for dialogue

Place is an elastic word that can be stretched in many directions and given many nuances. It can be different parts of one of Lynch's maps (the place where I work or live; where we have lunch); a sociohistorical reference (the place where I come from or where it happened); or a specific localization of a person or object (everything in its right place; my place at the table; they know their place), as well as the action of placing. It has linkages with social spaces and areas (the market place, or as a synonym for a small square) and in organizational terms to positions in hierarchy and to employment (who will take my place as Company President). Place, as a social construct, as Cresswell suggests (2004: 11), is a way of 'seeing, knowing and understanding the world. When we look at the world as a world of places we see different things'. A map location can be expressed precisely in latitude and longitude, but the name of a town, village, region, or landmark will give the same location a very different sense of meaning. In Portugal, the word for place (*lugar*) is also used to refer to the smallest part of the civic and political institutional structure. Yet places can be immense – as for example when ecologists evoke the idea of our tiny planet located in the cosmos – as well as minute, as in the line from the A. A. Milne poem: 'a place on the stairs where I always sit'.

Despite its apparent elasticity, place is not a term to be treated lightly. It is as central a concept to human geography as culture is to anthropology and, probably, identity to psychology. And, like the other disciplines, it has also suffered from the disputes around different forms of science. Geography also went through periods of positive science in which place was seen in terms of spatial laws and statistics, but fortunately today authors from humanistic (Tuan 1977), Marxist (Harvey 1996), and postmodern (Soja 1989) positions provide us with intriguing entry points to a debate that also includes many of the other social sciences (see Hubbard and Kitchin 2004 for an overview). Place also draws attention to space, which to most of psychology is understood as something permanent, out there, preexisting, empty, and waiting to be occupied. However, even a moment's reflection on the notions of anthropological space will show that any space – such as the space where small communities gather to pray – has no a priori existence as a vacant lot waiting to be occupied, but rather, as Lefebvre (1991: 26) states: '(Social) space is a (social) product'.

For psychology, these various offers of dialogue help us to think about how place is performed in different ways by different crisscrossing networks of people, materialities, social organizations, and institutions. Take for example the apparently simple view of lived-in experience that most of us have somewhere at home: the map. Maps for most of us are assumed descriptors of the way things are, as in, 'look it up on the map', or 'you can find us on the GPS'; they are ways of locating places. However, far from describing reality, maps are high-powered performers and shapers of our lived-in experience, as a brief look at the main chapter headings from Wood's *The Power of Maps* demonstrates (1992): maps work by serving interest; maps are embedded in a history they help construct; every map shows this . . . but not that; the interest the map serves is masked; the interest is embodied in the map in signs and myths.

Let us take as an example the district of Jardim Ângela, which has a population of over 300,000 and occupies the larger half of one of the 32 sub-municipal administrative districts in which the Municipality of São Paulo is divided. It, like a number of the other districts in the expanded south zone, borders the Gurapiranga Reservoir and occupies part of its water

catchment area. Ângela, as it is often referred to, went through a housing explosion from the 1960s onwards, fuelled by restrictive legislation on agriculture in the catchment area which led to small farmers selling out and moving away, and the industrial boom in São Paulo which brought may thousands in search of work to a city without any planning for the necessary housing. As a result, people bought formal or semiformal small plots of land from intermediaries who took over agricultural plots or, in the impossibility of payment, occupied public land alongside rivers or on hillsides. When people tell their histories they describe very similar processes. 'We first dug a well to get down to the water, then we built a room and then bit by bit we carried on, when we had the money, the time and as the family expanded'. The landscape of Jardim Ângela and its co-district Jardim São Luis is highly undulated and today it is marked by high-density occupation that seems to occupy all available possibilities – and impossibilities – of location. Despite the heavy subtropical rainfall in summer months, there are no sloped roofs. The tops are flat and unfinished and are very key parts of the property, either for holding social gatherings or for, when necessary, building more rooms: (social) space is indeed a (social) product.

Self-building did not only apply to housing but also to most everything else. These were areas of the outskirts of São Paulo that were largely ignored by the municipal government and those present had to fend for themselves. Many of them were religious people – Brazil has a large Catholic population – and were used to the church playing an important role in the community. They built their own places for worship that in turn strengthened the communities and were key elements in the São Paulo Catholic Church's 1970s option for liberation theology. With municipal government absent, social mobilization through the ecclesiastical base communities and the trade unions was the route to providing basic services and pressuring for place-based public investment: water, electricity, sewage, schools, health, and transport, amongst others, were many of the themes that people recall.

In Jardim Ângela, there are plenty of maps that can be found if you are prepared to dig around the many different service providers in today's São Paulo Municipality. But as our earlier comments would suggest, this does not mean that they are describing anything similar. On the contrary, they are performing very different ways of being. Take for example urban mobility. There is a São Paulo road map, similar to every other city, but in Ângela there are some parts with roads (paths in Lynch's approach) along which people move that are not on the map. The big central road, like the backbone of a fish, moves through the districts to cross the Pinheiros River and to connect to the São Paulo train and metro 'system' – which until very recently was largely a loose mess of unconnected bits until it too was given a map which, for those unfamiliar with the day-to-day of urban mobility in the megacities of the Third World, looks very much like the London Tube map. However, to those in the know, life hangs on the big central road down which fleets of buses flow – unless there is an accident or a protest and everything stops – and from there to trains, where the same thing can happen.

The São Paulo State Water Company (SABESP) also has maps, which are very difficult to find but which determine catchment areas and places of investment. Health services have their internal organization with a health centre for every 20,000 inhabitants, and there are maps for State Schools (secondary), Municipal Schools (primary), and private schools. There are maps of bus routes, maps of housing density developed by the Municipal Housing Secretariat and for Jardim Ângela and its co-district Jardim São Luis, maps of the more than 50 areas in which people are living at risk of land slippage and flooding (a very real and present risk). The state police have their maps and, as violence is a constant theme in the region, there are also maps of violence. The Catholic Church also has its parish maps that group territory and populations and these too will change over time as parishes grow and are divided. The problem is: (a) that many of the maps are not available either for lack of public access or simply a lack of interest in

turning lists into locations; (b) the maps, lists, and locations use different distributions and forms of territorial organization; and (c) as a result, the maps don't talk to each other. As a way of creating pressure on local authorities, we began to talk about invisible cities, places that existed but that were being excluded from the day-to-day of the wider lived-in city. There was nothing new in this comment. Part of this region was the birthplace of a wave of youth-based cultural movements, community poetry reading, and RAP groups from which emerged the expression and a reference to a key 'edge' in Lynch's terms: 'the world is different on this side of the bridge' (a reference to a key bridge over the Pinheiros river).

Then, following Lynch, there are the maps that people use as they move around and perform their lived-in place: both the regular daily movement from house to work, to the crèche or school, to the very few state lottery agencies or even fewer banks to pay bills, to the supermarket or the neighbouring shop; of where the floods reach or where and when it is safe to walk at night.

Complexity: modes of ordering and heterogeneous networks

Our first incursions into Jardim Ângela were guided by our past experiences in studies of public policy, social movements, and governamentality. As such, it made good sense to choose an anchorage in some existing organization and the Forum em Defesa da Vida seemed to fit the bill. The Forum has a historical link to one of the Catholic Church leaders and has been very active in local social movements that have helped to give Ângela a more humane image – it was at one point considered the most violent region in the world.

First meeting – first surprise. The Forum is an open event with diverse participants who, at each meeting, introduce themselves in equally diverse manners and forms of positioning: for example, territorial belonging (I am a resident of xxx), rank (I represent the city hall), political activism (I am a member of the movement for popular housing), or profession and program (I am a social worker at the yyy centre). Each of them is a link to a network of actants (Latour 2005), some humans, some nonhuman (as spokespersons of sewage, rain, buses, and vulnerable houses). There are many layers of discourses, institutions, and practices. Choosing one point of view, one social organization, one service provision agency, or any other nodal point in the diversity of actants that are present in this territory would be too much of a simplification and we wanted to understand the intricacy of action, without reducing what was obviously complex.

Complexity is another of those slippery words that are easy to use as an adjective but very difficult to face straight on in a research program: how to work with complexity? Fortunately, this is the question addressed by many of the authors of chapters in the book edited by Mol and Law (2002): how not to reduce research to one only point of view; how to work with what Bakhtin (1984) referred to as multivocality?

Traditionally, this sort of diversity in social action has been handled through perspectivism, the acceptance that there are many points of view, some of which allow for dialogue and some that are in competition. However, this would result in layering, some points of view being more accepted or legitimate than others. Working with multivocality and the complexity of everyday events requires an ontological reconfiguration through which reality itself is multiple – 'not plural: multiple' (Mol 1999: 75) – because it is performed in a diversity of practices. As such, attention must shift from versions of reality to forms of coordination, to modes of ordering that coexist:

> Often it is not so much a matter of living in a single mode of ordering or of 'choosing' between them. Rather it is that we find ourselves at places where these modes join together.

> Somewhere in the interferences something happens, for although a single simplification reduces complexity, at the places where different simplifications meet, complexity is created, emerging where various modes of ordering (styles, logics) come together and add up comfortably or in tension, or both.
>
> *(Mol and Law 2002: 11)*

Or do not add up, as when modes of ordering are so fragmented that response to problems related to environmental vulnerabilities cannot be properly addressed. In Brazil's southern hemisphere subtropical summer, we have many episodes of monsoon-type rain and in areas prone to risks of landslide and flooding, as in Jardim Ângela (and other peripheral areas of the city of São Paulo), contingency plans are drawn up by the Civil Defence. This should be a coordinated effort involving social services and health authorities as well as the civil defence apparatus. In January 2014, heavy rain caused flooding of some of the streams that crisscross the territory. Mary Jane was invited to visit one of these areas and, in the company of staff from one of the local social organizations (this was not an area for an unknown person to walk alone), witnessed the devastation that had happened. In this specific area the houses had been built in impossible places, precariously located on the edge of the river bank or even on pillars on top of the water (obviously without any sewage or fresh water connections). The story told by residents was of fear as the waters rose and invaded their houses, of loss of belongings, of total abandonment by the public authorities. Emergency action was left to the initiative of local residents and to the staff of this one social organization. And to top it all, when the wet belongings, mattresses, and beddings were piled up on the street in protest, the police reacted with tear gas and rubber bullets. It was to be several days before more formal help arrived, along with lists and forms to be compiled and filled.

Social services and health services, as well as civil defence, are all regionalized in different ways at sub-municipal level. So, what does this single event tell us about complexity? Firstly, that there are many strands of this heterogeneous network that have to be unravelled. The many rivers and mountains in the territory tell us of geological vulnerability and, hence, the question: why do people build houses in such terrain? This strand takes us to urban planning (or lack of it) and to discriminatory processes that push the poor to the periphery of cities like São Paulo. But it also takes us to discourses of the environmentalists and the green political parties, where preservation of the environment and concerns about future supply of water and clean air abound. However, this is also a place where people live, people for whom Jardim Ângela is home and where public services must be provided: education, health, social services, police, and transport. Each has its own agenda with modes of ordering that might add up. Others have agendas that are in competition: how to build more houses in areas of preservation; how to enlarge roads in built up areas; how to encourage community policing if drug lords have control.

Social issues, as we have suggested, do not float around in the air but are intrinsic parts of ordinary places that are constantly performed in multiple ways, including the urban, the rural, the mountainous, the coastal and, in our example, the water basin. To work with the connections and disconnections between heterogeneous networks of bits and pieces, with their socialities, materialities, and institutionalities, requires walking away from the idea of a given place which psychology can take as a generic context and assuming the difficulty and the challenge of its multiple textualities as, for example, in the different social languages of planners, human rights advocates, community workers, mothers, and young people, amongst many others. This will have consequences for what we study, how we carry out our studies, and with which disciplines we talk about our work. Even more difficult will be the challenge of rescuing organizational psychology from the hole it has put itself into.

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The Observatory of the Metropoles (Brazil): www.observatoriodasmetropoles.net
The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction: www.unisdr.org

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Counselling psychology
Critical achievements, possibilities, and limitations

Richard House and Colin Feltham

The term 'counselling psychologist' had appeared as a recognized professional title in the USA as early as 1951 (Munley et al. 2004). Ironically, the UK became home to the person-centred approach (PCA), which was initially the main driving force behind the growth of counselling, at the same time as its influence in the USA began to wane. Arguably, its original anti-authoritarian flavour was welcomed by Americans in the 1950s, but subsequently declined as psychotherapeutic practice came to be dictated by medical authorities and insurance companies. The PCA flourishes quietly amongst voluntary and educational counselling agencies and in private practice in the UK, but has now been eclipsed by the rise of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) in the NHS (e.g. House and Loewenthal 2008), by the ethos of evidence-based practice (e.g. Chwalisz 2003; Corrie 2009; Levant and Hasan 2008), the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), and Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) (e.g. Mollon 2009). At the time of writing (autumn 2013), certain forms of humanistic therapy and counselling are shaping themselves up for rigorous research in order to demonstrate their comparable effectiveness. It seems doubtful whether Rogers' legacy – sometimes hailed as a 'quiet revolution' – can live up to its radical promise (Grogan 2013).

What counselling psychology offers that is radically different

We will enumerate ten ways in which counselling psychology's distinctive features help differentiate it from the modernist 'regimes of truth' that still dominate mainstream academic and professional psychology. We have been deliberately optimistic in the section that follows, as a prelude to the more critical and equivocal analysis that follows it.

1 *Counselling psychology straddles the fields of counselling/therapy and Psychology*, such that at its best, counselling psychology can weave together into a potent therapeutic offer and practice the best aspects of both fields. This might sound like an implausible claim to those who have rejected psychology wholesale, and see it as essentially irredeemable. There are certainly those who strongly question whether it is remotely possible for a genuinely critical approach to be in any way effective at the level of the individual (e.g. Brown 1994; Fook 1993).

2   *Counselling psychology is a way of institutionally humanizing at least one area of the psychology field* when the discipline of psychology is (usually accurately) challenged by critical psychologists for its positivistic, pathologizing, objectivist worldview. Again, for those who view psychology as already essentially irredeemable (e.g. Parker 2007), this will seem a lame point. Yet given that psychology as a discipline not only exists, but does not appear to be on the verge of an existential meltdown and disappearance from modern culture, it is arguably important for critically inclined psychologists to support *any* wedges into the discipline that can encourage values and practices that undermine mainstream psychology's core assumptions and taken-for-granted regimes of truth.

3   *Through its theoretical commitments, counselling psychology at least offers the possibility of a flexible, pluralistic approach to therapeutic help* (but see Moller 2011), which is certainly a necessary (if by no means sufficient) condition for a genuinely radical–critical praxis. Cooper and McLeod's (2010) landmark text on pluralism in counselling and psychotherapy is not without its problems (House 2011; Samuels 1997). Yet what is interesting about these developments is that counselling psychology has actually been very proactive in showcasing its own explicit commitment to diversity and pluralism (e.g. Milton 2011; Moller 2011), which is a marked departure from the parochial 'schoolism' that typically dominates the non-integrative therapy world (Feltham 1997).

4   *Counselling psychology has some limited potential to be a less 'professionalized' practice compared to mainstream psychology*, so at least there is the prospect of a progressive 'post-professional' practice beginning to emerge from within the counselling psychology field (cf. Illich 1977; House 2010), which seems significantly less likely in the more clinically oriented and professionalized field of clinical psychology. Since the 1990s, we have both written about the therapy professionalization issue at some length in the literature, and House (e.g. 2010), Denis Postle (e.g. 2012), and others have been foregrounding a move towards what, following Ivan Illich (1977), they call 'post-professional' therapy practice. Now not too much should be made of this as, in the UK at least, counselling psychology is statutorily Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)-regulated in the same way as is the rest of professional psychology.

5   *Counselling psychology explicitly embraces a nonmedical model ontology*. In our view this is an important commitment within counselling psychology that critical psychologists should welcome. We are aware of the difficulty in generalizing across countries and continents here: our own experience is in Britain, but we are aware that in a US context, for example, Prilleltensky and Nelson (2002: 85) write of counselling psychology emphasizing 'mainstream, western, capitalist values of individualism, instrumentality, conformity, and efficiency . . . , [with] counselling psychology, as traditionally practised, . . . firmly supporting the societal status quo'.

6   *Counselling psychology encourages explicit engagement with multicultural perspectives and difference, especially within US counselling psychology* (see, for example, Goodman et al. 2004; Ivey 1995; Vera and Speight 2003), with an attendant potential for transcending the narcissistic Western individualism for which individualized therapy has so often been criticized (e.g. Cloud 1998; Wallach and Wallach 1983). Counselling psychology explicitly acknowledges the crucial importance of difference and uniqueness (as opposed to the nomothetic, normalizing/standardizing mentality of much of mainstream psychology), and so again, there is considerable 'potential space' for incursions into, and subversions of, the prevailing Eurocentric ideology and regimes of truth that dominate mainstream psychology.

7   *Counselling psychology tends to encourage a (humanistic) openness to different approaches and practices.* We have already referred to this openness, and it seems that any branch of psychology

that explicitly privileges an authentically open engagement with a broad range of ideas (which includes, crucially, a willingness to question and even 'deconstruct' prevailing orthodoxies [Parker 1999]) must be potentially fertile ground for radical ideas and perspectives to take root and, eventually, flourish. We are of course aware of the dangers of using approvingly the term 'humanistic' in any text on critical psychology! (one of us, R. H., would call himself a broadly 'critical-humanistic' practitioner, and the other, C. F., might be called a 'critical friend' of humanistic psychology – see Feltham 2013a; House et al. 2013; and also Totton 2010 and Weatherill 2004).

8   *Counselling psychology has the potential to embrace a strong social justice orientation*, especially in the USA, which makes it particularly amenable to counselling psychology practices. Ivey and Collins (2003) write about 'liberation psychology' (see also Watts 2001). A decade ago Ivey and Collins could bemoan the fact that 'counseling psychology has been too hesitant to promote social change and social action' (2003: 291), yet they then go on in their paper to outline how 'liberation psychology' (Martín-Baró 1996) can be directly incorporated into clinical practice (292–4). Also, writing a decade ago in relation to the USA, we find Vera and Speight (2003) arguing that counselling psychologists have not given sufficient attention to issues of oppression and social justice in their practice, training, and research. For them, social justice-informed praxis should be collaborative, socially relevant, action-orientated, and have a community focus.

9   *Counselling psychology often embraces issues around feminism, racism, and sexual difference.* There has certainly been attention given to issues of feminist engagements, racism, and sexual diversity in US counselling psychology (e.g. Moradi et al. 2002; Moradi 2012; Neville and Carter 2005) – with, for example, themes like the fusion of feminism and social justice being actively explored and theorized (Moradi 2012: 1134–6). There is also little doubt that the strong challenge to the 'psychopathologizing' mentality (Parker et al. 1995; see above) that counselling psychology claims to embrace is genuine and informed (see, for example, Larsson et al. 2012; Milton et al. 2010; Milton 2012; Parpottas 2012).

10 *Counselling psychology's ontology gives it the potential to connect with the radical linking of modernity / late capitalism, and emotional / psychological suffering*, as depicted in the work of (for example) David Michael Levin (1987a, b), Tod Sloan (1995, 1996), and Colin Feltham (2007). Before these latter works, 'modernity' had not been discussed at any length within psychology. For Sloan, for example, modernist therapy, which focuses on 'altering behaviour patterns and belief systems', has major shortcomings (1995: 64). Dokecki's useful 1999 review article refers to how Sloan (1995, 1996) traces the influence of modernity on human development, and its possible contribution to the genesis of 'psychopathology' – or modernity's colonization of the life world, as he puts it. This is a corrosive process whereby the system of material production invades the personal and intersubjective realms, and it is a mechanism by which advanced capitalist society stabilizes itself. Its crises in the economic sphere are deflected into the life world realms of culture, society, and personality. Among the prices paid for this stability are the loss of meaning, the destruction of solidarity [community], and psychological crisis (Sloan 1996: 65, as quoted in Dokecki 1999: 16).

Reflections on how useful counselling psychology has been

Maintaining the historical distinction between counselling and counselling psychology, it is almost certainly the case that critical psychology has had no impact on the former and little on the latter – though there are significant pockets of radicalism in at least some counselling

psychology training courses (we write from some personal experience here). This is not to say that critique of the counselling enterprise has been missing, but that it has not primarily issued from, or made much use of, the critical psychology literature. Critiques of counselling have included those made by outsider commentators such as journalists; those in cognate disciplines like sociology, political science, and philosophy (e.g. Furedi 2004); allied professionals such as psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, and psychotherapists (e.g. Eysenck 1952; Parker 1999; Persaud 2001); insiders critical of the professionalization agenda (e.g. House 2010; House and Totton 2011); and to some extent by dissatisfied ex-clients (e.g. France 1988; Sands 2000). The iatrogenic *class* biases of at least some therapeutic treatments have also been usefully highlighted (e.g. Hollingshead and Redlich 1958; see also Walsh 1988). All such latter critiques have been met with a mixture of individual soul-searching and limited professional openness. Where they have effected some change can be seen in the introduction or extension of research methodology modules, ethical and complaints procedures, and some attention to conventional 'equal opportunities' monitoring.

In so far as counselling psychology has emerged as genuinely new and useful, its challenge to clinical psychology and its privileged 'scientific' status and aspirations constitute a paramount factor. As discussed above, counselling psychology and its practice have moved away from a psychopathologizing stance and associated diagnosis and labelling, from a psychopharmacology-friendly stance, and from a medical treatment ethos. Counselling psychology has instead, on the whole, adopted the counselling values of respect for client self-determination, accurate attention to the client's phenomenal world, and her or his identified aspirations.

Counselling psychology has often been delivered in a variety of nonmedical settings, including the voluntary sector. It has also resisted, up to a point, the pull of quantitative research, of evidence-based practice and the 'external locus of control' generally, promoting instead varieties of qualitative research and practice-based evidence (e.g. Corrie 2009; Milton 2012). Until recently counselling psychology had resisted the routine use of assessment and evaluation instruments (CORE, PHQ9, GAD7, etc.) in everyday practice in favour of optimal client autonomy, relational depth, and trust (Knox et al. 2013).

Counselling psychology has all along lived with the problem of a proliferation of theoretical models, but the main clusters are found in psychodynamic, humanistic, existential, social learning and CBT, systemic, constructivist, eclectic, integrative, and pluralistic models. This has had the negative effect of the counselling psychology field being presented as incoherent psychobabble; but viewed more positively, it can also be seen as a more 'postmodern', anti-monolithic reflection of personalities, cultures, and worldviews. Many counselling psychologists regard their work as drawing selectively on all the above models, as well as on insights from feminist, multicultural, gay affirmative, and transpersonal therapies. While all this famously appeared to Hans Eysenck (1952) as a ridiculous, unscientific, and untestable 'mish-mash', today such pluralism finds favour with postmodern thinking, multiculturalism, and even within the rhetoric of 'patient choice'. It has certainly undermined the hegemony of early twentieth century Psychology.

Exactly how useful such counselling psychology has been in practice in the service of its clients is, of course, another matter. Almost certainly, the creation and promotion of *counselling* rather than psychiatry, clinical psychology, and psychotherapy, has been a public relations success. Ordinary people have been drawn to trust counselling who were intimidated by the quasi-medical psy-professions. However, the evidence is not overwhelming that clients get the results they hope for, notwithstanding a general research consensus that about 80 per cent of all talking therapy is successful (Cooper 2008). The repeated finding of high levels of satisfaction appears to confirm that clients feel taken seriously and listened to deeply (so-called transtheoretical common factors; e.g. Wampold 2001), even when their 'presenting concern' is not necessarily

resolved. And while traditional psychotherapy was once advanced as a once-and-for-all resolution of personal problems, users of (commonly quite brief) counselling now often return for more, or try out different counsellors. Counselling is popular, it is desired and non-stigmatic. It is frequently preferred to medication by mental health service users.

Returning, however, to some of the sources of our critiques above, we cannot avoid the problem of perceived successful outcomes versus concealed or denied aspects of the bigger picture. In the view of two British clinical psychologists, the late David Smail (e.g. Smail 1998) and David Pilgrim (Pilgrim 1992), and the American professor of social work William Epstein (Epstein 1995), the theoretical structure of all the talking therapies is unconvincing; the confirmatory bias of research essentially renders it meaningless, it is sometimes argued, and all psychological therapy is much more oriented towards middle-class than working-class people. Overall, counselling psychology is regarded as a sticking plaster for epidemic levels of social distress, as a convenient fiction for politicians hoping to avoid massive economic problems, and as another source of 'opium for the masses'. Even politicians have come to esteem counselling and therapy, it seems, at least in its CBT/IAPT form, as promising cheap solutions to psychological disabilities costing huge amounts in unemployment and sickness payments. Counselling psychology in this sense is perhaps *useful*, but negatively so.

Limitations

One of the primary values of counselling is acknowledgment of unique subjectivities and a relational framework. By their nature, no academic or professional disciplines can readily facilitate this. Traditional academic psychology, clinical and counselling psychology, humanistic psychology, and critical psychology exist largely in the context of institutions, in-group hierarchies, generalized theories, published texts, and academic and professional rituals. By contrast, the intersubjective or inter-human requires no psychology as such at all. Or perhaps even these are partly enmeshed in theories of mind and folk psychology. But the Buberian I–Thou encounter not only requires no psychology – it shuns and transcends it. Psychology is arguably always wordy, its very etymology implying a removed study of the soul or psyche, an anchoring in the logocentric, not primarily the experiential. Thinkers as different as Jiddu Krishnamurti and Jean-Paul Sartre have argued as much.

A number of possible interpretations occur with regard to the validity of counselling and critical psychology. (1) Those working in such roles, bearing these titles and deriving financial profit from them, can be said to be obliged to pretend that they value them, to 'play the game', while actually scorning them or holding them lightly. (2) Psychologists may sincerely believe there is a beneficial link between psychological theory and experience, whether indeed there actually is or not. (3) Psychology may indeed contain at least some genuine and useful insights into human experience and behaviour. (4) It may be that all the psychologies of which we speak here are, to different degrees or equally, subject to severe scepticism. Anyone who chooses to become a psychologist probably begins at point 3, and some will move to points 1 or 2. A few will move to point 4 and likely towards a critical psychology position. But some who are interested in the human psyche will never embrace psychology at all, or only tangentially (Feltham 2013b), while others may take an anti-psychology turn (e.g. Newnes 2013). Different courses and sub-disciplines within psychology, interacting with different personalities and professional experiences, will cast different perspectives. In other words, there is no single science of psychology but rather a multitude of interpretations, and there is no single, agreed version of counselling or critical psychology. There is also no consensus on the legitimate or useful scope and limits of scepticism.

Critical psychology leans towards the revolutionary, at least rhetorically. Critical psychologists in their own eyes are probably the 'good guys', the psychologists with greater moral integrity, political insight, and commitment, compared with their status quo peers. But how many of them are vigorously anti-capitalist, barefoot therapists, or social activists? Similarly, counselling psychologists probably deem themselves more aligned than their psychiatrist and clinical psychologist colleagues with real human experiences and needs, with subjectivity, and against oppressive scientism. But how many of them are more loving or more effective than counsellors or psychotherapists who are not psychologists? Critical psychology, in its academic discourse, typically uses a language that is alienating for working-class people. Counselling psychologists employed in the NHS are on a salary scale that can go up to about £70,000 p.a. when the current average UK salary is £26,500; and those in counselling psychology private practice often charge £80 or more an hour, or approximately twice the amount charged by many counsellors. What kind of language should a critical counselling psychologist use, and how much should she earn? Solidarity with other struggling human beings arguably requires communication by plain language, and some sharing of the stress of low incomes, rather than exercising philanthropy from above.

Conclusion

> [C]ritical . . . counselling psychology needs to attend also to relational and collective values to situate problems in their socio-political context. [It] needs to consider social ethics as well as the ethics of individual practice . . . [and] to incorporate values of empowerment and social justice.
>
> *(Prilleltensky and Nelson 2002: 85)*

We are all too aware of the Eurocentric orientation of this chapter: this is in part because we are both white British (male) 'middle-class' practitioner-writers whose only concerted experience is in the UK (C. F. and R. H.) and Denmark (C. F.); but also because we have too little space in this chapter to do justice to the range and depth of discussion that would be needed for an adequate cross-cultural exploration of critical counselling psychology. But it goes without saying that any full engagement would need to embed the discussion across different cultures, with all the local particularities that cultural difference entails.

The reader will probably have the sense by now that we are, to varying degrees, somewhat ambivalent about the critical or radical credentials (or the potential thereof) of counselling psychology. On the one hand, from the 'inside the tent pissing out' position (to which neither of us has a natural affinity), some kind of plausible case can be made for counselling psychology being a kind of proto-critical Trojan horse infiltrating psychology's conventional regimes of truth, as we have tried to do earlier. On the other hand, from the 'outside the tent pissing in' position (in which we are both more comfortable), there are significant doubts about having any realistic impact.

The issue of professionalization is also crucial. Certainly in Britain, from an anti-professionalization standpoint (e.g. House and Totton 2011), counselling psychologists have been unlucky to have been snared by Health and Care Professions Council statutory regulation, when the rest of the counselling and psychotherapy managed to escape such regulation. However, this does mean that counselling psychologists who in principle oppose HCPC regulation of, and surveillance intrusion into, their practice do have an avenue and a practitioner label under which they can pursue their therapeutic work.

Ultimately, perhaps, one's view on the critical possibilities of counselling psychology will turn upon one's attitude to psychology as a discipline. If we take the very radical position that *any*

engagement with psychology as an academic or a professional-practitioner discipline is necessarily wrong-headed and wasted energy, then the conversation will necessarily end at that point. But if we are wishing to find ways of infiltrating mainstream psychology with critical, progressive thinking and practice that at least offers some hope of challenging oppression, exploitation, and human suffering, then counselling psychology (perhaps in a creative alliance with community and humanistic psychology) is arguably as good a place as any to start; and we have tried to outline what some of those critical possibilities might be in this chapter.

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18

Health psychology

Towards critical psychologies for well-being and social justice

Yasuhiro Igarashi

Health psychology has been often defined as the aggregate of specific educational, scientific, and professional contributions to the discipline of psychology aiming for the promotion and maintenance of health, the prevention and treatment of illness, and the identification of aetiological and diagnostic correlates of health, illness, and related dysfunctions. We can see what the first generation of health psychologists thought to be important from this definition. Intervention targeting those who are identified as risky, and entry to health care services and policies, have been the focus for mainstream health psychology, along with the study of causes of illness.

In 'developed' countries, it has long been pointed out that diseases such as diabetes, cardiac disease, cerebrovascular disease, and cancer are related to the behaviour of patients. It was assumed that if psychologists could change behaviour that 'causes' such illnesses, people could enjoy healthy lives and medical expense could be reduced significantly. Health psychology started to grow rapidly in the late 1970s, mainly in the US, and in Europe shortly after. Health psychology has established its status as a specialized area that treats issues of physical health in the US, the UK, and other English-speaking countries. In other countries, including Japan, it is recognized as a sub-discipline of psychology in psychological circles, but it has not been recognized in medical circles and in society at large (Igarashi 2005).

The development of health psychology

A disciplinary history serves to legitimate the role and authority of health psychology in health care. Although some describe its roots tracing back to the age of ancient Greece (e.g. Belar et al. 2013), the area was formed and termed 'health psychology' in the 1970s when increasing expenditure and change in health care delivery became a major subject of discussion. Behaviour medicine, medical sociology, health economics, medical anthropology, and others had established their interest in health issues in parallel with health psychology. The discipline of health psychology has been constructed in competition with these rivals for the status of expert, showing its usefulness to concerned parties and society at large. Health psychologists needed to position themselves to win the struggle for survival and they succeeded in doing this. Deficiencies of and disenchantment with the biomedical model of illness, escalating costs of health care, the epidemic of HIV, an awareness of the role that behaviour plays in health, and an increasing

ideology of health as the responsibility of the individual facilitated psychology's entry into issues of medical care (Lyons and Chamberlain 2005).

It seems to be relatively clear now that political economy, race, gender, culture, and other external factors significantly affect health and illness, but that research with large-number questionnaires sometimes fails to capture experience concerning health. In the 1990s, some health psychologists started to critique mainstream health psychology and proposed alternative ways of doing health psychology (e.g. Stainton Rogers 1996). Critical psychology informed these approaches, but this 'critical psychology' is so diverse (e.g. Dafermos et al. 2013), it would be better to refer to critical psychologies. Themes, methods, and theoretical resources for research and practice are diverse, depending on what critical psychologists work on (Parker 2011; Teo 2014). However, critical psychologists in different parts of the world broadly share the following two stances towards psychology. On the one hand, critical psychologists try to bring about a psychology that contributes to the happiness and welfare of people, especially those who suffer from abuse of psychology and who are in weak positions in power relations. On the other hand, this psychology yields new theory, research, methodology, therapy, education, and ways of relating to society to resolve problems that spring from existing mainstream approaches to health, including approaches from within mainstream health psychology.

Health is an issue of concern for all of us. It is concerned with our experience of the body and closely relates to our subjectivity. However, health and the regulation of the body for 'health' are the focus of administration by authorities, and this places a series of demands on critical psychologies. Critical health psychology can inform health psychology in many important dimensions, and because it is a newcomer in psychological circles generally, the mainstream has not yet mobilized to exclude emerging critical trends. It has been clear that mainstream health psychology cannot achieve the goal of 'health for all', and critical health psychology has now been recognized as one of four main approaches, alongside clinical health psychology, public health psychology, and community health psychology (Marks 2002a).

The *Journal of Health Psychology* (launched in 1996) committed itself to the promotion of critical health psychology as one of its editorial policies (Marks 1996). Textbooks were published very early on (e.g. Crossley 2000; Lyons and Chamberlain 2005; Marks 2002b; Murray 2004; Murray and Chamberlain 1999) and more have appeared recently (Horrocks and Johnson 2012; Marks et al. 2011; Rohleder 2012). Biennial conferences of the International Society for Critical Health Psychology attract scholars who work in a wide range of health-related areas from multiple cultures to discuss new research.

Critical health psychology and its contributions

Health psychology has developed rapidly in the US and Europe, drawing on existing theories and methods of social, clinical, and cognitive psychology. But in the 1990s, it became clear to some psychologists that it had not achieved the goal of 'health for all' because of the limitations of its cognitive-behaviourist methodology. Critical health psychology started to challenge health psychology's individualism, cognitivism, positivism, reductionism, and other basic tenets. US American psychology achieved its paradigm or dominant methodology based on tenets of neo-behaviourism with the categories of variables (independent, intervening, and dependent variables) and operational definition in the 1930s (Danziger 1997). This became widely accepted in many countries after the Second World War, particularly in places where the United States had a strong influence (Igarashi 2006). At that time, psychology was considered to be a psychology of the organism, and so mental processes of human and animals were treated in the same way. Neo-behaviourism developed into cognitive-behaviourism with the rise of computer

science and cognitive psychology, which became more popular in the 1950s and 1960s. It has become the mainstream in the US and in countries where US American psychology dominates research and application. However, psychology cannot be viewed simply as the psychology of the organism any longer because the difference between human beings and animals, particularly over the use of language, has become a focus of attention in different fields of psychology (including discursive and critical psychology). Psychology has come to be considered as a psychology of person in general, whether it is treated as such explicitly or implicitly. Even here, though, it was for a long time presumed that gender, culture, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality, and other dimensions of the person do not make a significant difference in an individual's mental process.

A consequence is that this ostensibly 'general' psychology is actually the psychology of male, white, middle-class, heterosexual individuals – those treated as the invisible norm in research – and this is something that is questioned, of course – by different forms of critical psychology. Critical psychology attends to the way that the dominant culture and values in a society enter into psychological approaches, methods, and products in some way or another. Looking back at the history of psychology and the production and application of psychological knowledge, it is clear that psychology has not been merely a pure intellectual pursuit of the mind (e.g. Richards 2009). It has also been a tool for social control and management of individuals' conduct, and has worked as a 'technology of the self' (Foucault 1976). Health psychology, launched as a new branch of this mainstream psychology in the US, disseminated these assumptions about the human being to non-Western countries, including Japan.

Mainstream health psychology devotes itself to research on cognitions and behaviour concerning ill-health, attempting to predict targeted behaviour by adopting quantitative methods in the framework of a so-called bio-psycho-social model (Crossley 2000). This still-dominant form of health psychology tends to reduce questions of health and illness to instrumental, technical problems of management and control. It has not actively grappled with the problems of contemporary society. Rather, it has tended to perpetuate these problems by providing stopgap measures.

Critical health psychology has made efforts to overcome these shortcomings in the following ways.

Beyond individualism

It is natural for cognitive-behaviourism to explain a person's behaviour and mind at the level of the person, and so it is also natural for mainstream health psychology to treat health and illness at the level of a person. Mainstream health psychology has concentrated its practice on the development of individualistic and rationalistic education-type packages, designed by the experts to change individual behaviours (Murray and Chamberlain 2014). But critical health psychologists point out that the behaviour of individuals is not solely determined in their mind but is largely influenced by family, community, institutions, media, and political economy. The 'bio-psycho-social' model (Engel 1977) has been deployed as a slogan to propel health psychology, and this strategy was successful to an extent. But, in fact, health psychology has not actually included the 'social' to any great extent. The relation between the biological and the psychological and the social has not been theorized effectively, and the model has been criticized for its superficial treatment of the three components. We have not been able to understand health and ill-health any more by using that slogan (Stam 2000).

We need to take the social or external factors seriously to understand issues of health, as ecological systems theory does, for example (Bronfenbrenner 1979). Health behaviour is related

to lifestyle, and lifestyle is formed in a personal, familial, social, cultural, political, economic, and global context.

Poverty as the major cause of ill-health and death

Health inequality and poverty are major themes to work on to achieve the goal of 'health for all'. At the end of the twentieth century, the World Health Organization had already reported that those living in absolute poverty are five times more likely to die before reaching the age of five, and two and half times more likely to die between the ages of 15 and 59, than those in higher-income groups (World Health Organization 1999). According to Jha and Mills (2002), one-tenth of the deaths in developing countries (about 1.6 million) are caused by diseases such as measles, diphtheria, and tetanus that are vaccinated for in developed countries. The top causes of death in developing countries, such as diarrhoeal diseases, tuberculosis, neonatal infections, premature birth, and low birth weight, are associated with poverty such as malnutrition and low immunity, and poor health care services (World Health Organization 2002). The major impacts of poverty on health are caused by the absence of safe water, sanitation, adequate diet, secure housing, basic education, income generating opportunities, and access to medication and health care (Lyons and Chamberlain 2005).

The linkages between poverty and ill-health are not confined to developing countries. Health inequalities in 'developed' countries are also significant. It is widely known that socioeconomic status and position in the social hierarchy affect heavily the health of the working class and the marginalized (Marmot et al. 1984). Health inequalities are based on socioeconomic status in all societies; rich people can easily have good health, but poor people are more likely to have poor health. Furthermore, whether a person is wealthy or not is not the only cause of health inequalities. We need to consider inequalities in terms of class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and other attributes. These are associated with social and material exploitation that the weak or minorities suffer from. We need to consider the effects of institutional racism, gender discrimination, corporate globalization, degradation of the environment, destruction of the public sector, dangerous workplace conditions, and neighbourhood characteristics (Marks et al. 2011). We should never forget that we live in a world in which poverty and inequalities in wealth and access to resources are the major causes of ill-health (Campbell and Murray 2004). In dealing with these structural issues, we have to squarely address the problems that globalization and the world economy have on health and ill-health.

Beyond cognitivism and positivism

Mainstream health psychology has focused on cognition and its relation to health behaviours of individuals (e.g. smoking, drinking, diet, exercise, unsafe sex), along with positivist measurement, largely with self-report questionnaires and elaborate statistical analyses to validate its findings. Those in the mainstream believe that psychologists can specify cognitive variables and beliefs, which are supposed to cause particular behaviours, as the 'health belief model' and the 'theory of planned behaviour' do. After the mapping and measurement of these illness cognitions, they were reified through the development of standardized questionnaires (Murray and Chamberlain 2014).

Following identification of the psychological causes of unhealthy behaviour, interventions were developed which targeted these variables with the aim of reducing these behaviours, as 'cognitive behavioural therapy' does. As such, mainstream health psychology draws on mainstream social and clinical psychology. In a sense, health psychology has been rather 'ill-health psychology' (Marks 1996). In contrast, critical health psychologists consider that with that

positivist approach we cannot understand the lived experience or subjectivity of being healthy or ill and how these are socially and culturally constructed.

New methodologies and new philosophy of health psychology

The limitations of mainstream health psychology and its methodology have been increasingly evident. Its reliance on self-report measures and their ability to assess the complexity of health behaviour has been critiqued (e.g. Mielewczyk and Willig 2007). Critical health psychology, on the other hand, has been searching for new methodologies to explore the meanings of experiences concerning health. In the 1990s, critical health psychology began to carry out research using qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, discourse analysis, and other approaches departing from mainstream health psychology's reliance on quantitative methods, especially questionnaires (e.g. Murray and Chamberlain 1999). Presumptions of cognitivism, reductionism, positivism, and individualism behind the research, intervention, and theory of mainstream health psychology and its 'methodolatry' (Chamberlain 2000) were put under scrutiny. Viewed from the perspective of the history of psychology, this constitutes a part of the qualitative research movement that started in areas of social sciences, including psychology, in 1980s.

Critical health psychology shares an interest in various critical-theoretical ideas, such as post-structuralism, social constructionism, feminism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and postcolonialism. New research methods that contribute to understanding subjectivities and to social change are being explored. Some psychologists who work in community settings do research with participatory action research, for example.

Beyond the psychology of male, white, middle class, and heterosexual

To achieve the goal of 'health for all', health psychologists need to go beyond ethnocentrism, actually a form of egocentrism that hampers taking the side of those who suffer from ill-health and health inequality. Tracing the history of the discipline of psychology, we can see it has not been 'neutral, objective, pure scientific discipline' (e.g. Richards 2009). In a sense, mainstream psychology can be depicted as the psychology of male, white, middle class, and heterosexual that has been the mainstream of psychological circles and of the society at large, and those who don't belong to such categories can suffer from ill-health and health inequality much more easily than those that belong to the mainstream or majority. This means that we need more diverse psychologies from the perspectives of non-Western cultures, women, poor people, ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, and others.

The challenges for critical health psychology

Critical psychology can inform health psychology in important respects. Doing health psychology critically includes ethical, ideological, methodological, philosophical, and professional engagement with issues related to health (Vinck and Meganck 2006). We can see this in relation to practical examples. On March 11, 2011, a mega-quake and tsunami attacked the east of Japan, and these events caused the accident at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant. Many people suffered from the tsunami and the nuclear disaster. The accident was rated at level seven, the worst major accident on the International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale, the same rating as the accident at Chernobyl. Psychologists started to provide psychological services, especially for mental health care, soon after the quake. But those who work on the issue of the

health threat of radiation contamination on the side of the victims of the disaster are still very few, although psychological effects are considered the most important by radiation protection experts, along with physical effects, genetic effects, and others. It is a hot issue in society. Central and local governments, conservative politicians, a large majority of business leaders, and leaders in the circle of nuclear power engineering and related areas play up the safety of nuclear power generation, saying that the level of radiation contamination is low and will not cause substantial health damage. But even radiation protection experts cannot tell us what effects low level radiation contamination will have on long-term health. 'The objective scientific truth' on the effects of low-dose contamination has not been discovered yet. It will be established only after the lifelong health surveys of residents of the contaminated area. What is clear now is that the Fukushima disaster is the test case that the world is watching (*Japan Times* 2012). Viewed from the perspective of discourse analysis, different versions of realities concerning nuclear power generation and the health effects of radiation exposure are now being constructed by those who want to promote nuclear power generation and those who oppose it. It seems difficult for Japanese psychologists to work on the side of those suffering from the disaster. Up to this time, only a few health psychologists have carried out such research or practice. A critical psychological intervention is needed.

Critical health psychologists have been focused on issues of poverty as the most significant cause of ill-health in the world. But up to the present time, we cannot say they have succeeded in making substantial changes either in developed or developing countries. Issues of power disparity in economic, political, and cultural spheres are closely related to poverty. We still need innovative new theories and methodologies for research, practice, and education that can tackle these tough structural problems and the philosophy of psychology that supports them.

Viewed from the perspective of theoretical psychology as a meta-discipline of psychology that includes the history, philosophy, and sociology of psychology (e.g. Stam 2012), health psychology has the potential to make change in North American mainstream psychology beyond its role as a specialized area treating health and illness. To achieve social change for health, health psychologists have to be able to reconcile their roles as health professionals with their roles as critical agents (Prilleltensky 2003). We have to find ways of reconciling the two sets of skills and aims. Prilleltensky (2003), for example, urges critical health psychologists to ask themselves three important questions from the perspective of the health professional: how does our special knowledge of wellness inform our social justice work? How does our ameliorative practice inform our transformative practice? And how does our insider role of wellness promoter in the helping system inform our outsider role as social critic? It is a task for critical health psychologists to think over these questions in their daily activities.

It is a difficult challenge to make social change for health and well-being, but a psychology that has the principal aim of contributing to resolving social problems and increasing social justice would be a revolutionary new discipline in this world. Besides the dichotomy of individual and society that hampers a psychological approach to sociopolitical issues, we can point out other presumed dichotomies in US mainstream psychology, such as division between mind and body, between cognition and emotion, between theory and practice, and between person and environment (Holzman 2012). Critical health psychology focuses on issues of body and embodiment to understand experience and subjectivity concerning health and health behaviour. It does harm to artificially divide mind from body, cognition from emotion, and a person's mind from their society. Today some historians of psychology think that US American mainstream psychology is an example of indigenous psychology that is particular to US American society and culture (e.g. Brock 2006). Findings obtained from research and practice done from an undivided perspective would bring about innovative theory and methodology in the future.

Reflexivity: doing health psychology critically

Reflexivity is a hot topic for critical psychologists, but the term is interpreted in several ways (Finlay and Gough 2003). To think over what health psychology actually is, as this chapter aims to do, is a reflexive endeavour. It is critically important to reflect on characteristics of methodology, theory, and institutions of health psychology to see possibilities and challenges and to propose new ways of doing psychology that will contribute to health for all. We have to reflect on our ethnocentrism, or, rather, egocentrism, that hampers our ability to take the side of those who suffer the effects of powers that operate in this world. Health psychology has been rapidly developing in Japan since the late 1980s. The number of affiliates of the Japanese Association of Health Psychology mounted to over 2000 in 2014. But theories and methods that Japanese health psychologists use are wholly introduced from mainstream health psychology in the US and Europe. Research and practice from an original Japanese perspective or from the perspective of critical health psychology are scarce, although economic and social disparities and poverty among the weak, especially women, single-parent families, and children, have become serious objects of public concern in the last decade. Health psychology research and practice that implements real Japanese culture and values, which can contribute to the health and well-being of people in their actual lives, is seriously needed. In this context of a lack of reflexivity, such tragicomic events can happen as inviting a leading US American health psychologist to deliver lectures in East Asia on his work mainly with US American undergraduate students as subjects, without mentioning any cultural differences in health cognitions and behaviours. When asked about the effects of these cultural differences, he replied that although this is an important theme, it remains for future research.

Reflexivity is indispensable to doing health psychology critically, and there are political implications for this too. For example, it was reported that psychologists, two of them one-time presidents of the American Psychological Association (APA), who played a crucial role in establishing health psychology in its early days and who have contributed to its development through research on 'learned helplessness' and 'positive psychology' were also involved in the implementation of 'enhanced interrogation techniques', psychological torture against 'illegal enemy combatants' in the war on terrorism after 2001 (Democracy Now! 2009; Eban 2007; New York Times 2009). The harsh conditions of the interrogation are visualized in M. Davis' movie *Doctors of the Dark Side* (2011) Psychology has been infamous for its association with torture since the 1950s (McCoy 2012; Roberts 2007). It is also reported that the APA has strong connections with US defence and military sectors (Huffington Post 2009). As the special issue of *American Psychologist* entitled 'Comprehensive Soldier Fitness' (Seligman and Matthews 2011) suggests, psychology is now developing relations with these bodies (Salon.com 2010). Psychology can be used either to promote health or to break it down. Applications of psychology that cause ill-health violate the ethical principles of any health professionals. Critical health psychology needs at least to begin with tackling its own discipline, and the ways that discipline colludes in ill-health, if it is to be able to build genuine alternatives.

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Black psychology

Resistance, reclamation, and redefinition

Garth Stevens

This chapter traces the historical emergence and development of Black psychology as an alternative intellectual and applied tradition in the United States of America, and its attempts to offer a critical rendering of a psychology of *blackness* that acts as a counterpoint to a mainstream, Western *white* psychology. In so doing, the chapter highlights the historical, cultural, and material conditions involving the systematic marginalization of African Americans as a primary impetus for the development of Black psychology; explores the cultural and philosophical elements that have formed the foundational tenets of Black psychology; describes some of the manifest outcomes and influences of Black psychology on psychology as a discipline; examines some of the resonances with other *black psychologies* internationally; and concludes with a reflective critique of the strengths and limitations of Black psychology, especially in an era of transnationalism and globalization, in which cosmopolitanism and the increased marginalization and exploitation of minorities ironically coexist.

Historical emergence of Black psychology

The fundamental premise of Black psychology is the recognition and assertion that Western, Euro-American models of psychology have serious challenges around their applicability to understanding the experiences of black people, given their location and immersion in a normative culture of whiteness. In this context and using such models, the black experience is ostensibly characterized as an aberration, deviant, pathogenic, and driven towards the production of deficits in psychological functioning (Baldwin 1986; Guthrie 2004; Karenga 1996). The early roots of Black psychology in the United States of America can be traced back to the 1920s, when Francis Sumner became the first African American to obtain a PhD in psychology. African American psychologists started to conduct and publish research that contested claims of black inferiority (Karenga 1996), many of which had their basis in forms of racialized thinking that were premised on social Darwinism, instinct theory, the eugenics movement, and Mendelian genetics (Guthrie 2004). The 1930s witnessed a further development in this movement, with African American psychologists arguing for the importance of an appropriate and socially relevant psychology within educational settings, thereby promoting alternative models of human development, learner assessment, and impact on the training of educators (Karenga 1996). Not only did this

further advance research, but also focused on countering the inferiorizing effects of economic marginalization, political disenfranchisement, and racial segregation as embodied in the Jim Crow laws amongst a new generation of young African Americans in educational settings.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the influence of the Civil Rights Movement, Black Nationalism, and Black Radicalism all further advanced the trajectory of this intellectual tradition. Independent publishing fora such as the *Journal of Black Studies* and the *Journal of Black Psychology* were established, and African American psychologists organized themselves into independent organizations, the most notable of which was the Association of Black Psychologists (Karenga 1996). Ontologically and epistemologically, this period also witnessed the consolidation of a thrust towards alternative philosophical and conceptual understandings of the black experience, and represented a more fundamental rupture with mainstream, Western psychological models that were considered Euro-American and submerged in whiteness. For this reason, Akbar (2004) notes that Black psychology has not been a homogenous intellectual tradition, and can be characterized by various developments, such as the 'traditional', 'reformist', and 'radical' schools of thought that Karenga (1996) describes. In the first instance, Black psychology, while critiquing the effects of racist segregation and white supremacist ideology, did so within the dominant epistemological frameworks of Western psychology and was somewhat reactive in attempting to combat charges of black inferiority.

While acknowledging many of the negative manifestations of racism within the black experience, several theorists directed their critiques at the white establishment for generating an incubatory environment for such negative manifestations amongst African Americans, while continuing to hold that the Western conceptual frameworks for understanding human development could still apply to blacks and whites, but that the optimal conditions for such development were not always present for African Americans (Grier and Cobbs 1968). The reformist school of Black psychology witnessed a tendency to similarly critique the deleterious effects of racism in the United States of America, but instead argued for the importance of community engagement within black populations, the development of self-reliance, the promotion of black pride, and emotional and psychological emancipation (Cross 1971). Here, connections to Black Consciousness as a psychological process amongst individuals and groups, as well as a political current that underpinned the Civil Rights Movement and Black Nationalism (King and Washington 1992), are apparent. The radical school of Black psychology has more consistently argued for rupturing with knowledge systems that themselves are implicated in the production of difference and hierarchies, the importance of a psychology of liberation that emphasizes the contribution of pathogenic societies to psychological ill-health in contexts of racist oppression, the centrality of collective resistance to such systems of inequality, and the development of an Afrocentric psychology that relies on African conceptual and philosophical foundations to understand the black experience (Akbar 2004; Kambon 2004; Nobles 2004). This has ultimately led to more contemporary debates around the distinctions and connections between Black psychology and African psychology – a relationship that is addressed later in this chapter. Radical Black psychology's resonances with the works of Fanon (1967, 1968, 1970), Bulhan (1985), and Martín Baró (Montero and Sonn 2009), amongst others, are evident, generating linkages with the psychology of oppression, colonial and postcolonial psychosocial conditions, and liberation psychology.

A critical alternative to mainstream psychology

Throughout its evolution, Black psychology has embodied certain elements that are consistent with what we today consider to be critical psychology. It has variously attempted to provide a socially and contextually relevant conceptualization of the lived experiences of black people

within a cultural milieu through the use of standpoint methodology; has provided the basis for an empowering praxis amongst marginalized black communities; and is enabling of the restoration of humanity amongst alienated populations through offering new interpretations of their lived experiences as well as through centring social transformation and liberation within its broader project. In keeping with Jackson's (1979) 'reactive', 'innovative', and 'inventive' characterization of Black psychology, and Karenga's (1996) categorization of the schools of thought in Black psychology as being 'traditional', 'reformist', and 'radical', three broad characterizations of Black psychology's criticality can also be surfaced and illuminated. Bearing in mind that Black psychology has evolved over the past ten decades, and cognizant that how we define criticality is historically, temporally, and contextually contingent, it has (1) described the injurious psychosocial sequelae of racism, (2) re-appropriated, re-interpreted, and reclaimed aspects of the lived experience of blacks that have been systematically pathologized in mainstream, Euro-American psychology, and (3) begun the process of ontological and epistemological rupture and emancipatory redefinition.

In the first instance, the sequelae of living as a marginalized group within a racially segregated and racist social formation were clearly illuminated in the research conducted within Black psychology. Several key identified psychosocial problems that tended to be strongly associated, either literally or in the collective social imaginary, with black communities, were understood in relation to experiences of discrimination, oppression, and exploitation. Three seminal exemplars included a focus on the self-perception of African American children, the phenomenon of violence within black communities, and the proliferation of substances and their abuse within such communities. Clark and Clark (1939a, 1939b, 1940) undertook a series of research experiments with African American children, illustrating how segregation in particular had impacted negatively on patterns of racial identification, misidentification, disidentification, and preference amongst these children. Similarly, Grier and Cobbs (1968) suggested that high levels of violence within communities could be understood in terms of the rage that African Americans felt and enacted in response to their experiences and perceptions of racist discrimination within the United States of America. With regard to levels of substance abuse, authors such as Harper (1976) also articulated an argument that suggested that alcohol use and abuse amongst African Americans could be traced back to their experiences of an oppressive social system in which they needed to relieve their pain, muster courage, and overcome their sense of frustration (Harper and Dawkins 1977).

Much of this early descriptive research was seen as reactive (Karenga 1996), in so far as it spoke to the white establishment about the bedevilling nature of racism, and essentially suggested a reflective stance in which they needed to consider sacrificing white privilege, as the fate of black communities was both a source of potential strife for black and white America alike (Clark 1970). However, in relation to critical psychology, it is important to recognize that this kind of contribution made significant incursions into mainstream Euro-American psychology. Utilizing dominant epistemological frameworks and theoretical approaches, this research generated a legitimate intellectual argument outside of the formal political arena to give voice to the challenges experienced by African Americans in a racist society. Also, the impact of the work by Clark and Clark (1939a, 1939b, 1940) in no small measure contributed to the outcome of the Brown vs. Board of Education judgement by the US Supreme Court, which essentially integrated schooling in the United States of America and ruled that formal racial segregation in this context was in fact unconstitutional. This research also served as a platform for later, more radical, researchers and theorists in their arguments for liberatory approaches to psychology. Here, Bulhan (1985) utlized Harper's (1976) work in exploring the rates of substance abuse as a consequence of a psychology of oppression, through a reading of Fanon's work. Similarly, *Killing*

Rage, a seminal contribution by hooks (1996) on the hostile affective experience of blacks in response to feelings of powerlessness in contexts of racism, can also be read as a more sophisticated and nuanced expansion of the earlier work by Grier and Cobbs (1968), titled *Black Rage*.

In the second instance, Black psychology engaged in a form of re-appropriation, re-interpretation, and reclamation of certain aspects of the black experience that had been pejoratively evaluated in mainstream, Euro-American psychology. Much of the research on African Americans during the first half of the twentieth century had suggested that black children had a generalized exposure to overstimulated environments that were not conducive to intellectual enrichment, that their coping skills were a reflection of certain forms of cultural deprivation and were therefore underdeveloped, and that the non-nuclear nature of family organization and structure somehow predisposed these children to pathogenic environmental circumstances that resulted in deficits in psychosocial functioning (White 2004).

Euro-American psychology's preoccupation with developmental pathways and intelligence amongst minorities was also reflected in the research into African American children. White (2004) notes that the mainstream psychological gaze may have revealed higher levels of noise, multiple and cross-cutting conversational patterns, and apparently less access to reading materials amongst African American children in their early home environments – all of which seemed inimical to appropriate psychological development within the mainstream paradigm. However, he goes on to suggest that many of these children have the ability to discriminate information, to recall large amounts of information through their exposure to music, and acquire elements of an oral tradition at an early age. Similarly, both White (2004) and Akbar (2004) have noted how the behavioural repertoires of children within African American communities do not reflect cultural deficits in coping within a world that is dominated by white cultural normativity, but instead show a great deal of real-world 'street smarts' in having to cope with both the systemic and community threats and dangers to survival. They both cite the manner in which African American children in impoverished communities often have to navigate state intervention by welfare workers, the police, and even the psychosocial ills associated with gangsterism in many communities.

Furthermore, White (2004) also identifies how the black family has frequently been pathologized by virtue of its structural nonconformity to the middle-class nuclear family model. In utilizing this kinship structure as the normative baseline, researchers have often tended to over-exaggerate the apparent absence of paternal figures, the matriarchal nature of the black family, and the supposed encumbrances of the presence of the extended family network. However, White (2004), in the tradition of Poster (1978), highlights how exposure to multiple caregivers and role models may allow for greater role switching in rearing children, extend the emotional care provided to children, allow for more flexible social roles to emerge within these children, and reduce their susceptibility to the tense authority-love relationship between children and parents in classic, middle-class nuclear families. This specific element of criticality allows for the rejection of and resistance to certain 'enrichment' programmes directed towards addressing the 'intellectual impoverishment' of African American children, as well as those that strove to impose particular normative notions of 'family values' onto many black families. Instead, this form of criticality encourages forms of community interventions and mobilization that reflect an 'authentic' black experience, rejects imposed forms of pathologization, and emphasizes Black Consciousness-driven interventions as one such vehicle for countering the self-hatred associated with racism, with a greater degree of confidence and cultural revitalization (Poussaint 1966).

In the third instance, Black psychology more deliberately undertook to rupture with the ontological and epistemological foundations of mainstream, Euro-American psychology. In so doing, it has attempted to critique the solipsistic nature of this dominant worldview within

mainstream psychology, and to redefine it in relation to Afrocentricity (Akbar 2004; Baldwin 1986; Kambon 2004; Nobles 2004). In turn, this has impacted the very nature of the epistemic trajectory of Black psychology today, shaping its research foci and applied processes as well. This was largely determined by the fact that Black psychology's evolution was partly located as a reactive process in relation to the mainstream, or at its best, was linked to the appropriation and reinterpretation of the major tenets of Euro-American psychology in relation to blackness. This clearly raised a debate within Black psychology as to the very definition of this intel-lectual and applied tradition – was a Black psychology to be defined purely in relation to its focus on the black experience as a counter-ethnocentric enterprise in opposition to the white ethnocentrism of mainstream psychology; was it to speak only to an African American expe-rience; was it to speak to a broader African experience; and to what extent was it to contest the very philosophical, theoretical, and applied underpinnings of mainstream psychology as a knowledge-power matrix that generated specific hierarchical knowledges in the service of val-uing the white experience over the black experience (Baldwin 1986)? In attempting to define this alternative worldview of an African (Black) psychology, black psychologists invariably traced the history of Black America to the involuntary diaspora associated with the Atlantic slave trade, and consequently, to an Afrocentric worldview that they argued continued to influence the lived experiences of African Americans and Africans more broadly in contemporary society. Baldwin (1986: 243) defines African (Black) psychology as 'a system of knowledge (philoso-phy, definitions, concepts, models, procedures and practice) concerning the nature of the social universe from the perspective of African Cosmology. "African Cosmology" thus provides the conceptual-philosophical framework for African (Black) Psychology'.

Several key components of this African cosmological worldview can be distilled. The first is that the relationship between human beings and nature is characterized as interdependent and inseparable, and consciousness and well-being are therefore generated in a harmonious relation-ship to nature and others. As a consequence, the relational orientation within this worldview is seen to be socially affiliative, with an emphasis on group connectivity, cooperation, survival, and shared participation as a second component. Extended kinship relations are thus valued and seen to be integral to the development of a common humanity, with the individual as subject not existing separately from this connectivity. Third, social activity is not understood in terms of individual goals, but rather as a vehicle towards symbiotic functioning with others in the collec-tive, in the service of this collective, and therefore as part of the process of becoming a human being within a social milieu. Fourth, the orientation to time is also not conceived of as linear, but rather as a cyclical process in which the past is always referred to in the present as we strive towards integrating historical lessons from others into a more harmonious way of living in the present and the future. Last, the generation and acquisition of knowledge is not considered an individual pursuit in which we amass skills to simply know and master the external world, but is viewed as being communally relevant, has a moral value, and is premised on the idea that the essence of human beings is not material, but is located in a spiritual metaphysics (Akbar 2004; Baldwin 1986; Kambon 2004; Nobles 2004; Mkhize 2004).

What is immediately apparent from this alternative worldview is that the effects on how we conceive of an African (Black) psychology, are quite profound, in so far as it critically challenges the dominant ontological and epistemological underpinnings of mainstream, Euro-American psychology. The nature and process of research itself has to be reconsidered, as the very objects and subjects of research are conceptualized as a unity, and therefore have implications for defin-ing our research problematics and for conducting research. Similarly, conceptions of health are not situated within an individualistic, liberal humanistic frame, but are rather rooted within a collective interdependence. Interventions and forms of psychological practice therefore need to

accommodate this relational orientation. Finally, an orientation towards collective survival also means that this alternate worldview is likely to have at its centre an anti-oppressive orientation, especially in a global and historical context of white normativity and African (Black) marginalization and oppression.

Resonances with other Black psychologies

While the particular form of Black psychology discussed in this chapter thus far refers primarily to its historical emergence, evolution, and development within the context of the United States of America, this is by no means the only configuration of black psychology to exist internationally. There are indeed resonances with several developments in other parts of the world, that are variously referred to as decolonizing psychology (Sonn et al. 2013), postcolonial psychology (Hook 2012; Stevens, Duncan, and Hook 2013), liberation psychology (Nicholas and Cooper 1990; Seedat 1997; Stevens 2001; Stevens, Duncan, and Sonn 2013), indigenous psychology (Smith 1999), peace psychology (Wessels and Monteiro 2001), community psychology (Nelson and Prilleltensky 2005; Seedat, Duncan, and Lazarus 2001; Stevens 2007), and of course, African psychology (Manganyi 1973; Mkhize 2004). Importantly, these configurations of psychology are historically, materially, and contextually contingent, and have thus emerged under very specific and varied social conditions. Nevertheless, the resonances across these formulations of psychology will become apparent in several chapters later in this book, leading us to perhaps consider the idea of *black psychologies* that have similar critical objectives, but are nonetheless heterogeneous in character.

Revisiting Black psychology today – a reflective critique

From the above, it is evident that Black psychology's historical and ongoing presence on the landscape of international psychology has been premised on and sustained by its critical objectives and intentions to counteract the negative social, cultural, and psychological effects associated with racist prejudice, discrimination, segregation, marginalization, oppression, and exploitation. In this regard, it remains a critical alternative to mainstream, Euro-American psychology today, based primarily on its ability to utilize forms of strategic essentialism in a global context of increasing marginalization of black minorities. Spivak (1988) notes that this mode of organisation involves a recognition of the heterogeneity of affiliative groups, but the intentional essentialization of those groups in the service of their defence or advancement in particular political, social, cultural, or economic contexts in which they may be under threat. To this end, Black psychology has indeed deployed forms of strategic essentialism that have effectively defended the black experience in contexts of inferiorization, have promoted the uniqueness of this experience in a manner that renders it positive and constructive, and have also actively advanced the black experience as ontologically distinct and autonomous.

However, despite its contributions to critical psychology as an epistemic tradition, there are nevertheless several potential limitations to Black psychology that need to be taken cognizance of. The first relates to the fact that strategic essentialism itself may have a range of unintended consequences, such as the generation of narrow, insular, in-group, and inter-group relations. In highly racialized contexts, the defensive and advancing functions of strategic essentialism may regress into deep racialized divisions as group relations invariably draw on the most prominent ideological markers of difference in such contexts. Under these circumstances, strategic essentialism may have the inadvertent effect of re-inscribing racialized relations, rather than minimizing them (Alexander 1985). Second, while recognizing Bhabha's (1994, 1996) view that subalterns have the ability to challenge and subvert dominance within relations of power,

through engaging in counter-hegemonic practices to contest their social exclusion and marginalization as part of an organic liberatory praxis, there are also critical limitations to such practices. Spivak (1988) notes that there are significant dangers in re-inscribing the marginalized position of subalterns when they are assumed to be homogeneous collectives. Vahabzadeh (2008) also cautions that the voices of subalterns can quite insidiously and rapidly become ideologically appropriated and hegemonically re-grounded, thereby resulting in more complex and insidious ways of co-opting and subordinating those who are already subordinated. Gilroy (2010), for example, illustrates how opposition to the legacies of slavery, racism, and the associated negative constructions of blackness are easily appropriated into new modes of production and capital accumulation (e.g. the commoditization of black aspirational values in market economies).

Within Black psychology, this may in part also be evident in the manner in which certain epistemological orientations mimic and reproduce the very epistemological traditions of mainstream, Euro-American psychology when attempting to critique it. Finally, in the era of transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, globalization, and voluntary diasporic communities, caution needs to be exercised around the ways in which identities may sometimes be constructed as unitary and stable. Rather, we see increasing manifestations of multifaceted identities that are not stable, but rather reflect intersectionalities (Crenshaw 1991), hybridities (Bhabba 1994), creolization (Erasmus 2001), entanglement (Nuttall 2009), and a cultural dynamism (Mkhize 2004; Said 1978) that all contribute to more complex identity configurations. In such contexts, Black psychology must be mindful of the potential for unwittingly reifying and romanticizing the black or African experience, and has to be responsive to these new formations of identity and subjectivity if it is to retain its critical edge.

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Website resources

Apartheid Archive Project: www.apartheidarchive.org

The Association of Black Psychologists: www.abpsi.org

The Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association: www.indigenouspsychology.com.au

The Journal of Black Psychology: http://jbp.sagepub.com

Task Force on Indigenous Psychology: www.indigenouspsych.org

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20

Psychology of women
Questions of politics and practice

Rose Capdevila and Lisa Lazard

In 1968 Naomi Weisstein wrote that 'Psychology has nothing to say about what women are really like, what they need and what they want, especially because psychology does not know' (1968/1993: 197). This quote might well be the most cited declaration in the story of 'the psychology of women'. Integral to critical engagements with mainstream psychology has been the conviction that psychology has failed spectacularly to have anything to say about women, or indeed anyone who varied from the white, Western, middle-class, heterosexual, able-bodied, male. It was in response to mainstream psychology's conceptualization of this normalized individualized subject that the psychology of women began to form, many decades ahead of Weisstein's cogent and classic challenge.

Milar (2000) has argued that, from its inception as a new science, psychology was particularly receptive to the admission of women. This she attributes to the coincidence of the establishment of psychology as an academic discipline with major developments in women's education in the USA. In fact, women were first elected to the American Psychological Association in the year after it was founded. Although this initial hospitality wavered, particularly during the mid-twentieth century, the number of women pursuing psychological studies has increased substantially in recent decades. For instance, it has been reported that between 1970 and 2005 the number of psychology PhDs awarded to women in the USA grew from 20 per cent to 72 per cent (Cynkar 2007) in what has been termed the 'feminization' of psychology. Moreover, Alice Eagly and colleagues have argued that recent years 'have produced a psychology that encompasses understanding of the mind and behavior of both sexes, clearly a major advance for psychological science' (2012: 16).

Background

In early psychological research, the representation of women was not generally favourable when compared to males. This has been documented in Stephanie Shields' 1975 review of the extensive body of work on sex differences in mainstream psychology. Shields argues that psychological interest in sex differences was stimulated by the emergence of the functionalist movement in the United States in the late 1800s, which began to converge with a growing focus on intelligence. The popularization of ideas from phrenology and neuroanatomy were used to consider

sex differences in gross appearance, structure, and size of the brain. Whilst conclusions drawn frequently highlighted women's inferiority in relation to men, the claims of male superiority were subsequently grounded in explanations provided by evolutionary theory. The exploration of sex differences from an evolutionary perspective turned its focus on variability – deviations from the average or norm – which, it was argued, was greater amongst men than women. Since variability was already established as a key mechanism for evolution, it is perhaps not surprising that this was taken as evidence in support of the variability hypothesis that men were naturally more progressive than women.

This early work was not without criticism. Mary Whiton Calkins (1896) challenged proponents of the 'variability hypothesis', such as Joseph Jastrow and Havelock Ellis, on the basis that theirs' was an attempt to make 'a distinction between masculine and feminine intellect *per se*, and this seems to me futile and impossible, because of our entire inability to eliminate the effect of environment' (1896: 430). Helen Thompson Woolley (1903) was particularly critical of how physical variation was often taken as evidence for intellection variation in an array of mental abilities, diligently explicating how social influences could account for sex differences. Analogously, in assessing the methodological rigour of such work, Leta Stretter Hollingworth (1914) drew attention to the ways in which social factors had an effect on interpretations of data. However, in spite of the professional stature and prominence of these women, the call for the investigation of the relationship between social issues and sex differences was largely ignored and research drawing conclusions centring on women's innate inabilities in comparison to men continued.

In the 1920s, whilst in Germany, Karen Horney (1967) began to challenge Freudian theories of female psychology. She considered psychology as a discipline to be androcentric and, like Calkins, Woolley, and Hollingworth, argued that insufficient attention was given to the sociocultural determinants of gender differences. She argued that the concept of penis envy was demeaning to women. If it existed at all, she contended, it was rooted not in a wish to possess a penis, but rather in a desire for the status and recognition afforded to men by the culture.

It was within the context of what has been termed the second wave of feminism, however, that these individual challenges to mainstream psychology became formalized. Against the backdrop of the political activities of feminist and women's movements, the 1960s and 1970s saw an increased problematization of sex difference research as well as psychology's treatment of women more generally. In her book *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan (1963) suggested that rather than questioning problematic and prejudicial views towards women, social science served to legitimize them. Similarly, in her classic paper 'Psychology constructs the female' (cited at the beginning of this chapter), Naomi Weisstein elaborated on the problematic representation of gendered capabilities in psychological theory. Using studies from social psychology, Weisstein outlined how social expectations (rather than biological sex *per se*) impact behaviour in empirical work. Interpretations drawn from women behaving in line with social expectations shaped and produced representations of the feminine as 'inconsistent, emotionally unstable, lacking in strong conscience or superego, weaker, "nurturant" rather than productive, "intuitive" rather than intelligent . . . suited to the home and the family. In short, the list adds up to a typical minority group stereotype of inferiority' (Weisstein 1968/1993: 221). She powerfully demonstrated the impact of social context on how women become understood in psychology, as well as the negative implications that such expectations have.

As Rutherford and Granek have stated, as the seventies commenced 'the psychology of women coalesced as a distinct field' (2010: 27). This played out, in part, through the proliferation of publications explicitly identified with this area, specifically the birth of *Psychology of Women Quarterly*. Concurrently, this period also saw the establishment of independent professional

bodies (e.g. the Association for Women in Psychology in 1969) as well as the creation of legitimate spaces within the regulatory bodies of professional psychology (e.g. Division 35 of the American Psychological Association in 1973).

'Womanless' psychology

As it was establishing itself, the psychology of women became particularly focused on how women and women's experiences were routinely made invisible, made abnormal, or pathologized in psychology. Crawford and Marecek (1989) use the term 'womanless' to describe the gendered state of affairs operating within the discipline. More specifically, they tell a now-familiar story in which women were underrepresented in participant samples, so research findings not only failed to describe female experience but were used to established criteria for assessment based on incomplete data. For Crawford and Marecek, these 'womanless' practices served to create the impression that 'women are uninteresting or unworthy of study' (1989: 149).

One consequence of these practices was that women were judged against a norm developed around men's experiences. Carol Tavris argued that women had been 'mismeasured' by psychology: 'In any domain of life in which men set the standard of normalcy, women will be considered abnormal' (1993: 149). To illustrate her case, Tavris pointed to the presentation of psychological findings indicating women have lower self-esteem than men. She argued that it would be equally accurate to describe the findings as indicating that men are more conceited than women. (1993: 152). Correspondingly, research on helping behaviour initially seemed to indicate that women were less helpful than men until it was pointed out that this was an artefact of the way in which the term 'help' has been defined in these studies (Eagly and Crowley 1986).

The critique of psychology's failure to acknowledge women as professionals and participants together with the normalization of male experience were accompanied by an indictment of both psychiatry and psychology for their pathologization of women (Chesler 1972). Broverman et al.'s classic study (1970), in which women and men reporting identical symptoms were given very different diagnoses, illustrated unequivocally the impact of gender on clinical judgments. More recently, feminist researchers have argued that diagnoses such as PMS and postpartum depression pathologize women's everyday experience (e.g. Nicolson 1986; Ussher 1991).

These criticisms were underwritten by a more fundamental and epistemological challenge to psychology, which was allied with what has been termed 'the crisis in social psychology' (Parker 1989). Carolyn Sherif (1979/1998) attacked the discipline for failing to respond to the demonstrations of bias in research and theory provided by the women's movement. She argued that 'the orthodox methods of studying and interpreting sex differences were capable of delivering only mischievous and misleading trivia' (1979/1998: 58). A more basic critique of psychological methods was required, as the existing approach risked reinforcing psychology's aspirations to be an objective 'science' at the cost of other 'ways of knowing'.

'Just add women'

The impact of second wave feminism, with its slogan 'the personal is political', in shaping the growth of the psychology of women should not be underestimated. More precisely, relationality (and specifically the devaluation of it as a feminine preoccupation) became theoretically central to classic work unpacking women's subordination. For example, in her seminal text *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, Jean Baker Miller (1976) pointed to how feminine traits become devalued in comparison to masculine ones. She argued that male superiority hinges on this relation and, as such, men require women to embody the feminine. Miller suggested that to disrupt

the status quo, feminine characteristics of relationality and emotionality needed to be reimagined as advantages. Based on this reasoning, she proposed the relational model of development which, as the phrasing suggests, positions relationships as the cornerstone to human progression.

Sandra Bem (1974) also attempted to reconceptualize the relationship between what was feminine and what was masculine. In her work, Bem aimed to address the issues of women's 'inferiority' by displacing the question of sex differences. She argued that femininity and masculinity, rather than being two extremes of the same dimension, as was generally held, were indeed two separate dimensions. She suggested that 'strongly sex-typed individuals might be seriously limited in the range of behaviors available to them as they move from situation to situation' (1974: 155), implying that scoring highly on both dimensions, and thus androgyny, was more indicative of mental health.

Similarly, Carol Gilligan (1982) attempted to reposition the feminine as equal in importance to the masculine through celebrating relationality as well as other 'differences' between men and women. Gilligan, a student of Lawrence Kohlberg, noted that the research that underpinned Kohlberg's highly influential theory of moral development, which postulated an ethic of justice, had been conducted on all male samples. As such, resonant with our earlier point around the normalization of men's experience, according to this theory women were found to be deficient in moral reasoning. Through her research with women, Gilligan postulated an alternate ethic, one of care, that was more frequently described by women.

Whilst feminist analyses have exposed biases in method and interpretation, however, they themselves have become subject to feminist critique. In her review of feminist challenges to mainstream psychology, Sue Wilkinson (1997) points to some of the limitations of these problematizations. Wilkinson argued that the earliest and probably still the most dominant feminist approach, the promotion of good scientific practice by removing research bias, simply served to reinforce the status quo – 'beating the boys at their own game', rather than questioning the game itself.

Wilkinson went on to point out how many of these critiques focus on the individual rather than the social and political pathologies, reinforcing already existing biases and, effectively, victim blaming. An example would be accounts of women's 'fear of success' due to internalization oppression (e.g. Horner 1972, or see Sandberg 2013 for a more recent, but resonant, approach). Likewise, Gilligan's postulation of a 'different voice' was critiqued for its implication that 'woman' might be a naturally existing, homogenous category comprised of those who speak with the same voice in spite of numerous markers of difference such as age, class, (dis)ability, ethnicity, and sexuality.

Psychology, women, feminist psychology – troubling the boundaries

Up to this point, we have not distinguished between feminist psychology and the psychology of women. This belies crucial points of difference across research that fall under these umbrella terms. Whilst the sustained critique of sexism in psychological practice, research, and theory has always characterized the psychology of women, the terminology itself has, from its very inception, been subject to dispute.

A key point of difference is that, unlike feminist psychological work, research on the psychology of women is not necessarily political in its aims or focus. Erica Burman has argued that the 'psychology of women' was a 'call for a woman-centered psychology . . . aimed to speak of and for the specificity of women's experiences of psychology' (1998: 2). For Burman, its depoliticized stance, 'threatened to perpetuate mainstream psychology and recuperate feminist interventions into psychology's practices' (1998: 2; see also Wilkinson 1997). Thus, perhaps

unsurprisingly, the label has produced tensions around where people are positioned in relation to particular political commitments.

The classic paper by Mary Parlee already expressed early concerns that the term did not work to exclude studies which perpetuated problematic representations of women, going so far as to call the psychology of women a 'conceptual monstrosity' (1975: 120). Parlee drew on Nancy Henley's (1974) distinction between psychology 'of', 'for', and 'against' women, all of which Henley considered to be encompassed by the term 'psychology and women', to move forward the enterprise of developing psychological work that challenged gender inequalities. Psychology *against* women described work conducted primarily by mainstream psychology and which Weisstein's classic analysis, mentioned earlier, called attention to. Psychology *for* women referred to feminist work which attempted to reinterpret old assumptions and ask new questions about women and women's lives.

Parlee's view on the term the 'psychology of women' was not uniformly shared. Martha Mednick was supportive of the categories of psychology for and against women because 'Psychology against women is the prod for the development of the field, and psychology for women is the lesson that the old facts must be reinterpreted, that new questions must be asked, and that some theories may serve as guides to productive research while others cannot' (1976: 766). However, she also argued that there were good grounds for using the term 'psychology of women' which, she contended, was no more conceptually difficult than the term child psychology.

Despite continued debate around the terminology, 'psychology of women' continues to be the umbrella term used for an array of work attempting to understand aspects of women's lives, and it remains the case that many researchers working under this particular banner are not supportive of the politically neutral positioning of it within psychology, the authors of this chapter among them. Similarly, Paula Nicolson (1995), Sue Wilkinson (1997), and Erica Burman (1998), all of whom have provided cogent and eloquent accounts of the risks inherent in the term, have served as chairs of the Psychology of Women Section of the British Psychological Association. The divergences between these two approaches, whilst at times startlingly apparent, are most often difficult to distinguish. As Nicolson has mooted, it is possible that 'a psychology of women is better understood as a dynamic product of gender/power relations' (1995: 132).

Reconceptualizing 'women'

Whilst stabilizing the boundaries around the psychology of women may be beyond what we can reasonably expect to accomplish in this chapter, there have been a number of attempts to reconceptualize psychology which have arisen, in part, in response to mainstream psychology's failed attempts to have something to say about women.

As has been discussed, running through the history of mainstream psychology has been its focus on sex difference research, which proliferated across a wide range of topics such as moral reasoning (e.g. Kohlberg 1981; Gilligan 1982), aggression (e.g. Buss 1961; Maccoby and Jacklin 1974), and prosocial behaviour (Eagly and Crowley 1986; Latane and Dabbs 1975) to name but a few. Much of this research retains, implicitly or explicitly, dichotomous understandings of women and men which frequently position one group (most often women) as lacking socially valued abilities, skills, and characteristics in comparison to the other. Rhoda Unger (1979). in 'Toward a redefinition of sex and gender', argued for the need of a distinction between 'sex', to denote biological characteristics, and 'gender', to refer to those that are sociocultural. This move was intended to both disrupt the power of biology and open up the question of 'sex differences' to interrogation by allowing for a conceptual shift from the individual to the social context, which was seen to give rise to particular masculinities, femininities, and gendered social arrangements.

However, the vocabulary of 'gender' has lost much of its disruptive power. This has arguably been a result of its overuse and conflation with the biological category of 'sex'. Gender is now used in all cases to distinguish male and female, and it has become common to refer to the 'gender' of a baby (see also Haig 2004). Furthermore, 'gender' has become the socially acceptable shorthand for referring to women and women's issues which, arguably, re-inscribes the kind of biases it was initially set to challenge. According to Fine and Gordon, 'this almost exclusive construction of gender-as-difference functions inside psychology as a political and scientific diversion away from the questions of power, social context, meaning, and braided subjectivities' (1989: 151).

The critique of the focus on sex-difference extends to other aspects of 'difference' research. Michelle Fine and Judi Addelston (1996) have cautioned against explanations that use 'sameness' and 'difference', as institutional power depends on using both discourses. Indeed, they argue, the power of institutional narratives, as well as those of resistance, lies in the way they can avail themselves of manifold discourses. Can this conceptualization be seen to address Carolyn Sherif's 1979 query: 'Why have demonstrations of theoretical and research bias . . . been no more effective than they have been in correcting theory and research practice?' (1979/1998: 59).

Rather than theorize in terms of 'difference', much work in the psychology of women latterly has taken an approach based in intersectionality (Crenshaw 1991) to counter psychology's historical 'analysis-of-variance' approach to understanding complex identities. Avtar Brah and Ann Phoenix have argued that 'the concept emphasizes that different dimensions of social life cannot be separated out into discrete and pure strands' (2004: 76).

These moves to reconceptualize the discipline have been most often underwritten by a sustained critique of positivism (see, for instance, Hare-Mustin and Marecek 1988). The argument follows that it is psychology's 'scientific' approach that is, in itself, the problem. Mainstream psychology continues to insist on a hypothetico-deductive approach which purposefully strips away context, and the naïve positivist belief in a 'value-free' science. This more essential feminist critique of psychological research methods was closely intertwined with the crisis in social psychology and a move to more qualitative approaches.

A psychology of women?

Although the impact of the sustained analysis of how the trajectories of oppression have been maintained through routine scientific methods has undoubtedly been critical to rethinking mainstream psychology, this is not to say that methodological critique is the only accomplishment of the psychology of women. As Burman notes, such work has had some impact not only 'in academic psychology courses on gender and psychology, and especially the psychology of women' but also, 'in the statutory sector of health and welfare provision with the funding and organization of specialist services for women, including women's therapy centres' (1998: 1). Commitment to creating inclusionary spaces and challenging practices of inequality is notable in some of the work carried out by those working under this rubric. For example, in 2010, the Psychology of Women section aligned with the Sexualities section of the British Psychological Society (BPS) to trouble and protest against the Division of Clinical Psychology's decision to invite controversial speaker Kenneth Zucker to their annual conference. Kenneth Zucker endorses the problematic therapy practice of encouraging intersex and transgender children and adolescents into heterosexualized gender 'appropriate' roles (see Tosh 2011).

We should be cautious, however, in applying the boundaries of sameness and difference to the field itself; the psychology of women encompasses a myriad of political, epistemological, and

methodological approaches to a broad range of subtopics associated with this area of research. Given this, it is perhaps unsurprising that in answer to the question 'What is the psychology of women?' one can conceivably elicit a range of responses, from the study of in-group variations, to the experiences mediated by the female sex variable, to the social, political, and symbolic (re)production of womanhood. Alongside other scholars and practitioners working in this area, we understand 'the psychology of women' as a project rather than simply as a topic that can be lined up next to the wide array of subject matter that the discipline has in its focus. To complicate matters further, the goals of this project depend on who (as well as where and when) you ask, for the participants differ with respect to specific theoretical, epistemological, and political positions. With that caveat in place, we would suggest that, in a broad sense, the psychology of women is a body of work/action that aims to 'remediate psychology's omissions and distortions with respect to women . . . that is, scrubbing the scientific practices of sexism' (Crawford 1998: 61). At the same time, it should be an expression of a political commitment to challenge and transform relations of power which maintain myriad inequalities experienced by women. To what extent does this latter commitment work as a descriptor for the field? Given the fractured landscape of the psychology of women we would hesitate to suggest that a simple answer is forthcoming.

Indeed, over twenty years ago, Arnold Kahn and Jan Yoder (1989) suggested that the political conservatism of much of the field has curtailed transformation of gender politics. They argued that, not only had the psychology of women failed to meet its goals, but, in their view, it was no longer even striving to do so. More recently, Rutherford et al. have suggested that many believe the psychology of women to have become stuck, that 'positivist commitments effectively mute its political project, rendering it acceptable to mainstream psychology yet short of its transformative vision' (2010: 460). Yet Alice Eagly et al. (2012), based on their analysis of fifty years of research publications, concluded that the study of women and gender has become a major focus of psychological science.

The process of translating ideas in order to position them as legitimate can often run the risk of losing critical messages (Capdevila 2007). Is the lens of critical psychology what is needed to unpack the political impact of the positioning of the psychology of women? What are the criteria for judging success? Whither goes the psychology of women then? Is it not the case that all aspects of the discipline, including the mainstream, have been required to recognize the situatedness and limitedness of white, Western, middle-class, heterosexual, able-bodied, male psychology (e.g. Bhavnani and Phoenix 1994; Goodley and Lawthom 2006; Mohanty 1984; Rutherford et al. 2011)? With Rutherford and Granek (2010) we might well argue that 'Keeping psychology of women true to its feminist roots is a continuing challenge' (2010: 36). However, the question might be, is it a worthy challenge or one for which the time has passed?

Further reading

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Website resources

Classics in the History of Psychology, Special Collections, an Historical View of Some Early Women Psychologists and the Psychology of Women: http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Special/Women/
Psychology's Feminist Voices: http://www.feministvoices.com/

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From 'lesbian and gay psychology' to a critical psychology of sexualities

Pam Alldred and Nick Fox

The conventional history of psychology's engagement with sexualities describes the gradual progression from the darkness of unscientific prejudice, in which psychology theorized homosexuality as sick and/or perverse, to the sunny uplands of rigorous, evidence-based research (Kitzinger 1987: 8). Using sound data, testable theory, and more enlightened attitudes, psychologists now value people with differing sexualities as normal and healthy members of a pluralistic society, with LGBTQ psychology committed to sexual emancipation, self-affirmation, and the eradication of homophobia.

Informed by post-structuralist, feminist, and queer theory, and science and technology studies, critical psychology rejects this history of psychology's enlightenment. It is a truism that all psychological knowledge, indeed all scientific knowledge, is a product of human thought and consequently constructed rather than absolute (Gergen 1985; Kitzinger 1987: 2). But, as Rose (1998: 55) notes, 'truth' emerges not only from social construction, but also from social contestation, in which 'evidence, results, arguments, laboratories, status and much else are deployed as resources in the attempt to win allies and force something into "the true"'. Consequently, the history of the psychology of sexualities must be seen not as a gradual refinement of understanding, but as a continual struggle to deploy resources (though we might add to Rose's list other material contexts [Braidotti 2006: 137] and technologies [Gordo López and Cleminson 2004] that contribute to the production of knowledge).

This contested theorizing of human sexuality can be seen in its different treatments by psychology over the past 150 years. In the nineteenth century, psychiatry's medical model of homosexuality established sexuality within an individualistic framework of normality/pathology (Weeks 2012: 128–9), against a backcloth of societal prejudice, punitive laws against homosexuality vigorously policed, and a fundamentalist Christian establishment that regarded all sex outside (heterosexual) marriage as sinful. During this period, homosexuality was seen as an organic disorder to be treated by a variety of interventions, a perspective reflected until 1973 in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), and in the classification of homosexuality as a mental disorder until 1990 in the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases.

A liberal humanist perspective on different sexualities emerged early within psychology, marking a decisive break with these medicalized approaches in psychiatry. The British Society

for the Study of Sex Psychology, founded in 1913, was a talking shop for social philosophers, feminists, liberal, and free-thinking medical professionals to debate a range of issues concerning sexuality (Hall 1995; Weeks 2012: 233). In 1921, the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene advocated legalizing homosexual acts between consenting adults, redefining homosexuality as delinquency rather than degeneracy, and emphasizing its psychological causes and hence the possibility of psychological treatments (Weeks 2012: 280).

Liberal humanism shaped two threads in the psychology of sexualities: a 'scientific' psychology that (supposedly) stepped back from moral judgements about sexual choices or behaviours to apply value-free scientific research approaches to 'explain' these patternings; and an 'affirmative' psychology that modelled homosexuality as a 'normal, natural and healthy sexual preference or lifestyle' (Kitzinger 1987: 33). The former produced developmental, social, and health psychologies of sexuality. The latter, affirmative, trend produced 'lesbian and gay psychology' (Kitzinger 1999), and more recently 'LGBT' (Clarke and Peel 2007) psychology and 'gay affirmative' therapy (Langdridge 2007).

LGBT psychology provided a resource for thinking new subject-positions associated with different sexualities, and as such, was important in contributing to an emergent identity politics around LGBT sexualities (Clarke and Braun 2009: 238–9; Rich 1980), often in quite vehement tones, as Wilkinson (1997: 188) has noted. Within this affirmative psychology, studies documented the experiential character of LGBT lifestyles (Clarke and Spence 2012; Lucas-Carr and Krane 2011; Nadal and Corpus 2012), supplying a basis for political and cultural opposition to heteronormativity and homophobia, based upon shared identities that reflected sexual orientation (Garnets and D'Augelli 1994). LGBT health psychology, in contrast with medicalized perspectives on sexuality, has sought to make different sexualities 'healthy' or good experiences (for a review, see Fish 2009), and to identify the health and social care support needs of LGBT people (Pitts et al. 2009).

Psychology and sexuality: a critical perspective

Critical psychology has criticized mainstream psychological research on sexualities on three grounds: that it individualizes sexuality; that it downplays the importance of social, economic, and political context in how sexuality manifests; and perhaps most importantly, that it obscures the part that psychological knowledge itself had in producing individualized and individualizing LGBT sexualities and sexual identities in the contemporary West. Kitzinger's (1987: 33) account of the production of psychological knowledge of lesbianism began with the medicalized model that emerged in the nineteenth century, but continued into the present, with a profound critique of the liberal humanist discourse on sexualities, a perspective that was 'widely applauded by the gay and parts of the feminist movements' as a means to counter anti-gay sentiment and as an affirmation of gay and lesbian cultures.

Kitzinger's critical history showed how the earlier disease terminology described lesbians either as products of disturbed childhoods or genetic mishap. By constructing lesbianism as pathology, the human sciences supplied a means to control and manage this sexual orientation (Kitzinger 1987: 39–40). Turning to the humanized, 'affirmative' lesbian and gay psychology that later emerged, she then argued that, despite the identity-political uses to which this affirmative model has been put, it, like the pathological model, continued to individualize sexuality, removing it from its social and political context. This concealed the structures and processes of power that produce privilege and oppression in relation to gender and sexuality, handing responsibility for any problems faced by women firmly back to them rather than assessing the social forces at work (34–35). Kitzinger suggested that liberalism and humanism both played a key part in

emphasizing the self over the social, and depoliticizing many aspects of social life. Since she wrote her critique, neoliberal political ideology has ratcheted up this individualism, including the manifestation of right-wing libertarian gay identity politics and a 'new homonormativity' in the US (Duggan 2002), and the projection of homophobia onto the 'liberal' West's racial other (Jivraj and de Jong 2011; Rasmussen 2012; Rothing and Svendsen 2011).

Another insight into psychology's individualization and de-politicization of sexuality may be found in Foucault's genealogical approach, which regarded the history of knowledge not as a continuous process, but comprising discontinuous 'epistemes' or systems of thought, each with its own internal logic, underpinned by specificities of power, and enabling particular ways of thinking about topics. Foucault wrote extensively about the discourses that have produced different sexualities in various contexts and historical periods, providing a valuable resource for a critical history. His approach revealed the social, economic, and political forces that produced different manifestations of human sexuality, and exposed the contribution of the human sciences in establishing how contemporary sexualities are understood. Effects of power, for Foucault (1982: 781), are 'linked with knowledge, competence, and qualification', but also to 'secrecy, deformation, and mystifying representations imposed on people'.

In his history of sexuality, Foucault (1981, 1987, 1990) showed how in different cultures, sexual conduct was defined within strict, though entirely contingent limits, ranging from the institutionalization and celebration of paedophilia in ancient Greece to today's revulsion toward it. He described four discourses on sexual bodies that emerged towards the end of the eighteenth century: the recognition of the female body as 'saturated with sexuality' and thus prone to psychiatric disorder; the discovery of an immature sexuality in children that must be regulated; the economic and political problematization of reproduction that made child-bearing an issue for society, and thereby 'responsibilized' couples; and the view that sexual instincts were separate from other biological or psychological drives and subject to specific anomalies and specific corrective technologies (Foucault 1981: 103–5).

Together these discourses established the possibilities for modern normative perspectives on gender roles, child sexuality, sexual identity, monogamy, and mental health. The very familiarity of these discourses for the reader today suggests that what Foucault has offered here is an alternative understanding of the foundational premises of the psychology of sexuality. This foundation underpins the differing perspectives that psychology has brought to its understanding of sexuality, from the early pathological models grounded in Victorian moralistic fear of sexual deviance, through Freudian and subsequent models of sexual development, to the emergence of liberal-humanistic *laissez-faire* concerning sexualities and genders in the latter part of the last century.

For Foucault, the 'liberalisation' of attitudes to sexuality in the last century did not mark a progressive move away from repression. Rather, this represented continuity with the earlier repression, within a 'new technology of sex' that since the 1800s established sex not only as a secular concern, but also a concern of the state and of all individuals within it (Foucault 1981: 116). Instead he argued that successive scientific and psychological theories of sexuality were simply further manifestations of a '*scientia sexualis*' (52) that subjected sexuality to a proliferation of discourses and interventions. These have, if anything, increased surveillance and disciplining of sexual activity and desire (Foucault 1981: 36; Henriques et al. 1984/1998: 220–222; Rasmussen 2006).

From this perspective, the individualized model of sexuality promulgated by the 'psy-disciplines' (Rose 1998) has contributed to the disciplining of sexualities, and is complicit in producing the Western understanding of what sexuality is, and the limits of what may be thought 'sexual'. It follows that liberal humanism, despite its best intentions to acknowledge

and affirm differing sexualities (hence 'LG', then 'LGBT' psychology), has actually conspired to expose the darkest corners of sexuality to observation, codification, and therapeutic interventions. Rather than being a positivistic exercise in exposing the truth about human sexuality, the sexuality knowledge-production process in psychology and the other human sciences is itself productive of how sexualities are understood more widely by people and by social organizations and institutions.

Critical psychology has analyzed contemporary perspectives on sexuality as revealed in scientific and lay texts and accounts (including interview transcripts). These studies have sought to elucidate the social forces that surround sexualities, based on the view that the concepts people use in their language and communication 'do not simply spring from our heads, but come from the surrounding social institutions and relations in which they are embedded' (Spears 1997: 5). Studies have examined the underlying premises in psychological theories of sexuality, while others have explored the discursive production of sexual identities and conventions of sexual conduct arguments in lay understandings of LGBT sexualities. Many but not all of these studies have used discourse analytic approaches.

Studies of professional discourses on sexuality include Burman's (2008) analysis of 'child-centred' guidance for professionals working with children in residential settings. This revealed an underlying disease model for understanding homosexual behaviour that reflected a naturalized and essentialized, biological view of gender and sexuality and orchestrated a normative regime of care. Clarke (2002) identified four discourses concerning lesbian and gay parenting in psychological theory, and assessed the logic underpinning the specific relations of sameness and difference from heterosexual parenting that these discourses reflected, and the interests each served. A discourse on parent-child relationships undermined the potential to construct a psychology of any particular gendered/sexual identity category (Alldred 1999), while the rhetorical force behind criticisms of lesbian mothers came not from any psychological theory but in one instance from class hatred and xenophobia (Alldred 1998).

Among studies that have analyzed sexuality discourses in people's contemporary accounts, Hollway (1998) extracted three coexisting but competing and contradictory discourses from interviews and media reports, around: the male sexual drive, monogamy and family life, and sexual permissiveness. These, she suggested, together produced the subject-positions of heterosexual men and women in their interactions, and were co-opted in struggles to redefine subjectivities. Barker (2005) identified two discourses on polyamorous identities: one that constituted polyamory in relation to monogamy, and a second that regarded it as either a 'natural' human behaviour or founded upon a personal choice. In an assessment of the anti-normative premises of gay liberation in the 1960s, Weeks (2012: 365) argued that 'narratives around coming out, sexual pleasure, identity and relationships stimulated by gay liberation created new communities of meaning and communication, and a dynamic for self-transformation'. Kitzinger's (1987) Q-sort factor analytical methodology found that lesbian women's accounts of the provenance of their sexual identities could be differentiated into five distinct factors: personal fulfilment, consequence of romantic attachments, private sexual preference, conscious/unconscious reaction against patriarchy, and due to inadequacy or failing.

The subject, anti-humanism, and resistance

These social constructionist and post-structuralist analyses of psychological and lay discourses have demonstrated how sexuality, sexual subjectivity, and sexual orientation have been shaped by socially-contingent systems of thought, to produce both specific knowledgeabilities, and subjectivities and sexualities in bodies. They point to the part that social, economic, and political

contexts play in producing sexual conduct, sexual identities, and even sexual desire. They also revealed how liberal humanist psychology established two associated psychological discourses on sexualities. The first, which might be labelled positivist or 'scientific' (and is perhaps more 'liberal' than 'humanist'), regards sexualities as facts to be unpacked by scientific methods, to provide findings that can better inform understanding of sexuality and potentially inform either policy or therapy, for instance, in relation to homophobia and associated bullying. The second is a more self-conscious LGBT affirmative psychology that majors on the humanism, and while still using scientific methods, has a stronger orientation towards producing outputs that can be used to meet the needs of LGBT people, individually and collectively.

Critical psychology's criticism that both these discourses produce individualized notions of sexual identities is particularly evident when studying sexuality empirically. 'Sexual orientation' (even with categories pluralized beyond a binary) cannot serve as an essential identity to guarantee anything about experience, subjectivity, desire, or behaviour: sexual desires that might be taken to define a category of self may not be exclusive, may shift over time, may reflect actual (perhaps shifting) relationships, do not circumscribe behaviour, and occur in the context of what is imaginable in a particular society and time. Indeed, a stable or coherent psychological self must be questioned by narratives of 'coming out', some of which might shore up the notion of authentic desire or might disrupt this by multiple coming outs and re-identifications (e.g. Plummer 1995). Imagining a psychology of bisexuality – of commonalities in the psychic investments, emotional, and sexual patternings of bisexual men and women – may be particularly problematic. What might be common to that identity if neither hetero- nor homosexual 'object choice' can be excluded from this psychological subject?

A critical psychology perspective also questions the individualizing underpinning of LG/LGBT psychology's other principle terrain: the societal treatment of different sexualities. Homophobia cannot be seen simply as an irrational fear in the minds of sexual majorities, but as produced by cultural discourses, practices, and social formations. Monk (2011) points to three discourses underpinning reformist responses to homophobic bullying: 'child abuse', 'the child victim', and 'the tragic gay'. These mobilize compassion and inclusivity within education, but at the same time individualize and de-politicize homophobia. Similarly, UK sex education policy includes coverage of sexual orientation under the (special) needs of pupils of different sexual orientations, rather than as an educational need of all pupils or as a social justice issue that schools must embrace (Alldred and David 2007).

These critiques are underpinned by a more foundational difference between critical and LGBT affirmative psychologies concerning the social component of sexualities. Affirmative LGBT psychology is keen to acknowledge the oppressive forces of the social, but might view these as constraints upon some irreducible essence of human sexuality that sparks desire for the other, whoever or whatever that other might be. This 'anthropocentric' (Braidotti 2006: 40) view accepts uncritically the human body and 'individual' as the privileged site where sexuality happens (along with other aspects of human 'being'), supplying the foundation for claims for the authenticity of how sexual identities are experienced. This view is quite pervasive: sexual desires seem so personal, so 'internal' to a body, that it may appear self-evident that human sexuality is an individual attribute, albeit one that is subject to all kinds of discipline, coercion, and control by social forces.

Critical psychology sees this interaction between 'sexuality' and social context differently, rejecting sexual essentialism, and regarding the manifestations of sexuality as products of historically and culturally specific systems of thought and practices. Discourses on sexuality have shaped sexual conduct and disciplined sexual desire; even the limited categories by which sexualities are differentiated may be called into question (Lambevski 2005: 580). These categories, rather than teasing out difference, in fact deny difference in order to typify a body in terms of a single narrow

characteristic: the object of its sexual desire. Sexuality, along with other social stratifications such as class, gender, and race, aggregates dissimilar individuals 'only by repressing the highly complex differentials that compose any being' (Colebrook 2013: 35, see also Rose 1989: 123).

Ontological non-essentialism necessarily dissolves any conception of an 'internal' or prior sexuality or sexual identity, seeing these instead as epiphenomena of the constructive work of discourses in producing subjectivity (Henriques et al. 1984/1998: 117) and the 'effect of an internal core or substance . . . on the surface of the body' (Butler 1990: 136). Taken to its logical conclusion, this socialized ontology would imply humans and bodies buffeted by social forces (Burman 2008) into a range of arbitrary sexualities and sexual desires constituted by lay and professional discourses, leaving in doubt any ontological basis for resistance, as well as undermining the foundation for sexual identity politics. Theorizing resistance through a notion of a sexual energy or even a biological drive that escapes or is prior to discourse merely reintroduces essentialism, while Butler (1999) notes that the Foucauldian project of inaugurating 'bodies and pleasure' as a counter-discourse and rallying point for resistance to the discourses of sexuality and sexual desires marks either a utopian return to the pre-modern, or a fetishization of the 'break' from discourse as itself the source of pleasure. This debate has been pursued in recent queer and feminist theoretical debates (Allen and Carmody 2012; Jagose 1996).

In an effort to overcome the theoretical limitations of both essentialized and deterministic understandings of sexuality and sexual desire, some feminist and queer theorists have consequently sought an alternative, *materialist* approach to bodies and desire, often drawing upon the work of Deleuze and his sometime collaborator Guattari. While broadly cognate with Foucault's materialist historiography, this ontology offers some advantages in the ways it theorizes resistance (Conley 2000: 35). Agency is replaced with a focus upon 'affects' (which in this context simply refer to the ability to affect or be affected), and those affects (including desires) that produce capacities conventionally regarded as 'sexual', may be characterized as constitutive of a 'sexuality-assemblage' (Fox and Alldred 2013). Sexuality, in this anti-humanist formulation, must be understood not as an attribute of a body, nor as an 'energy' or the 'infrastructure' for desire (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 101), but as a productive flow of affects within a sexuality-assemblage. This formulation means that sexuality is nonhuman, impersonal, non-genital, and may produce 'subversive and unforeseeable expressions' (Beckman 2011: 11) in political movements, in business, in the law, and in social relations 'not normally considered sexual at all' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 293). However, at the level of human bodies, this manifests itself in a relatively narrow range of sexual capacities. Powerful aggregating social forces limit how elements affect and are affected, constraining and codifying sexual conduct, desire and identity-positions. Social institutions such as religion, medicine, and the State play a part, as do ideas and ideologies such as love, monogamy, chastity, and sexual liberation, social prejudices and biases, as well as the scientific knowledges of sexuality described earlier.

This analysis offers an analytical advantage in its ability to theorize both power and resistance to power. While Foucault's understanding of a progressively totalizing regime of power/knowledge denies a possibility of 'sexual liberation', the Deleuzian model holds open the potential for the aggregative shackles of the sexuality-assemblage to be loosened, and a body to achieve a sexual 'line of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 9) from a stable state or identity. We discuss how this capacity for resistance informs a critical politics of sexuality in the final section of this chapter.

Critical psychology and the politics of sexuality

A critical psychology of sexualities can be regarded either as a swingeing attack on the mainstream, including the affirmative LGBT psychology that has emerged over the past thirty years,

or as the next step in the development of a progressive psychology that seeks not only to understand the world but also to change it for the better. On one hand, the critiques offered earlier implicate psychology in its liberal humanist manifestation as both establishing an apparently value-free 'scientific' discourse on human behaviour and human thought, and in colluding in the production of individualistic identity-positions based upon discrete sexual orientations. On the other hand, for some writers, the addition of these critical perspectives deriving from feminism, post-structuralism, and anti-humanism can queer LGBT psychology, establishing an LGBTQ psychology that deconstructs its earlier liberal humanist commitments (Clarke and Braun 2009: 238). However, as Clarke and Braun (245) go on to note, feminist and LGBTQ psychologists have sometimes doubted the contribution critical psychology can make to social change.

As has been seen, critical psychology mounts two challenges to the mainstream, including LGBT psychology. First, it rejects a view of psychological science as a neutral approach to explaining sexualities; rather, psychological theories of sexuality are shot through with socially constituted and historically specific concepts. Second, it undermines essential and non-social understandings of human sexuality and sexual identity, revealing that the apparent emancipation and self-actualization of a range of sexualities and sexual identity-positions following earlier repression is actually a sexual subjectification that has produced reflexive and self-governing sexual subjects (Foucault 1987: 5; Rose 1989). The emergence of subjectivities as lesbian, gay, bi, polyamorous, and so forth, is not a cause for uncritical celebration, but an indicator of the anonymous workings of power upon the actions and thoughts of humans.

These conclusions suggest that critical psychology can neither fall back upon science and rationality as the basis for struggles against oppression and discrimination, nor can it uncritically support struggles for liberation or assertion of 'rights' for people holding different sexual identity-positions assumed to be stable, essential, and so guaranteed. While seeking to question heteronormativity and challenge homophobia, its analysis does not consider sexual identities as reflections of an individual's authentic sexuality, to be encouraged to full actualization through political activism and/or personal growth. 'Liberatory' struggles are illusory, simply producing subjectivities that are ever more imbued with discourses that mediate technologies of power and authority, for example, of a 'rescued' identity marked by its otherness while kindly regarded with tolerance and compassion.

This analysis places critical psychologists in a quandary. Affirmative liberal humanism embraced essentialist ideas of the location of sexuality within human bodies, and used this as the basis for radical criticism of societal imbalances and prejudices in relation to both women and to non-heterosexualities. Critical psychology, informed by discourse analysis and especially by the pessimism of Foucault's genealogical conclusions concerning sexual 'liberation', rejected essentialism, but as a consequence lost purchase in terms of engagements with people's struggles against discrimination (Kitzinger 1999). One solution has been Spivak's (1990) advocacy of 'strategic essentialism', which effectively bracketed issues of ontology (for instance of gender or sexualities) in order to build strategic alliances around essentialist notions such as 'woman' or 'lesbian', in order to advance a common cause such as challenging patriarchy or heteronormativity. Butler (1993: 222) advocates a double move to provisionally institute the categories 'without which one cannot move' at the same time as opening the category 'as a site of permanent political protest'.

Earlier we introduced an anti-humanist, materialist perspective that we feel suggests a way forward, which offers a means to think sexuality without the 'humanist enticements' (Grosz and Probyn 1995: xiii) that have associated sexuality with notions of agency, individualism, and free will. This materialist ontology of sexuality shares Foucauldian understandings of the action of

power, but crucially sees a more dynamic interplay within assemblages that opens up the possibilities for aggregative forces to be resisted, enabling new capacities and desires to emerge, for bodies to affect and be affected in ways that they have never done before, and in ways that may not even be considered 'sexual'. It replaces Foucault's pessimism about the possibility of resistance to discourse with an optimistic recognition that this 'affect economy' (Clough 2008) of power and resistance is going on all around, investing the daily sexual lives of us all with possibilities for new sexualities and genders. Queer theorists such as Grosz (1994) and Braidotti (2006) have given a cautious welcome to Deleuzian anti-humanism, as a means to 'clear the ground of metaphysical oppositions and concepts' and invoke 'a difference that is not subordinated to identity' (Grosz 1994: 164).

A non-anthropocentric approach to the study of sexualities shifts attention from accounts of sexual identities to exploration of the human and nonhuman elements and affective flows in sexuality assemblages, the aggregative and the singular affects, and the capacities for action, feeling, and desire that affective flows produce. Methodologically, it augments critical psychology's focus upon texts, allowing studies to use a wide range of sources and a variety of methods, including observation, interviews, and survey methods. But, perhaps significantly, it reintroduces a new politics of sexualities, in which the aggregative actions of power can be challenged and the dis-aggregating possibilities of resistance to power fostered. This materialist perspective opens up possibilities for sexual subjects to find a 'line of flight' away from the constraints of particular sexual identities, and into a new politics of sexualities.

Further reading

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Website resources

Gender Across Borders – A feminist activist site that has relevant material on sexuality: http://www.genderacrossborders.com/category/queer-issues/
The Sexualization Report, compiled by Feona Attwood, Clare Bale, and Meg Barker based on contributions from over thirty academic experts, drawing on research from a wide range of subject areas, including medicine, health and social care, media and communication studies, cultural studies, psychology, sociology, education, and gender and sexuality studies: http://thesexualizationreport.wordpress.com
Sociosite – A website that lists journals, organizations, and some key texts: www.sociosite.net/topics/gender.php

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Part Ic

Adjacent parts of psy-complex

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22

Alienists and alienation
Critical psychiatry in search of itself

Janice Haaken

An anthem to the Merry Pranksters and road rebels of the 1960s, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* celebrates the romantic impulses of the period. Published in 1962 and made into a film in 1975, Ken Kesey's tale of the asylum secured a lasting place in the social imaginary. His vision of institutional confinement registers ambient anxieties in the culture, but Kesey was particularly attuned to psychological currents in American manhood. The crisis of the story unfolds as McMurphy, who maneuvered to get into the state hospital to escape jail time, discovers that most of his fellow patients entered the facility voluntarily. Under the control of the repressed and repressive Nurse Ratched, the men on the ward choose to stay even when given the chance to leave. Chief, a Native American hospitalized for catatonia who emerges as the sentient ally of the rebellious McMurphy, emancipates himself from the control of Nurse Ratched at the film's conclusion. After the lobotomized McMurphy is wheeled onto the ward, mentally castrated for orchestrating a rebellion, Chief performs a mercy killing by smothering the tragic hero. Gathering up the strength within his massive frame, he then extracts a hydrotherapy machine from its plumbing fixtures and hurls it through a barred window of the day room. In the final scene, Chief jumps through the window casing and runs toward the Oregon hills, with a glorious sunrise over the Cascades signalling the dawn of a new era.

This allegorical tale concludes with the liberation of the one Good Man from the pernicious control of the (maternal) asylum, foreclosing on the question of where people go when they leave. In undertaking a documentary titled *Guilty Except for Insanity*, set at the same state hospital where *Cuckoo's Nest* was shot, I was particularly interested in working with this ambivalent subtext of the film – the representation of the state hospital as both sanctuary from a threatening external world and as site of coercive confinement. Unlike the prison, the psychiatric gaze of the asylum penetrates the internal world of the inmate, operating up close. Our film project began from the premise that the social control models that inform much of the antipsychiatry movement overlook a range of needs related to connection and care, as well as progressive currents in the changing terrain of Western psychiatry. The power of psychiatry may be in its license to dispense opiate to the masses. But this dispensing is a response to real human distress.

Psychiatry, psychology, and the psy-complex

Termed 'alienists' in the nineteenth century, doctors specializing in psychiatry during that grand era of the asylum generally worked as superintendents, treating a loosely categorized assemblage of misfits that shared the condition of *mental alienation* (Shorter 1997). Later abandoned as a term, the nineteenth century alienist might find an uncanny recognition of his work in the protestations of the next century. For the antipsychiatrists of the 1960s and 1970s, the mentally ill *were* indeed suffering from social alienation. Madness was cast as both symptom and resistance to the capitalist industrial age. The movement drew its animus from uprisings around the world against the old regimes, from colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism, to patriarchy. As Sherry Turkle (1981: 153) observes of the post-1968 scene in France, the strains of the politics of madness taken up by various radicals, Lacanians, and antipsychiatry intellectuals 'have become so interwoven that it is hard to tell where one leaves off and the other begins'. While the anti-education and anti-incarceration movements similarly confronted institutional power, antipsychiatry projects registered opposition to the 'soft power' of the modern state. Psychiatry holds a unique position as a medical specialty licensed by the state to intervene – sometimes coercively – in human behaviour. Although the profession carries little prestige within the medical field, psychiatry carries enormous social symbolic weight in popular culture, from films and television to music, because of this intimate association with mind control. The authority granted psychologists to develop and administer mental tests, a technology deeply involved in regimes of social control, operates less visibly than does the seductive biopower of psychiatry.

Pat Bracken and Philip Thomas (2010) trace the history of critical psychiatry from Thomas Szasz to Michel Foucault, drawing out distinctions between the antipsychiatry of Szasz and the critical methods of Foucault. The authors are leaders in the Critical Psychiatry Network in the UK and internationally (http://criticalpsychiatry.co.uk), an organization that produces critiques and promotes alternatives to the medical management of madness. In taking up the work of Szasz, a key figure in the antipsychiatry movement of the 1960s and 1970s, Bracken and Thomas draw out the conservative implications of his position: 'For Szasz, if the patient's suffering can be matched with an abnormal scan or laboratory result, then it can be regarded as "genuine" . . . otherwise it is essentially malingering and the implication is that doctors should walk away' (221). Rather than walking away, Bracken and Thomas call for a 'postpsychiatry' that recognizes the constraints of the medical model in understanding mental suffering.

In assessing the political work of the critical psychiatry movement, Bracken and Thomas identify three primary objectives: (1) targeting the heavy influence of the pharmaceutical industry on the theory and practice of psychiatry; (2) developing a theory of mental suffering that takes into account issues of meaning; and (3) working in alliance with the user/survivor movement. In this chapter, I take up these three areas of critical practice, drawing out insights from the history of antipsychiatry and the lessons they hold for a contemporary progressive politics of mental care. In moving through these points, I also draw on examples from projects carried out by my community research and documentary film teams.

Drugs and the psy-complex

In my Social Action Research course, I began one class by showing a documentary video on psychiatry that casts the profession as a form of crypto-fascism. Students were generally very positive about the video and its malevolent portrayal of mind-doctors, and particularly enthused about the video's condemnation of massive drugging of school children. Incorporating gothic images of the old asylums as historical backdrop, the film instructs on how modern psychiatrists

exercise more seductive and hidden forms of control than the more commonplace loboto-mies, electroshock treatments, and leather restraints of the past. The video seemed to resonate with what students recalled of their readings of Foucault the previous week. So it seemed true enough.

When I announced that the film was produced by Scientologists, students were gener-ally either confused or embarrassed. What emerged was a discussion of criteria for evaluating arguments. Among the criteria was the principle of approaching with some suspicion argu-ments that rely heavily on all-or-nothing claims, heavy emotional appeals, or presentation of counter-arguments for the sole purpose of dismissing them. This principle also extended to the demonizing of Scientology. We talked about accusations circulating in the survivor movement that some groups were serving as front organizations for the Church of Scientology. MindFree-dom Oregon, a leader in the global Mad Pride movement, responded in 2012 to this charge and its implicit neo-McCarthyism (see www.mindfreedom.org). Political alliances among marginal-ized groups open space for solidarity and resistance, but they also give rise to forms of paranoia and persecution. Another example taken up by the class draws on field research on ethical conflicts faced by clinicians working in war zones. In the course of producing the documentary, *Mind Zone: Therapists Behind the Front Lines*, I interviewed an Army major and psychiatrist who worked in a clinic in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Hunched over the PC where he carried out his morning telemedicine consults, he explained the frustrations of doing psychiatry in a war zone. Since service members undergo drug screening during enlistment, many of them stop taking their meds until they get into theatre. He said that he routinely asks soldiers having emotional reactions whether they were on psychiatric medications before coming into service. Although lying during recruitment and enlistment is grounds for disciplinary action, the doctor was clearly sympathetic with these soldiers. There is a long and noble history of men lying about their age or health problems to get into the military. Being on psychoactive drugs can put service mem-bers and their units at risk, but the doctor also framed psychoactive drugs as a disability rights issue. Many of these soldiers perform very well, he contended, and should be able to keep doing their jobs. More common are those cases where soldiers are prescribed medication to tolerate the acute anxiety and stress of living in a combat zone. Drug use thrives on the battlefield, and it is better to have controlled substances than the uncontrolled ones. Heroin, marijuana, and alcohol, key ingredients of the combat cocktail of the Vietnam era, are less available in these wars. Sniffing aerosol is one way that soldiers self-medicate, he adds, but it's a terribly toxic way of escaping the misery of war.

In my own teaching, and clinical and community work on psychiatry, I focus on the public discourse over 'good drugs' versus 'bad drugs' and how the distinction is ideologically loaded. The normalizing of prescribed psychoactive medications has been accompanied by a patholo-gizing of recreational drugs, particularly those used in poor communities. The medical marijuana campaign in the United States is instructive on this point. Through its demonstrated benefits in alleviating a number of chronic pain conditions, marijuana crosses a moral divide from deviant to therapeutic use – a divide heavily policed by the state and the medical profession. Marijuana dispensaries display an array of products, each with claims of unique benefits, and catering to individual consumer tastes. While S.A.N.E. justifiably frames legalization of marijuana as an advance, the campaign enlists the discourse of health-promoting drugs to make its case, secur-ing legitimacy by assimilating into the medical model and leaving unchallenged the catego-ries themselves. While old white people can now legally smoke a bowl in many states to ease their aches and pains, blacks and other racial minorities continue to serve prison time for drug charges, including marijuana. Prisoners incarcerated on drug offenses constitute half of the fed-eral prison population, 60 per cent of which are racial minorities (www.sentencingproject.org).

In intervening in public debates over psychoactive drugs, Joanna Moncrieff and David Cohen (2009) argue that the focus of critique should be on how they really work in the body and brain and on challenging the scientific claims of Big Pharma. In a paper pointedly titled, 'How do psychiatric drugs work?' the authors argue for an approach that is 'drug-centered' rather than 'disease-centered'. Psychiatry and the pharmaceutical industry have colluded in promoting the idea that drugs target specific disorders and that this biochemical precision distinguishes the many good drugs of the present from the bad ones of the past. In actuality, psychoactive drugs have broad systemic effects and a long list of serious side effects. Moncrieff and Cohen suggest that progressive psychiatrists play an important role in demystifying psychopharmacology and the marketing discourses that surround them. This demystification must extend into the endless 'war on drugs' as well, however, and to exposing the racial politics of the drug economy. The moral divide between the clinical psychiatrist and the drug dealer reflects class and race differences, including the employment opportunities at various levels of the business of dispensing chemical relief.

Diagnosis and disordered minds

Introducing the politics of diagnosis to psychology students inevitably invites discussion of stigma, and how psychiatry promotes stigma because it labels people. Although the limits of labelling theory are soon apparent, the topic provides a segue to riveting stories about psychology as a potentially subversive discipline. During the deinstitutionalization movement of the 1970s, many social and clinical psychologists joined forces with antipsychiatry in leaving the controlled laboratories of the university and entering institutions for the purpose of studying real-life social settings. Psychologist David Rosenhan and his students were part of this vibrant scene. In one of their most cited studies, they got themselves admitted to state psychiatric hospitals by faking symptoms of schizophrenia. Shortly after admission, the researchers stopped expressing signs of psychosis. But staff continued to view their behaviour through the diagnostic lens of psychosis, even describing their note-taking as 'writing behaviour' consistent with delusional thinking. Rosenhan (1973) concluded that the single best predictor of a diagnosis is a previous diagnosis, and that once a diagnosis is established, confirmation bias governs clinical observations.

This line of critical psychological research tends to reduce the complexity of diagnostic processes, however, including of how diagnostic signs circulate within a wider system of social signifiers. Indeed, the simulation of symptoms in Rosenhan's study registered a more central problem in psychiatry than what the researchers envisioned. As Foucault (2008) argues in his discussion of simulated hysterical fits at the Salpêtrière under the administration of Charcot, psychiatry emerged as a specialty within medicine and separate from neurology through its specific occupational role in detecting simulated illness. Indeed, Foucault concludes that 'The whole history of psychiatry can be said to be permeated by this problem of simulation' (136).

Thomas Szasz (1995) emerged as a leading antipsychiatry voice in the 1970s, dismissing the concept of mental illness as a 'myth'. But Szasz went beyond the social cognitive orientation of labelling theory to talk more directly about power. In framing odd or disturbing behaviour as an illness of the mind, he argues, doctors wrested control from the clergy in controlling deviance. Szasz situates this transfer of authority from clergy to medicine in the nineteenth century as an outgrowth of broader social forces, disagreeing with Foucault over the material conditions that gave rise to the medical model. Beyond differences in their historical analyses, Szasz and Foucault were part of a larger critical project that challenged the progressive narrative of psychiatry. The prototypical textbook story traces the origins of the discipline from Philip Pinel's liberation

of the lunatics during the French Revolution through its various battles with superstition and religious thinking to humane treatment of the mentally ill. Szasz (1995: 2) situates psychiatry as a transfer of authority within the terms of secular modernity, where doctors secured authority as agent of the state to confine a person not charged with crimes but otherwise bothersome, 'rendering him childlike, and justifying controlling and caring for him against his will'. The history of psychiatry told by Foucault (2008) brings these same elements of rationalized coercion and control into the analysis. The classification and diagnosis of symptoms within medical taxonomies and the search for anatomical-pathological etiologies represented the two points of psychiatry's 'materialist guarantee' – its claim as arbiter of truth within the framework of science. However, 'Psychiatric practice developed in the shelter of these two discourses but it never used them . . . it never really put it to work' (134). Foucault's intervention here is to unhinge this 'materialist guarantee' of psychiatry as a profession grounded in science from its actual material practices. He traces the history of mechanical restraints used in asylums, for example, and how these methods had little to do with the scientific discourses circulating at the time.

If psychiatry operates as a border-broker that perpetually fails to bring human activity into alignment with the social order, it also represents a fertile site for resistance. As a theorist and practitioner aligned with the radical psychiatry movement of the 1970s, Peter Sedgwick (1982) takes a different stance in opposing a key principle of antipsychiatry – that the concept of mental illness simply advances the power of medicine. He argues that the scientific separation of mental and physical illness, and particularly the absolutist position of Szasz, leaves unexamined the historical contingencies that produce categories of medical disease. Further, the idiom of mental illness, no less than physical illness, registers distress and a claim on the culture for some form of care, whether through folk remedies or Western methods. Antipsychiatry theorists approach mental suffering from considerable remove, Sedgwick contends, rather than from the 'hard seat of the waiting room or the casualty department's stretcher' (28). In arguing for patients' rights to care within the framework of health and social welfare, Sedgwick cautions against over-politicizing psychosis. He is particularly critical of R. D. Laing's casting of symptoms of schizophrenia as 'life-enhancing', and Laing's transition from insisting on the meaningfulness of schizophrenic communication to the position that psychosis represents transcendence of a falsifying reality. Tracking the theoretical moves of leading theorists in antipsychiatry, Sedgwick is particularly attuned to how antipsychiatry may turn to the right, a concern borne out by the anti-state and anti-social welfare positions of the libertarian wing of the movement.

Relations of psychiatric knowledge production

Pat Bracken (2012) argues that 'One of the most important questions facing psychiatry today concerns its relationship to the emerging international service user movement'. The historical dynamics of this relationship – where psychiatric patients and ex-patients resist the conditions of their care – have been largely overlooked in critical revisionist projects. Yet this is an important part of psychiatry's story, dating back to the nineteenth century asylums and the clinics where psychiatry emerged as a branch of medicine. Indeed, the service user movement could be cast as the repressed 'third term' in the history of mental health care. Asylum literature includes a rich legacy of autobiographical accounts of madness. But it also includes accounts of patients collectively challenging the authority of their doctors. In the United States, the patient-published monthly periodical, *Opal*, at the Utica State Lunatic Asylum in upstate New York, is one such early example. First published in 1850, the *Opal* chronicled, through poetry, short essays, and stories, various problems with the asylum system and grievances against doctors. A recurring motif centres on demands for 'truthfulness toward the insane', and their refusal to be cast as

hopeless cases (Eghigian 2010). As one patient describes the state of affairs, 'There is a certain point of recovery when the disordered mind seeks to discriminate between that which is false and that which is true in his condition' (The *Opal* 1852/2010: 137). Prefiguring ideas taken up in the antipsychiatry and recovery movements, the author maps a course of healing that departs from the medical model. While the doctor insists on the patient relinquishing his delusions, the patient asserts the right to preserve the creative and productive elements of madness, to 'find a counselor . . . to guide his trembling steps through the maze he is treading' (137). In tracing the relational side of psychiatry, Foucault (2008) overlooks dynamic shifts in the positions of patients by focusing on the moves of the doctors. His analysis foregrounds the perpetual battle of wills between doctor and patient, with the authority exercised by mad-doctors as a form of 'moral orthopedics' (8). The mentally ill – the misfits – came under the authority of the alienists as the 'residue of all residues', the 'unassimilable to all of society's educational, military and police disciplines' (54).

Foucault (2008: 269) brings the hysteric on to the stage in his analysis of Jean-Martin Charcot, even as the physician dominates the picture. The power of the hysteric operates as mere Echo to Narcissus. Foucault describes what he terms the *game of mirrors* between the doctor and his medical subjects as a mutually confirmatory gaze: back wards mental patients were able to achieve visibility while confirming the medical authority of the doctor. Under Charcot, the hysteric says, 'thanks to me, you are recognized as a doctor'. The power of the hysteric is in the erotic excess of her performance. Giving the man what he wanted, the displays of hysterical fits ultimately overwhelm the capacity of the doctor to contain them. Foucault declares his own allegiances in this dramatic battle of wills: 'We salute the hysterics as the true militants of antipsychiatry' (254).

In saluting the hysteric, Foucault turns away too quickly from the performance and the various parties in attendance. The game of mirrors does reflect the power of doctors, but it also includes popular movements that enlist the mental patient in staging their own revolts. Schizophrenia captured the gaze of 1970s antipsychiatry in part because reality itself was under scrutiny. The mind-expansion culture operated as palpable context, with LSD and other hallucinogenics going beyond recreational use to carry philosophical and transcendent import. While the critical difference between self-induced and non-voluntary hallucinations was downplayed or dismissed, often in egregiously irresponsible ways, this mind-expansion movement did claim from psychiatry a place for exploring exceptional states. Yet much like Charcot's hysterics, the psychotic patient is cast in a drama choreographed by forces not of his or her own making.

In the 1990s, multiple personality disorder (MPD) similarly captured the public stage, displacing the hysteric as a prototypical feminine condition. The multiple served as clinical medium for an emerging class of trauma therapists, many of whom were taking on the medical establishment by exposing the depths of fragmentation in the psyche that exceeded the reach of conventional treatments (Haaken 1998; Nathan 2011). This era in psychiatry is instructive for the formation of patient/practitioner alliances as well. Women diagnosed as multiples occupied many of the same conference stages as their therapists, finding their voice by sharing the podium and co-authoring papers and books on the MPD condition. The righteousness of the MPD campaign, advanced in the interest in exposing hidden histories of child sexual abuse, blinded many therapists to how their own grievances against the psychiatric establishment were channelled through patients. These therapeutic partnerships revived the ethos of antipsychiatry romantic revolt against medical control over madness, while locating the source of madness in repressed histories of sexual abuse rather than the divided psyches produced by capitalism. As schizophrenia and other psychotic conditions fell below the threshold of clinical interest in the United States, the mesmerizing multiple served to re-libidinize psychiatry. The stories of the chronically

mentally ill were far less dramatic, less riveting in their daily struggles with reality, than were those of the lively multiple (Haaken 1998). As the threshold for responding to suffering rose, so too did the demands for a captivating performance of madness.

Beyond antipsychiatry

The cult classic film *King of Hearts*, released in 1966, registers the romantic ethos of the antipsychiatry movement in its casting of the inhabitants of the asylum as the only real sane people in an insane world. Much like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, representations of madness operate allegorically to advance a social critique. For many of the practitioners who developed alternative therapeutic communities during the 1970s, representations of psychosis similarly served a larger political agenda. In countless revolutionary enclaves of the 1960s and 1970s, opposition to psychiatry caught fire because New Left culture was itself deeply involved in producing psychological theories and practices. 'The personal is the political' emerged as a feminist anthem, but this same ethos infused countercultural groups and socialists drawn to Marxist-psychoanalysis, liberation theology, and anti-racist and anti-colonial struggles. Resistance to commodity culture, capitalism, and to the bureaucratic and authoritarian systems of old left regimes required radically new ways of thinking about mind and consciousness, about boundaries between normalcy and madness, and about who decides on how the differences are drawn.

David Ingleby (1981: 97) was among the cautionary voices within the antipsychiatry movement, pointing to the totalizing tenor of opposition to the medical model – an approach that readily migrates to a position that 'invalidates the concept of mental care'. If the only answer is resistance, Ingleby asks, what pressure does this impose on distressed people? For Ingleby, the critical project centres on recognizing the contradictions of any program of reform – of both recognizing an ethical responsibility to intervene in human suffering and confronting how such interventions may reproduce the very conditions of that suffering.

In opposition to this dialectical stance, Francoise Castel, Robert Castel, and Anne Lovell (1982) reject the possibility of a truly socialized psychiatry, concurring with Foucault that reforms tend to reproduce the illusion of progress. Enlisting the rhetorical strategy of Szasz, they argue that 'The counterpart of the myth of deinstitutionalization was the myth of community care' (124). In their assessment of this terrain, Castel et al. conclude that 'Community psychiatry in the United States is part of a complex ensemble of services performing "functions of control, surveillance and normalization"' (169). But the myth of progress may be reflexively invoked to check any efforts at meaningful social change. Minority groups made claims on public clinics and hospitals in the 1960s and 1970s and service workers, including psychiatrists and psychologists, joined forces with the community in organizing around the conditions of care (Kupers 1982). A dialectical approach to the history of psychiatry attends to these contradictory currents of the professions and how everyday people enlist mental health discourses to make new demands on the system.

In a study carried out by Jimena Alvarado Chavarría, a graduate student on the *Guilty Except for Insanity* project team, the aim was to understand how participants in a coalition of consumer/psychiatric survivors conceptualized their work as mental health activists. The themes that emerged from this study cluster around the aims of critical psychiatry identified by Bracken and Thomas (2010) in their framing of a political agenda. Alvarado Chavarría (2012) interviewed ten long-term activists with the Oregon Mental Health Consumer and Psychiatric Survivor Coalition (OCSC), a group that seeks 'To establish a statewide network of people who identify as having a psychiatric diagnosis, and/or who feel labeled by one; to share ideas; provide mutual support; work toward common goals; strengthen peer-run organizations; and advocate for positive change in the mental health system' (Oaks 2009). While the members recognize

participation of consumer/survivors on organization boards as a mark of progress, they also stress that such metrics of empowerment can be deceptive. Serving on boards often involves participating in decisions that are antithetical to progressive reform – decisions that may further marginalize vulnerable groups because they operate within the institutional medical model. Building a progressive mental health movement means finding common ground among survivor/consumer groups, particularly around their shared insistence on the self-determination and complexity of people diagnosed with psychiatric disorders (see www.mindfreedom.org). As one participant describes her position on the medical model, the important question is the relational context where diagnostic terms circulate.

> There are times you have to say, 'this person is a person who was diagnosed with, or labelled with. I like that better than saying, 'this person is a person with schizophrenia'. This person is actually a person who was labelled or diagnosed by someone as schizophrenic.
>
> (*Alvarado Chavarría 2012: 86*)

Movements generate ideas that go beyond their eras of historical possibility even as they reflect the constraints of those same eras. The antipsychiatry literature served as vital incubator to the revolts of the 1960s and 1970s and left a rich legacy of ideas that might inform contemporary practices. As one example, the Hearing Voices movement registers the insights of antipsychiatry while avoiding its romantic excesses. In refusing the commodified world of polypharmacy in the marketplace of 'choice', the Hearing Voices campaign insists on the communicative value of psychotic symptoms (http://www.intervoiceonline.org). This aim of working with auditory hallucinations as both disabling and meaningful, as idiosyncratic and as register of ambient cultural anxieties, departs from the antipsychiatry lionizing of psychosis. The Occupy Movement, short-lived as it was, also brought onto the public stage the affinity between marginalization and madness. In the era of finance capital, with its manic flight from human suffering throughout the globe, unity was founded on disparate and desperate groups of people reclaiming the city squares. In the various occupied spaces, a culture of appreciation for misfits, for deviant ways of processing reality, prevailed for this short period of time. Providing food and shelter for street people, as well as activity within a holding environment, brought into view the failures of the social welfare system to provide meaningful care. Groups of malcontents, the increasing ranks of people overrun by global capital and its pathological vision of progress, have a perpetual way of finding each other and of creating new ways of fighting the dominant reality principle. But the ideals that animate these struggles, the desires that break on through to the other side, inevitably give rise to charges from the next generation of both romantic excess and failure of imagination. And both charges are frequently found to be true.

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23

Psychotherapists

Agents of change or maintenance men?

Ole Jacob Madsen

Psychotherapists occupy an ambiguous position in late modern Western societies. On the individual level, they are entrusted agents of change when the outcome of therapy is efficacious. Yet on a societal level, psychotherapy may unwillingly function as an allying conservative institution for forces adrift in late capitalism. This latent conflict both between the individual and society, and between professional ethics and social responsibility is in this chapter discussed through the process of *individualization*, as it illustrates the dilemmas surrounding individual interventions as Western societies' preferred answer to human suffering under shifting living conditions. In particular, previous responses from feminist therapists are discussed, and I maintain that some of the challenges they have struggled with are vital for anyone wanting to act ethically and think critically about psychotherapy both inside and outside the office door.

I want to start off this chapter by giving a brief discussion of psychotherapy and psychology as adjacent traditions. They are in reality different yet partly overlapping practices, as not all psychotherapists are psychologists and not all psychologists are psychotherapists. But in the public perception, they appear to be increasingly confused with each other. From the point of view of *critical psychology* their mix-up is not only a frequently occurring error, but also a quite convenient muddle for mainstream psychology, in that their forceful combination would appear to be reinforcing psychology's ideological role in Western contemporary society through the *psy-complex* that shapes subjectivity through contingent psychological truths (Rose 1985). But let us try to start untying this knot by first looking more closely at the ground that psychology and psychotherapy primarily cover.

The psychology–psychotherapy alliance

The influential American Psychological Association's (2013) current definition of *psychology* reads as follows: 'Psychology is the study of the mind and behavior. The discipline embraces all aspects of the human experience − from the functions of the brain to the actions of nations, from child development to care for the aged'. Standard introductions to psychotherapy, on the other hand, will tell you that *psychotherapy* refers to therapeutic interaction or treatment restricted to a trained professional and a client, a couple, a family, or a group of people (see Lambert 2013 for an introduction). The usual aim of psychotherapy is to increase an individual's

sense of well-being, to help a client with a specific problem, or to improve relationships between two or more people, such as a couple or a family. The confusion starts perhaps with the fact that although there is a wide array of psychotherapeutic goals, treatment techniques, durations of therapy and so on, a common denominator appears to be that a psychotherapist nonetheless draws on some version of psychology that espouses an idea about human problems, their root cause, and their potential resolution. Yet a psychotherapist need not be a psychologist, but can in fact be any kind of qualified mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist, clinical social worker, licensed counsellor, or other trained practitioner. Hence, not all psychotherapists are psychologists.

What further compounds the misunderstanding is that a larger number of psychologists within the field of psychology are now practising psychotherapy than before. Historically, clinical psychology was, in the 1930s, a rather small and undistinguished specialty within psychology, and psychotherapy was a less frequent activity among clinical psychologists (Garfield 1981). Psychiatry was the dominant profession in psychotherapy. This all changed with the great number of casualties from World War II, which suddenly created a need for an institutionalization of clinical psychology (Capshew 1999), and subsequently a requirement for a training model in clinical psychology that would result in the scientist practitioner model (Boulder model). The latter become the dominant mode of training in professional psychology, as it remains today (Benjamin 2005). In the latter half of the 1970s, most battles with psychiatry had been won, as clinical psychologists became the chief distributors of psychotherapy (Buchanan 2003). The role clinical psychology holds within psychology has also completely changed: in the United States in 2010, a vast portion of the 170,200 psychologist positions were found in clinical, counselling, and school settings (152,000) that fairly often involve the practise of psychotherapy (U.S. Department of Labor 2013). In the UK in 2013, out of 19,033 registered psychologists, around 9,500 were registered as clinical psychologists, making them the largest sub-division (Division of Clinical Psychology 2013).

The public image of the intimate scientific practitioner

After psychoanalysis became popular in the United States, following Sigmund Freud's sole visit in 1909, the public stereotype of psychologists has been that of a practitioner conducting psychotherapy by silently listening to the woes of a patient reclining on a couch (Benjamin 2005). The subsequent escalation of clinical psychology means that this stereotype is finally starting to catch up with the prototype, couch or no couch, as Benjamin reasons. Although psychology comprises a vast field of scientific knowledge, and only a portion holds a direct relevance to clinical psychology, the archetype of the psychotherapist continues to dominate in the public perception. For instance, in popular cartoons and newspaper caricatures it is almost always a classical analyst seated behind the client lying on the couch that is pictured, even two decades after *Time Magazine* asked the question 'Is Freud dead?' (Gray 1993) and the verdict was a resounding 'Yes'.

The skewed idea of the psychotherapeutic situation as the only working situation for a psychologist is not only reserved to the cartoon pages; it is also not uncommon to come across it within higher education. Cardiff University (2013) gives a presentation of the subject of sociology for non-sociologists on their web pages by using a basic cartoon series to underline how sociology is different from the life sciences. Physics, chemistry, biochemistry, and biology are all represented by a person staring into a microscope at different kinds of objects, anatomy is embodied as one figure pinching another, and sociology shows a researcher bowing to a cloud of 'social collectivity', whereas psychology is illustrated by a figure standing over another figure lying on a divan.

Of course, it is not unlikely that the traditional social representation of psychology within cartoons simply has had a spillover effect on higher education in this case, but my own experience from academia is that you will often come across researchers from other disciplines who struggle to understand what psychology is, other than psychotherapy.

What then to make of the public's tangled perception of psychology and psychotherapy? Instead of putting forward the common complaint you hear from time to time from professional psychologists, that they (the public) do not understand us (cf. Benjamin 1986), I want to ponder over how psychology and psychotherapy come to reinforce each other. It seems that their coexistence allows psychotherapists today to operate under the impression that what they do in therapy is derived directly from the latest scientific, neutral discoveries about the human mind (or brain). Cushman (1995: 2) maintains that psychotherapy is 'thought of as a scientific practice, yet it is anything but standardized or empirical'. Unfortunately this status means that the effects of psychotherapy tend to be gravely overrated, and clinical treatment can sometimes serve as an excuse for not implementing more costly and comprehensive interventions (cf. Alexander 2008). Psychologists, however, are currently flourishing throughout the Western media and popular culture (De Vos 2012), presumably because psychology is believed to be a more intimate and thus relevant science for people, thanks to the archetypical image of the helpful therapist. A comparable academic discipline such as sociology throughout the first years of this century seemed to be less noticeable and less in demand by the public (Giddens 2006), ostensibly because sociologists do not have the benefit of being associated with a helping profession or simply a natural employment constituency. However, the persistent alliance between psychology and psychotherapy, despite its great success, should worry us, according to the sociology of individualization (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Beck 1992), as psychology's success story may be based on a troublesome trend of development in the Western modernized world, which is destined to create only more human suffering in the future and may be irreversible, unless psychologists and psychotherapists come to realize how they might unwillingly reinforce such forces.

Psychotherapy and individualization

The late German sociologist Ulrich Beck (1992) is renowned for his book *Risk Society*, which was published just before the nuclear accident in Chernobyl on April 29, 1986. This tragic event emphasized Beck's warning that Western societies must come to terms with *reflexive modernity* to cope with uncertainty and the risks latent in industrialized and complex late-modern civilizations. The reason is that Western societies' problems have become so complex that politicians and societal planners cannot be expected to have the insight into the increasingly diversified fields of knowledge that is required in order to take appropriate preventive action. Readings of *Risk Society* in the direct aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster undoubtedly had engineers in mind with respect to Beck's assertion that future crises must be prevented by the professions themselves. Less noted is that fact that Beck (1992) also addressed the role of clinical psychology and psychotherapy and the problem of *individualization* in the wake of the development within the welfare states of the West, where reflexive modernization came to dissolve the traditional parameters of industrial society such as class, gender, and the old-style family roles. Beck emphasizes that in the present day risk society people are being freed from feudal bonds in great numbers. Throughout the modern period, the individual is progressively becoming the main reference point as a result of institutionalized individualism: 'The Western type of individualized society tells us *to seek biographical solutions to systemic contractions*' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002: xxii). Historical consciousness about these roots is of vital importance for whoever comes

into contact with the human consequences that stem from this radically new situation for the individual. It is here we find the trusted institution that is psychotherapy:

> It is important to recognize this in its historic dimension, because this socio–historical change takes place as a private, personal conflict. Psychology (and psychotherapy), which trace the suffering now being referred to them *en masse* back to the individual history of early childhood socialization, are becoming *short-circuited*.
>
> *(Beck 1992: 118–119)*

Beck warns against the framing of people's problems in therapist offices in a manner that views their individual biographical histories as the sole path to the cause and onset of, and solution to, their suffering. He adds that psychology has yet to undertake a satisfactory sociohistorical revision of its ways of thinking and intervening, which is necessary to prevent it from displacing the causes for problems onto the people who suffer from them. Thus, psychotherapy holds a significant position in late modern society, and must perform a kind of balancing act between the level of the individual and that of society.

If we are to take Beck's challenge for clinical psychology and psychotherapy seriously, we must also critically examine his point of departure. In sociology it is somewhat uncontroversial today to assess Beck's examination of the risk society and individualization as sweeping and at times a simplification (cf. Brannen and Nilsen 2005; Mythen 2005). First of all, anyone with the slightest familiarity with psychotherapy will undoubtedly complain that it can hardly be said to be one thing, and that among therapists you have a range of variance in technique, personal style, treatment philosophy, and so on. Beck, in the quoted passage, on the other hand, seems to be under the impression that all psychologists are likely to relate the client's suffering back to his or her early childhood. This priority given to childhood in psychotherapeutic treatment is most commonly associated with *conventional psychoanalysis*, where childhood experiences and possible trauma often is at the forefront (Freud 2003). Regardless, psychotherapy can by no means be reduced to clinical work on the client's childhood experiences. Multiple popular directions in therapy can be found that are predominantly focused on the present and on the client's future possibilities, like *cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)* (Dobson 2010) and *narrative therapy* (White and Epston 1990). Still, the risk of individualization is not simply resolved by pointing out to that there is much more to psychotherapy than fixations on the client's biography.

In order to exploit this dilemma beyond fixations on childhood, I have elaborated on Beck's perspective by creating a fictional case about a Norwegian office cleaner named Tove who works for a multi–corporate company (Madsen 2014). Tove is responsible for the cleaning of a larger section in one of the company's office complexes. The company is looking into cutting costs in all areas and has therefore launched an efficiency improvement plan that also affects Tove's daily workload, as she is expected to cover a much larger base than before.

Tove struggles with the new demands for several weeks, until one morning when she cannot manage to get out of bed and go to work. Her body refuses to carry out the signals the brain is sending and Tove gradually realizes that she has all the classical signs of burnout from work-related stress. Tove is put on a sick leave by her general practitioner. After a short period of time Tove is then offered psychotherapeutic follow-up as one of the steps her employer implements for getting employees to return to work. In my fictional case, Tove's therapist is an excellent professional who during just a handful of consultations manages to turn Tove's situation around by applying a combination of CBT and narrative therapy. The therapist helps Tove recognize unhelpful negativist thought patterns, and to increase gradually the amount of positive

thoughts and positive self-narratives that, according to these theories, will influence a person's emotional and behavioural life. No mention is made of Tove's childhood; the therapist instead helps Tove to look ahead, draws on her resources, and assists her in the creation of more adaptive coping strategies at work.

Not long afterwards, Tove is back at work and now successfully manages the new demands of her job. Tove is pleased. Her employer is content. The therapist is satisfied by a job well done. Despite the general contentment of all parties involved, I would hold that the solution to Tove's case by psychotherapy might still be problematic, because the question of whether her employer was right in implementing an efficiency improvement plan is effectively swept under the carpet. The case is also meant to illustrate how an institution like psychotherapy might become an extremely useful ally for forces in late capitalism as a place where the consequences of human exploitation are sent, and then reprogrammed to adapt to the same societal conditions they came from. Of course, one could argue that rationalization is sometimes necessary and that it is in everybody's interest that people quickly adapt to changing demands. However much this may be the case, my main point (as shown previously by Sampson [1983]) is rather that psychotherapy can never become wholly neutral; it is reciprocally intertwined with whatever goes on outside the office walls. The dilemma surrounding psychotherapy as preserving societal changes is that it is not adequately intercepted by the code of ethics of, for instance, psychologists and psychiatrists. For instance, the Hippocratic Oath basically obliges psychotherapists to give individual consolation to anyone who crosses their doorstep. An equivalent professional reflex for looking beyond the individual's problem is virtually non-existent. Cushman (1990) has reasoned that it looks as if psychotherapists' job descriptions simply do not permit them to question the sociopolitical conditions under which their clients live.

Alternative approaches to psychotherapy

How can psychotherapists seriously address the problem of individualization that essentially is relevant for all variants, regardless of treatment philosophy? This latent conflict where modern societies' contradictions and unsolved problems emerge in the therapist's office has not gone unnoticed in psychotherapy in past decades. The individualism of conventional therapy was in the early 1970s challenged by *family therapy* through the work of practitioners like Gregory Bateson and Paul Watzlawick, who took an interest in interpersonal issues and transactional patterns (Marecek and Hare-Mustin 2009). However, in recent years, family therapy appears to be falling further and further behind in the competition with popular, individually directed, evidence-based methods like CBT (Fishman 2008). *Community psychology* evolved out of the mental health movement in the 1960s and emerged as an ecological reaction to overly individual clinical interventions, with an ambition of taking on the sociopolitical causes of psychological suffering in the workplace, such as in local communities (cf. Sarason 1974; Rappaport 1987). Yet well-intentioned projects to help people in their local communities have a tendency to reproduce all the familiar patterns, as psychologists report that the demand for individual, clinical intervention in the population prevents them from doing much systemic and preventive work (cf. Heggland et al. 2013). Within critical psychology there are also practitioners who currently conduct *psychotherapy in everyday life*, interventions founded on the principle that traditional therapy cannot fulfil its purpose unless it taps into the client's social network and local resources (cf. Dreier 2008). Time will tell whether such a nomadic approach to psychotherapy can gain broad support.

These movements all indirectly own up to the problems of individualization, but it is perhaps within the tradition of *feminist therapy* that we find the most pronounced attempts to come to

terms with individualization, without altogether abandoning individual consolation. Within the fields of women's studies and mental health studies a critique of psychotherapy similar to that provided by Beck has been in general circulation ever since the 1970s (see Bondi and Burman 2001 for an overview). Women's studies scholar Kathy Davis (1986) has previously explored the critique of therapy for individualizing women's problems by studying a recorded therapy session. The client is a married, pregnant woman in her early twenties. The young woman starts off by telling the therapist she has been very upset lately, and Davis gives a fascinating excerpt and interpretation of how her problems are reformulated in therapy. Her dissatisfaction is related to an uneven distribution of responsibilities and a lack of space for her own interests, which is set to become a greater burden as she is soon to become a fulltime housewife instead of a student as she was before. The therapist in question gradually convinces the client that the 'real' problem is that she has put up a façade and not been able to talk openly and honestly about her feelings. Davis argues that another path was possible, whereby the therapist related the problems to the inequalities between husband and wife. She concludes by referring to feminist alternatives to traditional therapy that state that 'a client's "problems of fit" do not have to be reduced to something wrong with her. The social and political dimension of these difficulties could have been maintained as part and parcel of her current distress' (Davis 1986: 71). Yet that did not take place in the therapy session at hand, and Davis therefore urges that further attention be paid to how individualization is unwittingly being helped by the trusted artefact of psychotherapy.

Running out of steam

A private practitioner of psychotherapy in the United States since 1989, Dana Becker has also made several notable contributions to the field of feminist psychotherapy. Becker (2005) maintains that as the notion of psychotherapy for the 'normal' has been institutionalized for half a decade, and has been directed especially towards women, it is time to question how *the therapeutic culture* has served them in terms of the broader social and political problems they face. Yet part of psychology and psychotherapy's success lies in the ability to stow painful questions like these away. The professionalism of psychotherapy by clinical psychology grew out of Americans' historical rejection of authority 'and the science that undergirded professionalization provided the expert with a unique understanding of the world that protected him from insinuations of political, partisan, or personal motives or bias and left him accountable to very few' (Becker 2005: 57). In her multiple works, Becker pursues how popular psychological concepts like 'empowerment' and 'stress' seep into American society's popular lingo of people's potentials and problems. The concept of 'empowerment' reflects and reinforces how the idea of collective emancipation from unfavourable sociopolitical living conditions is nowadays reduced to individual psychological self-actualization (Becker 2005). In that the popular idea of 'stress' plays an ideological part in drawing the outside in, we end up believing that we must change ourselves in order to adjust to societal conditions, instead of changing the living conditions (Becker 2013). 'Stress' helps to avoid the issue of gender equality in society, as an entire industry, from mindfulness courses to medication, prevails in order to 'help' the women that strangely appear to have much more of this dangerous disease than their husbands. The psy and stress discourse is also part of an evident feminist backlash today that is eager to tell women 'they can't have it all', according to Becker.

Hence, the problems of individualization that Beck and Davis addressed in the mid-1980s appear to be unresolved today. It should be mentioned that Becker writes from an American context where gender roles might be less adventurous than, for instance, in the Nordic countries that are recognized as having the highest level of gender equality in the world (although progress is still reported to be slow within family life [cf. Magnusson and Marecek 2012]). In their

master's thesis from Umeå University, newly graduated psychologists Julia Narvola and Fanny Skarin (2012) investigated how six psychotherapists practising in Sweden negotiated therapeutic and feminist discourses in their daily work with female victims of violence. One of their main findings was that the different subject positions these discourses permit make it difficult for practitioners to successfully incorporate the feminist perspective into their work from day to day, despite sympathy for feminism. Narvola and Skarin (2012) therefore conclude that clinically oriented research in feminist therapy in general is lacking, and as a result critical and feminist perspectives lack legitimacy and credibility in therapy. The challenge today is to build on the decades of critique of psychology and psychotherapy's individualizing pitfalls and successfully transform these insights into practical programmes that are of use to therapists and their clients in their struggle to cope with everyday life.

Critical psychotherapy: a contradiction in terms?

Part of the problem regarding therapeutic interventions and individualization stems perhaps from the unavoidable fact that psychology is the science of the individual, and, as Parker (2007) has summed it up, is always poisonous. Psychotherapists, whenever allying themselves with psychological theories of human suffering, will unavoidably be drawn to explain the client's problems in individualistic terms. Yet the subject matter in psychotherapy might actually be the least of its problems, as the institutional conditions and codes surrounding psychotherapy will inevitably influence the outcome. In a welfare state like Norway, many rights are triggered only if the client has received a medical or psychiatric diagnosis. This way of organizing rights creates a situation wherein psychotherapists must treat the client's problems, formally speaking, as belonging to him or her. Legal ownership helps to create an incentive for giving biographical answers, which often means the latest biological–neurological scientific discoveries. For instance, the child psychiatric diagnosis *ADHD* (which has increased dramatically in Norway in recent decades [Hinshaw et al. 2011]) will prompt the right to funding for special education in state schools. Whereas no diagnosis, but a recommendation that certain measures be carried out in the classroom, just means that the school must make the best of the situation as it is. Similarly, a general practitioner must diagnose a patient as clinically suffering from *depression* if he or she is to be given a medical certificate to take to their employer, while a full description of the depressing working conditions that surround the employee will trigger nothing. When the rights follow the individual, the understanding of the client's problems and resolution appears gradually to follow. Thus resilient incentives may influence the underlying understanding of the client's suffering and ultimately the outcome of therapy.

Conclusion

Ironically, regardless of the school of thought, psychotherapy is at bottom about *change*. Why 'ironically'? Because psychotherapy may in fact guarantee the perseveration of the status quo, as it is quintessentially a conservative institution (Cushman 1990) and its practitioners do not have the necessary training or the professional backing to start questioning the sociopolitical conditions surrounding the individual clients they set out to help. In addition, its scientific partner in crime, psychology, deals by and large with allegedly universal structures in the brain. Giddens (2006) not long ago asked, in a commentary in *The Guardian*, why sociology today frequently comes up short in relation to psychology in terms of popularity in higher education. He links the relative strength of psychology to the impotence many people of today have come to feel about the future. When utopia is temporarily lost, sociological thinking born of the political and

economic revolutions of the nineteenth century seems to suffer with it, as opposed to psychology, which has always dealt with the enduring aspects of the human condition, according to Giddens. Thus, it is possible to interpret the psy-complex or therapeutic culture that currently forms the ontological centre of the Western world (Illouz 2008), where psychotherapy is ever more popular, as the only societal institution left where people dare to dream about revolutions. Exactly as the early critics of the therapeutic sensibility feared half a century ago (cf. Rieff 1987; Lasch 1991) 'psychological man's' diminishing expectations towards the social reality he and she live under, help to guarantee that revolutions beyond the private, individual sphere remain nothing but a forgotten and ridiculed dream.

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24

Education and psychology

Change at last?

Tom Billington and Tony Williams

> The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again.
>
> *(Adorno 1971: 1)*

Contemporary institutionalized understandings of education as a disciplinary field differ from historical concepts of education. Contemporary institutionalized psychology too differs from broader, historical understandings of psychology. Education and psychology share a similar trajectory as discrete disciplinary forms arising during the last one hundred and fifty years or so, but while both generate discourses around development, learning, behaviour, language and, more recently, emotion, psychology, variously conceived, has penetrated its erstwhile partner through the practices of a more vigorous positivist 'science'. The industrialized and more recent post-industrial reframing of a dilemma with which education and psychology have both historically been concerned – as to the kind of lives and societies we should aspire – underpins much of this chapter. Elements of a shared history, together with the potential mutuality of critical approaches to psychology, pedagogy, and progressive education are briefly explored and thrown into relief against their contemporary institutionalized forms.

Codifying psychology in education

It could be argued that following the opening of Wundt's own experimental laboratory in 1879, educational psychology almost became synonymous with psychology itself. Since it was impossible to take all the children to the laboratory, however, the school itself became a site for systematic psychological investigation and experimentation. Measurement, rank, and the category became established as preferred technological functions (Billington 1996), and in the early years of the twentieth century, educational psychology constructed a disciplinary boundary upon nonhuman conceptuo-technical devices in order to convince as to its 'scientific' credentials, for example, standardization, deviation, variance, correlation and thus its suitability to manage populations.

So-called psychological tests enabled the process of entry into the workforce to be subject to early regulation and the opportunity provided by schools as a site for scrutiny and examination – with children as a captive audience – was too good to ignore. By 1920, many children

in schools across industrialized countries were being subjected not only to testing in reading, spelling, and arithmetic (Thorndike 1913–14) but to a whole range of professional practices which purported to examine various 'abilities' or 'mental deficits' in verbal and visual reasoning, language, memory, and sense perception (Brown and Thomson 1921; Burt 1909, 1921; Goddard 1911a; Miner 1918; Shrubsall 1911; Whitley 1911).

The vigour in US psychology at the beginning of the twentieth century matched the vigour of its economy, and there was considerable enthusiasm for so-called intelligence tests. One of the principal architects behind the development of psychometric tests devised to measure such constructs was James Cattell (1860–1944) who had also studied with Wundt. Following the conceptualization of 'g' (Spearman 1904), Binet and Simon's original Tests (1905, 1914) and the later US version (Terman et al. 1917, the 'Stanford-Binet'), the discourses of 'mental age' and 'IQ' gained in currency. These were pivotal moments in the history of both psychology and education, not only in the US but across Europe and its dominions. A psychology had been created in which a mean, or normalization, could be sought which would allow with statistical precision the identification of the ideal individual and by inference, thereafter, all manner of individual differences according to age and 'ability'.

Educational psychology aspired to become the ultimate 'science' of child measurement although, of course, it never actually succeeded in moving beyond the merely technological. Educational psychology had offered itself as a solution to a problem of government – how to regulate the boundaries of childhood, even personhood? It provided a supposedly rational antidote to the unreason suspected in the category child (i.e. as potentially resistant to forms of governmentality) and demonstrated how, for example, problematic children who might commonly have been described previously in lay terms as 'idiots' or 'imbeciles', could now, via the 'scientific' methods offered by psychological testing, formally be categorized as such (Binet and Simon 1914; Goddard 1911b; Shrubsall 1923). Educational psychology thus followed a path into the belly of government, a journey made previously by psychiatry; both disciplines practised an alchemy in which individual lives could be transformed into formal categories of difference which were then concretized as transgressive according to law. Many children could legally be considered 'uneducable' and legitimately excluded from the 'mainstream'. Special education was born.

The tests were crude, partial, and unable to recognize the vast array of other variables which pertain in any human situation (environmental, contextual, economic, political, social, etc.) and a critical educational psychology argues that this remains the case today. Within the space of about twenty years, however, authorities in Europe and the US had acquired a seemingly rational means of managing the population from a very early age and of creating a structure of education in which social mobility could be regulated. Most children would be expected to remain within their social sphere but some would move outside, either to enhanced or restricted opportunities i.e. in respect of future economic status. All this would be controlled by a psychometric testing which promised to fix not only a child's 'mental age' or 'IQ' but thereafter their life chances too.

The Hadow Report on psychological testing in education in Britain (Board of Education 1924) provides insights into first, the origins of psychology in education in Britain, second, the ways in which psychological testing became an authoritative form of practice allied to the processes of government, and third, how many of the educational discourses of the time adopted psychologized discourses which were infused with the principles of positivism and eugenics.

Others involved in psychology and education at the time made different theoretical choices, for example, James and Dewey in the US, Steiner (1861–1925) in Europe, and Susan Isaacs

(1885–1948) in the UK. It is thus incumbent upon us within our current context to be une-quivocal about the status accorded to Cyril Burt's legacy, which should be subject to contempo-rary critique, not least since his claims proved to be hopelessly inaccurate:

> It is my personal conviction that the main outlines of our human nature are now approx-imately known, and that the whole territory of individual psychology has, by one worker or another, been completely covered in the main.
>
> *(Burt, in Hearnshaw 1979: 49)*

With little credible evidence other than personal conviction, Burt thus adopted an anti-scientific position and went on to contribute to a colonialist passion for racial explanations and the surge of interest in eugenics (Chitty 2007).

Sir Francis Galton's commitment to hereditability had clear racial connotations. For example, during his travels in Africa he had written thus of a first meeting with one particular group of people: 'I found that some had trousers, some coats of skin, and they clicked, and howled, and chatted, and generally behaved like baboons. I looked on all these fellows as a sort of primitive link with civilization' (Brookes 2004: 112). Burt's own later assumptions and preferences were injected into education via psychologized discourses which can lay little claim to objectivity, 'It is important to recognize the presence of hereditary mental differences even among the races of civilized Europe' (Burt 1913: 199). Psychological discourse in the UK thus came to reinforce a culture of measurement which created the opportunity to attack any child who might prove a burden on the economic wealth of the nation. However, the tests were riven with social and cul-tural bias, based upon reductionist psychological discourses of hereditability, fixed intelligence, and mental deficiency which not only remain unproven but continue to corrode individual lives and potentials.

In one of his six seminal reports on education for the British government, Henry Hadow set out specifically to map the latest thinking on the implementation of psychological tests in schools (Board of Education 1924). The 248-page document provides a detailed account of thinking of the time regarding concepts such as 'ability' and 'intelligence' (with voices for and against), and provides in itself the basis for critique of the early relationship between psy-chology and education. Hadow's meticulous scholarly account included analyses of the use of psychological testing in schools in over 20 countries; those consulted included psychologists such as William Brown, C. S. Myers, George Miles, Charles Spearman, Susan Isaacs, and Edward Thorndike.

While Burt was commissioned to write sections of the report, Hadow (Vice-Chancellor of our own University at Sheffield) was careful to maintain intellectual control over a critique in which he suggested the need for due caution regarding the more excessive claims being made by the positivist enthusiasts. Despite such cautionary counsel, however, Burt continued for decades to place energetically before successive British governments papers which encouraged the use of psychological testing across the school system wherever selection was required (Burt 1959).

Psychology in education: the foundations for re-construction

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide an inventory of the ways in which education and psychology have been mutually reinforcing, but the following are a few of the most signif-icant. The works of J. B. Watson (1878–1958) and B. F. Skinner (1904–1990) came to dominate many of the practices of successive generations of teachers, psychologists, and policy makers,

encouraging the development and application of a multitude of behaviour modification derivatives in schools. Piaget (1896–1980) similarly influenced generations of professionals through his theories of children's learning, not least through the impact on school curricula and systems of his development narratives according to age. Albert Bandura's (1925-) social learning theory stood somewhere in between these behaviourist and cognitivist paradigms, while education has at times been receptive to ideas from, for example, Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917–2005) on ecological systems theory, Howard Gardner (1943-) on multiple intelligences, Reuven Feuerstein (1921-) on dynamic assessment, and Martin Seligman (1942-) on positive psychology. In the respective contributions of these last four authors it is possible to detect a number of theoretical problems concerning the manifestations of behaviourist and cognitivist psychological discourses in education during much of the twentieth century, for example concerning: the concept of intelligence itself, and beyond to its irreducibility to a single and indeed fixed figure (Gardner, Feuerstein); a focus on deficit (Feuerstein, Seligman); and analyses which either isolated or dehumanized the individual i.e. as being impervious to environmental variables and potential change – social, cultural, political, economic (Feuerstein and Bronfenbrenner).

Critical psychology sensitizes us to the ways in which educational and other authorities not only regulate – which is not necessarily a problem – but also effectively exclude, which is, especially given a creeping unease as to the quality of the 'science' upon which those (social) practices are being justified. Arguably one of the most outstanding 'achievements' of psychology in education during the twentieth century was the development of the technical means by which selected individuals could be confirmed and positioned as defective, deviant, or as a member of a transgressive category (disability or special need). Rather than becoming lost in the minutiae of the most recent DSM-5 (APA 2013) in respect to a plethora of individual psychopathologies, however, we would like to conclude our chapter by highlighting a tradition of psychologists and educationalists whose work has sought not only to resist the reduction of psychology in education to the regulation of social exclusion but also to attempt to reclaim more ancient traditions of science, education, and psychology in research and practice.

Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934) and Jerome Bruner (b.1915), in different ways, each unsettled understandings of the relationship between individual functioning and the world as depicted by positivist accounts of human beings, and their ideas were applied across educational research and practice during the last decades of the twentieth century. Vygotsky became highly popular and influential with those psychologists and teachers who wanted to resist reductionist, individualized, or pathologized accounts of the person, in particular, relating to matters of language or learning. His theory of 'ZPD', the zone of proximal development (1986) has informed teaching and learning practices through its demands for consideration of people's functioning within social contexts, and has in turn led to a number of specific theoretical and practical derivatives such as sociocultural activity theory (Leadbetter 2008; Daniels et al. 2009). Bruner's (1966) conceptualization of learning ('scaffolding') bore similarities with the ZPD but he was also to develop rich analyses of thinking and knowing which demanded consideration of concepts frequently overlooked since James, for example, in relation to meaning-making and matters of representation (Bruner 1986).

Both Vygotsky and Bruner, each in their own way, envisaged a psychology which was impossible to contain within isolated individuals, although, while Vygotsky was perhaps more intrinsically social, Bruner was focused on the uniquely human. In recent years, narrative approaches have inspired many psychologists and teachers to aspire to less disabling forms of practice by demanding that analyses become more sensitive not only to the importance of language but to the dynamic nature of human being (Berliner 1992; Bruner 1991; Riessman 2002; White and Epston 1990). Erica Burman's (2008) utilization of deconstruction as a tool for critiquing

development narratives, together with her exploration of a feminist agenda, has also had a significant impact on contemporary global discourse in educational and other settings by re-affirming the essentially debilitating nature of existing institutions and practices. Isaac Prilleltensky has targeted policy and practice issues by, for example, emphasizing critical approaches and the possibility of community solutions (Fox, Prilleltensky, and Austin 2009; Nelson and Prilleltensky 2005), while Ben Bradley has similarly utilized emerging critiques of psychological paradigms to provide alternatives in respect of professional training (2005). There are in addition increasing numbers of psychologists working in education who have committed to the development of critical psychological research and practice – Billington (2000), Bird (1999), Corcoran (2014), Gallagher (2003), Goodley and Lawthom (2006), Goodman (2010), Kincheloe (2006, 2008), Mercieca (2011), Martin and McLellan (2013), Neilsen and Kvale (1999), Newman and Holzman (1993), Sloan (2000), Todd (2014), Vassallo (2013), Williams (2013).

Education has its own tradition of critical studies, of course, which in large part continues to owe its legacy to Dewey and, subsequently, to Paulo Freire (1921–1997) who adopted a more piercingly political and economic critique to inform a community activism. Freire's (1972) critical pedagogy perhaps best fits with the kind of critical approaches adopted elsewhere in this volume, influenced as it was by a more clearly defined politicized analysis and commentary. Examples of the many other educationalists who have inserted critical educational discourse into contemporary epistemological as well as political contests include Allen (2012), Ball (2012), Carr and Kemmis (1986), Davies (1994), Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2008), Giroux (2011), Lingard and Rizvi (1997), Martin, Sugarman and McNamara (2000), Phoenix (2009), Riley (1983), Said (1977), Slee (2011), Vavrus and Bartlett, eds. (2009), Walkerdine, Lucey and Melody (2002), and Willis (1981). Further direct challenges to specifically psychologically defined discourses include those of Drummond and Yarker (2013) and Wrigley (2013), who provided critiques of the conceptualizations of intelligence and ability while Stronach (2006) as well as Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) critiqued the therapeutic turn and new emotionalism in education.

Towards a critical, scientific psychology and education

Whether as researchers or applied psychologists, we are confronted with postmodern dilemmas of choice between particular activities and practices in preference to others. Adorno's call to arms with which we opened the chapter links to ancient ideas about the purpose of education as having the potential to contribute to public and private good, preventing atrocities, and implicitly encouraging virtuous lives. The dominant narratives of psychology in education of the last one hundred years, however, seem far removed from such lofty considerations, reduced as they have frequently been to accounts of mechanized mind and behaviour. So how should psychology and education share discursive spaces? What ideas should we select and encourage? How should we go about our work?

Critical thrusts during the last 30 years or so have questioned the scientific credibility of positivist approaches, for example, their ability to gain purchase on the following: the dynamic nature of all human processes and situations; the problematic nature of language and representation; and the intrinsically relational (and embodied) nature of all human experience.

While primarily targeted at researchers, however, Parker (2005) among others ensures that contemporary practitioners too, whether in psychology or education, can access the necessary materials to begin conceptualizing and building critical practice and research which can engage with the above. There are new challenges to face, though, not least through technological change, which seems likely to demand that Education will again be the recipient of technologically informed, psychological incursions, this time from neuroscience, specifically

concerning the nature of human development and the brain. Unfortunately, there are already signs that education may be resistant to the more complex possibilities offered by some critical neuroscientific literature, such as the questions concerning embodied processes of mind and meaning to be found in, for example, Broks (2003), Choudhury and Slabny (eds.) (2012), Rose and Abi-Rached (2013), and Tallis (2008). Concepts such as process, context, and value in relation to learning and development, although available for hundreds of years (e.g. Spinoza 1677/1989), are once again likely to confuse however, and simplistic discourses are already being filtered down from their more cautious and complex origins by the demands of governmentality (for example, Immordino-Yang and Damasio [2007]; Trevarthen and Aitken [1994]). The prefix 'neuro' seems likely to supplement 'psycho' as the powerful cultural signifier and there is a danger that potentially exciting research might be oblivious to critique and thus leave the old power relations intact i.e. between knower and known.

In his social constructionist accounts of human relations, Ken Gergen develops a Deweyan position in which 'the primary aim of education [will be] to enhance the potentials for participating in relational processes – from the local to the global' (2009: 243), while in considering the critical practice of psychologists in the future, Billig points to a danger that 'social science writing talks of things when it needs to describe people, both the powerless and the powerful' (Billig 2013).

There has been insufficient space to introduce fellow participants into this account but their contributions have been tacit, whether children, parents, teachers, or professional trainees. Critical approaches thus need to embrace epistemology, ontology, and the political, since together they take us further towards acknowledgment of the complexity of human relations of which psychological discourses in education have frequently been intolerant. Even when adopting a critical stance, individual relations, for researchers, practitioners, and other participants (research and practice *with*, not *on*) will continue to be at risk from the abuses of power which can infect those practices of diagnosis and psychopathologization, which are impervious to critique and which result in educational discrimination and exclusion, the consequences of incomplete, inadequate, or non-science.

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25

Social work

Oppression and resistance

Suryia Nayak

The relationship between the defined purpose of social work and the theoretical, legal, and political scaffolding that supports the profession presents a series of tensions and dilemmas. The International Federation of Social Work provides the following definition for contemporary social work:

> The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work.
>
> *(International Federation of Social Work 2012)*

The concepts and practice of 'social change' and 'problem solving in human relationships', when placed under the conceptual lenses of empowerment, liberation, principles of human rights, and social justice, should distinguish social work from other professional disciplines. However, social work utilizes 'theories of human behaviour', for example, theories of psychology that clash with the imperative to promote the empowerment and liberation of people, and to adhere to principles of human rights and social justice. Taking up the notion of social work as an agent that 'intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments', and placing this with the history and origins of social work as a profession, raises a number of challenging questions, not least because these origins continue to have a strong influence on the constitution and function of contemporary social work. The heart of the issue is that it is precisely at, and in, the points where people interact with their environments that social injustice can be located. Thus, questions about the mode and purpose of social work interventions are pivotal if social work aims to be concerned with social justice. This chapter provides a critical analysis of the instruments used by social work, such as the theory and models of psychology (Ingleby 2006), and offers an alternative range of theoretical lenses, such as Black feminist theory, in response to the following questions:

> . . . what is the degree of autonomy of our profession? What kind of a power does it exercise? What alliances does it entertain? Where does the knowledge that we develop truly

come from and what aims does it accomplish? What kind of a world is sustained by the professional activities of social workers? Do we not automatically adopt a number of ways that function to control, to contain, to render us subservient to the logic of power relations established elsewhere, outside the discipline? What margin exists for developing knowledge and action of a different kind?

(Chambon et al. 1999: 266)

The profession of social work originated in the nineteenth century, in the Poor Law. It is to be noted that parts of the 1601 Poor Law Act were not finally repealed until 1967, and fundamental principles of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 continue to prevail (Charlesworth 2011); for example, the belief that the poor are responsible for their poverty, and the belief that in order to deter fecklessness, the state should provide below-subsistence living conditions. The parallels between the rationale, conditions, and practices of splitting up families inside the workhouse, and the rationale, conditions, and practices of splitting up families through social work interventions of safeguarding, warrant critical analysis. The roots of social work are bound up with the historical development of the idea of charity and charitable institutions. Tracing the roots of social work through the etymology of the word 'charity' is revealing because it brings us to the idea of benevolence for the poor, good will, and kindness to those less fortunate. This apparently benign disposition (which continues to permeate contemporary social work) must be scrutinized in terms of power dynamics, colonization, and mechanisms of regulation. An example of this is the way in which social work is located in the relationship between the vulnerable, the poor, the mad, the deviant, and society with a primary function of keeping social order (Doel 2012: 4–13). In this light, social work intervenes in, and at, the points where people's interactions with their environments are seen to be a menace. Thus, it is no coincidence that these social work interventions rest on a theoretical platform that supports the edict of social order. It could be argued that the dynamic between social work and psychology functions to quell any potential threat to social order posed by the 'vulnerable' and, as such, social work is implicated in the psy-complex (Fox et al. 2009; Hook et al. 2004; Parker 1999; Parker and Revelli 2008; Rose 1998). Furthermore, it could be argued that social work's alliances with, and allegiance to, theoretical and practice models designed to sustain social order by suppressing threats to that order leaves little room for social work to be the threatening menace it needs to be as a champion of social justice.

Dividing practices

The origins of the social work casework approach can be traced back to the Charity Organisation Society founded in 1869, which directed that:

Caseworkers should *investigate* the causes of the problem. This involved a *home visit*, an *interview*, and an investigation or enquiry to establish 'deservingness'. *Written case notes* were kept for *analysis* and *record*.

(Howe 2009: 16, italics in original)

Although limited resources and increased referral numbers have placed constraints on casework, it remains a key mechanism of social work practice in the twenty-first century. The predicament of the casework approach is that it tends to produce an investigation that locates the cause of the problem with the individual, within the context of their home. There is an implicit assumption that the mechanism of 'an interview' or relationship-based encounter

is able to obtain the relevant information for 'the empowerment and liberation of people' (International Federation of Social Work 2012). The predicament is that many of the theories of human behaviour adopted by social work and utilized within the casework method are founded on 'dividing practices' (Foucault 1975, 1982) that serve to re-inscribe and legitimize an '"individual–society" dualism' (Parker and Spears 1996: 4). Psychology is an example of a theoretical framework used extensively within social work that is constituted of, produces, and reproduces, numerous and intersecting dualisms, splits, and borders. These are manifest in social work assessment processes to ascertain good enough parenting, form the basis for observations in contact centres and residential care institutions, and constitute expert witness court reports with powerful repercussions. These dualisms revolve primarily around a split between individuals and the oppressive social structures they inhabit. The socially constructed borders between the mad and sane, normal and abnormal, good and bad, and right and wrong are examples of conceptual splits that are foundational to psychology and, by association, are rampant within social work. These conceptual splits are part of what Foucault was talking about when he stated that:

> . . . the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.
>
> *(Foucault 1981: 52)*

Thus, the tension for social work is that, on the one hand, it purports to be an agent of social change with an emphasis on tackling unequal power relations, and on the other hand, social work is implicated in the control, selection, organization, and redistribution of discourse that actually produces unequal power relations.

The 'number of procedures' that Foucault speaks of include socially constructed ideological, diagnostic, and material borders and splits. However, these conceptual splits are precisely the splits that emancipatory approaches such as Black feminist theory fight against in order to confront abuses of human rights and the oppression of those identified as the mad, abnormal, bad, and wrong (Lorde 1980: 114). Black feminist scholarship details the daily reality of fragmentation due to multiple and intersecting ideological, political, emotional, disciplinary, geographical, and demographical borders. For example, the Black feminist activist Audre Lorde identifies the ways in which these fragmented pieces of identity and experience are represented in a hierarchy, where hierarchies breed hierarchies or fragmentation further fragments (Lorde 1983).

The question for social work is whether it is a force for the empowerment and liberation of people based on principles of human rights and social justice, or a force for the implementation of questionable socially constructed hierarchical splits. The task for social work is to scrutinize its relationship with theories of human behaviour, namely psychology, that contradict imperatives to work for the liberation of people. For too long now, social work has settled for a form of critical analysis that merely names inherent tensions and dilemmas rather than using these tensions as sites for insurrection. Epstein puts it well:

> Doublespeak is characteristic of twentieth-century communication . . . In social work non-influential influencing is its communicative art, its specialty. It has evolved complex rationales and methods for appearing to sew together influencing and not influencing, without the seams showing too much. A polished style evolved to conceal this basic dissonance within social work. For example, it is common to state the intentions of social work as

helping people to accommodate to the status quo and as challenging the status quo by trying to bring about social change.

<div style="text-align: right">(Chambon et al. 1999: 8–9)</div>

In other words, social work cannot settle for a convincing and deceptive mask of person-centeredness (Sudbery 2010) to cover up a host of contradictions, particularly when those contradictions involve the human rights and emancipation of oppressed groups. Social work would do well to take heed of Lorde's warning that ' . . . *the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house*' (Lorde 1979: 112; emphasis in original). Thus, social work needs to be cautious of using a theoretical base founded on borders and conceptual splits to dismantle the oppressive consequences of borders and conceptual splits.

In sharp contrast, a radical social work approach that implements critical psychology believes that:

> The problems of madness and misery, then, lie not inevitably in any inherent impairment of perception, emotion or conduct . . . Instead they are located in the contexts they inhabit, particularly in intolerant norms and the fetish for rationality. Once this epistemological tack is taken then warranted paternalism to those with psychological afflictions melts away.

<div style="text-align: right">(Pilgrim and Rogers 2008: 36)</div>

It is exactly the 'intolerant norms and the fetish for rationality' that Pilgrim and Rogers refer to that form the backbone of the psy-complex. Foucault's analysis of the production and function of ideology and surveillance within the psy-complex argues that these are instrumental in creating and maintaining the categories and the criteria of 'the normal', 'the healthy', and 'the well-adjusted' individual/community (Chambon et al. 1999: 107). These categories and criteria are based on individualism, essentialism, and normalization, and work to dislocate individuals from 'the contexts they inhabit' (Pilgrim and Rogers 2008: 36). The implication is that the discipline, practice, and productions of social work exist because of, are constituted by, and are contingent upon, boundaries. However, boundaries are highly problematic (Thiongo 1996: 120). Any human rights-based critical analysis of the reasons why individuals are placed on social work caseloads would find that it is precisely because socially constructed boundaries produce problems and these boundaries maintain problems. However, too often the theoretical base, training, and practice of social work locates the problem within the 'inherent impairment of perception, emotion or conduct' (Pilgrim and Rogers 2008: 36) of individuals on their caseload. The point Pilgrim and Rogers make is that this dislocation of the individual from the contexts they inhabit is part of the legitimization of psychology's paternalism and, as such, also serves the same purpose for social work.

In contrast, the starting point for critical psychology is: ' . . . that the social does not have to be used in contrast to the individual, or a background against which individuals act, but can be seen as constituting their very being' (Parker and Spears 1996: 4). Therefore, ideological representations of the individual as separated from social relationships must be challenged because social structures create psychic structures (Oliver 2001: 34). The issue for social work becomes one of how to use its professional function to target with far more precision the core of the problem located in the constitutive relationships between the individual and their social contexts. Probyn summarizes the issue succinctly, stating that ' . . . the space and place we inhabit produce us' (Probyn 2003: 294). The imperative here is at least twofold, namely that the discipline and practice of social work is produced out of the theoretical space and place that it inhabits, and that the individuals on social work caseloads are also products of the space and place that they inhabit.

Butler's (1999) theory of performativity adds further clarification about how this process works by explaining that '[w]ithin speech act theory, a performative is that discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names' (Butler 1993: 13). The implications of this for social work include the following factors:

> The situation of individuals, in every sense of the word, is not a product of nature, but a product of discursive practice. So, perhaps social work caseloads should be made up of named, oppressive, discursive practices that need altering rather than named individuals;
>
> Discursive practices are unstable social, historical, cultural, economic, and political artefacts (Burr 1995: 3–5). So, perhaps social work should be suspicious of any instruments of assessment, methods of intervention, and positions of professional identity that seek to establish a fixed, stable truth;
>
> Performativity is not a one-off act, but works through repetitive re-inscriptions (Butler 1999: xv). So, perhaps social work should look at the production and function of repetition in all of its manifestations within the profession, and in particular, in relation to individuals on their caseloads and the ways in which social work oils the wheels of repetition;
>
> The contingent instability of the contextualized artefact (namely, the artefact of social work), the production of communication (e.g. between social work and service-users), and the inevitable space represented in the hyphen in the term 're-inscription' are opportunities for subversion. So, perhaps rather than seeing the inevitable gaps, fissures, and instability inherent in all repetitions as a reason for increased social work regulation, surveillance, and control, social work could use the gaps as a mechanism for liberation and empowerment. In other words, social work could be 'the boundary event' (Minh-ha 2011) utilizing the happenings within boundaries, borders, splits, and gaps as an event for human rights and social justice.

Implicated technologies of social work

In relation to the theoretical foundations of contemporary social work, the International Federation of Social Workers states:

> Social work bases its methodology on a systematic body of evidence-based knowledge derived from research and practice evaluation, including local and indigenous knowledge specific to its context. It recognizes the complexity of interactions between human beings and their environment, and the capacity of people both to be affected by and to alter the multiple influences upon them including bio-psychosocial factors. The social work profession draws on theories of human development and behaviour and social systems to analyse complex situations and to facilitate individual, organizational, social and cultural changes.
>
> *(International Federation of Social Work 2012)*

Any deconstruction of this statement must take into account that 'There can, of course, be no apolitical scholarship' (Mohanty 1984: 19). Therefore, no 'systematic body of evidence-based knowledge derived from research and practice evaluation, including local and indigenous knowledge specific to its context' can claim neutrality (Chambon et al. 1999: 261). The significance of this point is that the body of knowledge used to analyze phenomena, and the phenomena itself, are mutually constitutive and mutually contingent. Actually, the 'systematic body

of evidence-based knowledge derived from research and practice evaluation' is an aspect of the 'technologies' (Foucault 1977) used and developed by social work. Rose acknowledges that:

> The notion of technology may seem antithetical to the domain of human being . . . However, our very experience of ourselves as certain sorts of persons – creatures of freedom, of liberty, of personal powers, of self-realization – is the outcome of a range of human technologies, technologies that take modes of being human as their object. Technology, here, refers to any assembly structured by a practical rationality governed by a more or less conscious goal. Human technologies are hybrid assemblages of knowledges, instruments, persons, systems of judgement, buildings and spaces, underpinned at the programmatic level by certain presuppositions about, and objectives for, human beings.
>
> *(Rose 1996: 313)*

Perhaps the work of Menzies Lyth (1959) on the functioning of social systems as a defence against anxiety could be used to enable a detailed analysis of the technologies and tactics deployed by social work to disavow the anxiety of its position, role, and function. The manoeuvres of the social work apparatus include: fragmentation of the subject (manifest in separated branches of social work practice); increased, and increasing, proximity between social workers and their service-users (disproportionate amounts of time spent completing records as compared with time spent with the service-user); the use of officialdom (standardized assessment pro formas and impossible stipulated time frames); and disrupted lines of responsibility and accountability (the subject of all serious case reviews, or put another way, a matter of life and death).

The imperative for social work is to take account of the technological instruments it uses 'to analyse complex situations' (International Federation of Social Work 2012) because these will determine the way that social work facilitates 'individual, organizational, social and cultural changes' (International Federation of Social Work 2012). In other words, because ' . . . an optics is a politics of positioning' and 'Instruments of vision mediate standpoints . . .' (Haraway 1988: 288), even the standpoints of 'local and indigenous knowledge' (International Federation of Social Work 2012) are implicated. This is clear in Haraway's claim that 'The standpoints of the subjugated are not "innocent" positions' (Haraway 1988: 286). Social work metanarrative statements about service-user participation, partnership, and local, grassroot standpoints have to be scrutinized from the position that all metanarratives (including those about liberation, empowerment, human rights, and social justice) are implicated. The rationale for this is articulated by Caselli:

> The metanarrative assertion, however, also presents itself as an authoritative claim, as if it could escape the very game of which it is part and could guarantee the reality or unreality of what is written. Although there is no ground to decide what is artificial, since the claim belongs to the same fictional world that it denounces, the rhetoric creates the illusion that, by judging what the narrator has just said, it stands on a higher ground. The metanarrative statement occupies an ambiguous position, as it is implicated in the narrative it criticises and it also stands above it in order to judge it.
>
> *(Caselli 2005: 105)*

It is simply not enough for social work to stand on the 'higher ground' of an explicit value base of empowerment and social justice as a basis for judging the narrative, practices, and knowledge base of other professions. Application of Casselli's point to social work would result in an insistence that social work is implicated in, and part of, 'the very game' it is meant to denounce.

No event

The event of emancipatory social change comes with a host of complexities that social work needs to occupy. Let us be clear that this is not just a theoretical matter; it is actually, and just as (if not more) importantly, an ethical matter. Derrida explains the dialectic: ' . . . if I decide because *I know*, within the limits of what *I know* and *know I must do*, then I am simply deploying a foreseeable program and there is no decision, no responsibility, no event'(Borradori 2003: 118; emphasis in original).

The implications here are that if social work deploys 'a foreseeable program' of professional theory, policy, and legislation as a basis for intervention, it falls into the trap of 'no decision, no responsibility, no event'. A prime example of this is the issue of recognition; for example, social work's recognition of neglect, vulnerability, and risk according to a priori criteria becomes a performative re-inscription of the status quo. Keating elucidates the problem, stating that: 'No question to the stranger is pure because we already assimilate their being into terms that we can arrange into our own conceptions of being' (Keating 2004).

Perhaps this could be the starting point of all social work reflective practice, supervision, and training, where the impetus is to use non-defensive reflection to critically evaluate process. Application of this to the social work casework approach and research (much of which is adapted and adopted from psychology) designed to '*investigate* the causes of the problem' (Howe 2009: 16, italics in original) calls the whole process into question. The dialectic becomes one of how to investigate what has already been assimilated in terms of, and conceived as, a 'problem'. The underlying tensions within this dialectic are at work in the recognition and identification of the 'authentic' service-user, and are particularly manifest in the professional body requirement for service-user involvement in the design, delivery, and evaluation of social work training. Perhaps social work should heed the words of Spivak on the problem of the construction, constitution, and claim of authenticity:

> . . . what I find useful is the sustained and developing work on the *mechanics* of the constitution of the Other; we can use it to much greater analytic and interventionist advantage than invocations of the *authenticity* of the Other.
>
> *(Spivak 1988: 294; emphasis in original)*

Conclusion

The critical analysis of social work (including its affiliations with, and reliance on, psychology) presented in this chapter serve a dual purpose of highlighting the problems that social work must occupy and confront, and in doing so, this forms a starting point for formulating (albeit an implicated formulating) strategies for social justice. It seems that negotiating ' . . . a channel between the "high theoretical" and the "suspicious of all theories"' (Boyce Davies 1994: 43) can be achieved by exploring the relevance of theoretical frameworks used by social work in dialogical relation to the activism of theories that are overtly concerned with the liberation of the oppressed, such as Black feminist theory. Indeed, it is more than a task of seeking out particular theories; it is a task of asking why some theories are privileged and other theories foreclosed. For example, why is psychology privileged as a legitimate theoretical basis for social work interventions while Black feminist theory is rarely (if ever) cited, articulated, and used as a legitimate theoretical basis for social work interventions? Of course, this question takes on particular significance in the light of the disproportionate numbers of Black people on social work caseloads. Hill Collins is in no doubt that 'The shadow obscuring this complex Black

women's intellectual tradition is neither accidental nor benign' (Hill Collins 2000: 3). Minh-ha summaries the task as:

> . . . a constant questioning of our relationship to knowledge, to way we reserve, transmit or bring it to bear on our daily activities. Our ongoing critical view of the system is motivated, not be a mere desire to blame, to right the wrongs and to oppose for opposition's sake. Rather, it is motivated by the necessity to keep power and knowledge (ours and theirs) constantly in check for our own survival.
>
> *(Minh-ha 2011: 125)*

In terms of the 'theories of human development and behaviour and social systems' (International Federation of Social Work 2012) that constitute the technologies and instruments of vision used within social work to intervene 'at the points where people interact with their environments', perhaps social work could learn something from Black feminist theory and methodology. The principles of Black feminist theory and methodology could be summarized in the following way:

> That Black feminist theory is constituted of the dialectic. In other words, Black women have formulated, crafted and communicated their theory out of, and because of, oppression.
>
> *(Hill Collins 2000)*

> That Black feminist theory is constituted of the dialogical. In other words, Black women have formulated, crafted and communicated their theory out of, and because of, active engagement with struggles for social justice.
>
> *(Hill Collins 2000)*

> That Black feminist theory goes beyond ' . . . the encouraged mediocrity of our society . . .'
>
> *(Lorde 1978: 54)*

This chapter began with a set of questions for social work and concludes with a different set of questions that seek to overturn how problems are traditionally constructed:

> How, under what conditions, and in what forms can something like a subject appear in the order of discourse? What place can it occupy in each type of discourse, what functions can it assume, and by obeying what rules? In short, it is a matter of depriving the subject (or its substitute) of its role as originator, and of analyzing the subject as a variable and complex function of discourse.
>
> *(Foucault 1969: 118)*

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Website resources

Sara Ahmed – Feminist Blog: http://feministkilljoys.com/

SWAN (Social Work Action Network): www.socialworkfuture.org

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26
Self-help
And pop psychology

Jan De Vos

A central trope in self-help is that within you there is concealed an other and better Self that you can and need to unearth. 'Dare to be yourself' amounts to 'Being your best self', or so we read on the *Psychology Today* website (http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/self-help). However, this Self is not just the old familiar Self you have lost along the way: self-help promises you an extra gain. In *Psychology Today*'s five-step guide to self-help (a guide to the guides which of course reads itself as a self-help guide – the claim is that with this meta-guide you will become 'a far wiser consumer' [sic] of self-help), it says: 'you want to learn something that you didn't already know', and so you need an expert: 'the chances are that you'll learn more from people who have gained respectability in their field'. (Whitbourne 2012). You are moreover advised to *google* the author of the self-help guide for his academic 'credentials'. A guarantee of good scholarship should allow you to separate serious, research-based self-help guides from the 'watered down' versions written by ghost writers for the popular press (Whitbourne 2012).

Here a remarkable similarity between self-help and psychology as such becomes clear. In the same way as self-help urges you to search for a better and new Self and to get rid of your bad, weak, or shy self, the discipline of psychology has its devils to fight and to expel. That is, psychology has to get rid of its false appearances and watered-down doubles: it has to struggle with the popular psychology and/or bad psychology in which people erroneously believe.

Starting from this observation, this chapter will guide you through the fields of self-help and popular psychology so as to answer the question how these adjacent parts of the psy-complex use and reinforce mainstream psychology. The wager is that self-help and popular psychology can teach us something about mainstream psychology. For, as already should be clear in this short introduction, the central paradigm of self-help, of getting in touch with your true self, is but the logical upshot of (mainstream) psychology's foundational claim of being able to reveal the reality of the human being. In short: psychology's presupposition that ultimately we have the wrong idea of what we are (our allegedly flawed folk-psychology) and that psychological science can correct this, is essentially the backbone of self-help's promise that you can find your true inner core. Moreover, here it is already clear that psychology's supposed valuable and useful knowledge begs to be popularized: psychology's fundamental drive is to go public in order to set straight the flawed pre- or para-scientific self-assessments of the human being. This is why the attempt to oppose or correct popular psychology is a fight of psychology against its own shadows. Just

consider that the popular book *50 Great Myths of Popular Psychology* (Lilienfeld et al. 2010) is in its own right popular psychology. Even only as a form of irony it cannot escape the discursive scheme of the genre (the book uses the typical lists – e.g. 'The 10 Sources of Psychological Myths: Your Mythbusting Kit', note also the typical trope of direct address).

The turn of the screw of this chapter will of course be that if one exposes popular psychology as the Mr. Hyde of psychology, one necessarily stays within psychobabble, understanding pop psychology as the symptom or the hidden, if not obscene, truth of psychology. But perhaps this twist has a bonus value, that is, it might teach us something about true defiance for critical psychology.

Self-help

The self-help discourse hinges on the presupposition that you can become the loving, communicative, balanced … person who is now just lurking underneath your skin – pretty much as US interventionism has been said to want to liberate the freedom loving, liberal-democratic American slumbering within each Pakistani, Iraqi, or Syrian (Žižek 2003). Here we have a strange wedding of the particular and the general: while self-help promotes hyper-individuality (Rimke 2000: 67), the precious inner core we should look for is eventually shared with everybody. The paradoxical message is 'become your unique self' with a millions-sold bestseller. Self-help passes from 'help from within' to 'help from without' (Cherry 2008) and requires external textual authority and expert knowledge (Rimke 2000). In this true catch-22 (Bröckling 2005), your unique Self is a ready-to-wear standard product.

But is this critique not met with online self-help guides and their sophisticated interactive web technology, allowing for flexible, tailor-made, and more empowering and emancipatory forms of self-help? A closer analysis reveals that such tailored interactivity is above all illusory. The personalized advice and custom-built exercises on such web modules are merely the outcome of fixed algorithms providing a strictly guided activity: if you answer this, we send you to that part of the website. Consider for example the website *Fit in Your Head*, which prides itself on its interactive and personalized approach based on a self-judgment test. A closer scrutiny reveals that despite the complex flow chart (see Willaert and Van den Brande 2008), there are only six ways to go through the module. From the four subtests, only test 1 (resilience) and test 2 (level of complaints) lead to differentiated advice (test 1 has three feedback possibilities, test 2 only two). The feedback of test 3 (coping) and 4 (life-style) is for the same for everybody. Not surprisingly, the authors themselves argue that their advice is based on 'general and obvious knowledge' (Levrau and Stevens 2007: 6).

This frequent recourse to the obvious in self-help – just do a google search on the phrase 'as we all know' on websites such as *Psychology Today* or *Psychcentral* – should be questioned. Did Louis Althusser not consider the *obvious* as ideology at its sharpest (Althusser 1971)? In the same vein, Ian Parker contends that psychology in the guise of pop psychology operates as a form of ideology as it puts forward its 'commonsense about the nature of the self' (Parker 2010: 108). This becomes very tangible when the advice of *Fit in Your Head*, after promoting a 'healthy sex life', 'meaningful relations', and a 'holistic life-approach', eventually ends up putting forward religion and prayer as positive assets (Levrau and Stevens 2007: 18). This popping up of religion in self-help should not surprise us. Remember how Michel Foucault traced the religious discourse in the psy-complex, e.g. how the practice of confessing still structures psychotherapeutic formats (Foucault 1978). Self-help equally testifies to this religious heritage, if only in the soft-spoken and pastoral tone many of these manuals adopt. Or consider how more often than not self-help promises a kind of purification, as if self-help concerns a 'rite de passage' one has to go through to reach the other side.

But here the question becomes: what is this enlightened and redeemed position that self-help holds out? Here we can turn to Heidi M. Rimke's argument that, in the passage from relying on oneself to relying on the expert, one is eventually called upon to become an expert of one's own selfhood (Rimke 2000). Hence, as Nikolas Rose notes, that though the psy-disciplines play a key role in actively constructing certain forms of Self (Rose 1990), they above all concern the construction of a vantage point from where to look upon that equally constructed self. Self-help is the creation of a Self ontologically separated from itself and in this process the subject is 'enjoined to turn the psy diagnostic gaze upon itself' (Hazleden 2003). In other words, in passing through the practice of self-help, you are supposed to form part of the psy-complex, looking upon yourself, the others, and the world from an Olympian, academic psychologist perspective.

The radical conclusion here is that the 'lay person' in this way is, above all, a fiction. Psychology's dictum *this is who you are* positions the subject not as the one he/she supposedly is, but as the one looking (as a proto-psychologist) at the one he/she supposedly is. The lay person is an artefact of psychology. The same holds for 'folk psychology': the discipline of psychology constitutes itself through supposing that there are lay persons with a folk psychology, which scientific psychology can enlighten. Unfortunately, so it seems, folk psychology is tenacious, as it tends to adopt academic psychology and transform it in so-called popular psychology.

Popular psychology

Let us start with the observation that popular psychology is not always the enemy. Bibliotherapy, including the use of self-help manuals and popular psychology books, has become a mainstream practice within many forms of psychotherapy (see e.g. Norcross 2006; Rasmussen and Ewoldsen 2013). This is little surprising, as most psychotherapies adhere to the central adagio of self-help: it is you who has to change, the professional is only a guide. Psychotherapy is always already self-help. Or, put differently, if the psy has expertise, it resides in telling that you are the expert yourself. The paradox is of course that while psychotherapy promotes self-help, the trump card of self-help manuals is psychotherapy: in the end it might not help, and you'd need real psychotherapy and real psychology.

If at the horizon of this double bind the figure of 'real psychology versus popular psychology' arises, the question becomes, in the case of psychology taking up the fight with popular psychology, who is actually targeted? For, in the abovementioned book *50 Great Myths of Popular Psychology*, most of the myths in need of debunking originate in the psy-sciences themselves and not in the lay audience. The contentions that people use only 10 per cent of their brains, that subliminal messages can influence consumers, or that adolescence is a turbulent period (Lilienfeld et al. 2010) are all theses stemming from academic psychology itself. Other myths under attack are actually alternative views or even critiques from within the psy-sciences or from adjacent disciplines. See e.g. the alleged myth that IQ tests 'are biased against certain groups of people'. The authors counter the critiques of the IQ-concept with the following argument: 'Far from being an arbitrary construct that depends entirely on how we choose to measure it, there's consensus among most experts that intelligence is (. . .)' (Lilienfeld et al. 2010: 83). One could rephrase this argument as follows: *IQ is not an arbitrary construct because most of us say it is not*. At the least, here the partition between scholarly psychology and popular psychology is doubtful. Eva Illouz speaks in this respect of a continuity between professional and popular psychology (Illouz 2008: 7) as she observes that both address the 'self' using similar metaphors and narratives. (Illouz 2008: 13).

Is not the conclusion therefore that psychology cannot but interpenetrate everyday life, and that this is, moreover, the very way that it constitutes itself as a discipline? Perhaps this is why

APA president George Miller pleaded to 'give psychology away' (Miller 1969), a call echoed by his successor Ronald Levant's call to turn psychology 'into a household word' (Levant 2007). Psychology's raison d'être is to occupy what it supposes to be the field of the lay. Carl Rogers, for example, expressed his hope that people with 'no particular interest in the field of counseling or psychotherapy will find that the learnings emerging in this field will strengthen them in their own living' (in Illouz 2008: 13–14). In short, the main praxis of psychology is to spread itself, is to psychologize: scholarly psychology is popular psychology.

The gist of all this is that psychology, in lacking a model (in both theory and praxis) of its own, has to borrow its paradigms, and the main one, it can be argued, is schooling and education (De Vos 2012). Hence, as psychology is psycho-education and schools its subjects in the theories of psychology, the jump is quickly made to self-help and popular psychology. No wonder, then, that the latter is in turn thoroughly impregnated by the educational paradigm. Self-help is about homework, written assignments and, in the understanding of Norcross, 'information gathering and understanding' (Norcross 2006: 184). Popular psychology books, in turn, resemble textbooks of psychology.

This schoolification of society can be criticized for littering the field of everyday life, the public sphere, citizenship, and, eventually, politics. Illouz, for example, laments that the therapeutic persuasion has emptied the Self of its communal and political content and cannot provide us with an intelligible way of linking the private Self to the public sphere (Illouz 2008: 2). One could be tempted here to defend or even try to recapture an authentic and pre-psychologized public and private sphere. However, suffice to recall Althusser's remark that the differentiation between the public and the private is always already ideological (Althusser 1971), to which we could add that the modern partition of the public and the private necessitated the discipline of psychology to ground it. Hence the risk that a critique which tries to rescue the old public/private divide unknowingly relapses in a classic psychologizing discourse. Just consider how the French sociologist Alain Ehrenberg argues that therapeutic culture leads to a rising number of cases of depression (Ehrenberg 2009). Thus, Ehrenberg's critique reaffirms the psychological discourse it rallies against: psychology is bad for the psyche. In turn, Illouz's (2008) sociological critique on the therapeutic ethos seems in need of returning to the notion of 'agency', which she grounds in the realm of emotions: 'Cultural sociology has surprisingly failed to devote serious attention to what is perhaps the central missing link connecting structure and agency, namely emotion' (Illouz 2008: 11). There she seems to plead for a different psychology against the falsifications of mainstream psychology, and hence risks merely repeating academic psychology's fight against popular psychology.

At the least, critical approaches of psychology should not miss the power of the psychological premise, as they are often overtaken by it. Moreover, it is this tenacity, and probably the inevitability, of the psy-factor which makes mainstream psychology, and hence also self-help and popular psychology, so easily able to incorporate the critiques. Gjyri Helen Werp, editor-in-chief of a women's magazine in Norway with a strong focus on self-esteem and self-improvement, for example, writes in an editorial that 'It's not about all of us running around trying to be superhuman. Nobody can be anybody else, but we can all be better' (cited in Madsen and Ytre-Arne 2012). Pop psychology here testifies to being nuanced and even critical of mainstream psychology's false promises or coercive advice. In a similar way, Kristin Neff's self-help book *Self-Compassion: Stop Beating Yourself Up and Leave Insecurity Behind* is a critique of 'the relentless search for high self-esteem' having become 'a virtual religion' (Neff 2011). Scott Cherry hence rightfully remarks that critique strengthened or even boosted the genre of self-help (Cherry 2008).

. . . and psychology

This little tour through self-help and popular psychology has taught us that Rimke's contention that in self-help the individual becomes the sole ontological pivot of experience (Rimke 2000) is actually a key principle in mainstream psychology as such. The psychologized subject becomes, in a Von Munchausen way, its own ontological guaranty as it is enjoined to become its own expert. Psychology's *this is who you are* thus not only calls into life a spectre-like, phoney subject, but creates the vantage point from where to contemplate and even manipulate this homunculus. Hence, if the Foucauldian argument is that self-help is the pinnacle of the modern subject governing itself (instead of being held in check or directed by external powers) (e.g. Rimke 2000), then it is clear that this self-governing does not concern the becoming of that what you are said to be. Rather, psychology's *you have a wrong idea of what you are* invites you to escape from being lured by your alleged false self-conceptions, in order to . . . lure your own Self. That is, with the help of expert knowledge you can manipulate your cognitions, feelings, or beliefs. With psychology you indeed become another person: you become the therapist/governor of your Self.

If in this way the subject of psychology is actually called upon to leave his psyche behind – for he or she is supposed to transcend his or her psychological level in order to contemplate and manipulate it – self-help and popular psychology show us that the psychologization effected by the psy-sciences in point of fact amounts to a *de-psychologization*, or perhaps better, a de-subjectivation. To make this point, let me refer once again to Rimke: she contends that psychology's subjects are in the grip of the illusion that they can escape from the constraints and regulations of social relations (Rimke 2000). (Popular) psychology, so to speak, is escapism at its sharpest. One can argue that self-help invites you to engage above all in pseudo-activity: you have to fill in surveys, complete check-lists, do homework, or do practical exercises so as to remain passive on the social, political, and hence also the subjective front. The self-help book must persuade you to actually do the exercise, reproaching you for your detachment, non-engagement, your betting on your score. You have to participate in the action, even if you remain critical or cynical (see also Salecl 2009). Put differently: self-help and popular psychology testify of expelling of the subject in its sociopolitical dimension. It is in this way that we can understand Rimke's remark that self-help concerns above all 'social, not psychological, rules of conduct', fetishizing and glorifying 'the liberalized and psychologized "individual"' (Rimke 2000: 70). Here self-help lays bare that the psy-sciences as such are far removed from dealing with the subject and its psyche, as they deal with the construction of the *psychological individual* by hailing the subject to occupy the role of the proto-psychologist, thus preventing the subject from dealing with the social circumstances which both alienate and form him.

Self-help and popular psychology, moreover, show that as there is no psyche in psychology, psychology is also without knowledge. Scott Cherry describes how the self-help book addresses the reader, e.g. by progressing textually from *they*, over *we*, to *you* (e.g. the typical phrase *because you are important*) (On the use of direct address see also Kress and van Leeuwen 1999). A variant is Neff, who in her book on Self-compassion starts with a confessional *I* then moves to *you* (Neff 2011.) Put differently: in the end the *they* and the *we* disappear and the isolated and idiosyncratic *you* stays behind. Cherry furthermore remarks that the reader must realize that reading and knowledge are not enough; eventually the text of the self-help book itself is devoid of value (Cherry 2008). Just as in the knowledge society, knowledge becomes superfluous – if not redundant, it is all about capacities and skills – and self-help manuals in the end deconstruct the knowledge of the psy-sciences. Here the drama of the psy-sciences is enacted: by giving psychology away (in self-help and popular psychology) psychology enacts its own emptiness; it deconstructs itself, or, put in more mundane terms, it gives *shit* away.

I deliberately used here somewhat gross terms in order to make the point that in self-help and popular psychology discourses, a vulgar and obscene aspect of the psy-sciences becomes particularly clear. In self-help we end up with the isolated, idiosyncratic, and hence denuded *you*. Psychology's interpellation *look this is what you are* effects a drawing out of the inner to the outer, folding over the private to the public. Psychology puts your alienated psychologized *you* on the scene, which is of course the literal meaning of the 'ob-scene'. This is how we can understand that, as Rimke and Brock observe, the celebration of self-revelation entails that the latter takes place through the gamut of public media (Rimke and Brock 2011). In this *psychoporn*, as it can been called (De Vos 2009), the idiosyncratic and denuded *You* becomes the ultimate commodity: just consider the popular psy-entertainment shows on television, like *Dr. Phil*, *The Dr. Oz Show*, or *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. Psychology not only objectifies and lays bare who you really are (denuded from your false folk psychology), it also offers you the vantage point from where to savour and enjoy your or another person's naked psyche as the ultimate late-modern commodity.

And the neurological turn?

The concluding question is: does the neurological turn bring a shift in the field of self-help and popular psy-science? For, if psychology's scientific status always remains questionable, the neuroscientific claim of being based on firm objective data seems to bring us to rather different grounds. As a proclaimed real science, neuroscience might thus not have to enact its own deconstruction in order to (pseudo)empower the lay person. Moreover, neuroscience might even effect a return to the inner *as inner* and the private *as private*: neuroscience puts the psyche back inside, that is, in your brain. Hence, if *Me* and my *Self* was an odd couple, *Me* and *my brain* seems a bit more straightforward: the soft Self is traded with the hard and material brain.

However, here things already get complicated. The brain is not exactly hard; neuroscientists consider the brain malleable and plastic. From here the step is easily made to the 'trainable brain' as Brenninkmeijer calls it, to be worked upon with special nutrition, sports and games, light-and-sound machines, and electric or magnetic brain stimulants (Brenninkmeijer 2010). In this way it seems that *neuro-self-help* and its array of (semi)commercial, (semi)academic, and popular resources offering exercises, devices, or even alternative drugs to balance or to boost one's brain, is after all only the old hat. Some authors indeed note that neuro-self-help above all reproduces earlier commonplace self-help literature (Ortega and Vidal 2007). Or, as Steven Poole argues: 'it is self-help armoured in hard science' (Poole 2012). Similar to popular psychology, we now have 'popular neurology', 'folk neurology', and neuromyths which are of course in need of being debunked. (See for example a webpage of The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] dedicated to the debunking of neuromyths in education: http://www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/neuromyths.htm).

Perhaps a minor shift can be discerned in the fact that neuro-self-help, at first sight, prompts less pseudo-hyperactivity than its psy-predecessor: as the chemicals come in, the modification of behaviour becomes a more passive issue. In this way neuro-self-help seems to realize an upward mobility in the capitalistic rationale of self-help: instead of being the hard working labourer of your Self, you now can be the stakeholder of your brain, letting the sound, the lights, the waves, or the chemicals do the job. You only have to collect the surplus. However, with this provision, many authors point out that 'rewiring your brain' (as runs the title of Arden 2010), is not that easy. In the case of addiction (drug abuse, gambling . . .), for example, it is hard to go against the grain of the *nucleus accumbens* or the pleasure centre (Arden 2010: 8). Rewiring your brain requires effort, but if you persevere things will require less and less effort: 'After a new behavior,

thought, or feeling has been established, it takes less energy to keep it going' (Arden 2010: 19). Or, eventually your initial investments will pay off. As self-help and popular psychology arguably serve capitalism, neuro-self-help can be said to offer the rationale for the latest, more flexible and ethereal production and consumption modes. Rimke and Brock, for example, point to the role of the psy-sciences in 'the increasing focus on individual responsibility' and 'the dismantling of public services' (Rimke and Brock 2011). Nikolas Rose for his part speaks of the 'entrepreneurial self' (Rose 1996).

However, if the paradoxes of the formula '*Me* working on my *Self*' of psy-self-help still could be held more or less in check (both instances could be regarded as a two different parts of one and the same psyche), this problematic mono-duality is due to manifest itself more sharply in the neurological turn. Brenninkmeijer, for example, contends that the idea of people working on their brains implies a paradoxical distinction between the Self and the brain (Brenninkmeijer 2010). But perhaps it might be more fruitful to expand this paradoxical mono-duality into a triangle so that we would have (1) *Me* (the entrepreneur); (2) the brain (the material resources); and (3) the Self (the produced commodity of subjectivity). Let us consider more closely one by one the three corners of the triangle, starting with the latter. It is clear that it is at the site of the Self and subjectivity that the surplus has to be realized. Or as the book *Rewire Your Brain* states: 'The book will guide you through the process of rewiring your brain so that you can change your life' (Arden 2010). The neurological turn in mainstream psychology, and, concomitantly, the neurological turn in self-help and popular human science, testify how in late-modern post-Fordist production modes the central commodity *and* the central mode of generating surplus is subjectivity itself. The *Train Your Brain*-paradigm is perfectly aligned with the direct production of subjectivity and social relations envisioned in the post-Fordist production and consumption modes.

However, to make it fully clear, it is only in the second corner of the triangle (where, allegedly materiality is situated) that the shift is realized from the psy- to the neuro-paradigm. In terms of the psy-paradigm, self-help, and popular psychology Theodor W. Adorno was right to declare: 'The denial of objective truth by recourse to the subject implies the negation of the latter' (Adorno 1978: 63). In this constellation the point was not to deny the psyche or the subjective, but to search for another place/approach of and for the subject. As Ian Parker put it: 'we need to develop a response to social problems which works at the interface of the personal and the political instead of pretending that society is something separate from us' (Parker 1999: 104). However, in the light of the neuroturn, we might need to rephrase Adorno as follows: *the (alleged) full purchase on the objective truth by recourse to the subject implies the full commodification of the latter*.

Hence, today, the crucial task of critical psychology, or maybe we should say, of the critique of the psy-neurosciences, is that we need to develop a response to social problems by readdressing materialism. That is, we have to engage in a critique of the neurological turn and argue that current mainstream theories and praxes of the brain are far removed from a truly materialist approach. Just consider that the neuroturn often enough turns out to be a virtual turn. The brain not only can be said to reside above all virtually and iconographically in the colourful digitalizations, it also opens up to the virtual space: when what you experience, think, or feel is nothing more than electric impulses and chemical reactions, reality receives another status, if not, redoubles. At the least we need to think why the current neurodiscourse is co-originary with the immaterialization and virtualization of our life world, where the late-modern subject moves primordially through virtual environments such as Facebook, Twitter, and online gaming.

It could be argued that the first corner of the above sketched triangle might provide a critical alternative to think of the material. For is not this, as such, empty space, the hard kernel surviving the shift from the psy- to the neurodiscourse, the ideal candidate to situate a decentred

materialism? For this *Me*, as a kind of zero-level of subjectivity situated beyond both its brain and its psychology (the Self, subjectivity) might be the very hard material kernel of the subject resisting both psychologization and neurologization. Here we can connect to the Marxist tradition of understanding how the supposedly immaterial (e.g. the fetish-character of money) can have very tangible and material effects in the social, economic, and political sphere. At the very least a critique of the contemporary psy-neurosciences should concern a critique of materiality and should deal with that hard kernel of zero-level of subjectivity, as the latter can be considered to be the condition for a viable conceptualization of agency which would allow us to think of the subject as embedded socially and politically. I expand on this idea of a decentred materialism of the zero-level of subjectivity in (De Vos 2014). This critique should oppose the current naturalization of subjectivity which in the end amounts to a virtualizing and a commodification of the zero-level of subjectivity in late capitalism.

Further reading

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Website resources

Annual Review of Critical Psychology, Volume 8: Psychologisation under Scrutiny: http://www.discourseunit.com/annual-review/arcp-8-psychologisation-under-scrutiny/

Basic Research on the Self has good references to critical approaches towards self-help: www.janhenderson.com/self/the-history-of-self-help-some-books-to-read/

Brain Bullet works 'effortlessly' because you only need to install this software that will flash subliminal messages while you work or do other stuff on your computer: http://www.brainbullet.com/

'446,986 Self Improvement Resources – Find the Right One for You': www.selfgrowth.com/

Keep Your Brain Alive is one of the most well-known 'neurobics' resources: www.keepyourbrainalive.com/index.html

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Part II
Varieties of critical psychology

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Activity theory

Theory and practice

Manolis Dafermos

Activity theory has been characterized by Yrjö Engeström as 'the best kept secret of academia' (Engeström 1993: 64). In the last decades the number of publications on activity theory has increased rapidly, and various applications of activity theory to different systems (learning, work, information systems, etc.) and disciplines (psychology, linguistics, cognitive science, anthropology, etc.) have taken place (Engeström et al. 2005; Sannino and Nocon 2008). Roth (2004: 1) argues that 'activity theory no longer is the secret that it was in 1993'. However, if we take into account Nissen's (2011) statement about the existence of directly opposite readings of the Russian legacy of activity theory, we can conclude that activity theory remains a secret of academia. As Hegel pointed out 'The familiar or well-known in general, because it is well known [*bekkant*] is not known [*erkannt*]' (Hegel and Yovel 2005: 125).

The paradox is that although activity theory has emerged as an attempt to overcome the crisis of traditional psychology, nowadays the expansion of activity theory is connected with the acceptance of an uncritical, technical, instrumental view of the concept of activity as a simplifying, functionalist scheme. What can activity theory offer for an understanding of human development from a critical standpoint? Is it possible to reconsider activity theory from the perspective of critical psychology?

Definitions and sources of the concept of activity

In contemporary sociocultural literature, the question of the meaning and character of activity theory arises. Is activity theory an umbrella term with different approaches or a single theory? Holzman (2006) pointed out that there is no unified activity theory, but a wide variety of approaches that have been inspired by Vygotsky. Holzman describes different articulations of activity theory:

> a general conceptual system with these basic principles: the hierarchical structure of activity, object–orientedness, internalization/externalization, tool mediation and development; theoretical approaches that place culture and activity at the center of attempts to understand

> human nature; . . . a non-dualistic approach to understanding and transforming human life that takes dialectical human activity as its ontology.
>
> *(Holzman 2006: 6)*

Other thinkers reject the interpretation of activity theory as an 'eclectic grouping of multiple theories' (Sannino et al. 2009: 1). Engeström and other scholars (Engeström 1987; Engeström et al. 1999) argue that in accordance with activity theory, the concept of activity should be considered as the primary unit of analysis, or as 'the basic unit of concrete human life' (Sannino et al. 2009: 1). To answer this and many other open-ended theoretical questions, we first have to examine the origin of the concept of activity and the historical development of its meanings. The introduction of the concept of activity in the field of psychology can be understood only if we take into account the social and scientific context of its formation.

The concept of activity has its philosophical roots in nineteenth century German classical philosophy (especially in Hegel's philosophy) and Karl Marx's works (Blunden 2010). Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach* is worth a special mention. Indeed, Marx, in the *1st Thesis on Feuerbach*, criticized all previous materialism for seeing reality 'only in the form of the object [*Objekts*], or of contemplation [*Anschauung*], but not as human sensuous activity, practice [*Praxis*], not subjectively' (Marx 1975/2005: 3). The introduction and expansion of the concept of activity in psychology was realized in the context of Soviet psychology. First of all, we should take into account the *social context of the development of Soviet psychology* in which the concept of activity developed. The historical period immediately after the October revolution was 'a period of creative turmoil and one of great enthusiasm for the arts and sciences. And there was a lot of experimentation in cultural and political life' (Sannino et al. 2009: 8). The situation of science that emerged after the October revolution was described by Luria:

> This atmosphere immediately following the Revolution provided the energy for many ambitious ventures. An entire society was liberated to turn its creative powers to constructing a new kind of life for everyone. The general excitement, which stimulated incredible levels of activity, was not at all conducive, however, to systematic, highly organized scientific inquiry.
>
> *(Luria 1979: 3)*

The concept of activity acquired new dimensions and meanings as a theoretical and practical project in the context of radical social transformation. Moreover, the concept of activity was one of the key concepts elaborated in the context of Soviet psychology as an attempt to build a 'new psychology'. Neither the introspective psychology of consciousness nor behaviourism could cope with the theoretical and practical issues that arose in the context of transformative social practice. Introspective psychology focused only on the immediate data of consciousness; behaviourism reduced the activity of organisms to the reactions to external stimuli (Rubinstein 1987). Existing psychological theories could not face the social challenges and acute issues that emerged in social practice.

Two sources of the concept of activity in psychology can be distinguished. Sechenov's psychophysiological reflex theory is the first major source of the concept of activity. The term 'activity' acquired the meaning of physiological activity of organisms. In the context of Soviet physiology, several theories on physical activity of organisms have emerged: Pavlov's theory of Higher Nervous Activity, Anokhin's theory of functional systems, Bernstein's physiology of

activity, Ukhtomsky's theory of the dominant under the influence of Sechenov's psychophysiological reflex theory (Bedny and Karwowski 2007). In Soviet psychology the concept of activity acquired a different meaning under the influence of German classical philosophy, and especially Marxism, which became the second major source of the concept of activity.

> [T]he term 'deyatel'nos't' or 'activity' refers to the human mobilization around conscious goals in a concrete, external world. Inasmuch as only humans can establish conscious goals, only humans can be the subjects of activity. This emphasis on conscious goals in activity theory implies that that human activity develops less from human biology, than from human history and culture.
>
> *(Bedny and Karwowski 2004: 136)*

The focus on the cultural, social, and historical dimension of human activity is the main contribution of the second source of the concept of 'activity'. Wertsch (1985: 210) notes that 'the Russian term "*deyatel'nos't*" has no adequate English equivalent'. The term 'activity' refers mainly to physical activity, behaviour. The Russian term '*deyatel'nos't*' corresponds to the German term '*tätigkeit*' rather than the term '*aktivität*' (Kaptelinin 2005). The term '*deyatel'nos't*' includes both external and internal aspects of human activity. All of these aspects of activity of concrete individuals have developed in human history and culture. The term '*deyatel'nos't*' came from German classical philosophy and Marxism and was transformed in the context of Soviet psychology and philosophy.

Versions of activity theory

In the 1920s, psychologists in the Soviet Union used the term 'behaviour'. For example, in 1925 Vygotsky wrote his famous work 'Consciousness as a problem of psychology of behaviour'. However, even though the term 'activity' was used, it acquired a different meaning than that term in contemporary activity theory. As Veresov pointed out, the term '*deyatel'nos't*' was used not in the sense of *Tätigkeit* i.e. as 'the practical, socially organized, object-related, goal-directed activity of an individual . . . but in that of *Aktivität*, in line with typical and traditional usage in the physiology and psychology of the time' in Vygotsky's texts between 1924 and 1927. 'Vygotsky used this term in the same sense as Ivan Pavlov (higher neural activity – *vysshaya nervnaya deyatelnost*)' (Veresov 2005: 40–41).

In contrast to the behavioural scheme of relationship 'stimulus-response' (stimulus-reflex), Vygotsky proposed a method for the investigation of an instrumental act. The link between A and B is connected to stimulus-response. A psychological tool is used when people attempt to solve the problem in a different way than of stimulus-response connection. Vygotsky used the concept 'instrumental act' and not the concept 'activity' with the meaning it acquired in the later development of activity theory. In the context of an 'instrumental act' a psychological tool as a middle term appears between subject and object. Vygotsky argued that symbols and signs, as psychological tools, mediate psychological processes in the same way that material tools mediate overt human labour activity. Tools and instruments are used by humans for transformation of the material world. Symbols and signs are used by people for the regulation of their own psychological processes: 'In the instrumental act man masters himself from the outside-via psychological tools' (Vygotsky 1987: 87).

The concept of activity had a crucial character within the research programme of Kharkov school members (i.e. Leontiev, Galperin, Zaporozhets, and others) and it is considered by them

as a means of bringing psychology 'out of the close world of consciousness' (Haenen 1993: 77). Unlike Vygotsky, who emphasized the crucial role of speech, Galperin and other Kharkov school members focused on the investigation of the content of human practical activity.

The real relationships between activity theory and cultural–historical psychology were complex and contradictory. In the early 1930s in the Soviet Union, cultural-historical psychology and activity psychology emerged as interconnected but independent research programs. Cultural-historical psychology emerged as the study of the development of higher mental functions (Veresov 2010). Activity psychology emerged as the study of the external, objective activity and its influence on the development of mental activity. According to Leontiev (1981), activity contributes to the orientation of subjects in the world of objects. Activity is not an aggregate of reactions, but a system of processes which deal with the vital relationships of organisms to their environment. Leontiev distinguished two meanings of the term 'activity'. The term 'activity' is used to describe biological and physiological processes. In this meaning, activity is identified with the reactivity of organisms, their ability to respond to stimulus. In psychology the term 'activity' refers to the particular relationships of the individuals to their environments. The second meaning of the term 'activity' is connected with the reflection of reality by subjects.

Leontiev adopted activity as an object of psychological investigation and attempted to investigate its inner structure. The three–level (or three–component) structure of activity includes: activity, actions, and operations. Activity is governed by its motives. Actions are subordinated to conscious goals. Operations are influenced by the conditions of its accomplishment. Leontiev (1978) introduced the concept of 'object oriented activity' (*predmetnaja dejatelnost*). One kind of activity is distinguished from others by its object. The object of an activity is presented as its true motive. Human activity exists in the form of a chain of actions. An action is directed toward a goal. Each action has operational aspects connected with the concrete conditions in which it can be achieved.

Another version of the psychological theory of activity was introduced and developed by Rubinstein. In 1934, Rubinstein's paper 'Problems of psychology in the works of Karl Marx' devoted to the analysis of an early Marx work, the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (written in 1844), was published. Rubinstein argued that the Marxian notion of human activity is the starting point of the reconstruction of psychology. Human activity is Man's objectification of himself, 'the process of revelation of its essential powers' (Rubinstein 1987: 114). Human beings and their psyches are formed in the processes of human activity. Changing the world, human beings simultaneously change their own essential powers. The *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844 marked the emergence of the method of scientific investigation of Marx. However, it is only the starting point of scientific investigation of the political economy of capitalism. In Marx's *Das Kapital* the method of scientific investigation reached a qualitatively new level of development. In Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* many of the most important of Marx's ideas had not yet appeared, such as the notion of the dual character of labour, the distinction between abstract and concrete labour.

Rubinstein suggested 'the principle of unity of consciousness and activity' which 'synthesized in one formula the four tenets of dialectical psychology . . . the special nature of the psyche, its active role in human behaviour, the historicity of consciousness and the plasticity of man's abilities' (Payne 1968: 149). The appearance and formation of psychological processes takes place within the activity only in the process of the continuous interaction between the individual with the world around him (Rubinstein 2000). Consciousness and, more generally, psychological processes, not only arise from activity, but also form and transform within the activity. Rubinstein disagreed with the identification of psychological processes with the internal and

activity with something external. Activity – in the same way as psychological processes – is a concrete unity of external and internal. In contrast to functionalism, Rubinstein attempted to study not only discrete psychological functions (such as perception, memory, speech, emotion, thinking), but also human psychism ('*psychika*') as a whole in its ontogenesis.

The relation between internal and external activity is one of the principal points of controversy between Leontiev and Rubinstein. Rubinstein criticized Leontiev's conception of internalization as a transformation of external activity to internal, psychic activity. According to Rubinstein (1973), all the external conditions determine the impact on the thinking only refracted through the internal conditions. External causes act through internal conditions. For Rubinstein, Leontiev overstressed the dependence of internal activity on external activity, while not revealing the inner structure and content of psychic activity itself. One of the consequences of Leontiev's approach to internalization is the reduction of learning to the assimilation of fixed knowledge, of predetermined products and results of the process of cognition. Rubinstein criticized the perspective of reduction of learning to a purely reproductive process, to the simple appropriation of ready-made products of culture and the elimination of the production of new knowledge and new forms of activity. One of Rubinstein's main achievements is connected with his focus on the active, creative role of the subjects and their non-reproductive, innovative activity.

Rubinstein suggested a more dialectical approach than Leontiev, one which demonstrates the complex interconnection of the internal and external activity, and highlights the importance of subjects in the creative learning process. However, in Rubinstein's activity theory, as in Leontiev's theory, there is not a concrete analysis of activity in the particular sociocultural contexts and the description of the particular sociocultural and educational conditions of the transition from the reproductive to creative learning process.

In the 1960s, the reconsideration of activity theory had started. Many Soviet psychologists carried out and published the results of their investigations into the relations between the external activity of children and their correspondent psychological actions. D. Elkonin elaborated an original theory of psychic development based on the principle of leading activity. V.V. Davydov focused on the investigation of collective learning activity, considering internalization as a mode of individual appropriation of forms of collective activity. Galperin developed his theory of the stepwise formation of mental actions (Dafermos 2014).

Cultural-historical activity theory

Cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) has become one of the most popular in Anglo-Saxon literature over the last two decades. Different versions of cultural-historical activity theory can be found (e.g. Stetsenko and Arievitch 2004; Yamagata-Lynch 2010). However, there are some similarities between multiple versions of CHAT. In contrast to approaches emphasizing differences between cultural-historical psychology and activity theory, 'the basic impulse underlying a CHAT approach is to reject this either/or dichotomy' (Cole and Engeström 2007: 485). Vygotsky, with his concept of cultural mediation, was identified by Engeström (2001) as the first generation of cultural-historical activity. A.N. Leontiev is presented as the founder of the second generation of cultural-historical activity theory. The 'third generation' has introduced new conceptual tools such as dialogue, multiplicity of perspectives, the interrelations between defined activity systems, etc., to expand the theoretical framework of activity theory.

Engeström's periodization creates the risk of interpretation of cultural-historical activity theory in the light of presentism: 'Presentist history has been described as linear, progressive, continuous, justificationist, or, in short, whiggish – failing to concentrate upon understanding the past

in its true historical context' (Buss 1979: 14). Presentism leads to an examination of the 'third generation' of cultural-historical activity theory as if it were merely a linear culmination of the first and second generations (that is, of Vygotsky's and Leontiev's theories). The consideration of Vygotsky's and Leontiev's theories exclusively from the standpoint of the present conjuncture of cultural-historical activity theory, and the exclusion of Rubinstein's version of activity theory, results in decontextualized accounts of the historical development of cultural-historical psychology and activity theory.

Cole and Engeström describe the following basic theoretical principles used by CHAT: mediation through artefacts; activity as the essential unit of analysis; the cultural organization of human life; adoption of a genetic perspective; an emphasis on the social origins of higher psychological functions; and the ethical and strategic contradiction of intervention research. Some of these principles are associated with cultural-historical psychology (which include a focus on mediation through artefacts, adoption of a genetic perspective, social origins of higher psychological functions and the cultural organization of human life) and other principles with activity theory (for example, a focus on activity as the essential unit of analysis).

Cole and Engeström consider Vygotsky's and Leontiev's writings compatible and plausible and prefer to refer to them as cultural-historical activity theory (Cole 1996; Cole and Engeström 2007). The proponents of the canonical approach consider activity theory as a continuation of cultural-historical psychology (Davydov and Radzikhovskii 1985; Radzikhovskii 1979). The canonical approach of the development of the 'school of Vygotsky-Leontiev-Luria' has been criticized by several authors for ignoring the serious differences between Vygotsky's research programme and the Kharkov group's research programme (Yasnitsky 2011). Toomela (2000) emphasizes differences, discontinuities, and gaps that exist between cultural-historical activity theory and Leontiev's activity theory. According to Toomela (2000: 357), Leontiev's activity theory 'was a "dead end" detour of cultural historical psychology grounded by Vygotsky'. Toomela argues that for Vygotsky the most important 'unit of analysis' was not the concept 'activity', but the concept 'sign meaning'. The eclectic combination of elements or components from different approaches leads to theoretical confusion and questionable practice.

Hakkarainen (2004: 4) argues that Western CHAT accepts 'a multidisciplinary approach while the Russian activity approach is more or less psychological'. A multidisciplinary approach to activity theory has developed at the Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research (University of Finland, Helsinki) led by Yrjö Engeström. Vygotsky, Luria, and Leontiev worked in the context of psychology as a discipline, while the representatives of CHAT developed a multidisciplinary research program.

Many scholars argue that the concept of activity is interdisciplinary by nature (Blunden 2010; Davydov 1999). However, bringing different disciplines together on the basis of activity theory creates many theoretical and methodological questions. For example, Langemeyer and Roth (2006) argue that Engeström's version of CHAT neglects essential aspects of dialectics which are connected with the understanding of contradictions. Moreover, they point out that 'Engeström's notion of activity (and its triangular representation) proves rather indifferent about the broader societal relations that determine practice and by which human activities develop historically' (Langemeyer and Roth 2006: 28).

Activity theory from a critical psychology perspective

The mainstream reception and implementation of activity theory in North Atlantic psychology and pedagogy has been criticized. Ratner (2006) argues that, with few exceptions, activity theorists generally ignore concrete historical forms of organization of social life.

> They do not consider concrete activities such as alienated work, or formal education in capitalist society, and the kind of subjectivity that is operative within them . . . they rarely comment on the need for reforming the concrete educational system (e.g., power relations among administrators, teachers, and students; working conditions of teachers; social relations between teachers and students.
>
> *(Ratner 2006: 37)*

Many activity theorists operate general categories such as subject, object, motive, etc. in a functionalist way, without considering their concrete historical forms and their internal contradictions as a driving force of the development. Marx did not investigate activity in general as an abstract concept, but as labour activity. Marx used such terms as 'labour', 'the productive life', 'work', 'the process of labour', and 'the labour process' (Jones 2009). Moreover, Marx did not investigate labour activity in general, but labour activity in a particular sociocultural context, that of the capitalist mode of production. In contrast to the Finnish/Anglo-Saxon tradition of activity theory, which is based on Engeström's conceptualization, which emphasizes the structural dimensions of activity systems, the German tradition, based on Holzkamp's conceptualization, emphasizes the subject's perspective in theory and methodology. The task of reconstructing categories of psychology as science, which was posed by Holzkamp, was associated with the reconstruction of subjects in their real lives and their emancipation. The elaboration of the concept of subjectivity as a reflective agency was one of the main achievements of German critical psychology. Holzkamp, on the basis of a reconsideration of Leontiev's version of activity theory, offered a sketch of historicization of the human psyche through connecting biological phylogenesis, historical development of society, and individual development.

'Practice research' emerged as an attempt at the further development of German critical psychology through bridging the gap between research methodology and practice. Practice research is based on the production, appropriation, and transformation of knowledge in situated research practices. The concept of practice research was developed under the influence of the theory of situated activity as well as post-structuralism (Nissen 2000). The theory of 'situated activity' emerged in opposition to the traditional cognitive approach, which separates mind from the social world. It emphasizes cultural-historical forms of located, conflictual, and meaningful activity. In contrast to formalistic views of the activity, the situated approaches are invented to contextualize everyday local practices of people and their engagement in processes of human activity (Lave 1993). On the basis of situated approaches, the concept 'community of practice' has been elaborated. The concept 'community of practice' refers to a group of individuals creating their shared identities through participating and contributing to activities of their community (Wenger et al. 2002).

Conclusions

Undoubtedly, the situated approach to activity has offered a creative perspective for bridging the gap between critical research and alternative practice in various fields (education, psychotherapy, social work, etc.), but it 'can be criticized as influenced by relativist postmodern trends' (Nissen 2000: 145). Postmodern relativism can lead to the total rejection of all kinds of 'grand narratives' of the social world as abstract, formal, and meaningless entities and the celebration of the fragmentized, local, situated practices. The relativization of social practice could undermine the emancipatory potential of activity theory. For this reason, it is important to elaborate a dialectical framework for the activity theory in order to conceptualize 'relations between persons acting

and the social world' (Lave 1993: 5). Dialectics as a way of thinking brings into focus the *dynamic* and *contradictory* nature of reality which is not constituted by ready-made things, but complex processes: 'To say that activity is dialectical is to appreciate something of the synthetic work that the performance of contradiction always accomplishes' (Parker 1999: 64).

It is difficult to deal with many theoretical and methodological problems of activity theory which remain still unsolved without the elaboration of a dialectical framework. Some of these issued have been identified: 'the nature and role of transformation in activity systems, the relation of collective and individual activity, the relation of activity theory to other theories of human conduct, and the relation of the biological and social in existence' (Roth 2004:7).

In conclusion, we would like to restate Vygotsky's idea that 'practice sets the task and serves as the supreme judge of theory, as its truth criterion' (Vygotsky 1987: 305–306). Hence, we should recognize that a crucial challenge for activity theory from a critical standpoint is to detect real ways for connecting critical theorizing with transformative practice at local, national, and international levels. This challenge has already been posed by Marx in his *Eleventh Theses on Feuerbach*: 'Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it' (Marx 1975/2005: 4).

Further reading

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Website resources

Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research (CATDWR): http://www.edu.helsinki. fi/activity/
International Society for Cultural and Activity Research: http://www.iscar.org

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Marxist psychology and dialectical method

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Much recent work in cultural-historical activity theory has been concerned with mediation, zones of proximal development, activity, language, concept formation, and abstract thinking, to name a few key issues. This work has provided an important corrective to positivist psychology, which has concentrated on describing operation, structure, and processes within individual heads. Through the efforts of cultural-historical activity theory researchers, it has become increasingly clear that any account of human higher mental functions development must be studied within its social, historical, and cultural context. Human higher mental functions are developed historically, formed socially, shaped culturally, and carved by the social relations of production. This leads to the urgent need for an integrated developmental theory. Hegel was one of the first developmental theorists who offered a systematic theory of conceptual development. His dialectic can be seen as a general theory of human higher mental functions. There are important structural similarities between dialectical and developmental psychology of higher mental functions. To achieve these similarities, we need to re-formalize Hegel's idealistic dialectic and Marx's materialist dialectic, a truly impressive project on which few attempts have been made (by, among others, Wallon, Politzer, Vygotsky, and Sève). My own position is that Marx's materialist dialectic is completely incompatible with Hegel's idealist dialectic, a proposition that Marx and others have sharply disagreed with.

In this chapter, much attention is paid to central concepts of dialectics such as negation, contradiction, '*Aufheben*' (simultaneous preservation and transcendence of categories in the process of change), negation of negation, conflict, quantity, quality, unity, and struggle. Hegel's dialectic deals with the dynamics of conceptual structures whereas Marx's dialectic deals with real social structures. For Hegel, dialectic is a general theory of the development of conceptual structures. Hegel argued that 'Wherever there is movement, wherever there is life, wherever anything is carried into effect in the actual world, there is Dialectic at work' (Hegel 1892: 148). He discovered and presented 'some' of the necessary tools to understand dialectics and the dialectics of nature, society, and thought, and for that we should be grateful. But Hegel also obscured and distorted other necessary aspects of dialectical method by presenting his 'dialectic' in a classical idealist form, subordinating materiality to ideality. Hegel both revealed many laws of dialectical logic *and* buried them under the idealist frame of disorder. He applied the dialectic to

consciousness, history, logical categories, and history of philosophy. Hegel's *Phenomenology* is specifically concerned with the development of knowledge, as well as with stages of consciousness.

The years 1905–1925 saw an attempt to use the Hegelian Marxist dialectics as an instrument of knowledge and action. These years were the most important for breakthroughs in Marxist thinking. The struggle of this period, as described by Lenin in 1908, was an attempt to restore the dialectical concepts of totality and historical process. In the light of these struggles, Vygotsky attempted to build a psychology structured on the scientifically based method of Marx's dialectical materialist method. Dialectical materialist method is above all an analysis of the logical thought of contradictions and an analysis of social relations. It has a rich understanding of the historical development of human higher mental functions as a contradictory process. The task of Marxist psychology is to discover the possibilities of the development of human intellectual abilities. Vygotsky's cultural-historical analysis of human higher mental functions was, therefore, an attempt toward a dialectical *Aufheben*, able simultaneously to negate, preserve, supersede, and transcend the contradiction between human higher mental functions and the concrete totality of the living concrete reality. The introduction of dialectics into a cultural-historical activity research program opens fertile terrain for the study of human higher mental functions. In this sense, culture, history, and social factors will be treated as active variables, not simply as a blank cheque signed and endorsed by history, culture, and society. This chapter regards the names of Hegel, Feuerbach, and Marx as milestones in the history of the dialectical method and the interpretation of human higher mental functions. It is through the use of dialectical method that cultural-historical activity theory will overcome the present dominant versions that emphasize opposition between description and explanation of human higher mental functions.

Lev Vygotsky

In the last three decades, Lev Vygotsky was celebrated as one of the most important psychologists of our time. Yet Vygotsky's dialectical method is relatively unknown in the English-speaking world (see Blunden 1997; Parker 2007; Sève 1975, 1968/1978, 1989, 2002, 2008). Although several of his writings were available during the last two decades, his main works on applied dialectical method, particularly '*Educational Psychology*' and '*Studies on the history of behavior: Ape, primitive, and child*', have not yet received much attention, which is unfortunate. Vygotsky's approach to psychology, which is grounded in a dialectical historical materialist philosophy, is underutilized. The dialectical method is a potential methodological instrument of investigation of human higher mental functions, and became a fundamental rule in Vygotsky's psychological studies. Dialectical method led Vygotsky to adopt an approach to 'truth' and knowledge, refusing to accept any psychological fact without experimental validation. As a consequence of his constant critical questioning of the values and foundations of the contemporary trends of Soviet psychology, Vygotsky made a number of enemies during his lifetime (incarnated in the rise of Stalinism, the mechanistic dialectic, positivist Marxism, 'diamat', Stalin's version of Marxist theory, and so on). The dialectical method views human concrete social reality as a set of complex, changing, contradictory processes. These complex processes are embedded in human practical activity of the totality of social life. The totality of social life is a moving entity in struggle to realize its own nature.

Psychology, viewed in the light of historical materialism, serves the double purpose of demonstrating the nature of the social relations of production of a given society, and promoting solutions that have relevance to the actual living concrete conditions. Therefore, the dialectic is the concrete analysis of concrete conditions. In this sense, the purpose of psychology is not only to adapt the individual to a given society, culture, and mode of thinking, or to clarify the

mechanisms by which such adaptation is made possible, but also to stress consciousness as a part of human activity (instead of behaviour), and to promote awareness, individual potential development, and social change. Vygotsky stated that a social change in the mode of production, the elimination of private property, a change in social relations, class structure, institutions, and the division of labour can enhance human higher mental functions and reduce tensions between social classes. Such transformations pave the way for the development of human cognitive potentials.

Vygotsky's ideas in context

Under the directorship of Lev Vygotsky, a new paradigm in psychology began at the Moscow Institute of Psychology in the newly created social experiment known as the USSR. While Vygotsky and his colleagues were decidedly Marxist, they sought to draw from the philosophic works of such notable figures as Kant, Hegel, Spinoza, Feuerbach, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Wallon, and Politzer, to name but a few. Three common pursuits can be found pervading the works of Soviet psychologists: 1) a rediscovery and understanding of Marx's works; 2) a reconstructed understanding of Marx's research paradigm; and 3) an exploration of the mediations that make possible the developmental changes of society, economy, culture, higher mental functions, personality, and consciousness.

While Marx's research program proved to be the kernel of Soviet psychology, Soviet psychologists incorporated strengths of German, French, American, and other world psychology. It is in this context that I propose the incorporation of the advanced achievement of the cultural-historical activity research paradigm. The unification of these achievements will deliver a greater explanatory power to the unfinished project of Marxist psychology (scientific psychology) and a better formula for practical action in education, learning, upbringing, social progress, and human development.

Marx's proposal, that the human individual creates his/her nature through social practice became for Vygotsky and Marxist psychologists (Wallon, Politzer, Sève, among others) a series of guiding theoretical principles. Vygotsky, like Marx, moved away from the conception of the individual as a self-contained agency and grounded his theory on Marx's conception of the social individual as an ensemble of social relations. Social individuals do not simply produce the means and conditions of their own lives and live under these conditions, but produce the conditions under which they live. Vygotsky engaged in developing a theoretical framework to the two-sided reality of social individuals as not merely subject to their life conditions, but simultaneously creating them.

Vygotsky argued for social, historical, and cultural principles based on historical dialectical materialism. Unfortunately, for political reasons, the 1920s project of Marxist psychology suffered many delays, was left dormant in the mid-1930s, and brought to slow death in 1936. In the 1960s the project of Marxist psychology was revived after the aborted social uprisings in May 1968. Also around this time, Lucien Sève published his ideas in the monumental *Man in Marxist Theory and the Psychology of Personality*. The book addresses key new concepts in psychology from a historical dialectical materialist perspective. Sève never held a university teaching position, despite his Marxist convictions. Yet his situation in the French Communist Party as well as in French universities and academia went unnoticed. His views were marginalized. Sève's psychological ideas were shaped by the social struggle of the 1960s; he was a Marxist and his theoretical and conceptual ideas were strongly influenced by Marx's writings. In order to understand the unfinished project of Marxist psychology, it is useful to examine different versions of interpretation of Marxism from Marx's death to the present day Chinese Marxism.

Dialectical method and psychology

Vygotsky viewed dialectics as a framework for studying the development of higher mental functions. For Vygotsky, 'Development does not proceed toward socialization, but toward the conversion of social relations into mental functions' (1981: 165). Development is not transformation but change. His readings of Hegel, Marx, Engels, and Lenin, among others, entrusted him with the necessary intellectual tools to see the shortcomings of positivism and the need of investigating human activity within social, historical, and cultural settings. It was Vygotsky's combination of these various mediations – social, historical, and cultural – into a complex whole that made his theoretical framework worthy and promising. Dialectics is the engine of psychology, and its driving force. In this connection, Wallon argued that

> It is dialectics that has given psychology its stability and its meaning. . . . Through dialectics psychology is able to be at once a natural science and a human science. . . . Marxist dialectics has enabled psychology to comprehend the organism and its environment, in constant interaction, as a single, unified whole. And finally, in Marxist dialectics, psychology has a tool for explaining the conflicts out of which the individual must evolve his behavior and develop his personality.
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> *(1951/1963: 34)*

At the heart of Marxist dialectics is the idea of contradiction. Contradiction is the key to all other concepts and categories of dialectical development. Contradiction is to dialectics as matter is to materialism. Vygotsky, like Wallon, organized his psychological observations and experimental investigations by presenting the development of the child's cognitive development as a succession of stages (concerning language development, speech development, concept development, intellectual development, and so forth). Some of these stages are marked by the predominance of, for example, social cognition over hypothetico-deductive reasoning, whereas others appear characterized instead by the primacy of practical skills over abstract skills. The individual's personality is developed in this discontinuous and competitive succession between the prevalence of cognitive development and personality development. Vygotsky thus articulated concepts such as speech, language, concept formation, and emotion from a dialectical historical materialist perspective. His conception of the stages implied the idea of *Aufheben*, as well as that of regression, contrary to other models of developmental psychology (such as from Piaget, versions of activity theory, and versions of cultural-historical theory).

While insisting on the discontinuity, change, conflict, contradiction, and crisis which underlie the development of higher mental functions, Vygotsky demonstrated his fidelity to the Hegelian, Marxian theses of the dialectic. In this regard, Vygotsky, like Wallon, valorized Marxian dialectical concepts of material reality, consciousness, practice, conflict, contradiction, crisis, *Aufheben*, negation, negation of the negation, quantity, quality, discontinuity, and change over transformation, interaction, continuity, adaptation, equilibrium, equilibration, enrichment, and replacement of concepts. Each human developmental stage is the product of contradictions inherent or implicit in the preceding stage. Scientific advances often involve conceptual changes. These conceptual changes correspond to the cumulative nature of the dialectic, in which nothing is lost on the way to a higher level. Growth is spurred by the recognition of contradictions between what a theory claims to do and what it actually does. This is what Vygotsky had to say about behaviour, for example: it is 'a dialectical and complex process of struggle between man and the world, and within man' (1997a: 53). Each individual's life represents the road toward the

conversion of social relations into higher mental functions, and ultimately the road toward him/herself. It is through social relations that we develop into ourselves. Marx viewed dialectics as a methodological framework, best exemplified in *Die Grundrisse* and *Das Kapital*, which outline two of his central theories: that of surplus value, and the materialist conception of history.

It is dialectics that gives psychology its scientific base, epistemological meaning, ontological guidance, conceptual tools, theoretical clarity, and logical and methodological rationale. Psychology is the study of the human individual within his/her rich web of social relations. Engels argued that 'dialectics . . . is the science of interconnections' (1940: 26). Luria put it eloquently when he said that:

> Vygotsky supposed that higher mental processes are of a social origin, and that the basic unit of human conscious behavior is not to be found in unconditional or conditional reflexes . . . Instead, a new method was proposed – to step outside the organism itself and to try to find the basic units of human conscious behavior in the relation of the subject with the social environment, treating these *relations* as an essential feature of human mental processes.
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> *(1987: 87)*

In connection, Politzer argued that '*La psychologie ne détient donc nullement le "secret" des faits humains, simplement parce que ce "secret" n'est pas d'ordre psychologique*' [Psychology by no means holds the "secret" of human affairs, simply because this "secret" is not of a psychological order] (1929/1969: 170). Wallon was making exactly the same point when he argued that:

> Psychology is by no means unique in this respect. Dialectical materialism is relevant to the entire realm of knowledge, as well as to the realm of action. But psychology, the principal source of anthropomorphic and metaphysical illusions, must, more than any other science, find in dialectical materialism its normal base and guiding principles.
>
> *(1951/1963: 34)*

Vygostsky's arguments for a Marxist psychology are quite consistent with Wallon's and Politzer's views. Vygotsky believed that dialectical materialism has the necessary conceptual tools to bridge the gap between human higher mental processes and consciousness, and their social, historical, and cultural grounding.

Vygotsky's application of dialectical method

The dialectical method applied by Vygotsky in his study of '*Thinking and Speech*' showed that each stage of speech development gives rise to a successive stage which is said to be its *negation*. The dialectical process of speech development moves from social speech (thesis), to private speech (antithesis), to inner speech (synthesis). Each new stage of speech development both supersedes and incorporates the stage which it negates. This dialectical process is best described by Hegel's concept of *Aufheben* (which combines preservation and the clearing away of a concept in a dialectical process). By means of the double aspect of dialectical negation (negation of negation) and *Aufheben*, progress is made, leading to a new, higher, advanced, more complex stage. Higher mental development should not be viewed as mere process of accumulation (expressed as the deduction of reductive psychological theory), but as a dialectical negation, preserving accomplishments and superseding them in a conceptually radical manner. For example, theory is

not expected to explain successfully only what its predecessor intended to explain; it should also deal with unexpected phenomena. Scientific advances, as well as social and historical changes, often involve dramatic conceptual changes, rather than enrichment and replacement of concepts in the Hegelian outlook.

Dialectical method: confronting the challenges

The best way to understand Lev Vygotsky is to go beyond him philosophically, epistemologically, and ontologically. In Vygotsky's ontological-epistemological system, psychology is based on the assumption that human nature is achieved only when human individuals recognize each other mutually and equally. Human individuals are full of potentialities waiting the right conditions to be set out. In this sense, Vygotsky argued that,

> Marx frequently dwells on the subject of the corruption of the human personality which is brought about by the growth of capitalist industrial society. On one extreme end of society, the division between intellectual and physical labor, the separation between town and country, the ruthless exploitation of child and female labor, poverty and the impossibility of a free and full development of full human potential, and on the other extreme, idleness and luxury; not only does all this result in the single human type becoming differentiated and fragmented into several separate social class types which stand in sharp contrast to one another, but also in the corruption and distortion of the human personality and its subjection to unsuitable, one-sided development *within all these different variants of the human type.*
> *(1994: 176)*

As long as the development of human potential is interrupted by social injustice, social oppression, economic depression, social turmoil, discrimination, unemployment, poverty, famine, segregation, racism, the urban ghetto, war, colonization, and the effects of repressive external concrete reality, the human intellectual development will be inevitably affected. To begin to deal with these pressing problems, Vygotsky suggested two solutions: first, that Marxist psychology be treated as a comprehensive worldview in which human activity is viewed as a totality, as an interdependent whole; second, that human higher mental functions and rule-governed behaviour are derived from the macro-social scale, not from hypothetical agency within the organism or hypothetical processes that are internal to the individual. In this sense, Marxist psychology concerns itself with not only understanding of human activity (instead of mere 'behaviour') but also with changing human activity. Here, Marxist psychology differs chiefly from other psychological trends in terms of the unit of analysis. Its unit of analysis is the 'social relations of production'. The concept of 'social relations of production' is the kernel of Marxist psychology, as was 'relations of production' for Karl Marx, 'collective consciousness' for Emile Durkeim, 'shared social a priori' for Georg Simmel, and 'value orientations' for Talcott Parsons.

Focusing on the 'social relations of production' as a unit of analysis remains under-appreciated and certainly under-utilized theoretically, conceptually, and methodologically, as a framework for understanding the complex dynamics, nature, structure, and functioning of human higher mental functions. This unit of analysis shifts psychology away from the Cartesian dualism, mentalistic idealism, mechanistic materialism, and cognitivism individualism which predominate in present-day psychology. These later trends place the blame for personal problems inside individuals' heads rather than in their social living concrete reality. They also view individual activity as reduced to self-interested, rational action. The dialectical historical materialist philosophy underlying Marxist psychology is a theory of the individual's history (*dialectical historical*

individual) and of the laws of reproduction and transformation of social relations. Human higher mental functions are regulated by social relations of production, which generate standard personality patterns, structure ways of thinking, and organize ways of acting. Marx's sixth thesis on Feuerbach, which states that human essence is 'an ensemble of social relations', means that human individuals are the products of their real social relations.

The increasing eclecticism and narrowing of the terrain of exploration and investigation of human higher mental functions mean that there is an 'imminent danger of becoming a non-science at best, and non-sense at worst' (Van der Veer and Valsiner 1994: 35). Various theories within Soviet psychology have been offered (reactology, reflexology, Pavlovism, psychoanalysis, etc.) as alternatives to classical psychology, its crisis and contentions. In the beginning, Soviet psychologists attempted to reconcile Marxism and different trends of bourgeois psychology. This reconciliation led to the unity of opposites, which resulted in an elimination of dialectical tension. What is called 'dialectics' is there not based on contradiction, the struggle of the opposites, or negation, but on the dialectic of putting together, and all forms of life move toward equilibrium. These versions of dialectics 'putting together' had been preached by Louis Althusser (1965/1970), Gerald Allan Cohen (1978), and Leszek Kolakowski (1978). Dialectics is reduced to the law of logic, and here only statements contradict each other, not actions. This kind of dialectics which eliminates the struggle of opposites also underlies the basis of much of postmodernism. It is a dialectics without contradiction. A dialectics based on equilibration as a concept views development as a succession of disequilibrium and re-equilibration, and the contradiction will gradually be eliminated as equilibrium approaches.

The dialectic is the driving force of history. Dialectical thinking is described as a specific activity involving human *purposes* with definite *temporal* references to things in *movement* (Hook 1929: 85). This means that dialectical thinking is seeking to clarify and not to explain.

Dialectics is:

> a theory which maintains that . . . human thought develops in a way characterized by . . . dialectic triad: thesis, anti-thesis, synthesis. First, some idea or theory or movement is given, which may be called 'thesis'. Such a thesis will often produce opposition, because probably it will be, like most things in this world, of limited value – it will have its weak spots. This opposing idea or movement is called 'anti-thesis' because it is directed against the first, the thesis. The struggle between the thesis and the anti-thesis goes on until some solution develops which will, in a certain sense, go beyond both thesis and antithesis by recognizing the relative value of both, i.e., by trying to preserve the merits and avoid the limitations of both. This solution, which is the third step, is called 'synthesis'. Once attained, the synthesis may in turn become the first step of a new dialectic triad . . . will proceed at a higher level.
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> *(Popper 1940: 404–405)*

Conclusions

As a leading Marxist psychologist, Lev Vygotsky played an important role in formulating psychological concepts in the light of dialectical historical materialism and paving the way to the foundation of a Marxist psychology. His writings are a germinal work centred on the main ideas of: 'who is a human individual? What is social reality? How this reality is formed? How human higher mental functions are constructed? What is consciousness? What is personality?' The answer to these questions cannot be found in a scientifically managed psychology based on the idea of the human individual as object of manipulation. The answer can be found in scientific study of the human individual within the rich web of social relations of the concrete totality of

reality. Dialectical historical materialist theory is suitable to tackle the issues raised above. Though Vygotsky touches many topics, subjects, and ideas originating from Hegel, Marx, Engels, and Lenin, among others, he failed to systemize them in a unified integrative theoretical framework. The main difficulty lies in the hopeless ambiguity of integrating Marxist philosophical concepts into psychological concepts (i.e. Marx's ascendance from the abstract to the concrete and Vygotsky's pseudo-concept and scientific concept, Marx's potentiality concept and Vygotsky's zone of proximal development). Psychology is in need of its own concepts, categories, methods, units of analysis, and unified theory in order to develop as a science. Dialectics place psychology on its feet and guide it towards a science that emphasizes human potential, creativity, and development.

The dialectical method penetrates concrete reality, deciphers its structures, and sees it in its concreteness (Ollman and Smith 2008; Sève 2008). This is the dialectics, a familiar theory in accordance with Hegel's conceptual elaboration and Marx's dialectical historical materialist interpretation. Dialectics as a method is well elaborated by Marx in his theory of materialist conception of history. Psychology by no means holds the secret of human affairs, simply because this secret is not of psychological order (Politzer 1929/1969), but of the order of the human concrete totality. The dialectical conception of concrete totality puts more weight on social relations of production. Dialectics is the only method capable of understanding and reproducing reality and captures the true consciousness in its totality within concrete reality. This later regulates the social relations of productions. Social relations of production govern human psychological affairs. The social relation is the cell form of human mental life, and the entirety of human mental life becomes reproducible through social relations of production. A concrete analysis of social relations of production and all other social forces plays a central role in the shifting force field that is social cultural history. In other words, it helps to understand interconnections as widely and deeply as possible, and conceive of the historical social cultural reality of human mental life as a unified whole.

Hegel's dialectic and Marx's dialectic can be useful tools, fruitful in our quest for understanding human concrete totality and for Marxist 'critical psychology'. The present concrete totality of social reality is pregnant with future society, and dialectics is its midwife.

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Website resources

Lev Vygotsky Archive: http://www.marxists.org/archive/vygotsky/
Psychology and Marxism: http://www.marxists.org/subject/psychology/

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Kritische Psychologie

Psychology from the standpoint of the subject

Johanna Motzkau and Ernst Schraube

German (or German/Scandinavian) Kritische Psychologie emerged in the context of intellectual and political struggles at the Free University in the former West Berlin during the 1960s and 1970s (see Osterkamp and Schraube 2013 for an overview; Maiers 1999; Mørck and Huniche 2006; Tolman 1994). While based on a number of topical contributions (including Dreier 1980; Haug 1987; Holzkamp 1973; Osterkamp 1976; Tolman and Maiers 1991; Schurig 1975), Klaus Holzkamp's (1927–1995) work played a pivotal role for Kritische Psychologie. Its philosophical foundation is informed by historical dialectical materialism, and, specifically, builds on ideas developed in Marx's social theory and theses on Feuerbach concerning human subjectivity and practice (coining *practice research*), as well as the cultural-historical activity theory of Vygotsky, and above all, Leontiev (a legacy which has been taken up in various other alternative psychologies as well, cf. Engeström 1987; Hedegaard and Chaiklin 2005; Wertch 1991). Whilst the term 'Kritische Psychologie' is used widely in this context, it is problematic.

First, it is too generic, creating the impression this was a homogeneous approach (it was a heterogeneous and collective endeavour from the start), or indeed the only critical psychology in Germany; second, it implies that the approach as such is limited to German language context, which is not true; and third, and most importantly, the prefix 'Kritische' might suggest an anti-psychological vision which is precisely not what Klaus Holzkamp et al. had in mind. This Kritische Psychologie is an attempt to rescue psychology from itself by redefining psychology as a historically developed theory about subjects as societal beings (based on the concept of the *societal nature of human existence*), and to reconstitute it as a psychology for and about these subjects. In this way it sought to overcome the problems caused by traditional psychology's mapping of the abstract and external scientific 'third-person' perspective onto its object of study by establishing a 'Psychology from the Standpoint of the Subject' (PSS). This is why in this chapter we will refer to PSS instead of 'Kritische Psychologie' (Tolman 1989) or 'German Critical Psychology' (Markard and Reimer 2013).

Critical engagements with traditional psychology

PSS emerged in response to the North American functionalist model of psychology dominant in Germany and Europe after World War II (Teo 2013), outlining serious limitations and

contradictions within traditional psychology (TP) (the term refers to mainstream approaches within psychology, such as behaviourism or cognitive psychology in its information-processing version [Holzkamp 2013b: 234ff]). First, critique focused on the societal application of psychological knowledge for specific ruling interests and investigated traditional psychology's limits in terms of social theory, ideology critique, and discourse analysis. Second, PSS noted that TP lacked explicit theoretical and epistemological foundations and highlighted the problematic way in which TP had implicitly defined its subject matter. Uniquely, and in contrast to other critical psychologies, PSS took this critique as a basis for a comprehensive reconceptualization of psychology's theoretical and methodological foundations (Holzkamp 1983).

PSS pointed out that the dominant post–World War II psychological approaches, particularly those employing experimental-statistical methods – by emulating what they considered a natural sciences–type approach to research – ended up with a theoretical and methodological framework that implicitly conceptualized the world as a set of isolated stimuli causing effects in individuals which could only be accessed and tested from an external point of view, i.e. a *third-person standpoint*. Human beings in turn ended up conceptualized as if they were solely dependent on external factors, merely responding to stimuli and acting as isolated units in a vacuum. In this way TP not only established a research position of a distant judging observer (third-person perspective), but also implied a model of passive research objects, which, as PSS highlights, ultimately dissolves human subjectivity and creates a very limited idea of agency. PSS shows that by aiming for this (in effect pseudo–) scientific ideal TP lost sight of the societal and historical dimension of human subjectivity that, as PSS demonstrates, is a vital function of human life. TP conceptually creates what Holzkamp termed a 'homunculus', a creature with such limited capacities it would not be fit for survival (Holzkamp 2013a: 20).

Furthermore, TP establishes a 'worldless' psychology (Holzkamp 2013b: 233) devoid of context, unable to make sense of the complexity of the sociohistorical world as enacted, experienced, debated, and shaped by people. PSS highlights TP's tendency to value methods over content, i.e. to define the object of study according to the preferred methods (here experimental-statistical methods, thus dictating an isolated stimulus cause-effect rationale for human agency), rather than creating methods adequate to the subject under investigation, as PSS set out to do. At the core of the critical stance is the argument that TP's scientific conception might serve specific interests of capitalist society by individualizing and naturalizing human activity and psychological problems, thereby making people governable and obscuring the implications of power and oppression; by proposing personal work on the self as the solution to psychological problems, for example, TP privatizes these problems and obscures their rootedness in societal dilemmas and power structures. In this way TP construed personal compliance as 'normal psychological functioning', helping to obscure perspectives that could allow subjects to realize their potential for shaping their shared world, and actively engaging with and changing repressive societal conditions.

There are a series of published debates, books, and articles that provide a detailed insight into PSS's critical engagement with TP, and particularly Anglo-American-European approaches. For example, Holzkamp (1964) offers an early insight into critique of the experimental research set-up; the *Zeitschrift fuer Sozialpsychologie* ran lengthy published debates between Hubert Feger (experimental), Carl F. Graumann (phenomenology), Martin Irle (experimental), and Klaus Holzkamp; Holzkamp's core work, the *Grundlegung der Psychologie* (1983) details his critique and reconstruction of psychology, and in *Lernen* (1993) he examines and recategorizes the concept of learning; in addition, his later work on the conduct of everyday life presents a detailed critique of traditional as well as alternative psychological approaches (2013b: 233ff). Furthermore,

Osterkamp (1976) provides an in-depth critique and reinterpretation of psychoanalysis, with a specific focus on the concept of 'drive'.

Psychology from the standpoint of the subject

To provide a detailed example of the analytic work PSS conducted in its reconstruction of psychology, we would like to outline some aspects of the analysis supporting the central concept of the *societal nature of human existence* in some more detail and explore the crucial transition from *phylogenesis* to *sociogenesis*.

Based on the conceptual critique, PSS recognized the importance of developing a well-founded theoretical and methodological language. For such a foundation to be truly empirical, the analysis must trace (inspired by Leontiev 1981) the becoming of the psyche in relation to the phylogenesis and ontogenesis of life in general while accounting for the specificity of human life in particular. A period of particular interest for the human species is what Holzkamp terms the 'Tier-Mensch-Uebergangsfeld' (TMU) (zone of transition between animal and human life). Previous to this zone (TMU) psychological functions exist, but they manifest as basic psychic formations; functions such as 'learning', 'interest', or 'motivation' can be observed, but they manifest in an immediate fashion (e.g. for microbes interest is defined as the ability to be sensitive to certain stimuli, e.g. nourishment, for self-preservation, which constitutes motivation).

During evolution there are shifts in what shapes functions such as interest, motivation, etc. (e.g. life forms become able to not just detect food but orient towards characteristics that indicate food, e.g. light) and shifts in the dominance of certain functions. For the transition from phylogenesis to sociogenesis, Holzkamp identified a crucial shift in the quality of all these functions that took place within human evolution and during the TMU, and that ultimately also distinguished humans from other primates: while for other life forms, needs like hunger require immediate attention until satisfied, during the TMU those evolving towards becoming humans were increasingly able to anticipate and mediate such needs by establishing societal structures and practices to systematically cater for them. Herein they did not just gain some control over their natural environment and thus their conditions of living and surviving, but they also became able to create generalized meaning and thus culture; inscribed into their shape tools and artefacts, e.g. a plough, carry and express the generalized meaning of their purpose to future generations who use and develop them further. Furthermore, these practices established a division of labour (as societal structures, such as organizing the acquisition of food through traditions of farming and hunting).

As a result of this qualitative shift during the TMU, human life is constituted and shaped predominantly by sociogenesis and to a much lesser extent by phylogenesis. It is mediated via these sociohistorical and cultural forms of development, and thus human subjectivity and agency is determined by people's ability to participate in practices and access, through labour, the general means (tools/traditions) that allow them to further shape, transform, and improve their own conditions. This is why Holzkamp speaks of the *'societal nature of human existence'* and highlights the importance of participating in practices.

Crucially, then, each person's possibilities for action are directly defined by how they themselves perceive the meanings and resources available to them at any one moment. Hence we each have *reasons* for our actions (they are not reactions to conditioned stimuli) and these are based in our *first-person perspective*, which is personal and societal at once, because structures of social meaning, i.e. the pertinent conditions, flow into the premises for each person's subjective reasons for action.

Once PSS had elaborated the crucial role of subjective reasons for action in human subjectivity and the conduct of everyday life, it proposed a *reason discourse* (rather than the *conditioning*

discourse of TP) as the discourse most adequate to the task of formulating genuinely psychological theories and methods. This necessitated a radical epistemological shift in research practice. Since reasons for actions are given in the 'first-person' (they are always *my* reasons), research needed to be conducted from the standpoint of the generalized subject. It would be a misunderstanding, however, to interpret this first-person perspective as an individualistic, subjectivist concept.

On the contrary, it establishes a notion of a complete, yet communicable subjectivity (an intersubjectivity) not characterized by the inaccessible interiority the TP subject is trapped in. The argument is that, since 'I' experience myself and the world from my perspective, and act from my perspective and standpoint, it follows logically that the other also experiences her/himself and the world from her/his perspective and acts from her/his perspective and standpoint. And we know that they do. This means we do not just plainly react to what others do, but we have a meta-level at our disposal: we perceive the other subjects as reflexive subjects that perceive us as reflexive subjects; if we have reasons then so must the other (even if their reasons might not be very good or indeed transparent to us); and if we negotiate such reasons with ourselves as we act, and assess our possibilities, those reasons must also be communicable to others.

This *intersubjectivity*, i.e. the reciprocity of the subjects' first-person perspectives and the premise of the intelligibility of reasons, is a prerequisite for social interaction to work at all. Hence, rather than being 'subjectivistic', it is precisely the systematic inclusion of the subject, and the recognition of the other as coequal *centre of intentionality*, that offers the foundations for a truly empirical and scientific (i.e. adequate to the subject matter) approach to understanding of human sociality and psychology (Schraube 2013).

This is why PSS proposes to root psychological research in the standpoint and perspective of the 'I' and 'we' and explore through subjective experiences what the world means for human subjects and their possibilities and necessities to act: hence, a *Psychology from the Standpoint of the Subject*.

PSS's analyses demonstrate that the potential of human agency is not the product of isolated individuals preserving and developing their own lives. Instead, human agency only develops its potential through individuals gaining influence over the particular societal conditions specifically relevant in their conduct of life. Consequently, the quality of each individual's lived experience is inherently connected to the type and degree of agency the individual can exercise and perceives to be able to exercise. Human suffering and fear originate not solely from immediate constraints, but are the result of an individual at the mercy of the societal relations/conditions they depend on due to having lost influence over them. To overcome suffering and develop a genuinely human quality of life requires the individual's ability to access and participate in the shaping of the conditions her/his conduct of life depends on.

From the perspective of the standpoint of the subject, the challenge or momentum that drives human subjectivity and the conduct of life, is located precisely in the reciprocal relationship between individual and society: there is a constant contradiction between on the one hand, individuals being subject to the conditions under which they live, and, on the other hand, their potential to influence and change these conditions to reflect their own needs and interests. To express this fundamental contradiction in human agency, PSS developed the analytical concepts of *restrictive agency* versus *generalized agency*. Depending on the situation, in attempting to overcome this contradiction subjects may not only have reasons for trying to change particular conditions to improve their own life prospects (generalized agency). Equally, subjects might have reasons to arrange themselves with the given restrictive conditions; for example, in cases where they consider that the attempt to intervene and change restrictive conditions carries a significant risk of conflict which could affect their existing position even more negatively. As a result they might view their existing conditions as acceptable despite realizing their restrictiveness (restrictive agency). From

the subject's standpoint, this creates the dilemma that the propensity to secure one's own situation (in the short term), ends up undermining one's own prospect of (and constitutive aim to strive towards) generalized agency, and in this sense violating one's own long-term interests.

The central driver for empirical research within PSS is to engage with people on an inter-subjective basis and to explore such dilemmatic positions, conditions, and inherent constraints in order to open up perspectives towards change and generalized agency. As PSS is taken to fields where psychological questions arose in everyday practice, it is often described as practice research (Axel 2011; Busch-Jensen 2013; Fahl and Markard 1999; Jefferson and Huniche 2009; Nissen 2000). By aiming for an involved intersubjective exchange and getting at first-person perspectives, it becomes possible to analyze how individual existence is mediated through the overall societal context.

This analysis works from the assumption that objective conditions are meaningful only when mediated through both collective objectifications and through each subject's perspective. This is why the 'subject' of research is defined as a 'co-researcher', as they are the 'experts' of the conditions, meanings, and reasons that surround the problem at the heart of research that engages with practices they are involved in. In this sense such research is inevitably also 'owned' and guided by them, and the role of the researcher is defined as participatory and cooperative. The aim is to develop a collaborative understanding of the questions and problems at the heart of the research, to generalize subjective experience, and to open perspectives towards generalized agency.

Contemporary discussions and fields of study

There is a plethora of recent theoretical and empirical research directly drawing on or rooted in PSS, often reshaping and further developing PSS. In the following we would like to provide examples of such work.

Dreier's work on *clinical and therapeutic practice* provides a detailed critique of mainstream research into therapeutic interventions, highlighting, for example, that it only takes the thera-pist's or researcher's perspective (not the client's) and applies a technological, decontextualized rationale (assuming the therapist as the sole agent with therapeutic effects occurring within therapy, overlooking clients' agency and the importance of their everyday life). Dreier's research sets out to capture clients as agents who are trying to make therapy work in their conduct of life. One of his central projects (Dreier 2008, 2011a), an intensive case analysis, focused on the relation between clients and therapists (himself and one colleague) in a Family Therapy setting, exploring the link between sessions and everyday life by interviewing the cooperating family at home, asking them to reflect about sessions, and holding reflexive sessions with family and therapists to ask for their feedback and to explore how they experienced sessions.

Research on *children's development in everyday life* constitutes another major field of current PSS research. Here the aim is to transform common practices of classification and individual-ization by systematically including the perspectives of children and by exploring child devel-opment via their participation in and across different contexts of everyday life, e.g. family life, educational institutions, and recreational settings (Højholt 2006 2012; Kousholt 2011; Røn Larsen 2012; Stanek 2013). Further research focuses on *childhood sexual abuse* and *children and the law* and develops a methodology of 'researching practice as process' by expanding PSS via process theory (Motzkau 2009a, 2009b, 2011). The study of *learning in and outside educational institutions* represents another major field of study. Here learning is re-imagined as a theoretical and empirical project systematically structured from the perspective of the learning subjects (Haug 2003, 2009; Holzkamp 1993; Langemeyer 2005; Marvakis 2013). Research on *social work practice* and treatment of addiction advances PSS theoretically and methodologically (Nissen

2004, 2009, 2012), with most recent research in this field exploring the way *standards* are developed (particularly those assessing the efficacy of psychological treatment). Research into the *technological dimension of human life* explores the power and politics of technological artefacts and their significance in people's everyday experience and agency by expanding PSS via *Science and Technology Studies* (Chimirri 2013; Huniche 2009; Papadopoulos 2010; Schraube 2009, 2013; Winner 2007). Crucially, recent work in PSS focuses on the *conduct of everyday life*, looking at how human beings as active sensuous subjects live their everyday life, and exploring the conduct of everyday life as a basis for understanding the dilemmas and contradictions people are confronted with in contemporary society (Dreier 2011b; Holzkamp 2013b; Schraube and Højholt 2015).

Internal debates and challenges

PSS's greatest accomplishment, the concept of subjectivity/agency, also presents its greatest challenge: PSS's insight into the first-person givenness of human experience, consciousness, reasons for action, and the resulting necessity to conduct research from the standpoint of the generalized subject, can clash with an understanding of research that is engaged in broadening both the researcher's and the co-researcher's perspectives to see beyond what PSS terms restrictive agency and enable a path towards generalized agency.

From the beginning, this tension has provided momentum for unique and important research for example about parenting (Markard 1985), teaching/learning (Holzkamp 1993; Haug 2009), racism and neo-nazism (Holzkamp 2013c, 2013d; Osterkamp 1996), as well as generating fierce internal debate (e.g. Fried 2002; Osterkamp et al. 2002). This tension is not unique to PSS, but the way it was unearthed and discussed openly was, and is, exemplary and inspiring. This is because the uniquely comprehensive theoretical framework PSS provides offers an excellent backdrop against which, and analytical tools through which, to examine it.

Clearly, co-researchers are free to disagree with the researcher's aim or definition of the issue at hand; disagreement can be further negotiated or reflected in the research. But where such standpoints would in themselves be considered problematic (e.g. in the case of racism, or neo-nazism), it is difficult to formulate a genuine PSS manner of approaching such important topics while fully taking into account, and potentially having to accept, the perspectives of those who hold those views. A similar issue was at the centre of a debate that gripped PSS in the 1990s, which emerged in response to a heated debate in Germany about child sexual abuse/rape of young women the question being whether there was an epidemic of false allegations of abuse. In this context the term 'abuse of abuse' was coined by Rutschky (1992) (it was mooted that many accusers were deliberately making false allegations to harm someone, and that the feminist movement was exaggerating numbers of abuse/rape to serve its agenda).

In this context, Holzkamp (1994) advanced the view that, from a PSS perspective, one could only meaningfully engage with those (mostly) girls/young women when starting from a position of unconditionally acknowledging their allegations, as this was their first-person perspective. Other PPS proponents of the debate argued this idea was naïve, and that, if it meant 'believing' them in a forensic sense of the word, it ultimately implied generalized guilt, i.e. that all men were, by association, abusers/rapists until proven innocent, thus making a balanced discussion impossible and dismissing the standpoints of those accused. This turned into a very heated, and at times hostile, debate (*Forum Kritische Psychologie*, special issue 33 and 37, see also Osterkamp 1997 on the 'abuse of abuse of abuse') that we cannot do justice here, and unfortunately, the contributions to which are published in German only. Nevertheless we thought it important to mention because it illustrates PSS's readiness to explicitly and openly take debate to the very heart of

PSS's conceptual-transformative framework, forcing it to confront important and uncomfortable issues (such as abuse/rape, racism, neo-nazism) even if they challenge it to the extreme.

Conclusion

PSS helps to overcome mainstream psychology's one-sidedness. It highlights the fractures and self-hindrance inherent in a psychology uncritically adopting what it considers the theoretical language and methodology of the natural and technological sciences. In contrast, it has sought to develop a set of fundamental concepts and methods that are genuinely empirical and psychological, a set of concepts capable of elucidating the complex reality of human subjectivity, including the reality of the concrete, societal, and technological world in which human experience and agency is located. By taking the standpoint of the subject, which is logically the result of the first-person givenness of psychological phenomena, psychology is freed from the impossible idea of being a science from an external perspective, and from its common practices of classifying and disciplining individuals, and controlling and predicting their behaviour. Instead, by taking the standpoint of the subject, psychology becomes a science 'for' people, working with concepts that are analytical and exploratory, at once helping to clarify everyday experience, action, and the conduct of life.

What to us seems particularly unique about PSS is first, the comprehensive, detailed, and positive reconstruction of psychology as a whole (a feature that sets PSS apart from more recent critical approaches, particularly those who do not see 'foundations' as desirable [Brown and Stenner 2009]); second, the commitment to co-researchers' perspectives and the uncompromising way in which researchers are practitioners, theoreticians, and activists; third, the power of the analytical tools provided, paired with an ever-prevailing scepticism towards its own insights and agendas which keeps PSS open to being reshaped and taken into different directions, as the social, personal, political, and theoretical landscapes it confronts are in constant change.

It is to PSS's credit that it has stuck with the apparently insurmountable problem of subjectivity and generalized agency, holding it in suspense, rather than dropping, dismissing, or obscuring it. At the same time, it has continued to seek out this very challenge as it emerges, is engendered and confronted within everyday life and (institutional) practices (this is evident in recent work that emerged from within and associated to PSS). This persistency might in part be to blame for some of the harsh internal debates in the past, and for the apparent lack of an intellectual centre or coherent network more recently, both of which may have contributed to the impression PSS has suffered an untimely decline or even demise (Teo 1998). Yet PSS is alive and well in current research. PSS may have drifted apart as it was developed into different directions. And even though PSS as such is no longer (or never was) a distinct 'school' or 'paradigm', the analytical depth and thoroughness, and the uncompromising attention to detail that initially drove it (as evident in Holzkamp's and Osterkamp's work), provides a generalizable mode of critical thought that can inspire current critical psychologies; it reminds us to be hesitant, as well as uncompromisingly constructive, personal, and political.

Further reading

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Website resources

Forum Kritische Psychologie: www.argument.de/wissenschaft/psychologie_fkp.html
Kritische Psychologie: www.kritische-psychologie.de
Outlines: Critical Practice Studies: www.outlines.dk
Substance: http://www.substance.ku.dk/

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Does psychoanalysis have anything to say to critical psychology?

Kareen Ror Malone with Emaline Friedman

For those with a critical psychological eye, one can make the case that psychoanalysis has been as radical in its challenge to the 'psy-disciplines' as current critical psychology (Canguilhem 1968/1995; De Vos 2011; Lacan 2006). Nevertheless, psychoanalysis has been complicit in psychology's seductive execution (Lacan 2006). Psychoanalysis is worrisome when it draws upon its psychiatric and psychological companions in theoretical alliance – psychoanalysis as a mental health profession (e.g. Wagner 2005). Usually, in this case, psychoanalysis understands itself as based in 'needs' that exist in the nether lands between biology and culture; such needs have been thwarted in a child's developmental trajectory, and psychoanalysis possesses particular tools to address such deficiencies (see Altman 2013). This is not to say that such psychoanalytic work does not offer significantly different angles on community transformation (e.g. Wagner 2013). Rather, an examination of psychoanalytic theory, inextricable from the question of praxis, calls upon one to consider the layers of criticality that can be mined from psychoanalysis; is it an applied knowledge or a different sort of knowledge and, in both cases, what is its status within the critical psychological field?

Critical psychoanalysis?

Critical psychoanalysis has multiple expressions, including a notion of what it means to be human at a particular place and time (Houis et al. 1999; Parker 2011). Yet, psychoanalytic radicality should not be judged by whether a form of psychoanalysis is dramatically popular (Ego Psychology/Freud in the United States in the 1950s; Lacan in France during the 1970s; Relational Psychoanalysis in the States today; Wilfred Bion in Italy) (Kernberg 2011; Pfister and Schnog 1997; Turkle 1981). One may judge the 'tools' of theory and praxis that any given school may offer to those critically inclined for certain projects (e.g. Ainslie 2013; Cantin 2009). But to think of this as simply another practice that may be critically crafted toward a particular population or for a given emancipatory goal underestimates psychoanalysis, which, of course, is a theory of a subject, defined by the unconscious.

The intellectual soil upon which psychoanalytic thoughts and practices landed after they left Vienna had an enormous impact on what subsequently was conceived of as psychoanalysis. Again, critical psychologists had best be aware; psychoanalysis through the 1950s was a cultural,

cinematic, and clinical 'hit' in the United States (Herman 1995; Pfister and Schnog 1997). Its ties with commodity capitalism in advancing the art of advertising are partly balanced with an indisputable, nuanced impact on film and art through, for example, the work of Alfred Hitchcock (Žižek 1992). Its strong relation to art continues to this day, and should not be dismissed as academic; the aesthetics within culture, evidenced in a trend in art or in a particular artist are not without implications for ideology, community, and the modes of production as structural features that organize and anticipate subjective horizons (time, place, the place of the subject, the excluded, how one speaks, etc.) (Cancina 2013; Romanyshyn 1989; Vanier 2012). Yet links to medicine and to capitalism were deadly poisons, flattening many radical aspects of psychoanalysis (Jacoby 1983; Lacan 2006).

Karen Horney, more traditionally psychoanalytic in earlier years, was seen as feminist and revolutionary in her perspective, at least in her challenge to the primacy of the phallus (Rose 1986). Her later works, such as *Neurosis and Human Growth: the Struggle Toward Self-Realization* (Horney 1950) demonstrate a deep affiliation with the humanistic interest in self-actualization. Many have seen this shift and these values as consonant with contemporary capitalist principles in the United States (Buss 1979). Horney was part of a broader movement. The North American psychoanalytic theoretical swing to 'self' and to culture in part reflects a certain awareness of cultures as relative, à la Mead. It also reflects awareness that analytic work is a field, intersubjective, a field with dynamic particulars that envelops and accesses dynamics that hover outside the space of the clinic (Lacan 2006). It is a way of seeing analysis, as with Harry Stack Sullivan, which seems initially packaged to accompany a deeper analysis of cultural context (Kernberg 2011; Mitchell and Black 1995).

Yet at the same time, many within this school see the analytic field in the terms of an interpersonal dyad, i.e. in terms of two selves now able to act differently, more emphatic, attuned, more primitively, and so forth. In fact, one often returns to a theory of needs and self-reparation, alienation, and actualization (e.g. Fromm, Kohut) that, in the upbeat interplay of self and other, fails to address the complex interface of culture and subjectivity as may, for example, be read in Freud's work. This 'culturalist' move bothered mid-century Marxists (Jacoby 1983; Jay 1973; Marcuse 1955), and still raises suspicions from Lacanians and others interested in the political ramifications of psychoanalysis, i.e. its insistence on the specificity of the unconscious spread across the dyad or the situation of speaking, or even embedded in any exchange that creates surplus value (Rebaté 2000; Malone and Sowecke 1998; Lacan 2006; Vanier 2001).

Probably most importantly for this readership, against the fervent wishes of its founder, Anglophone psychoanalysis has been institutionally and conceptually tied to medicine, with not-unexpected consequences for its metapsychology and cultural reflections. This issue is more than a parochial concern of the United States but inflects through many modalities within analysis in relation to how it takes up the question of its knowledge. In the United States, psychoanalysis was initially imagined as an application of psychoanalysis to somebody, and neutrality as a form of psychologized objectification of a traumatized or otherwise disadvantaged individual. The arduous work of analysis on the couch was extracted as concepts or assessment tools to be applied to a more general population (Herman 1995, Lacan 2006). Yet its true esoteric knowledge was gained through lengthy work with the young, attractive, verbal, and intelligent sorts with an education and pedigree that made learning and understanding this knowledge possible (Alpert et al. 2013).

Psychoanalytic ties to psychology and medicine are still strong. with effects on how psychoanalysis is practiced in many settings or how it is conceived, that is, as a particularly elite path to mental health. To this day, true analytic practice is often deemed too expensive or too intellectual for the less wealthy (Gherovici 2003). Internationally, and even within North America,

psychoanalytic work suggests strongly otherwise, including psychoanalytic work within community and hospital settings where class status is not the gateway to its efforts (Ainslie 2009; Brabeck and Ainslie 2008; Cantin 2009; Debieux and Mountain; 2013). In South America, psychoanalysis informs psychology curriculum; in the United States, psychology has re-formatted psychoanalysis, at some cost to its specificity. This has meant that its utility for critical psychology is similarly compromised, psychoanalysis now falling more within the orbit of the psy-disciplines and their normative definitions of health, even with its esoteric and vacillating lexicon (Westen 2002). When overly psychologized, pragmatized, and privatized, the robust cultural legacy and insight of psychoanalysis is lost (Jacoby 1983).

Another way in which psychoanalysis has entered into the arena of social justice and critical thought is through the lenses of feminism. Although much disliked by many in second wave feminism (Tong 1998), some Marxist feminists realized that women in their relation to sexuality and family are actually addressed as human subjects in the Freudian paradigm (Foreman 1977; Jay 1973). Some feminists take off from there, using notions of sexuality and the notion of the object to re-construct psychoanalysis and Marxism (Benjamin 1977, 1988). In later instantiations of psychoanalytic influence, the presence of Freud and Lacan are quite evident in feminist and in cultural studies, from the mid-1980s forward. This shift is in part attributable to Juliet Mitchell's influential text, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (1974/2000), and to French feminisms (Feldstein and Roof 1989). In psychological circles, the work *Changing the Subject* revealed through a variety of post-structuralist and feminist frames that a question of the psychological subject was truly at stake in any fully critical enterprise (Henriques et al. 1998). Whether one moved in the direction of Irigaray or Cixous, there was the inflection of a style of thinking that was tied to a Lacanian way of re-reading Freud. Freud's texts, if criticized, were resurrected (e.g. Brennan 1989). An important impetus for feminist thinkers is understanding femininity as more than a subset of motherhood. Those with a Lacanian bent looked to femininity as a means to approach the question of the interrelation of the symbolic, imaginary, and real, as a relationship to negation, and as a re-positioning from the phallic subject (Barnard 2002; Brousse 1999; Pickman 2004).

Other feminist re-takes of psychoanalysis have pulled from Judith Butler's hybrid of Marxist, Lacanian, and object relations (e.g. Dimen and Harris 2001). Layton (2004) offers a culturally critical way of re-framing gender and cultural notions of identity by questioning the binaries that are assumed in the 'opposite sexes'. Queer theorists have appropriated psychoanalysis in different ways; compare Corbett (2002), Dean and Lane (2001), Watson (2009), and Berlant and Warner (1994). In all cases, there is the issue of an intimate social construction, one that is the body itself, transmitted and recycled through the instantiations of the body and the cultural place of generation, sexuality, and sexual difference (Alsop et al. 2002). Jostling with the temporal and political dimensions of this issue will inform *sinthomosexuality*, a notion which will assign sexuality the materiality of the letter to claim access to jouissance over access to sense (Edelman 2004). It is because sexuality is not biological in Freud that it is found in so many other places, leading to a re-articulation of how man and woman come to be (Mitchell 1974/2000; Pickman 2004).

In more recent years, works of Freud, Klein, Lacan, and relational psychoanalysis have established positions that are aligned explicitly or implicitly with critical psychology. One sees such incursions in the work of David Caudill (1997) in law, in bringing cultural reflections on psychiatric trends, e.g. self-injury, revisiting trauma more broadly, or looking at the cultural processes of Western capitalism (Gulerce 2012; MacGowen 2013). Others enjoin a psychoanalytically informed discursive approach (Neill 2013; Parker 2005). Articulating what it is about psychoanalysis today that renders it a theory of culture as well as a clinical practice implicitly invites new forms of community interventions. In this role, psychoanalysis has played its hand as a viable

counterforce to less humane forms of treating humans and of thinking through what the relation of culture and the human entails. For this latter reflection, one can look to Marxists who take up psychoanalysis, e.g. Marcuse or Althusser (those two very differently), or to a number of Lacanian–inflected visions wherein the cultural is embedded through the Freudian insight on subjective division. Such a reflection would involve an explication of the refraction of the drives and the body, and the role of cultural and particular representations in defining the process of repressions and the place of transference in mediating repressive effects. Again, this is not to say that Bion or Klein could not be similarly mobilized, but rather that the structuration of the subject within Lacanian thought overturns certain predictable ways of thinking about consciousness and the self and thus forces a turn to alternative ways of conceiving the rotation of subjectivity in historical time (Parker 2011; Svolos 2011).

Within psychoanalytic theory: shopper's guide

The majority of critical psychologists will probably not go into analysis or participate in an Institute of Psychoanalysis. Critical psychology will know psychoanalysis through research or through more general texts, or perhaps feminism or cultural studies. If trained squarely within the discipline, they will see psychoanalysis in the terms granted it by psychology. The Freud passed down in psychology and thus to these critical psychologists is one whose vision of the subject is 'intrapsychic', a self-enclosed cauldron of instincts who goes out into the world overlaid by a psychic reality defined by repressions, introjections, and projections. Freud's approach is individualistic, focused on the insistence on infantile fantasy and personal history that reveals a particularly dark side of development. Failures at certain junctures, as empirical study (ideally) confirms, will graph this cusp between the logic of the bios (the child's being as a form of body) and a psycho-logic, a being now attuned to another set of exigencies, e.g. adaptational, emotional, cognitive, etc. If, by chance, the psychoanalytic view frames this transition in terms of needs, i.e. of the logic of the psychic being analogous to current bio-logic understandings, then we have a very familiar, very psychologized Freud. The list of dependency needs, of attachment needs, of a much less sexualized analysis is assumed to be timelier and more compassionate.

Although one may be politically astute within such need based approaches, whether interpersonal or object relations, this would probably not be the psychoanalysis towards which critical psychologists would gravitate, since they, as much as Freud, saw through the laundry list of needs as a matter of socially reified claims upon the body (Lacan 2006; Rose 1986). Psychoanalysis is the articulation of a practice and a discordant subject whose suffering and subsistence is nestled between the body and socially reified claims, a subject in exile (Fuks 2008). The unconscious is the division of a person from himself, and the encounter with what it tells us as bodies and as persons with desires is not necessarily wholly viable, socially. Otherwise, why would we resist this knowledge? Certainly, the Marxist reproach of the 'culturalist' psychoanalyst was just this. You seem to be more culturally attuned than that biological Freud, but your sensate infant, ever aware of the Other and culturally enmeshed, is too adaptable. The radicality of psychoanalysis lies in its capacity for maladaptation. (Dahmer 1977; Marcuse 1955; van Haute 2001).

Despite a wide margin of error within psychology in presenting the most interesting Freud, psychoanalysis starts from Freud as an author, meant in the Foucauldian sense, as one who makes an epistemic cut (Foucault 1977). Whether one reads Freud as a biological determinist (Mitchell and Black 1995), a religiously informed thinker, as a developmental psychologist with a sour outlook on children, structurally, or as the founder of talking together differently, psychoanalysts are all, in some sense, accountable to Freud's texts. When someone like Erich Fromm ceases

to call himself a psychoanalyst, there is a reason, a change in reference points (Jay 1973; Lacan 2006). Psychoanalysis begins with the subjective and social consequences of an unconscious.

Classical and some fundamental aspects of Lacanian analysis attempt to stay faithful to Freud's discovery as they might refer to it, even if at times, it is obvious that such readings may not be what others would see as the purest of fidelities to Freud's ideas (Verhaeghe 2001). Some may argue that Bion or object relations could be implicitly or explicitly integrated into Lacanian modalities (Kirshner 2011); others incorporate object relations into a basic classical stance, while others have moved that same base in relational directions (Kernberg 2011). Contra wise, a host of 'disputing doctors' frequently contend the validity of alternative approaches, differences codified in Institutes, affiliations and so forth (Friedlander 1993; Lacan 2006;Parker 2011). This includes even the importance of being a doctor or mental health professional in the first place (Freud 1912/1958; Malone 2006; Safouan 2000). Such differences are important for an outsider qua critical psychologist to know.

Psychoanalysis is the praxis and theory of becoming human, the stakes of subjectivity. As such, it veers from any socially agreed upon spectrum of behaviours to be made sense of, and looks instead at the persistence of human desire and the logic of human passion in relation to sociality. It thus would substitute an ethics for an understanding. It attempts rather than defaults on being an impossible profession (Freud 1937/1969).

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Website resources

Academy for the Study of the Psychoanalytic Arts: http://www.academyanalyticarts.org
Lacan Online: http://www.lacanonline.com
World Association of Psychoanalysis: http://wapol.org

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Deconstruction
The foundations of critical psychology

Andrew Clark and Alexa Hepburn

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For the last few decades, French post-structuralist critical thinking has provided one of the most important areas of impetus for the development of new ways of considering psychology. The philosophy of figures such as Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes has provided a dramatic reconceptualization of the human subject. The deconstructive philosophy of Jacques Derrida has been central to this post-structuralist revolution, but it has yet to be comprehensively integrated into the discipline of psychology. We argue that, insofar as it can be understood as a form of philosophical psychology, Derrida's thought has profound implications for the discipline on three interconnected levels: as a way of theoretically conceptualizing the subject of psychology, by placing the regional science of psychology under a broader ontological scope; as a way of considering the pivotal role that a theory of language plays in the conceptualization of the subject; and as a way of interpreting the texts that form the tradition of the discipline itself.

Derrida's thought is best known for its philosophy of language, where in particular he highlights the historical relationship between speech and writing. In *Of Grammatology* he notes that, for the entirety of Western philosophy and culture, from its historical origins up until the present time, speech has been thought of as the privileged mode of language – leaving writing in a strangely repressed position. Derrida (1974) poses the radical question: what if writing is a more adequate theoretical example than speech of the essential structure of language? Why would this be the case, and indeed, why does it matter? Well, in the act of spoken communication there is no absolute guarantee of the occurrence of mutual understanding or mutual agreement. There is no absolute guarantee of the occurrence of rational communication. There is no absolute guarantee that meaningfulness will prevail over meaninglessness. And perhaps most relevantly for our purposes, there is no absolute guarantee that, in the act of spoken communication, the intentions of the subject will fully present themselves. Because of this psychological illusion of self-presence, it follows that self-absence must itself be taken into account as a necessary feature of the very structure of language. It is in this respect that all language – whether written or spoken or some other form – corresponds to the generic structure of writing as requiring the necessary possibility of self-absence. Hence one way of understanding the sweep of Derrida's work is to think of it as transforming our understanding of philosophy. Rather than seeing philosophical texts as partial summaries of underlying ideas

and arguments, as representations of the purer workings of logic and inference, Derrida suggests that it the language of philosophical writing *itself* that is important. Philosophy is working through its textuality rather than in spite of it. That is the power of his claim that philosophy is a kind of writing.

Building on this notion, Richard Rorty (1980) develops a devastating critique of two major areas of philosophy: the traditional concern with the discovery of truth, and the analytic concern with defining criteria for the truth values of statements. He argues that most philosophers still view the mind as a mirror, the 'glassy essence' that can reflect objective reality. This has led to an equally mistaken notion of knowledge as accuracy of representation, and philosophers as experts on 'knowing'. His pragmatic aim is to remove the throne from which philosophers dispense decrees about truth, validity, and reality, and to show that philosophy, like any other discipline, is a kind of writing. We argue here that psychology, too, is a form of writing – its claims to truth, validity, and reality about the mind are equally textually produced. It follows that deconstruction can perform a similar function for psychologists, examining the metaphors and tropes through which the discipline of psychology is produced.

So at what point can we transfer Derrida's argument from the philosophy of language to philosophical psychology? Here we can note that in accounting for the necessary possibility of self-absence the *purity* of subjective self-presence becomes a theoretical impossibility, as there is a radical contamination from the necessary possibility of self-absence given by the very structure of language-as-writing. To illustrate, we can consider Searle's argument, that 'in serious literal speech the sentences are precisely the realizations of the intentions' (Searle 1977: 202). Derrida's response is that this is an illusion that belongs 'to the repertoire of a psychology of language (mechanistic, associationist, substantialist, expressionist, representationalist, pre-Saussurean, prephenomenological, etc.), more exactly to a *pre-critical psychologism*' (Derrida 1988: 66, our emphasis). By putting into question the purity of subjective self-presence, Derrida therefore requires us to rethink the very foundations of the inherited concepts and methods that we employ in our constructions of human psychology – for so many of these concepts and methods implicitly rely on the idea of this purity. It is for this reason (the complex intertwining of the nature of human language with the nature of human subjectivity) that we argue that the utilization of Derrida's thought has become essential for rethinking the foundations of critical psychology.

As with philosophy, psychology relies upon the fundamental notion of the mind as a mirror that reflects more or less accurate mental representations of 'reality'. This entails three main assumptions: that we are dealing with 'facts', which are independent of the researcher; that true knowledge can only be acquired through the empirical-analytic method; and that there are a number of facts about the mind and humanness that psychology is accumulating knowledge on, and so will handle with increased effectiveness over time.

Just as philosophy seeks to become the arbiter of statements about external reality, psychology aspires to provide the facts about internal reality. The tools that are used to this end – the technical apparatus and metaphors such as 'behaviour' and 'information processing' – can be revealed as nothing more than a form of writing. We therefore argue that psychology's function be reconceived; it should be removed from the task of seeking 'facts' about 'the mind', and replaced with a study of writing – writing in the deconstructive sense. This would involve the study of the variety of descriptions of subjectivity and humanity, rather than the study of subjectivity or humanity 'itself'. And psychologists, like other analysts, need to recognize that speech/writing/conversation is all there is; there is no escape from the discursive net into the sea of objective reality.

Deconstruction as critical psychology?

In a certain respect, deconstruction as critical psychology does not yet properly exist. On the one hand, research in the field of critical psychology has not unreservedly appropriated the complexities of deconstructive thinking. And on the other hand, research in the field of deconstruction has not effectively directed itself towards psychological concerns. Drawing on and developing some of our earlier attempts and arguments (Clark 2011, 2013; Hepburn 1999; 2000a,b, 2002, 2003, 2006; Hepburn and Jackson 2009) we hope to show how the two strands of thought might be fused together.

Our approach also builds on prior attempts to apply deconstructive thought to critical psychology – most notably, Erica Burman (1990, 1994, 1998) and Ian Parker and colleagues (1990, 1995, 1999) – who institute a mode of deconstruction they term 'practical deconstruction' (Parker et al. 1995: viii). Here, deconstruction is understood primarily as a form of literary theory which emphasizes the critical reading of texts. In this version, the strategy of deconstruction is to unravel a text in such a way that considers how the language of the text has been rhetorically produced: 'Deconstructive unravelling works through a kind of anti-method which resists a definition or prescription, for it is looking for how a "problem" is produced the way it is rather than wanting to pin it down and say *this* is what it really is' (Parker 1999: 2). Deconstruction is thus drawn on as a useful critical tool to address standard practices in the institution of psychotherapy. Hence the term 'practical deconstruction': rather than simply addressing the language of literary texts, deconstruction is drawn on as a critical tool with which to address the language of the psycho-therapeutic institution itself. In particular, the language that occurs between therapist and client is thought of as an important location where the critical tools of deconstruction can become useful to unravel the complex techniques with which versions of selfhood – and indeed versions of the 'problems' of selfhood – are presented and represented.

What is it about the traditional institution of psychotherapy that Parker argues to be uncritical? In order to consider this question there is a fusion of the work of Derrida and Foucault in Parker's position: where Derrida's thought provides the critical tools, Foucault's thought provides the practical point of application of those tools. Where Derrida's thought is applied to the rhetorical structure of texts (primarily philosophical and literary), Foucault's thought, in contrast, is applied to the formation of institutions (primarily those concerning psychiatry and the human sciences). In works such as *Madness and Civilization, The Order of Things*, and *The Birth of the Clinic* (Foucault 1965, 1970, 1973), Foucault's thought is concerned with the way in which the historical formation of new institutions concerning the study of people and their mental health created new objects of psychological knowledge. The problem for this 'knowledge' is thus that it is capable of transforming over time – a capability which ironically undermines its status as 'knowledge'. The historical exclusion in Western society of the mad from the sane, or of abnormal practices from normal practices in part arose from the knowledge drawn upon from these institutions. However, as these institutions transform their knowledge claims, as their ideas and ethos develop, these changes have an impact on the treatment of those who are excluded. This twin problem in the historical formation of psychological institutions – the creation of new objects of knowledge and the transformation of the knowledge claims concerning these objects – are why Foucault referred to the knowledge developed by these institutions as 'discourses'. As discourses, the historical formation and transformability of knowledges and identities is emphasized, as are the power relations between various groups in the constitution of these knowledges and identities.

For Parker, Burman, and others (e.g. see Parker and Shotter 1990; Sampson 1990) the fusion of Foucault and Derrida becomes a useful strategy in the critique of traditional approaches in

psychology, e.g. psychotherapy. Where Foucault's historical analyses present a broader critical standpoint against the relevant psychological institutions, Derrida's textual analyses present a critical standpoint against more localized rhetorical manoeuvres. The task for the deconstructive critical psychologist thus involves taking a more localized discursive context within the psycho-therapeutic institution itself, for example, of the analytical situation between therapist and client, and of analyzing the discourse of these interactions. From a critical standpoint, the purpose of such an analysis is to highlight the relations of power at work within the more localized discursive context, and to analyze the rhetorical effects of these relations. The concern is to consider the way in which the psychological problems of the client are produced as ways that 'individualize' the client: that is, where the varying categories of madness and abnormality classify the individual in a particular way. The critical problem with this uncritical individualization is the unreflective way in which the psychological institutions have themselves created the categories that they apply to their clients, thus identifying them as having 'psychological' problems and creating knowledge about these problems. The critical problem is thus that this knowledge is not necessarily true, and these identifications are not necessarily accurate, and indeed this can manifest itself in various rhetorical discrepancies within the language that is used at various stages of the analytical situation itself.

Rethinking psychologism: developing a deconstructive critical psychology

Critical psychologists' usage of deconstruction is not here an entirely illegitimate one. However, it presents an incomplete version of deconstruction in its transition from the popular field of 'literary deconstruction' to the notion of a 'practical deconstruction' that is applied in the context of psychotherapeutic institutions. What has thus been circumvented is an emphasis on Derrida's engagement with Western philosophy, and the deconstructive critique of the version of subjectivity (as self-presence) found in the metaphysical tradition itself. In this philosophical context there is also the need to reconceptualize the very idea of subjectivity that has been put into question by Derrida's thought. In its critique of the metaphysics of subjectivity, deconstruction has cleared the foundations for critical psychology by targeting the very version of human subjectivity that is most uncritical and most pervasive. However, this still leaves us with the important task of rethinking the nature of the very subjectivity that has thus been put into question.

As a way into this reconsideration of subjectivity, we therefore argue for a more comprehensive application of deconstruction to psychology, which in turn requires further philosophical development of the general theory of selfhood that is already operative in Derrida's thought. We argue that this is more powerful for the discipline of critical psychology because it provides stronger theoretical foundations. But why bother to rethink the foundations of critical psychology? The key to addressing this question is in the word 'critical'. There appear to be three – perhaps interrelated – problems with the academic discipline of psychology such that one could determine it as 'uncritical': (a) a lack of concern for theoretical rigour, especially concerning our general philosophical understanding of the nature of the human mind. Here the need to appear 'scientific' by gathering empirical data overwhelms this concern. (b) The problem of empirical method itself, especially insofar as a specific philosophical version of what the mind is can already be active and implicit within any specific empirical method. (c) An uncritical philosophical version of the human mind that dominates the various empirical methods used across the various sub-fields of psychology. The move to appear critical is thus bound to a certain identification of what counts as uncritical. A vibrant discipline of critical psychological

research therefore needs to be clear what the 'uncritical' in psychological research represents. For example, is the object of criticism specific uncritical practices within the psychotherapeutic institution, or is it a specific uncritical theoretical version of selfhood or subjectivity that runs through these institutions?

Because Derrida's thought already contains a radical critique of the metaphysics of subjectivity, it lends itself to critical psychology by considering the philosophical version of subjectivity that is most uncritically accepted in psychology. What, then, is this uncritical philosophical version? It is the tendency to treat the nature of the human mind (psychology) as if it were a separate object of study from the nature of human beings more generally (ontology). The discipline of academic psychology thus typically reduces ontology to psychology. But here, the case is in fact the reverse: in its initial inception, critical psychology relies on what Heidegger in *Being and Time* (1927/1962) calls 'fundamental ontology': that is, the attempt to consider the nature of the individual human being within the generic confines of their historically given world, and also within the specific confines of their temporal lifespan (Heidegger 1927/1962). In this view, what makes traditional academic psychology uncritical is, therefore, the removal of psychology from these environmental confines in an attempt to locate the inner workings of the mind – as if these inner workings had a logic that was separate from the life history and world history into which human beings are thrown. Undoubtedly, it is with the sub-field of social psychology that an effort has been made to be concerned with such environmental factors, which is why critical psychology has often been thought of as a 'critical social psychology' (e.g. Ibáñez and Íñiguez 1997; Hepburn 2003).

As many critical psychologists have noted, the irony of traditional academic psychology is that in its attempts to understand individuals it removes them from the very conditions which are necessary for that understanding. This is why critical psychology has itself become a necessary position within the discipline of psychology. Indeed, as a social science the discipline of psychology requires empirical methods with which to gather psychological data. Hence another important issue is whether research methods which are consistent with the arguments of critical social psychology can be developed.

Internal debates in critical psychology

Writing fifteen years ago, Hepburn (1999) surveyed 'ab/uses' of deconstruction in various strands of critical psychology, highlighting what appeared to be omissions of some of the more useful and 'subversive' features of deconstruction. She argued that rather than rejecting the 'undecidable' aspects of deconstruction, in favour of more 'emancipatory' critical realist elements, a more thoroughgoing application of deconstruction 'offers profound critical and political possibilities'. As part of this argument, Hepburn (2000a, 2000b, 2003, 2006; Hepburn and Jackson 2009) has argued for the more anti-foundationalist approaches in feminist and discursive psychologies to be incorporated into critical approaches. However, there have also been fairly consistent criticisms of what has been dubbed the 'Loughborough School' of discursive psychology (see Hepburn and Jackson 2009 and Stokoe et al. 2012 for more elaborate responses than we offer here). These criticisms typically centre around the alleged limitations of discursive psychology's adoption of conversation analysis (e.g. Parker 2005), or the embracing of relativism (e.g. Cromby and Nightingale 1999; Parker 1999). Space does not permit an extensive review of these debates here; instead, we offer an overview of the relevance of discursive psychology (hereafter DP) to deconstructive approaches, in that Hepburn's argument has been that because the a priori existence of subjectivity and objectivity in psychological research is not assumed, DP comes closest to a deconstructive critical psychology.

Discursive psychology can be understood as an attempt to socialize psychology by considering what were traditionally seen as inner, personal, cognitive notions in terms of their location in broader social practices. For example, how can we understand 'memory' as part of a legal performance of a defence in court, or how can we understand 'attitudes' in terms of their position in broad debates about controversial topics? The key problem that Edwards and Potter highlight is in the very location of psychological phenomena. Traditional approaches in psychology locate psychological phenomena in the internality of the human mind/brain, and take the reproduction of descriptive mental terms in everyday life as evidence for their obvious existence as causal entities. DP challenges this 'cognitivist' conception of psychology by emphasizing that what we call 'psychological' phenomena appear *first and foremost* in everyday discursive actions, e.g. in blaming, justifications, announcements, compliments, complaints, and so on.

Here, discourse is conceived in a more localized setting than the Foucauldian historical definition. As Potter notes: 'I am taking a focus on discourse to mean that the concern is with *talk and texts as part of social practices*' (Potter 1996: 105). Potter couples this definition of discourse with a social constructionist theoretical standpoint, which views language as a social (specifically, interactional) phenomenon through which what we understand to be the realities of human experience are mediated. Language is not thought to mirror reality (as if reality were merely a set of pre-given facts), but rather the process of interaction is part of what constructs reality in particular (and often peculiar) ways. What we therefore like to refer to as 'psychological phenomena' are not assumed to be unproblematically located in the internality of individual minds, but rather they are explored for their function as parts of these social practices and interactions. Two aspects of critical psychology are operative here: first, distancing ourselves from the very idea of the mind as a space of subjective internality; and second, distancing ourselves from the very idea of the world as a space of objective factuality (Hepburn 2003). Hence we can operate with a definition of discourse that accounts for both an alternate location for psychological phenomena and a more dynamic view of reality as presently in the process of being changed and constructed.

From a DP perspective, then, subjective and objective reality are linguistically organized; if we want to gain insights about them, the problematic move is to reify them – to take them out of their primary discursive location. If we want to best understand them, we have to understand their role in both the local interactional context, typically overlooked by critical and traditional approaches alike, and the broader historical and political context of any given interaction, for it is here that they become what we understand them to be.

Conclusion: response to the internal debates

This chapter has attempted to present the case for a deconstructive approach to critical psychology. As we have shown, Derrida's philosophy has currently been drawn on in certain limited ways in constructionist and critical work. Critical psychologists have typically fluctuated between positions that are deconstructive and anti-deconstructive, or, more broadly, post-structuralist and realist/materialist.

However, the sheer difficulty of Derrida's writing is not to be underestimated. This is not so much to do with the technical complexity of Derrida's ideas (which is a challenge in itself), but in capturing and explaining them in a way that is both clear and accurate. In setting out our arguments, we have encountered real problems of institutional boundaries, and of what the very term of 'deconstruction' is taken to mean across these boundaries.

In its initial Derridean form, deconstruction originated as a form of criticism of the tradition of Western philosophy – especially of the cherished metaphysical assumptions concerning the

nature of the human being that this tradition protects. And yet, Derridean deconstruction has never really been popular in philosophy departments, and has instead flourished in literature departments where it has become a powerful form of literary theory. As literary theory, deconstruction does not therefore concern itself so much with the critique of the assumptions of Western metaphysics, and instead becomes hailed as a form of experimental and creative writing. In literary theory, deconstruction has a certain 'stylistic ambition' (Bennington 2000: 181), which appears to involve creating hyperbolic paradoxical formulations in the process of making textual criticisms of another's work. The problem with literary deconstruction from a more philosophical interpretation of Derrida's work (Clark 2013) is therefore that the whole raison d'être of Derrida's thought has become marginalized.

Then deconstruction transfers into the social sciences: how is this meant to work, when, unlike the humanities (especially philosophy and literature), the social sciences have the additional problem of needing to appear scientific by collecting some form of localized data and analyzing it according to some form of empirical method? We have argued that the issue here is the creation of methods that are consistent with the theoretical arguments. It is at this level, the level of ideas, that deconstruction is a useful player in the field of critical psychology. That said, both Parker, Burman et al. and Hepburn, Potter et al. would nonetheless claim deconstruction as an ally in their form of critical psychology. As we've noted, Parker, Burman, and colleagues take deconstruction as merely a critical theoretical tool, hence the need to create a notion of 'practical deconstruction'. This loses the more philosophical side to deconstruction, where it questions metaphysical assumptions.

The call for a 'practical deconstruction' in critical psychology no doubt arises from the notions of politics, democracy, and justice in Derrida's writing, such as his recent consideration of Marxism (Derrida 1994). On the one hand, Derrida rejects recent attempts to exorcise the spirit of Marx by those espousing the ideals of liberal democracy. On the other hand, Derrida also rejects some of the central tenets of Marxism, notably the notion that ideology can be banished through the science of historical materialism. Marx's notion that the world must be freed from the unreal ideological spectres that produce real effects is shown to be reliant on notions of presence and ontology that Derrida's work subverts. For many this means that Derrida's work does not provide the basis for ideology critique, and yet we have argued that Derrida's work *can* provide strong foundations for a critical psychology. Our argument has been that it can have profound implications for the discipline in the way the 'person' or 'individual' is conceptualized and made into knowable phenomena, as a radical reconceptualization of language and discourse, and as a way of understanding the texts of psychology and the construction of psychological truths as a form of writing.

In contrast, the discursive psychological view of deconstruction engages with its more philosophical side, and the social constructionist view that would have language as actively constructing reality rather than passively mirroring it would appear to be in line with a certain version of Derrida's thought. However, these links are typically not made and their theoretical implications for critical psychology are little more than promissory notes.

In true deconstructive style, however, what remains are a series of inconclusive questions: what are the issues that will confront psychologists after they have started to take deconstruction seriously? What does a post-deconstructive psychology look like? For example, if psychologists finally cease to take the reproduction of mental terms in everyday life as evidence for their existence as causal entities, will psychology then turn into textual analysis? What methods and topics are appropriate for psychology? What forms of rhetoric and figuration does psychology employ? Answers to these questions lie in further developments of critical approaches in psychology, and of deconstruction itself.

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Website resources

Bibliography of publications by Jacques Derrida: Contains bibliographies of texts and interviews by Jacques Derrida, ordered both chronologically (by publication year) and alphabetically (by title). It also contains links to bibliographies listing works about Derrida: http://hydra.humanities.uci.edu/derrida/jdind.html

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Deleuzian perspectives

Schizoanalysis and the politics of desire

Hans Skott-Myhre

To read Deleuze in direct relation to psychology without some degree of theoretical violence requires several degrees of mediation. Without this, one can run the risk of reductive and opportunistic appropriation of bits and fragments of his corpus that violates the integrity of the project as a whole. That is to say, it would be to replicate what traditional psychology as a field has done to almost all the philosophers it has encountered.

Deleuze is first and foremost a philosopher. His philosophical project had little, if anything to do with psychology per se, at least up until 1968. The bulk of his work was to extend and clarify philosophies and philosophers of immanence. In his book co-authored with Felix Guattari (1994: 32), *What is Philosophy?*, the work of the philosopher is defined as the creation of concepts, which they specify as, 'the contour, the configuration, the constellation of an event to come'. The creation of the concept by the philosopher, as an event to come is profoundly related 'to our problems, to our history, and, above all, to our becomings' (27). This has deep implications for the ways in which Deleuze's philosophical interests will intersect with and engage the problems of his historical moment and the possibilities of revolutionary becoming.

Psychology, philosophy, and politics

Of course, one could argue that philosophy and psychology are intertwined in many ways, and certainly Deleuze's philosophical work has powerful implications for key questions in psychology pertinent to the constructions of subjectivity and consciousness. His works on Spinoza (1988b, 1990a), Bergson (1988a), Leibnitz (1993), Nietzsche (2006), Bacon (2003) and in *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 1990b) are rich in the development of conceptual frameworks that have a direct implications for what might be called the 'minor' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) (not part of the major or dominant) branches of psychology such as humanistic, critical, or transpersonal psychology. His work on transcendental empiricism (Deleuze 1994, Deleuze and Guattari 1994) and his challenges to the claims of science as the ultimate arbiter of what is true (Deleuze and Guattari 1994), also hold important implications for the development of psychology as a scientific discipline and can provide support for those who would critique, at a minimum, the role of science in offering insight into human striving, struggles, and dilemmas.

However, there is a significant deepening of his engagement with psychology after the events of May 1968 in Paris. Consistent with his proposal that the development of concepts are tied to the historical conditions in which they arise, the worldwide revolt in the late 1960s against the emerging force of global capitalism marks a shift in both his focus and overt level of political analysis and engagement. Indeed, one could argue that these events provide precisely the mediation necessary to bring the work of the philosopher Deleuze into an engagement with the political that opens on to the common field of interest with critical psychology. In this regard, it is in his work with the Lacanian analyst, anti–psychiatrist, and political activist Felix Guattari that Deleuze's work takes on areas of interest that are directly pertinent to critical psychology. Most particularly, this is the task, in the work with Guattari, in the two volumes on *Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* (2004, 1987).

In this dense, complex, and multilayered double text, Deleuze and Guattari engage the question of capitalism, subjectivity, and revolutionary politics. They extend, challenge, revise and trouble the field of theory that comprises the world of countercultural politics in the late sixties and early seventies. Existentialism, phenomenology, systems theory, semiotics, neuro-biology, and structuralism are undertaken in turn, among others. The central engagement, however, is with psychoanalysis and Marxism. In keeping with Marx, this is an investigation of the ways in which capitalism operates as a system of global rule. In keeping with psychoanalysis, the investigation of capitalism cannot be undertaken without an understanding of both the unconscious and the question of desire.

The writings of Deleuze and Guattari are, without a doubt, an incisive critique of capitalism that contain radical proposals for resistance and revolt against ruling systems in general and capitalism in particular. In addition, they extend and critique key theorists and thinkers in psychoanalysis including Freud, Klein, Reich, and Lacan, among others. The question remains, however, as to what degree their work is constituted as a sympathetic outside to critical psychology or operates within the same theoretical frameworks and parameters.

Critical psychology can be conceptualized as functioning as a particular instance of the broader field of critical theory. In this sense, it brings a critique of social structures and functions, such as psychology, drawing on theoretical frameworks concerned with questions of human liberation and bondage (Horkheimer 1982). Given this definition, we can easily locate the work of Deleuze and Guattari within the general field of critical theory. Indeed, Michel Foucault's introduction to *Anti-Oedipus* states that 'Anti-Oedipus is an introduction to the Non–Fascist Life' (xiii). Deleuze and Guattari's concern in *Anti-Oedipus* is to rethink psychoanalysis outside any possibility of bourgeois appropriation or deployment by the state. As Foucault puts it in the introduction to *Anti-Oedipus*,

> Informed by the seemingly abstract notions of multiplicities, flows, arrangements, and connections, the analysis of the relationship of desire to reality and to the capitalist 'machine' yields answers to concrete questions. Questions that are less concerned with *why* this or that than *how* to proceed. How does one introduce desire into thought, into discourse, into action? How can and must desire deploy its forces within the political domain and grow more intense in the process of overturning the established order.
>
> *(2004: xii)*

Anti-Oedipus is written as a savage critique of what is perceived as the missteps and betrayals of the revolutionary possibilities of psychoanalysis and by extension psychology by 'the poor technicians of desire – psychoanalysts and semiologists of every sign and symptom – who would

subjugate the multiplicity of desire to the two fold law of structure and lack' (Foucault 2004: xii–xiii).

As a critique, the work of Deleuze and Guattari would seem to operate well within the theoretical parameters of critical theory, and as a specific critique of psychoanalysis and psychology within the corpus of critical psychology. However, there is another dimension to the term critical here that must be accounted for if we are to welcome Deleuze and Guattari into the theoretical collectivity that constitutes critical psychology. This is the question of critical theory as a specifically Marxist enterprise. The question of whether this simultaneous critique and revision of Marxist theory and method places them outside any claim to being Marxist, is, for our purposes here, perhaps beside the point. Clearly, as far as critical psychology is concerned, Deleuze as well as Deleuze and Guattari are sufficiently, if contrarily, engaged in the discourse of critical theory in ways that are hold significant interest for those psychologists wishing to critically engage the dominant field of psychology on a political and philosophical footing.

Deleuze, Guattari, and critical psychology

Specifically, in what ways do Deleuze/Deleuze and Guattari take up concepts and key issues pertinent to the field of psychology? Again, we find ourselves slightly to the side of the dominant trends in contemporary dominant psychology. Deleuze as a philosopher took up certain concepts and ideas drawn directly from dominant psychology, such as the individual, consciousness, subjectivity, neurosis, psychosis, masochism, and psychopathology, among others. However, the approach to these issues is philosophical, not psychological, which is not to say there are not implications for psychology. Psychology is simply not his interlocutor or target. He is commenting on these things on his way to somewhere else. As we have noted, this shifts when he collaborates on work with Guattari. However, even here, the engagement is not directly with the dominant trends in contemporary psychology, but instead with psychoanalysis and psychoanalytically derived psychiatric thinking and practice. One might argue that these were the dominant trends of his time and geographical location in France, but that would be to imagine a very narrow and provincial theoretical field, something belied by the most cursory examination of the bibliographic scope of the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Instead, it might be more accurate to conceive of Deleuze's encounter with psychology in the same way he approached various philosophers. That is, to seek those with whom he had an affinity and then read them into his own project. In this sense, the decision to read psychoanalysis and particularly Lacan might be thought of in this way.

The engagement with Lacan takes place through a critique of Freud and, specifically, the ways in which the family is centred in the Oedipal complex. Deleuze and Guattari (2004) follow Marx (1978) and Engels (1978) in the Marxist assertion that the family is an integral component of and model for all forms of domination and control. The title of their text *Anti-Oedipus* is an obvious indicator of the ground upon which they will engage the Freudian project. However, while their critique of familialism is both cogent and targeted, it is the engagement with desire that sets the tone for their interrogation of psychoanalysis/psychology/psychiatry.

To understand the way in which desire is undertaken by Delezue and Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus*, it is important to fully account for the impact of the philosopher Spinoza in the work of Deleuze and Guattari. To state that Spinoza is the nearly absent, but thoroughly immanent, source of production in their work in *Anti-Oedipus* is somewhat of an understatement. It is Spinoza and his production of the concept of immanence that is the ghost in the machine. We know from other texts how important Spinoza is for Deleuze (1988b, 1990a) and also for

Deleuze and Guattari (1994) writing together. Indeed, in *What is Philosophy?*, they refer to Spinoza as,

> The Christ of philosophers and the greatest philosophers are hardly more than apostles who distance themselves from or draw near to this mystery. Spinoza the infinite becoming philosopher: he showed, drew up and thought the 'best' plane of immanence–that is the purest, the one that does not hand itself over to transcendence or restore and transcendent, the one that inspires the fewest illusions, bad feelings and erroneous perceptions.
>
> *(60)*

As we can see from this passage, it is Spinoza as the philosopher of immanence, who is of profound interest to Deleuze and Guattari. And it is a philosophical adherence to immanence that will saturate, mutate, and confound each psychoanalytic concept, psychiatric category, and psychological proposition they encounter.

Of course, this is not without foundation in Spinoza's own writings. Book IV of the *Ethics* (Spinoza 2000) has been noted as containing its own psychological and even neurological accounting of human motivations and behaviours (Damasio 2004; Yovel 1999). The Spinozist accounting of immanence as life itself producing itself without any form of transcendent outside informs both Deleuze and Guattari's accounting of psychoanalysis and their extension of the work of psychoanalysis in relation to Marx and modes of life as production that exceed the capacity of capitalism to fully encompass or dominate. Mark Seem, in his introduction to *Anti-Oedipus*, remarks,

> Everything in Marx and Freud that has to do with how things and desires actually flow will be kept and added to the infernal machine . . . This political analysis of desire, this schizoanalysis becomes a mighty tool where schizophrenia as a process – the schiz – serves as a point of departure as well as a point of destination.
>
> *(2004: xix)*

Certainly, this is where they begin in the opening passages of *Anti-Oedipus* with what they term 'desiring machines'. The opening subtitle conflates Marx, Freud, and Lacan in the phrase 'Desiring-Production' (1). We are plunged without warning into an ecology of immanent production within the first paragraph of the text. 'It is at work everywhere. Functioning smoothly at times, at other times in fits and starts. It breathes, it heats, it eats. It shits and fucks. What a mistake to have ever said *the* id' (1).

Deleuze and Guattari start with the force of life per se as immanent production. Raw desire is not centred in the individualized psychoanalytic structure of the id. Rather it is impersonal and machinic. 'Everywhere it is machines – real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections' (1). Life here is pure production without the mediation of the symbolic. There is nothing figurative, nothing that stands for something else. 'The breast is a machine that produces milk, and the mouth a machine coupled to it. The mouth of the anorexic wavers between several functions: its possessor is uncertain as to whether it is an eating machine, an anal machine, a talking machine, or a breathing machine (asthma attacks)' (1). The partial objects of the psychoanalytic tradition and their symbolic associations are opened here to a literal ecology of lived capacity. As Deleuze (1988b) has noted, the project here is an ethological one, that is to say, a concern with the capacity of an organism in its interactions with other organisms. However, one must be cautious that one does not inadvertently nominalize what is essentially a process of becoming rather than an identification of being.

The 'subject' and language

The role of the subject, as noted in these early pages of text, but consistent throughout the Deleuzo-Guattarian corpus, is that, 'we are all little handymen; each with his little machines' (1). Each of these machines produces real effects, not symbols or metaphors. This is not to say that symbols and metaphors are not productions, but for Deleuze and Guattari they do not have the capacity to directly or indirectly represent the productions of life. Instead, as Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 76) point out in the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia, A Thousand Plateaus*, symbols and metaphors, as the stuff of language, are part of what they call the world of the 'order word'.

Language, they tell us, has no direct involvement with life except in so far as it commands, orders, and structures what life has already produced. Each 'order word' carries what they call a 'little death sentence' (76). A death sentence, because language in ordering, structuring, and commanding the effects of the machinery of life itself forecloses the dynamic living force of desire and appears to produce living force as a transcendent outside to itself. Language does not communicate information about the world; it produces a map that claims, but fails, to encompass the territory described.

One can imagine the implications for such an assertion in terms of the centrality of language to psychoanalysis and the descriptive worlds of psychiatry and psychology. For Deleuze and Guattari, linguistic exercises that make claims that language is able to reveal the world or accurately represent it are riddled with prefigured social forms and obligations that pre-order and structure the outcomes of such claims in micro- or macro-fascistic forms. The interpretation of the world through metaphors and symbols is a specific instance of this process. Life is not symbolic, nor can it be represented symbolically or metaphorically. This is why they will claim in relation to the famous case of Freud that, 'Judge Schreber feels something, produces something, and is capable of explaining the process theoretically. Something is produced: the effects of a machine, not mere metaphors' (2004: 2). It is this focus on production as immanent to itself that is one of the features of delirium that they argue is consonant with Marx's insights into the relationship between capital and the division of labour.

> What the schizophrenic experiences, both as an individual and as a member of the human species, is not at all any one aspect of nature, but nature as a process of production . . . within society [a] characteristic man-nature, industry-nature, society-nature relationship is responsible for the distinction of relatively autonomous spheres that are called production, distribution, consumption. But . . . this entire level of distinctions . . . presupposes (as Marx has demonstrated) not only the existence of capital and the division of labour, but also the false consciousness that the capitalist being necessarily acquires . . . For the real truth of the matter – the glaring sober truth that resides in delirium – is that there is no such thing as relatively independent spheres or circuits; production is immediately consumption and a recording process without any mediation, and the recording process and consumption directly determine production.
>
> *(2004: 4)*

Deleuze and Guattari's engagement with schizophrenia and delirium elucidates madness as the kind of process that simultaneously demonstrates and operates in contradistinction to the dependence of capitalism on binary codes that function to divide the living world of production into appropriable units. It should be made clear that they have no romanticized notion of what it means to be a schizophrenic. They refer to the schizophrenic as an artificial social effect of blocking the process of schizophrenic thought and instead of deploying it as a passageway

through or out of modes of dominance or control, mistaking it as a goal in and of itself. Madness, like love, they say, referencing D.H. Lawrence, becomes distorted when pushed from a process into a goal. 'Schizophrenia is like love: there is no specifically schizophrenic phenomenon or entity; schizophrenia is the universe of productive and reproductive desiring machines, universal production as "the essential reality of man and nature"' (2004: 5).

The question then becomes: what exactly is desire? Here, again, they follow Spinoza and his work on affects. For Spinoza and for Deleuze, affects are 'forces that things exert on other things. These forces, in turn, become actualized so long as they find a purchase on those other things' (Tiessen 2012: 13). Massumi (2002) argues that it is through affects that experience is initiated in the individual. It is through our relations with other bodies that we discover our own capacities to think and act. In this sense, our ability to express is not rooted in a foundational self with an interiority and history that requires expression. Instead, expression is founded in the encounter between bodies, each of which has an indeterminate ability to elicit capacities for thought or action from the other. The process of expression is simultaneously the product of, and is always engaged in, an infinite web of production composed of all bodies from the subatomic particle to galaxies. For our purposes here, however, it means that the notion of a psychological, bounded, ego-managed self, no longer constitutes an adequate ground from which to draw a reasonable theory of emotion or cognitive function.

This portrayal of affect as a collision between bodies that elicits the capacities of each, as a particular instance of a much broader ecology of expression extending infinitely in all directions simultaneously, offers us an insight into the world of machines and social productions seen through the lens of immanence. Affect, described this way, opens the door to an understanding of the realm of pre-linguistic machinic production. This, Tiessan (2012: 16) tells us, proposes affect as the pre-linguistic 'enabler of all that follows, of all instances of being affected'. Affect comes before language and is the ground out of which the capacity for expression, in both act and thought, arise. However, language, then, does not originate from within the individual subject, but passes through the subject, simultaneously constituting the parameters of who we are and what we imagine is possible. Language is impersonal and we do not choose the words we speak. Massumi (2002) states that, 'The force of expression strikes the body first, directly and unmediatedly, [from there it passes], transformatively through the flesh before being instantiated in subject-positions subsumed by a system of power' (xviii).

Key here are two elements: (1) the element of affective force as passage and (2) the element of systemic structural power as blockage. This relation of what Deleuze and Guattari call territorializing and deterritorializing vectors of force will comprise a central theme throughout their work. Desire for them is always connective and transitional. Desiring machines operate in couplets, one machine coupled to another. 'Desire always couples continuous flows and partial objects that are by nature fragmentary and fragmented. Desire causes the current to flow, itself flows in turn, and breaks flows' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 5). In this reading, desire does not arise from within the subject, but passes through the subject both constituting it as a mode of expressive capacities and providing the passage between bodies that allows for a machinic assemblage of force that leads to what Spinoza (2000) terms greater or lesser degrees of power of action or thought. In this radically non-dialectic formulation of desire, there is nothing lacking. The effects of desire are continuously and infinitely productive of actuality as absolute affirmation of living force. The entire reading of desire as lack or need is radically refuted. In its place is the real as the product of desire. 'The real is not impossible; on the contrary, within the real everything becomes possible. Desire does not express a molar lack within the subject; rather the molar organization deprives desire of its objective being' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 27).

Deleuze and Guattari refer to what they call 'Lacan's admirable theory of desire' (2004: 27), which they propose as having two poles, one positing desire as the small object *a* as machinic desire without any trace of lack or need and without reference to fantasy. The other pole they suggest is comprised of the 'great Other' which as signifier 'reintroduces a certain notion of lack'. These two poles oscillate between one another. In Deleuze and Guattari it is just such an oscillation that bypasses the dialectic, as the process of oscillation is complete within itself and not premised in lack produced by an absent outside.

Capitalism and desire

Desire then, is constitutive of the real and lack 'is created, planned and organized in and through social production . . . The deliberate creation of lack as a function of the market economy is the art of dominant class' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 28). The relation of lack and desire as forces of territorialization and deterritorialization is central to their analysis of capitalism. Tracing the Marx of the *German Ideology* they trace the production of the socius or social machine from the primitive horde with its chieftains to the regimes of the despot and finally onto the social terrain of capitalism. They propose that capitalism as a system that was founded on the 'ruins of despotic state . . . find itself in a totally new situation' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 33). Previous regimes have relied on the process, noted above, of codifying the flows of desire 'to inscribe them, to record them, to see to it that no flow exists that is not properly damned up, channeled, regulated' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 33). Capitalism is premised on decoding the social in such a way that it can be recoded on the empty signifier of the money form. This is only a faux territorialization as the money sign. Because, as Hardt (1995) points out, capitalism, through the deployment of the money sign, eviscerates and empties social forms. Capitalism, unlike previous social forms, cannot provide a totalizing social code for the socius, as its very function is to decode the socius and open fields of desire. However, these flows of desire are opened onto a field of absolute abstraction that holds the ultimate capacity for social dissolution. This is what they propose creates capitalism as a form of schizophrenia, which they identify as the 'malady of our time' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 34).

This psychotic process of capitalist decoding and deterritorializing of the socius always presses against its own productive force as limit. Capitalism as production accumulates what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'an awesome schizophrenic accumulation of energy or charge' that it must use all of its force to repress and contain for fear that it will undo itself as a social form. Following Marx's twofold tendency to the failing rate of profit, to increases of quantity of surplus value, Deleuze and Guattari posit a twofold movement of decoding and deterritorializing to 'violent and artificial reterritorializing' (2004: 34).

The political proposal that arises from this analysis is to engage desire in a schizophrenic process that seeks the limits of capitalism and scrambles the codes into decoded flows of living desire as opposed to capitalism's abstract decoding. The process for this is proposed in their concept of schizoanalysis, upon which they propose to recuperate the field of psychoanalysis as a revolutionary project. They begin with proposal that madness and delirium originate, not in the individual unconscious or historical family traumas of unmet needs or lack, but in an 'investment of a field that is social, economic, political, cultural, racial and racist, pedagogical and religious'. (2004: 274) The family is only a specific function of the 'unconscious investments of the social field.' (2004:274–75) This social field they suggest is comprised of various forms of mad social investment. Of these two major types are significant: (1) paranoiac fascisizing which invests in centralizing forms of sovereignty and paranoiac formations of social exclusion of outside others and (2) alternatively, schizorevolutionaries that open lines of escape founded in the

force of desire as passage and connectivity, operating under the surface of the dominant system of coding and decoding. The schizorevolutionary group operates at the edges or peripheries of the dominant social and comprises what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as the minoritarian or minor force. The use of minor or minority here is not numeric, but refers to the constitutive capacity of the schizorevolutionary to oppose and provide alternative to the majoritarian system of rule.

The two poles oscillate (à la the reading noted above of Lacan's theory of desire) within the unconscious, sometimes breaking free through revolutionary force and at other times succumbing to internal fascistic impulses. This oscillation forms the ground of schizoanalysis.

Conclusion: towards schizoanalysis

Deleuze and Guattari state that the negative task of schizoanalysis is to form a critique of psychiatry that challenges the social alienation inherent in the deterritorializations of capitalism which lead to mental alienation and perversity, madness, and neurosis. In short, they propose extending the concerns of anti-psychiatry into a thorough politicization of psychiatry (and psychology). Such a politics would comprise disconnecting madness from mental illness and connecting it to 'all of the other flows, including science and art' (2004: 321). This would breach the limits of madness, allowing it to be 'overcome by the means of the other flows escaping control on all sides and carrying us along' (2004: 321).

To do this, Deleuze and Guattari propose a series of positive tasks for schizoanalysis. First, the discovery of one's own desiring machines 'independent of any interpretations' (2004: 322). The elements of such machines are to be found in the functionality and productivity of the assembling of partial objects in such a way that they disturb the boundary between conscious social arrangements and the unconscious. Second, psychoanalysis, they propose, 'should be a song of life or else worth nothing at all' (2004: 331). They reference Reich and note that he had it right when he claimed that 'the product of analysis should be a free and joyous person, a carrier of life flows, capable of carrying them all the way into the desert and decoding them' (2004: 332) Reich referred to the development of a 'revolutionary preconscious investment [that] bears upon new aims, new social syntheses, a new power' (2004: 347). It is perhaps in their proposal for schizoanalysis that Deleuze and Guattari most directly and powerfully bring Deleuze's philosophical project into the flow of desire that constitutes critical psychology. In their reconceptualization of the intersections of psychology, capitalism, psychoanalysis, and revolutionary politics, they offer a unique and idiosyncratic approach to the set of problems and contestations faced by psychologists living within the regimes of capitalist rule.

Further reading

For an introduction to Deleuzian concepts, the Sheilds and Vallee edited book *Demystifying Deleuze* is a good starting point. Also good is: Holland, E.W. (2002) *Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus: Introduction to Schizoanalysis*. Routledge. For a practical example of how these perspectives play out: Skott-Myhre, H. (2009) *Youth and Subculture as Creative Force: Creating New Spaces for Radical Youth Work*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Website resources

http://www.langlab.wayne.edu/cstivale/d–g/
http://www.generation-online.org/p/pdeleuzeguattari.htm

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33

Discursive psychology
Key tenets, some splits, and two examples

Margaret Wetherell

This chapter focuses on discursive research and its links with critical psychology. Discourse approaches emerged in social psychology in the UK in the 1980s, along with the first intimations of critical psychology. Indeed, there was a lot of overlap in the early years, especially in the key proponents. Both intellectual movements were a response to the sense of crisis and dead ends experienced in the 1970s in social psychology (Parker 1989). Key early texts in discursive research included *Changing the Subject* (Henriques et al. 1984/1998), *Discourse and Social Psychology* (Potter and Wetherell 1987), *Arguing and Thinking* (Billig 1987), and *Common Knowledge* (Edwards and Mercer 1987). The 'turn to language' these and subsequent texts initiated in psychology drew creatively and generatively on larger intellectual developments such as post-structuralism and postmodernism, Foucault's analyses of knowledge/power, theories of ideology, Lacan's thinking, microsociology and social constructionism, conversation analysis and ethnomethodology, ancient studies of rhetoric, the sociology of science, Rom Harre's ethogenics, speech act theory, and Wittgensteinian philosophy. Discursive work was exciting and liberating at a point where social psychology was almost entirely dominated by experimental research in laboratories, or quantitative questionnaires and surveys. It offered new ways of working with people's meaning-making and with their talk and texts focused directly on everyday life.

It is probably fair to say that, now, critical psychology has a love/hate relationship with discourse studies – perhaps still with more love than hate. For many critical psychologists, it remains the case that discourse theory and analysis offer the most robust epistemological and methodological alternatives to mainstream psychology, the most effective interrogations of the individualism and conservatism of conventional psychology, and the best means of revealing the startling constitutive power of psy-techniques in capitalist and neoliberal social formations. For many, discursive research remains the preeminent route reconnecting the subject of psychology with social relations. But, for a number of critical psychologists, discursive research has also ultimately disappointed. It has been accused of re-establishing new orthodoxies (Billig 2012; Parker 2012), being too relativistic (Parker 1992), presenting smoothed out versions of the conflicted and apparently incommunicable aspects of subjectivities (Frosh 1999; Hollway and Jefferson 2005), and not sufficiently engaging with the material and sensuous aspects of human social relations (Brown et al. 2009; Maiers 2001; Willig 2007).

In this brief review, I will be defining the field of discourse studies pretty broadly. Discursive research in psychology is a rapidly evolving stream, now one with many tributaries. It includes the discursive psychology developed by Potter and Edwards (Edwards 1997; Edwards and Potter 1992; Potter 1996;), the most sustained research enterprise in the field. There is also the tradition of work on rhetoric, argument, and dilemma inspired by Billig and his colleagues (e.g. Billig 1991; Billig et al. 1988), and my own and other related research in what is sometimes called critical discursive psychology (e.g. Durrheim and Dixon 2004; Edley 2001; Wetherell 1998, 2007). There are lines of discursive research closely aligned to conversation analysis (e.g. Antaki and Widdicombe 1998; Kitzinger 2000; Speer and Stokoe 2011), lines more engaged with post-structuralist discourse theories (e.g. Gavey 1989; Parker 1992; Rose 1998; Walkerdine 1990), work which combines discursive research and social identity theory (e.g. Condor 2000; Reicher and Hopkins 2001), and which emphasises discursive and narrative threads (e.g. Taylor 2010).

Given this extent and richness, my aim is simply to elaborate some shared concerns, some lines of fracture, and some of the ways discursive research engages in critical activity. I will first describe some key shared features of discursive research which sum up its main challenges to mainstream psychology, and then look at some of the splits and differences that emerged as discursive research developed. I will go on to describe two studies to illustrate how two very different kinds of discursive research have contributed to critical psychology's concerns with social justice, before concluding with an overall assessment.

The discursive challenge to mainstream psychology

Three features typically distinguish discursive research in psychology – an emphasis on discourse as social action, a focus on the regularities, patterns, and practices evident in people's talk and texts, and a view of subjectivities and psychological processes as situated, relational, and distributed phenomena.

Discourse as social action

Discursive research in psychology works with a constructionist theory of meaning, in contrast to what Edwards (1997) describes as a view of language as a 'do–nothing domain'. Mainstream psychology typically assumes a simple true/false framework. People might lie, may be deceived, or may not know, but assuming good information and good faith (plus good research design), their words are generally thought to work as a transparent medium and neutral servant, faithfully representing, reflecting, tagging, and conveying mental states, events, attitudes, cognitions, behaviours, and environments. In this view, the world, language, and minds are separate entities with language as a window or expressive conduit between minds and worlds.

In contrast, for discursive researchers, language is performative and constitutive. Our discourse often describes our actions but these descriptions are also a form of social action per se. Our accounts are complex products, interwoven with histories of previous talk. They are constructions which bring social worlds into being, and which make things happen. Accounts circulate, are exchanged, become marginal or dominant, are stifled or celebrated, and turned through human work into truths. From this perspective, discourse builds worlds and it builds minds (Edwards and Potter 1992; Potter and Wetherell 1987). People's talk and writing is about the world and about themselves, but it also variably constructs events, memories, identities, social relations, group life, subjectivities, and other people. Discursive researchers thus acknowledge and pay attention to the indexical nature of discourse ignored in mainstream psychology,

appreciating that the meaning of an utterance and its sense and implications depend on its contexts of use. Taken seriously, indexicality has some major implications for psychological method, for business as usual in experimental psychology, and for assumptions concerning mind and behaviour.

Discursive researchers ask the question which is of little interest to traditional positivistic psychology – why this utterance and not some other, why this version or formulation of self and not some other? We are interested in what discourse accomplishes. In exploring this accomplishment, one might be concerned with how an account is tailored for a particular argumentative and rhetorical context and its functions in that context. What might be of interest is what a particular version at a particular moment tells us about the wider discursive economy, about what is taken for granted in a social scene, the broader politics of representation, about the ways in which cultural worlds have been made, and who is routinely empowered and who is disempowered as a consequence.

Discourse patterns

Related to this, discursive researchers assume that while people's discourse can be chaotic, idiosyncratic, and random, it is more usually patterned, regular, and ordered. Discursive research is the study of these patterns, and for critical psychologists who do discursive research, the interest is often in patterns (such as categorisations, formulations, versions, accounts) that create, perpetrate, and reinforce discrimination, marginalisation, and asymmetric power relations.

The patterns discursive researchers in psychology investigate are generally understood as *practices*. In other words, the regularities studied by discursive researchers are not presumed to be the strong, determining, acontextual cause–effect relationships between variables that are the gold standard for quantitative psychologists. Practices, as Edwards (1997) notes, have a 'could be otherwise' quality. They are open and flexible, subject to change, deeply connected to situation and context, and, often, a form of knowing how, more like a craft skill, a habit or routine, than a fixed action programme. This is not to say that people can always articulate the practices that guide their discursive conduct, or that these are necessarily intentional, conscious, and transparent. Some practices become automatic, so rapid that there is no room for prior reflection, and some are so deeply embedded in the history of our development that, as Butler (2005: 78) comments, we can never expect to grasp and describe the entire texture of the relational and discursive fields in which 'a person like us' took shape.

Different kinds of discursive research focus on different kinds of practices. Those researchers who focus on interaction, and who turn to conversation analysis and ethnomethodology, are interested, broadly, in people's methods for producing social life, and more particularly in the kinds of patterned sequences around turn-taking that make up everyday activities such as when workers in residential homes offer choices to people with intellectual impairments (Antaki et al. 2008), or when speakers inoculate against being seen to have a stake in some particular outcome (Potter 1997). Discursive psychologists examine, too, how psychological processes (attribution, collective memory, categorisation, evaluation) work discursively, changing psychologists' conceptions of their core phenomena (Edwards 1997; Edwards and Potter 1992).

For other discursive researchers, it is patterns in discursive content (as well as discursive activities) that are more central, such as the interpretative repertoires, subject positions, cultural narratives, and dilemmas making up racist ideologies (Edley 2001; Wetherell and Potter 1992). Here the discursive activities of interest are those associated with the politics of representation such as justification, defence, subjectification, and the maintenance of local

and more general hegemonies. Even broader still, researchers (e.g. Rose 1998) might be concerned with entire epistemic regimes and patterns of person formulation characteristic of particular historical periods, along with the role of academic and applied psychology as disciplining institutions.

A relational and distributed psychology

Work on discourse practices across different scales reinforces and is typically commensurate with the view of human psychology that emerged from relational, narrative, and social constructionist theory in the 1990s (Bruner 1990; Gergen 1985, 1991; Hermans 2001; Shotter 1993; Wertsch 1990). Michael Billig (1999a) outlined the contrast with conventional psychology particularly clearly in his argument that discursive research involves *dialogical* analysis. He describes how conventional psychology, especially cognitive psychology, assumes an isolated and solipsistic individual, removed from the hubbub of everyday interaction. In effect, the individual typically acts alone in much traditional psychological research, rather like Rodin's sculpture of 'The Thinker': head in hands, on a rock, being psychological, with any relational context or history denied and obscured.

Discursive research demonstrates how memories, emotions, and other psychological processes are constructed jointly across a relational field (Edwards 1997; Middleton and Brown 2005). Similarly, it shows how identity depends not just on self-assertion, and claims concerning who one is, but on fields of differences, and interactional, categorical, and ideological work (e.g. Condor 2000; Edley and Wetherell 1997; Wetherell 1998). In these senses, it demonstrates why human psychology is perhaps best described as distributed, and is certainly extended way past the boundaries of individual bodies and minds, intersubjective, occasioned, emerging 'in-between'. In a real sense, psychology is located in practices, including particularly discursive practices (Wetherell 2008).

For many discursive researchers, this raises questions about who speaks when we speak. Influenced by the thinking emerging from theorists such as Bakhtin, Vygotsky, and Voloshinov (Maybin 2001), it becomes possible to more thoroughly consider, for instance, Erving Goffman's (1981) early concerns with the ways in which people animate and author voices and to demonstrate how these voices are emergent from complex social and cultural histories. Thus when we speak we combine together in new ways fragments of other conversations and texts and, crucially, the voices of others are made into our own, contextualising and re-contextualising their previous evaluative accents. This perspective gives a much richer and more social take on the act of introspective self-report which has been such a staple of traditional psychological and psychoanalytic research. It suggests also that subjectivity and identity will be more conflicted, inconsistent, fragmented, and multiple than traditionally assumed, constituting and reconstituting as people move variably across intersectional identity fields and psycho–discursive practices.

In this context, the notion of subject positions (Davies and Harré 1990), resonating with Foucauldian explorations of what it means to 'be subjected', and with Althusser's work on interpellation, has become a familiar analytic concept in much discursive research in psychology. The position someone speaks from is in this way interrogated more thoroughly, and not seen so innocently as a simple experiential or phenomenological act. To speak one discourse or interpretative repertoire rather than another, and thus inhabit one speaking position rather than another, is an act which constitutes identity and subjectivity in particular ways, where all the personal, ideological, and social implications of that act, along with the discursive and social history of the positions, are not likely to be clear.

Some splits and differences

In these ways, then, discursive research in psychology challenges conventional psychology, and more crucially, has gone on to develop knowledge apparatuses and research methods that can foreground power relations and the social processes and practices involved in the formation of psychological subjects and psychological events. Researchers typically work with transcripts of interviews or focus group discussions, with texts such as media outputs, with archive material, or with taped and sometimes filmed examples of naturally occurring interaction. Although most discursive researchers would continue to adhere broadly to the three general principles or key features I have just outlined, some major differences in emphasis have emerged over time in scale, approach, and mode of analysis. In simple terms, these differences fall into what we (Edley and Wetherell 1997) presented at one point as a contrast between 'top down' versus 'bottom up' approaches.

Differences reflect contrasts in the wider discourse traditions, extending beyond discursive work in psychology. Conversation analysts and ethnomethodologists, for instance, advocate a 'bottom up' approach, meaning that their preference is to work in a fine-grain way with the patterns found in naturally occurring data rather than, say, interview data (see Schegloff 1997). They tend to be much more concerned with the generative, active, and lively nature of social interaction and work with short episodic encounters, usually with small numbers of participants. In contrast, at the other extreme, post-structuralist influenced discourse research has been more interested in discourse on a large scale. The focus has been on the discursive formations (and texts) that organize social life from above, as it were (see Laclau and Mouffe 1987), or the ways in which social 'playing fields', with their ensembles of subject positions and interpretative resources, are set out in advance, if not determining then certainly strongly constraining creative human activity.

In psychology, discursive psychologists and conversation analysts have followed the more fine-grain approach, while those of us who have been more interested in broader questions of rhetoric, discourse, identity, narrative, and ideology have tried to work in a more eclectic fashion. We have not been persuaded by the procedural taboo on critical reflection and interpretation of participants' activities, or by the prohibition on 'going beyond the data' to attempt to make sense of the ideological import, for instance, of a particular pattern. We have tried to combine aspects of the more fine-grain focus on activities and local practices, and the emphases of early work on discourse in social psychology, while also paying attention to broader social relations and social contexts and to structuring powers (see Wetherell 1998, 2007 for a justification of such an approach).

Inevitably, these contrasting choices have come to define and legislate what counts as good and proper analysis in peer reviews, for instance, and in definitions of academic communities. Discursive psychologists and conversation analysts have argued strongly, for instance, that discursive research should always be founded on participants' orientations, should adopt the 'documentary method' of ethnomethodology, and should work with 'naturally occurring' data in preference to interviews or focus groups. The documentary method is the requirement that analysts base their claims on the demonstrable actions of participants, in particular on their interpretations of the situation and context as evidenced by their next turns in a conversation (see Wooffitt 2005 for a strong defence of this approach).

For more eclectic discursive researchers, however, an analysis tends not to be complete without some larger interpretation of the social and ideological implications of the patterns presented. Analysis in this case does not stop at participants' concerns, and participants' actions might often be set in a broader political context that they might find unfamiliar or disavow.

This work, too, is sceptical of the constraints imposed by 'naturally occurring data' and by the small scale of conversation analytic work in particular (see for more extended discussion, the 1998/1999/2000 debate in *Discourse & Society* between Schegloff 1998, 1999a and 1999b; Wetherell 1998; Billig 1999b and 1999c and Weatherall 2000 and the *Culture & Psychology* 1999 Special Issue on emotion and discourse, in particular the articles by Edwards and Campos et al.)

What difference might this make for critical psychology? The concerns and objectives of critical psychology are in many ways much more obviously aligned with eclectic discursive research in psychology and with 'top down' 'big discourse' approaches such as post-structuralist research. But, work in conversation analysis in psychology and in discursive psychology is also sometimes relevant to critical psychology, and some important findings have emerged from fine-grain work on natural interaction, particularly when researchers have gone somewhat off script and been eager to locate and understand the interactions they are studying in terms of broader social contexts.

Two illustrative studies

Examples of discursive studies in psychology that mesh with the aims and objectives of critical psychology abound. The two illustrative studies I have chosen elegantly illuminate issues central to the concerns of critical psychology and exemplify some principal contrasting ways of working now found in discursive research in psychology.

A fine-grain example from feminist conversation analysis

The first example is a study conducted by Celia Kitzinger examining heteronormativity or 'the mundane production of heterosexuality as the normal, natural, taken-for-granted sexuality' (2005: 477). Kitzinger's material was a dataset of 59 after-hours calls to a medical practice in a large town in the English Midlands. Kitzinger focuses on those calls (50 of the 59) where the caller is someone other than the patient and is ringing on their behalf a locum doctor not already familiar with the patient. The majority of such calls were from family members (spouses, parents, siblings, etc.) and the minority were from non-family members such as friends, neighbours, etc. The calls were recorded by the doctor, who deleted any identifying information about the patient.

Kitzinger is working, in other words, with a classic conversation analysis dataset. The data are a sample of naturally occurring conversations collected by one of the participants rather than being researcher-generated. These are typically short moments of episodic interaction between two people operating in an institutional context. The material is then transcribed in great detail using the notation system developed by Gail Jefferson, which aims to include what Kitzinger describes as 'those small but significant features of talk (cut offs, silences, etc.) that interactants use in systematic and orderly ways' (2005: 481). Analysis involves searching for patterns in this talk where these patterns are seen as practices ('systematic and orderly'). In this case, Kitzinger showed the structures of heteronormativity at work in every interaction.

Research of this kind becomes *critical* when it reveals how power, privilege, exclusion, and marginalization work through the minute details of everyday normativity. Analysis can illuminate what we could call aspects of a kind of 'social unconscious' – practices which are implicit, not articulated, forceful, repetitive, untroubled, repressive of alternatives, and automatic.

The overall effect is to produce what Haraway describes as a technology for producing the effect of 'natural relationships' (cited in Kitzinger 2005: 494). Among many systematic practices, Kitzinger notes for instance that the doctor routinely displays an assumption that any adult

calling concerning a child is that child's parent. Though there are, of course, multiple ways in which any one person could be described, the dominance in this context of definitions of self and others through the co-resident nuclear family constellation is striking. In particular, it suggests, as a kind of thought experiment, the interactional trouble and extra layers of negotiation likely to be involved if the person ringing on someone else's behalf was their same sex partner, and thus, for Kitzinger, the importance of campaigns for same-sex marriage and claims to those powerfully normative family relationships.

An example from critical discursive research in psychology

My second example is a study conducted by Martha Augoustinos, Keith Tuffin, and Mark Rapley (1999) focused on the discursive themes and rhetorical work evident as a sample of non-indigenous Australians discussed contemporary issues concerning race relations in Australia. For Kitzinger, the focus was on the activities of categorisation (self and other reference) in everyday interaction. In contrast, Augoustinos et al. were more concerned with the *content* of people's discourse as well as with what was being accomplished. Their focus was on the regularities in participants' constructing and meaning-making displayed in their formulations and accounts, and on interpreting the ideological implications and thrust of this discourse in the context of a white settler society with a particular history and patterning of privilege, power, and inequality.

The significance of this kind of research for critical psychology depends, first, on the centrality and pervasiveness of the discursive themes in the broad social contexts being studied. Augoustinos et al. note that their data from Australia reproduce patterns found in work in New Zealand (e.g. McCreanor 1989; Wetherell and Potter 1992), a similar white settler society. Pervasiveness is important because the aim is to highlight the *dominant* discursive resources used by the privileged. Such research also aims to make a contribution through the extended ideological analysis it offers of the upshot, consequences, and implications of the prevalent discursive themes. To give just one example, Augoustinos et al. argue that a consequence of the discursive patterning they identify is that British settlement becomes 'not an "invasion" during which Indigenous people were "massacred", but rather is constructed as an innocuous "lifestyle incompatibility"' (1999: 370). This, they suggest, maintains older notions of the 'white man's burden' and misrepresents forceful colonisation as 'caring'. It is not contemporary white Australians' fault if Aboriginal people fail to 'fit in' with the good things on offer.

Conclusion

As these two representative examples illustrate, discursive research in psychology is often motivated by shock and anger at inequity, marginalisation, manifestations of privilege, and justifications of unjust treatment. More than this profoundly important reactivity, however, I hope this brief review of the field has also reminded that discursive research provides critical psychology with sets of tools, theories, and methods to systematically investigate and describe power relations and understand better how they operate.

It is certainly the case, as some critics have argued, that discursive research has become a new orthodoxy – increasingly formulaic, bedded down, and operating paradigmatically. The days are past when it was highly intriguing, novel, and revolutionary to explore constructionist theory and consider meaning as something which was actively made (as opposed to authoritatively given) and which could be thus contested or re-made. But this anxiety about orthodoxy while pointing to serious issues about capture and appropriation seems to me potentially an elitist

concern. It was not that amusing, fun, or creative in the 1980s for emerging researchers and graduate students to have no models to follow, few audiences for their work, and little feel for what a discursive study could or should look like. The advantage of established paradigms is that they provide the platforms and foils for new conversations and new revolts against orthodoxies. New generations can start from here. These conversations, already beginning in critical psychology around the psychosocial, for instance, concerning relations between discourse theory and psychoanalysis, and through new concerns with affect and the sensuous, can only intensify in years to come.

Further reading

For those relatively new to discursive research these two volumes constituted the Open University post-graduate course on Discourse Analysis. They contain worked examples of different styles of analysis, key readings, and reviews of core debates: M. Wetherell, S. Taylor and S.J. Yates (eds) (2001) *Discourse Theory and Practice* (Volume One) and *Discourse as Data* (Volume Two). London: Sage

The Special Issue of the *British Journal of Social Psychology* (2012, 51) edited by M. Augoustinos and C. Tileaga presents a useful retrospective of 25 years of research since the publication of the early texts in the 1980s.

Many critical psychologists are interested in discourse because of its relevance to investigations of identity issues. This review provides a comprehensive starting point: B. Benwell and E. Stokoe (2006) *Discourse and Identity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Website resources

Two discourse research groups have dominated the UK scene. Their websites are full of interesting links to current research and, particularly in the case of the second, links to other critical work:

www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/socialsciences/research/groups/darg

www.discourseunit.com

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Part III

Standpoints and perspectives on psychology and critical psychology

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Part IIIa

Perspectives

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34

Feminist psychology
Researches, interventions, challenges

Amana Mattos

As with all the human sciences that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, psychology carries in its main propositions and objects of study the marks of the society in which it was conceived and developed. As many critical approaches have been pointing out during the last decades, hegemonic theories in psychology and its main concepts – such as the *individual* and their abilities, needs, problems – derive from the dominant thought of modern societies. In this context, science was created by highly educated white men, which is expressed through the ideas and researches conducted by academics and scientists. During the second half of the twentieth century and also in the first decades of the twenty-first century, feminist researchers and activists have been bringing to the foreground not only the discrimination suffered by women, but also a discussion on how the ideas of universality and normality are constructed in a science based on a sexist perspective. As Nogueira (2001) stresses, psychology as a scientific discourse is deeply committed to controlling women. Its theories, which hierarchically dichotomize genders, are frequently mentioned to justify gender oppression against girls and women.

Feminist activists have been fighting for women's rights in Western societies for a long time, and the fight against patriarchy and sexism acquired different forms and targets. This activism was responsible for the intermingling of political practices with theoretical issues, revealing that scientific objects are defined as important by specific limited perspectives, which cannot simply be erased from the theories. So, even in its different approaches (classic – or white – feminism, Black feminism, postcolonial feminism, post-structuralist feminism, transfeminism, ecofeminism, and so on), feminists are constantly developing a political critique based on the experience of different oppressions, a critique which is necessary to rethink society and its practices – science included.

The contributions of feminist perspectives to the human sciences are extremely important, but constantly underestimated and frequently put aside as a marginal subject (Kitzinger 1990). Particularly in psychology, central concepts, such as sexuality, autonomy, and identity, bring in their definitions and uses the marks of a sexist knowledge. Psychological practices, which are oriented by these concepts and definitions, recurrently perpetuate inequalities, unjust power relations, and objectification of groups and subjects considered immature, not capable, or abnormal, such as children, disabled people, indigenous people, white women, men and women of colour, gay and trans people, people with mental disorders, poor people, and so on. Affirming

the maxim of working for the good of subjects, psychological research and practices (which are deeply connected) delimit places of oppression and silence, establishing who is authorized to speak for the 'others'.

Having this panorama in mind, feminist perspectives appear as a crucial approach for a critical psychology which aims at raising problems and queries concerning forms of oppression that take place in our society. Not only forms of oppression based on gender and sex differences, but also on race, class, religious orientation, and so on, since inequalities are always intersectional.

In this chapter, I will start by presenting some different perspectives that compose the broad field of feminist theories and practices. Then, I will discuss the following psychological concepts that are problematized by feminist theories: autonomy, identity, and sexuality. After that, I will consider the contributions of feminist psychology for the area, its challenges and difficulties, offering some examples from researches and practices.

Feminisms and psychology: a heterogeneous puzzle

The main contributions of feminist authors in the field of psychology started in the 1970s, with the feminist critiques of science in different areas of knowledge. Before this, women were effaced, neglected, or undervalued in hegemonic psychological theories (Saavedra and Nogueira 2006). Since the 1970s, we can observe an increase in the number of studies based on feminist perspectives in the discipline of psychology, addressing different aspects of the area: childhood and development, gender inequalities, education, research methodologies, and so on. The majority of these researchers locate themselves in gender studies, or women's studies. Only some of them locate themselves in the area of feminist psychology. In other words, we can discuss the impact of feminist perspectives in psychology by considering both feminist psychology researchers and researchers that do not claim this label for their works, although clearly influenced by feminist approaches.

However, assuming a feminist orientation is important to engage the researcher in a critical perspective about reality, institutions, and power relations in the field of research and also in academia (Nogueira 2001). Thinking critically about the objectification of certain positions is an exercise constantly promoted by feminist perspectives, and it is not restricted to gender issues. Feminist contributions to childhood studies, for instance, are well known (Alanen 2001), and this influence can also be found in distinct approaches of developmental psychology. From the appreciation of feminine psychological aspects of women, who should have more voice and participation in their developmental processes (Chodorow 1978; Gilligan 1982), to the critical deconstructions of the object of 'childhood', considering the colonizing and sexist standpoints of traditional developmental psychology (Burman 2008a; Castro 1998; Walkerdine et al. 2001), feminist epistemology and reflexions are influential in contemporary childhood studies.

Another field deeply influenced by feminist epistemologies is research methods. The feminist (and also post-structuralist) critique of the objectification and essentializing of groups and subjects, as mentioned above, opened a broader discussion on the political engagement of the researcher and the fictionality or constant construction of the subject of the investigation in different areas of knowledge, contributing to a severe critique of positivist paradigms of science (Haraway 1991; Spivak 1988). In feminist psychology, and research in particular, feminist epistemologies called into question the gender of the universal subject – or the *individual* – of psychology, exposing the patriarchal assumptions present in its practices. Also, feminist psychologists put into perspective the context in which knowledge is constructed, considering the role of gender and power relations, as well as of language, in the production of knowledge (Harding 1993; Neves and Nogueira 2004).

Since the influences and appropriations of feminisms in psychology are not homogeneous, there are many contradictions and conflicts in this field. I would like to point out one of these conflicts, which is constantly present in feminist discussions: the tension between academic feminists and feminist activists. Many of the concepts that are discussed in feminist debates originated in academic research. Besides, many feminists (psychologists included) are activists, inside and outside universities. However, Black feminists and other groups that have not historically participated in Western academic spheres (immigrants, LGBT, and indigenous people, for example) have been interrogating (white) academic feminists about their privileges in the production of knowledge (Anzaldúa 2007; Lorde 2007; Trinh Min-ha 1989). In Lorde's words,

> *the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.* They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. And this fact is only threatening to those women who still define the master's house as their only source of support.
>
> *(Lorde 2007: 112, emphasis in original)*

Furthermore, many activists consider that the feminism discussed in academia is far from real situations women face every day. For them, theoretical knowledge can be extremely classist and racist, perpetuating bourgeois privileges and patronizing poor, battered, illegal immigrant, drug-using women.

(Re)thinking assumptions: psychology in feminist perspectives

As a discipline oriented by the paradigm of modern science, psychology presents a universalistic description of its objects. This tendency can be identified in different areas of psychological research, such as development, personality, behaviour, and cognition. Feminists raise different critiques of the idea of universality and neutrality, as I have already noted. However, some subjects are particularly problematic for feminist theories – especially for those that share a socio-constructivist perspective. In this section, I will discuss three of these concepts: (a) the concept of autonomous and developed subject; (b) the concept of identity grounded in universal and essentialist models; and (c) the idea of sexuality and sexual difference.

Autonomy

The main contributions of developmental psychology are oriented towards the achievement of the adult as a normal and mature subject, a position that is reached after a developmental process conceived according to universal bases (Burman 2008a; Castro 1998). This developmentalism, a heritage of the scientific thought of the nineteenth century, is intimately connected to evolutionary theories. The commitment to so-called societal progress can be found in each theory that discusses childhood based on ideas of normality and enhancement of learning, abilities, and skills. By the hierarchization of individual differences, psychology reduces personal idiosyncrasies to features that should be shared by every *normal* child in a specific age group (Burman 2008b). Conceived in the core of modern society, psychology reproduces in its hegemonic theories the relation between personal success and individual adaptation to the environment. Thus, being outside the norm is a perfect nightmare – particularly if a child is regarded as being 'abnormal'. Guided by an extended bibliography composed of works on developmental psychology, education, and paediatrics, parents constantly search for help and counselling from specialists on childhood, capable of identifying any 'irregularity' in their children's development (Mattos 2011).

The objectification of the developmental process has an impact not only on the way psychology – and, also, modernity – conceives childhood, but also on gender relations. As Burman observes (2008b, 2011), hegemonic and patriarchal discourses presented in developmental psychology have material consequences in women's lives. Knowledge and power positions are mainly occupied by men – doctors, intellectuals, politicians – that guide parents (as *mothers*) so they can bring up their children correctly. As the child-bearer, women are addressed as passive subjects who need specialists (usually *white educated men*) to explain what they need to do with their bodies, feelings, fears, and children. Even when we think about schools and their majority of female teachers, it is possible to identify gender oppressions in the relations among teachers and principals of schools, doctors, and politicians (Louro 1997; Mattos et al. 2013).

Another gender issue present in developmental theories is the alleged desexualization and gender neutrality of the process. In the process of becoming a normal adult, autonomy is a central concept. It is conceived as self-government and self-determination, and it is something that is developed during childhood and youth, aiming for a self-control of behaviour, cognition, emotions, moral judgment, and body. Feminists have questioned if autonomy is a gender-neutral feature, since it points to qualities that are the privilege of a determined class, gender, and race. As Friedman and Bolte (2001: 89) observe, 'autonomy had been historically inaccessible to subordinated and oppressed social groups, such as women, whose labors were often precisely what freed middle- and upper-class white males to live autonomous lives'.

Socialization of children and teenagers is the process that leads the not-yet adults to autonomy, and it has been described by important (male) authors (Berger and Luckmann 1991; Piaget 2001). Feminists have problematized this concept in the last decades, calling attention to the valorization of individualism to the detriment of more collective and mutually dependent experiences. In fact, different feminists highlight that autonomy, as a feature acquired during the developmental process, is a fiction, and it operates within intricate networks of dependency among subjects (Benhabib 1987; Hirschmann 2003; Sevenhuijsen 1998).

Assuming that the developed subject has attributes and qualities that are socially related to men, feminists raise important critiques of the available models in psychology for testing, evaluating, and measuring boys and girls in their developments. If the model is gender-biased, the results of evaluations will perpetuate inequalities. As Coole (1993: 86) affirms, regarding negative freedom (the liberal concept of freedom, related to individual independence): 'if negative freedom does not specify men as its beneficiaries, its logic strongly implies that the later are not-women'. Therefore, feminist critiques in developmental psychology address both its main concepts and its alleged neutrality, putting into perspective the universality and neutrality taken for granted by its authors.

Identity

If the concept of autonomy is central for development theories, identity is the heart of theories of personhood in psychology. The notions of self, identity, and subjectivity (even if they are not synonyms) refer to theoretical models related to the totality of the person. In these theories, the privileged moment for the development of identity is adolescence. Described as a moment in which biological, psychosocial, and cultural factors must be coordinated, adolescence is the period of the assumption of identity, frequently assumed as universal – at least in its generic traces (Erikson 1987; Valsiner 1989).

For Erikson (1987), for example, the psychic integration of experiences makes possible the feeling of uniqueness of the person in a given society and social group. The unity of the personhood depends on a solid sense of identity. This sense is possible once the individual feels

connected, in solidarity, with the ideals of the group. From learning to walk to getting married, once an individual develops abilities and skills that are valued in society, 'he' (and usually it is 'he') is gaining self-esteem, which is the basis for a solid identity.

The psychological concept of identity has its roots in fundamental philosophical debates on sameness and otherness. Philosophical theories of the subject based on 'his' sameness (or identity) derive from a representationalist conception of knowledge, which presumes a 'real world' that is represented by mental facts or by language. Feminist critiques point out that, in psychology, categories of identity, which mark what is immutable in a subject, can be (and frequently are) used to 'compartmentalize and obscure aspects of women's identities' (Burman 1998: 15).

That is the case in Erikson's theory. For him, the construction of feminine and masculine identities is based on a binary and anatomical model which outlines gendered needs, abilities and possibilities for both sexes. His works, written in the post-Second World War period, describe adolescence based on values shared at the time, considering, for instance, that the development of integrated identity in women can only be accomplished by marriage and maternity.

Post-structuralist critiques counter that identity is defined by discursively crossed lines, delimiting inside/outside and sameness/otherness, and they delimit the identities of individuals, groups, and nations. For Butler (1990), identity should be understood as a normative ideal rather than a description of one's experience. The 'coherence' and 'continuity' that compose personhood must be understood as products of the norms of ruling intelligibilities in that context. This perspective brings an important consequence: some identities simply cannot exist, because they put at risk the cultural and discursive lines that establish what is normal or acceptable in that society. Butler describes these identities as 'abject', a concept that is especially important for gender identities.

For Fulani (1998: 156), identities in hegemonic psychology discourses turn into a 'marketable commodity', regardless of whether they are considered as inferior or superior positions, since they reinforce 'the discourse and experience of possessive individualism, as yet another patriarchal psychological product'. This position is shared by Trinh Min-ha (1989), who warns of the hazard of approximating women's identity to 'mentally ill' or 'mentally underdeveloped' categories. This risk exists once the dominant and colonialist thought of identity is present in these discussions – even within women's movements.

Another problematic aspect we can see in gender studies regarding the concept of identity is the separation of gender discussions from feminist perspectives (Saffioti 2001). This is happening in some areas, such as women's studies, that naturalize gender inequalities by not contributing to deconstruct them. As Nogueira (2001) points out, many researchers that locate themselves in women's studies develop very traditional works about women's subjectivity and role in society, without critically discussing institutions, power relations, or even the hegemonic concepts of woman and femininity presented in traditional psychology.

As with other psychological concepts, identity must be considered in a feminist perspective so that it can be deconstructed and addressed in a critical way. As Trinh Min-ha (1989) affirms, identities must be thought 'as points of re-departure of the critical processes by which I have come to understand how the personal – the ethnic me, the female me – is political' (Trinh Min-ha 1989: 104).

Sexuality

When examining the universal subject studied by many areas of traditional psychology, sexuality is usually treated as a secondary aspect to the study of cognition, perception, emotion, and other mental processes. However, it became a central subject in psychoanalysis and clinical

interventions. From his first works on, Freud addressed sexuality as a constitutive dimension of human subjectivity.

Assuming that sexuality is founded on the unconscious, Freud gave a prominent role to this aspect of human life, which was constantly considered shameful, embarrassing or, at least, private in Victorian society. While listening to his patients in a psychoanalytical setting, Freud developed complex theories on modern subjectivity and the role of sexual difference in their constitution. Since the subject in psychoanalysis is not unitary, but divided in psychic instances, sexual difference is not experienced as something univocal, but is permeated by otherness. Based on the Freudian theory, different psychoanalysts conducted their practice and developed their theories on human sexuality. Many of these works reproduce gender stereotypes, perpetuating sexual hierarchies in their explanations of human sexuality (as in the work of Erik Erikson, discussed above). Even Freudian psychoanalytic concepts such as the passivity/activity of drive, related to femininity/masculinity, or the gender roles presented in the scenario of the Oedipus Complex (the dramatic functions of the mother, the father, the son, and the daughter) are constantly problematized by feminist authors (e.g. Benjamin 1987; Butler 1990). However, psychoanalysis had an important role in complexifying the understanding of sexuality. Especially with Lacanian contributions, the importance of language in the construction of the sexed body became central, allowing significant dialogues among psychoanalysis and contemporary gender studies.

In psychology theories, sexual difference can be regarded as the biological differences between men and women, which correspond to psychological differences in subjectivity and personality of both sexes. The latter are understood as gender characters, differentiated in a binary opposition of male/female. Alternatively, sexual differences can be conceived as socially-constructed differences, which produce discursive bodies and meanings for different sexes. This position has led critical contributions of post-structuralist feminism to discuss sexuality. Authors of this position intend to undo the binary dichotomy of nature versus nurture in the understanding of human sexuality, affirming that medicine, as a modern discipline, discursively constructs its objects, including sexed bodies (Butler 1990; Foucault 1978).

From a post-structuralist perspective, bodies always become gendered in the context of a determined culture, and social practices of this culture delimit the possibilities of sexual expressions. 'Gender and sexual identities are, therefore, composed and defined by social relations, they are shaped by power relations of a society' (Louro 2010: 11). Inspired by psychoanalytic discussions regarding the processes of subjective identification, Butler (1990) highlights the argument that the subject is built as such by going through the process of asserting a sex. This is important because of the assertion that belonging to a particular sex does not occur naturally, nor is it based on specific features. The constitution of a particular sex is done by positioning the subject before social norms. Here, Butler highlights that the discursive hegemony of heterosexuality is constitutive of our society, and that its weight needs to be considered and examined when it comes to discussing the 'how' of subjects asserting their sex.

The heteronormativity of Western societies is an important target for post-structuralist feminist critiques. By heteronormativity, I refer to the rules and norms of discursive practices that are guided by the gender binary (masculine and feminine) and by the hierarchical superiority of the former to the latter (Butler 1990). In the critique of this hegemonic discursive order, feminists constantly affirm that psychology and psychoanalysis have a central role in its maintenance. Their theories and concepts are present in educational practices that act on the reinforcement of heterosexuality and of distinct places of gender, both in schools and in society in general (Louro 1997). Feminist theories and interventions have the challenge of rethinking sexuality in critical ways, contributing to opening possibilities for non-heteronormative experiences and expressions.

Researching in the field of feminist psychology

Feminist psychology can be defined not only as an area of gender studies in psychology but as a permanent critique of epistemological postulates that (re)produce hierarchies and sexism in psychological knowledge and practices. As Burman (2008a) points out, psychological theories are intimately connected to the normalization of human life, and to the institutionalization of its different experiences in the modern age. The discussion of how psychology monitors, confines, and institutionalizes people considered *abnormal* is related to feminism in so far as the 'normal position' is called into question by feminists as a male-dominant and privileged position. This critique, however, assumes different perspectives, and can be developed by the use of different research methods which cannot be unified in a 'feminist methodology' (Phoenix 1990).

The feminist slogan 'the personal is political' is essential for feminist researches. Thinking of everyday life as a political field (as Barbara Kruger reminds us by saying that 'your body is a battleground' in one of her art works), feminists are constantly problematizing everyday dynamics, relations, and common sense ideas, aiming to denounce and deconstruct naturalized power relations. According to Haug, this exercise addresses the 'everyday' in two ways. First, as a source of knowledge that brings sexist and androcentric cultural components. Second, as 'a field from which reconstructions are to be made, including alternative methods of gaining knowledge' (Haug 1998: 126). For feminist psychologists, this problematization of the personal brings a particularly important contribution, since hegemonic psychology is historically committed to explaining and controlling the personal realm based on measurement and normalization – strategies that deeply depoliticize the person and the individual.

Researches that share a feminist perspective discuss the research process itself and its methodologies. In psychology, a discipline crossed by positivist and experimental paradigms, feminist researchers frequently use in their investigations methodological tools that are considered 'low status', such as interviews and focus groups (Phoenix 1990: 90). Phoenix calls attention to the fact that issues reach greater importance in social research (i.e. they are funded, published, and acknowledged in academia) if considered a 'social problem', and studies usually intend to deliver specialized understanding of them in order to 'ameliorate or eradicate them' (Phoenix 1990: 92). However, critical feminist perspectives call into question the sheer idea of 'social problem', discussing the production of stigmatized social positions, abjections, and inferiorities by traditional social sciences.

Following this line of argumentation I will mention two research projects that are located in the field of feminist psychology. Both projects critically discuss themes that are addressed as 'social problems' by traditional psychology. The first one is Mountian's research on drugs and gender; the second, my own research work on adolescents and their meanings of freedom. Both *drugs* and *adolescents* are objects of normalization and control in psychology theories, but these research projects have sought to critically understand the dynamics and processes involved in the construction of these issues. Also, their fieldwork was oriented by feminist perspectives, which are concerned with listening to voices that are usually unappreciated in academic theories.

In her work, Mountian (2013) brings a critical analysis on discourses on drugs and drug use, and their intersections with gender, sexuality, race, class, and age. A critical deconstruction of the notions around 'drugs' is put forward, unravelling key discursive constructions, particularly on how medical, religious, and juridical discourses impact contemporary ideas of drugs, their uses, and public policies. Drawing on feminist, postcolonial, and critical theories and discourse analysis, the author revisits the history of drugs, emphasizing how specific social imaginary formations are enhanced throughout central events in relation to drug use and prohibition in Western societies.

Here, the very understanding of drugs is challenged, since 'the definition of drugs appears fluid, and this gives space for various interpretations, having specific discursive effects' (Mountian 2013: 29). In the same vein, gender is understood as a performative process, where the focus is on discursive categories on gender and, in particular, on how these operate regarding women. The intersections with race and class are also considered, likewise seen as fluid and varying according to social-political context. However, the historical fixity of some discourses is considered in their production, being therefore historically constituted and reiterated.

By analyzing discourses on the female drug user, Mountian explains how discourses on victim and threat operate regarding women. These consider the social position of women in relation to the nation, associate women and drugs with ideas such as uncontrolled, weak, and dependent, and attribute the sexed body to a production of specific social imaginaries of women and drugs. In the case of women, a sexual gaze is operating, and the dynamics of visibility and invisibility of drug use for women are at stake, having important effects on women's drug use and drug policies.

My own research work discusses the meanings that adolescents give to freedom in their lives (Mattos 2012). As not-yet-adult subjects, teenagers in contemporary big cities experience their (lack of) freedom in contexts where they do not fully participate as citizens, having their own narratives, expectations, and problems related to invisible or unappreciated freedom. Listening to and understanding their speeches were important guidelines for my fieldwork.

There I discuss the problematic dimension of freedom when taken in its liberal sense. In our society, liberal authors, mainly white highly educated men, state that the more freedom one has, the better. The liberal concept of negative freedom, which affirms that someone is freer if they face less obstacles to their action, can be found in widespread ideas related to freedom in Western contemporary society. Liberal influences can also be broadly found in the bases of psychology, especially in relation to the development of the autonomous and able-for-freedom individual (Burman 2011, 2008a; Mattos 2012).

However, even if freedom is understood as something private, individuals need to deal with others in order to act freely. Therefore, the experience of freedom is always something tense, conflict-inducing, and marked by dissension. Dealing with all resulting conflicts and different individual interests brings us to an experience of strong political potentiality. One of the main goals during my fieldwork was to discuss these problems with teenage subjects from different socioeconomic contexts in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. I conducted focus groups where participants raised many interesting points that queried the abstract idea of a free/independent individual. Their experiences and observations improved my discussion of freedom, which is a subject neglected in psychological approaches – at least in a political *and* subjective way.

Conclusions

Feminist interventions in psychology thus compose a heterogeneous field of research and intervention. As a critical perspective on science and academic practices, feminist works raise questions for traditional theories on the universal subject of psychology, interrogating its construction and highlighting sexist and colonial discourses. These hegemonic discourses invisibilize and oppress differences, producing hierarchies and unequal power relations through psychologists' knowledge and practices.

Since feminist psychology is a critical perspective, it does not find wide recognition among conservative researchers. Raising research funds and having studies published in acknowledged scientific journals are problems frequently faced by researchers that locate themselves in this area. Notwithstanding this, understanding and deconstructing these everyday oppressions is an important task. This critical deconstruction permeates both intellectual and activist work.

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35

Queer theory
Disarticulating critical psychology

Miguel Roselló Peñaloza and Teresa Cabruja Ubach

To explain the complete social and political context in which the term 'queer' appeared would go beyond the limits of this chapter, and to try to define what the concept means exactly, is an idea we discarded. This, not only because the large diversity of understandings and uses of the term 'queer' which 'contradict each other irresolvably' (Jagose 1996: 99), but also because we take note of the warning given by Nikki Sullivan (2003: 43) when she pointed out that trying to do this is 'a decidedly un-queer thing to do'. If we add to this the origin and contradictory development of 'queer' since it was claimed and appropriated in the US by activists at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, with ACT UP and The Queer Nation Manifesto (1990) as the key actors, and its controversial inclusion in the academic field as a 'uniqueersity banquet' as Paco Vidarte called it (2005), then our task becomes even more complex.

Here we would like to leave a trail about the difficulties in translating the word 'queer' (which comes from the Indo-European root 'twerkw') into other languages. Despite all attempts so far, the general option has been to maintain the English term. There are several reasons for this, including maintaining a geopolitically non-located recognition of the term, avoiding grammatically gendered words in Romance languages, or even to avoid leaving out any of its multiple meanings. In Spain, for example, there is also the issue of a sexist appropriation by a sector of the gay 'community' when translating it.

Notwithstanding all these problems, we do want to point out, as a quick introduction to the term, how it was used by Queer Nation (1990) when they said that 'It's a way of telling ourselves we don't have to be witty and charming people who keep our lives discreet and marginalized in the straight world' ('Why Queer?': par. 4). Use of the term therefore involved a re-appropriation of a term related to rarity and strangeness, as a self-interpellation of a concept which at that time 'was not yet a cable-TV synonym for gay; it carried a high-voltage charge of insult and stigma' (Warner 2012: par. 4), as a subversive resource of displacement or for inverting the politics of enunciation. One of its own 'rarities' include the fact that Teresa de Lauretis, the author who is considered to have imported the term into the academy at a conference in 1990, stated: 'My "queer". . . had no relation to the Queer Nation group, of whose existence I was ignorant at the time' (de Lauretis 1991: xvii). Some years later, she even classified it as a term that 'has quickly become a conceptually vacuous creature of the publishing industry' (de Lauretis 1994/2007: 200).

Beyond its meaning and implications as a theoretical proposal or 'paradigm', as it is called by some, we can also find some criticisms regarding its use. For example, Gloria Anzaldúa (1991) called for the intersectionalism of the concept, saying that:

> Queer is used as a false unifying umbrella which all 'queers' of all races, ethnicities and classes are shoved under. At the times we need this umbrella to solidify our ranks against outsiders [but] we must not forget that it homogenizes, erases our differences. Yes, we may all love members of the same sex, but we are not the same.
>
> *(164)*

In other words, this metaphorical concept of a 'happy umbrella . . . that would exclude no one' (Warner 2012: par. 5) 'gives a false impression of inclusiveness [and] promotes the misleading notion that queer solidarity has decisively triumphed' (Halperin 1995: 64). This goes in line with the criticism made by de Lauretis (1991) regarding the integration of geopolitical, ethnical cultural, and social and political discourses, as well as with what Ruth Goldman (1996: 175) called the 'constructed silences within queer theory' surrounding bisexuality, for example. To these problems we would also add the new fashion of 'wearing a pair of queer goggles', just to touch on a theme that is under study, since it is totally against the very postulates and positions claimed by and for the queer.

Instead of providing a definition, then, we will give some background to the conditions of possibility of its emergence, and the way these conditions coincided with debates started in the 1980s in social movements and in universities about modern rationalism. As summarized by Tamsin Spargo (1999: 9): 'queer theory is not a singular or systematic conceptual or methodological framework, but a collection of intellectual engagements with the relations between sex, gender, and sexual desire'.

Heading towards something called queer theory

Despite the fact that its origin and rapid spread is especially located in the Anglo-Saxon world, we would like to stress that most of the key contributions to the development of queer theory, ranging from de-naturalizing sexuality to concerning its use as a normative device, come from the works of French philosophers like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, who destabilize the straight/homo binary and analyze *biopolitics* and the place of *logocentrism* in Western knowledge. In addition, the epistemological and methodological review of studies on sexuality, as well as gay and lesbian studies, in queer theory feeds on and is indebted to feminism, not only for the genealogy of patriarchal relations and the notion of gender, but also for the contemporary reviews and discussions in third-wave feminism in line with post-structuralist and postmodern interventions.

In this sense, the contributions of Judith Butler to re-formulating the concept of gender, understood as an effect of political truth and illusion of expressiveness, are essential. She pointed out that the 'construct called "sex" is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all' (Butler 1990/2008: 9–10). Meaning is seen as operating through a cultural fiction of a sexual 'original' that does not actually exist, where 'the effect of gender is produced through the stylization of the body' as a materialization process, from a 'styled repetition of [theatrical and linguistic] acts' (Butler 1990/2008: 191) that are culturally determined, 'a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint' (Butler 2004: 1).

This 'de-essentialisation' of gender as a performing act does not mean denying its effects on people's lives. Neither does it mean rejecting identifications; rather it is an invitation to

re-appropriate and re-signify the categories that converge in 'identity', 'in order to render that category, in whatever form, permanently problematic' (Butler 1990/2008: 174). And, of course, her text 'Critically queer' (1993) elaborates a 'performative' approach based on Austin's linguistic pragmatics and the contributions made by Foucault concerning 'sex', both for gender and for *drag*, pulling away from the common misunderstanding of it as some kind of free 'choice' taking place in the interior of each individual.

Another recognized influence can be located in the work of Eve Sedgwick (1985), who extended the de-naturalization of 'sex' to the homosexuality/heterosexuality binary and theorized about 'homosocial' forms of domination constructed through the repudiation of erotic ties between men and the stigmatization of the homosexual. She also showed how the politics of enunciation, which gives or takes away legitimacy to categories of people who speak about or describe reality, operate by constructing silences around homosexuality, in what she called the 'Epistemology of the Closet' (1990). In turn, these silences turn into confessional imperatives, with a double consequence of public scandal when 'coming out', or being blamed for not revealing something that, nevertheless, homosexuals are constrained to hide: their 'sexual orientation', a construct that Sedgwick also helped problematize.

In addition, and apart from the understanding of the heterosexual political regime expressed by Monique Wittig in her *queered* version, as the philosopher Beatriz Preciado (2005) suggests, regarding the way that both materialist and performative feminisms elude lesbian and transgender sexuality and corporality, there is also an understanding of how 'sexpolitics' (Preciado 2004) operate as a form of contemporary capitalist biopolitical action, where discourses and modern technologies about sex and identities participate in controlling life. In this framework, 'queer movements and theories reply with strategies that are, at the same time, hyper-identitarian and post-identitarian. They make a radical use of the political resources for the performative production of deviated identities' (par. 7).

Therefore, we could establish that the disarticulation of 'heteronormativity', or the cultural/political privilege of heterosexuality as the axis of intimacy and the pillar of social participation and organization (Berlant and Warner 1998), is another of the pillars of the queer theoretical and activist edifice, whether that is seen as built from an understanding of heteronormativity as 'heterosexual contract' (Monique Wittig), 'compulsory heterosexuality' (Adrienne Rich), or 'heterosexual matrix' (Judith Butler). They together operate as a complex theoretical corpus of criticism against current political regimes of sexuality, with the capacity to construct radically illegitimate (and even unrecognizable) subjects and bodies.

In a still more radical line lies 'the antisocial turn in queer theory', an expression coined in 2005 at the panel 'The Antisocial Thesis in Queer Theory', among whose participants were Lee Edelman and Judith (now Jack) Halberstam (as cited in Downing and Gillet 2011). As summarized by Laura Stamm (2011), this antisocial turn would be marked by the search for a heteroclite society, which would include redefining sexual desires in society and developing a policy of rejecting social values, (hetero)sexual reproduction, and the rhetorical emphasis of the Child, at the heart of which lies the Freudian Oedipus Complex as a civilized ideal of the family constitution.

Turning (to) psychology

It must be pointed out that the notion itself of 'psychology', even the ostensibly 'critical' psychology, risks becoming disarticulated from a radical approach on queer theories. In the words of Downing and Gillet (2011: 5), 'since "normal behavior" is not just the object of psychology, but also its subject, it is possible to argue that rejecting such a notion is tantamount to repudiating psychology as a discipline'. The starting point of this section of our chapter is therefore

an invitation to reflect on the possibilities of bringing queer theory into psychology, or *queering* psychological practice. We will being by summarizing the ways in which queer theory has critically questioned psychology, since we find different contributions such as: (a) examining how this field has called into attention 'the ways that modern epistemologies flip back and forth between conceptualizing sexuality as an act and as an identity in ways that create discriminatory effects' (Hegarty and Barker 2005: 7); (b) showing that, in the search for causes or explanations of the borderlines occupied by queer identities and sexualities, the discipline operates by constructing 'abnormalities' and regulating social aspects of people's lives; (c) being aware that when understanding 'sexuality as ideology', it disarticulates, rather than simply displaces, the dividing line between what is taken to be normal or healthy and what is supposedly abnormal or pathological; (d) making an ethical criticism of the reduction of the forms of otherness that entail understanding others, a reduction to what psychology can recognize as lying in its own domain; and (e) questioning the discipline, in general terms, from the position of queer as 'de-centered from the norm' (Minton 1997: 349).

If we go back to Foucault's (1978: 101) argument that 'discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also an hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy', and notice that psychology flows from and takes on a status of 'truth' as a key cultural element in social regulation — and not because it is the unveiling of the universal functioning of human beings — then we can understand the emergence of 'queer' as a position of resistance that is internal to this dominant cultural and scientific construct of identities and subjectivities.

Presenting queer theory in this way allows us to develop our own position at some distance both from a simplistic politics of 'liberation' and from illusions of modern 'rationality' in order to understand the concept of queer as an illusion of exteriority and an effect of resistance in its networks of power, within the very same discursive space as the discipline of psychology itself, all of this without forgetting, as Paco Vidarte (2005: 77) said, that 'the queer theory was not born in universities and will neither enter its classrooms pacifically'.

An example: psychotherapy?

We will take as an example what often happens in the field of psychotherapy. As has been pointed out by several authors, for instance, in a recent compilation made in Argentina and Brazil by Fernández and Siqueira (2013), there is a great lack of knowledge about, and great deal of prejudice towards, erotic, sexual, and relational diversities in several professional fields. In this respect, they consider it urgent to link psychology to queer studies and use this for other local cultural struggles.

Psychotherapy, particularly in the versions of it that feed on gay and lesbian studies, studies which lie at the root of contemporary queer theory, has focused on disarticulating psychopathologizing models of homosexuality and lesbianism. One of the main contributions to the discipline is so-called gay affirmative therapy, a term first used by Alan Malyon in 1982 and defined as 'a special range of psychological knowledge which challenges the traditional view that homosexual desire and fixed homosexual orientations are pathological' (cited in Butler 2009: 340), which later on, due to the exclusions it repeated in its restriction to 'gay' clients, was expanded to 'LGBT affirmative therapy', 'sexuality affirmative therapy', or 'affirmative therapy'.

However, despite its specific aim to dismantle heterosexism, an aim which is shared by what we could call the *queer project*, several criticisms have emerged against 'affirmative therapy', some of them mentioned by Smith et al. (2012), and which are related to the reification of gender and sexual identities and its operations through an assimilationist logic. We would also add that the

very concept of 'therapy' is problematic within the optic of queer theory, and also from within the approach of 'critical psychology', since that approach has already established a criticism of the tendency of the discipline to individualize social, linguistic, and cultural problems and to normalize ways of being through its nosological categories and assumptions about identity, not to mention oppressive constructions of what is taken to be 'mental health'.

As to the issue of power in psychotherapeutic relationships, Damien Riggs (2011), who is committed to the democratization of power in an 'evidence-based practice', offers an explicitly conflictual solution, one in which the therapist should recognize the coexistence of a top-down power and use his position of knowledge for productive purposes and queer intentions, that is, for example, by facilitating a transition beyond heteronormative discourses. However, we wonder if, in doing so, clinical practice may become a vehicle for a strange kind of *queered* regulation from an illusory position of exteriority that simply displaces, but does not disarticulate, the dominant ideological lines of 'well-being' and 'mental health'.

A problematic example of applying queer notions to therapeutic practice comes from what Smith et al. (2012) describe as the paradox of the lexical use of identities in clinical practice. While referring to categorical language that strengthens binarism as an accomplice of normative regulation, they point out that 'without social identity categories, critically conscious counselors have no way to speak to the inequitable experiences of millions' (Smith et al. 2012: 390). So, in the very practice of collaborating to give visibility to delegitimized (and abused) bodies in mainstream discourses, it is worth asking about the conditions of possibility for articulating a politics of resistance from inside these spaces. The answer provided by the authors of a so-called dual practice by the therapist, clinical and activist, does not seem sufficient enough given that therapy is still working, in the best of cases, at the level of the effects of politically challenged discursive networks, which should be interrogated at their ideological roots.

We cite these few *queering* examples concerning psychotherapeutic practice (ones which are, so far, still problematic) to give visibility to what we consider to be a complex and very often contradictory task. Even the main therapeutic objective of these approaches (mitigating the subjective effects of oppression by challenging the constitution of what is 'marginal') problematizes a queer politics of becoming and taking on, precisely, the margins and their effects of subjectification, of becoming *un-findable.* This queer politics would entail institutional disarticulation, and not an attempt to protect the practice of psychotherapy against such a disarticulation; those dominant practices produce subjects who are not simply victimized by the oppressive operations of power (Foucault 1978; Jagose 1996). A psychotherapeutic work of this kind can therefore only be done through negotiating and virtually fitting together its radical notions, always through complex techniques and forced partial sacrifices.

And psychoanalysis, is it still relevant?

In a similar way, the relationship between psychoanalysis and queer theory is, in the best of cases, complex. As Javier Sáez (2004: 193) has argued, 'from the queer perspective non-normative sexual practices are ways of symbolical and political resistance; they are never a subjective positioning of a psychological or psychoanalytical origin or a structure of desire'. Feminist authors such as Gayle Rubin and, later on, Teresa de Lauretis, made outspoken criticisms of, for example, the 'phallocentrism' of Lacan's works, and Foucauldian authors such as Didier Eribon (1999/2001) have pointed to the 'heterocentrism' and even the homophobia in psychoanalysis. Peter Hegarty (2009), for instance, noted that psychoanalysis 'repeatedly promised to address fears about the impure development of children who might lapse into homosexuality' ('The past of Kid Stuff', par. 5), and David Halperin (2004) criticized the psychoanalytical approach

to HIV and unprotected sex practices which constructs a persuasive (and psychopathologizing) theory linking homosexuals to the 'death drive'.

Nevertheless, there are several academics who include psychoanalysis in their reflections within the queer theory. Authors such as Tim Dean (2003: 245) have asserted that 'it is thanks to ideas as this one – the instinct's original independence of its object – that Freud rather than Foucault may be credited as the intellectual founder of queer theory'. One of its most radical ideas, concerning the dissolution of the feminine essence or the treatment of femininity as a masquerade, was put forward by Joan Rivière, for one, at the start of the twentieth century. This then connects with Judith Butler's theorizations of 'masquerade', as well as those of Julia Kristeva when looking into *abjection* in greater depth, and this notion has itself then been used in several ways by queer theory. But of course, we are considering precisely the most radical and critical proposals within psychoanalysis, a practice which is still struggling to abandon a certain theory of the subject. We include, for example, a proposal by Ian Hodges (2011) to *queerify* psychoanalysis with regards to the Oedipus complex, as a comprehensive model of the transgenerational transmission of heteronormative ideals. Drawing on the psychoanalytic work of the feminist Juliet Mitchell, Hodges re-conceptualizes this model as a heteronormative product and, at the same time, as a descriptor and prescriber in the production of heterosexual subjects, rather than a universal model for the psychic conformation of the subject.

So, critical psychology, is it critical enough?

Critical psychology can be seen as a heterogeneous landscape of rupture with hegemonic mainstream psychology, a heterogeneous landscape that includes social constructionist approaches, discourse psychology, post-empiricist psychology, and post-structuralist feminist psychology. Approaches to the social construction of human phenomena and that of science in general, those which call for the dissolution of disciplinary borders and which criticize their normative and regulatory effects, constitute a point in common with queer theory. Nevertheless, it is from this approach that we also see disagreements arise: 'critical relativism' versus 'critical realism'; attempts to develop a 'politics of recognition' and 'un/identification' of the homo-hetero binary; and studies of the materiality of the body or its rejection of that materiality, for instance.

It is true, of course, that there are common themes in the critical psychological debates: a critique of Cartesian humanism and individualism; opposition to positivist traditions and the knowledge of identities and bodies; criticism of the regulatory and bio-governance effects of psychology; suspicion of claims to universality; the use of contributions from deconstruction, Foucault's genealogical method, and other instruments of postmodern thought regarding 'otherness'; and dilemmas and debates concerning the androcentric and (hetero)patriarchal, or ethnocentric and colonialist character, of psychology (Fox and Prilleltensky 1997; Ibáñez and Íñiguez 1997; Parker 1989). Yet how can critical psychology be critical without being self-critical, taking into account and prioritizing sexualities, not just as part of its own agenda but as something that is cross-cutting and disturbing every taken-for-granted field and subject it deals with, including its own methodologies? Of course, queer theory, despite appearing and existing at the same time as critical psychology, is reminding us of its own incomplete pathway regarding sexualities, and its destabilizing potential. It seems as if there is some sort of 'simultaneous absorption and occlusion of queer in this new introduction to critical psychology' (Downing and Gillett 2011: 4) that does not quite manage to include all the aspects on hetero(sex)normativity and is especially confined to certain concrete areas.

We may also ask ourselves, regarding critical psychology and its institutionalization, and previous studies concerning sexualities, both gay and lesbian or even feminist studies, where

we stand in relation to this acceptance and assimilation of or rejection of and resistance to queer theory itself. In this sense, we should at least consider that, besides the controversy over its subversive capacity in the street and the academy, it is also important to value the fact that 'despite its implicit (and false) portrayal of lesbian and gay studies as liberal, assimilationist, and accommodating of the status quo, queer theory has proven to be much more congenial to established institutions of the liberal academy' (Halperin 2003: 341). However, if we look at how the contributions made by one of its exponents, Judith Butler, are being included in several fields of critical psychology, into methodologies of research and intervention, we could understand it as part of a process of *queering* psychology. For instance, from the position of someone doing research, reflecting on how the 'identities' of people who participate in a research project are constructed, to looking at how an understanding on the relationships of hetero(sex)partriarchal violence can be expanded and, of course, all the depathologizing initiatives. We need to find a way of relating these 'bodies that matter' to all the subjects and themes of the discipline.

In a similar way, Marc Sherry (2004), commenting on studies on functional diversity, points in a provocative way to the need to 'disable queerness' and to 'queering disability': the first with regards to the challenges to exclusions from citizenship based on the discourse of 'disability' (medicalization, pathologization, and treatments) that are present in cultural constructs of 'queer'; and the second with regards to disarticulating heteronormativity in the constructs of 'disabled' people who are subject to different processes of 'enfreakment, particularly those that produce (often contradictory) notions of asexuality, vulnerability, inexhaustible sexual voraciousness, perversion, and exoticism' (Sherry 2004: 781). Here queer theory is brought to bear on questions of shame and sexual moralizing.

As expressed by Nancy Hirschmann (2013), there is an interconnection between disability studies (fear of disability) and queer theory (fear of queerness), founded both in the bodily/sexual uncertainty and in the forms of artificial stability portrayed through cultural practices and discourse. The fear of this instability or uncertainty, which would otherwise push them to invisibility, would highlight the differences and would turn them into otherness, a situation that is similar for people who are constructed as being physically disabled and for those who are constructed as such based on their anti-normative (sexual) practices and identities. In fact, this invisibility appears as the recurring reason to express the need to incorporate queer theory into critical psychology.

Conclusion without ending

We conclude by returning to the point we made about limitations or controversies, the point that David Córdoba (2005: 23) makes concerning 'making and talking queer theory as a form of political act of enunciative intervention by which, in a way, the authority of academic discipline is suspended and is decried from one of its margins'. We do not consider the 'gender trouble' that queer theory causes as a closed issue. It works as a troubling of assumptions within and alongside critical psychology, regarding the processes and strategies of legitimizing psychological and social knowledge.

In this respect, all practices which disarticulate what is normative are good for critical psychology, particularly the double disarticulation of biological or social determinative factors. Queer approaches constitute a testing field for research and intervention for alternatives in critical psychology with a radicalized political agenda. But, we must always ask, to what extent? Is this queering critical psychology? Is this generating a queer critical psychology? Is it possible? It must remain open to further developments and applications.

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Liberation psychology
Another kind of critical psychology

Mark Burton and Luis H. Gómez Ordóñez

The emergence of liberation psychology in Latin America can best be understood as an attempt to reform psychological praxis in relation to the fundamental questions of colonization and decolonization (Escobar 2007; Mignolo and Escobar 2010) in Latin America. This is to consider liberation psychology in terms of the dialogue between knowledge and practices in contexts marked by inequalities, exclusion, poverty, (neo)colonization, and violence. Despite the changes of recent decades (Stolowicz 2007), the history of Latin America, like other 'peripheral' (Wallerstein 1996) regions of the world, can be seen in terms of 'open veins' for extraction and exploitation (Galeano 1998) and, taking into account the interdependent dimensions that make this region the most unequal in the world (PNUD 2011), where exclusion and poverty embody different expressions of violence, particularly in some places, with recent memories of colonization and the signs of the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being.

In this context, liberation psychology in Latin America emerged as one instance of a constellation of critical alternative praxis (Flores 2009), each intervention a response to the inadequacy of its discipline to confront the problems here described in terms of coloniality, including philosophy of liberation, theology of liberation, popular pedagogy, sociology of exploitation, dependency theory, and theatre of the oppressed. All of them share as articulating notions praxis, problematization, and awareness of or articulation with social movements.

Ignacio Martín-Baró's intervention

A variety of responses to the crisis of psychology's social relevance emerged in various parts of the world, but what emerged from Latin America was distinctive. There had been earlier uses of the term 'liberation psychology' but it is Martín-Baró's formulation that was decisive in shaping what we now know as liberation psychology. It is not easy to summarize what was an evolving approach to reformulating psychology since, although he summarized it in some programmatic articles (Martín-Baró 1985a, 1986, 1998), and most of these are available in English, an understanding of his distinctive orientation requires a consideration of a larger body of his work, and specifically his two textbooks of social psychology (Martín-Baró 1983, 1989b), his work on violence and war (Blanco and de la Corte Ibañez 2003; Martín-Baró 1988, 2000), and his public opinion research (Martín-Baró 1985b, 1989a). Nevertheless, 'Towards a liberation psychology' (Martín-Baró 1986) outlines his overall project.

Martín-Baró was a practising priest, working at one of the centres of liberation theology at the University of Central America in San Salvador, and in the abovementioned article he used liberation theology as an organizing framework, identifying 'three essential elements for the construction of a psychology of the liberation of the Latin American peoples'. They were: (1) a 'new horizon', an outward turn from preoccupation with the scientific and social status of the discipline, and redefinition of purpose in terms of the needs and interests of the majority of the Latin American people, which had been neglected both in the universities and in professional practice; (2) 'A new epistemology' where the criterion for psychology's relevance, and indeed truth, is found through its interrogation by those popular Latin American majorities in a lived process of revision. That would not involve a rejection of all previously existing psychology, but critically sifting its models and theories, discovering their 'validity or deficiency, their usefulness or uselessness, their universality or provincialism … their potential for liberation or subjugation' (1986: 27); and (3) 'A new praxis': rather than merely academically adopting an assumed perspective of the oppressed other, knowledge will come from the attempt to transform that reality. This involves *an activity that transforms reality.*

Liberation psychology as a critique of psychology

Critique of the uncritical adoption of models from the North

One of the most salient stances of liberation psychology is its rejection of the uncritical adoption of knowledge from the 'North'. The questioning of that imported reason, with its formulaic truths, is the posing of the epistemological problem wherein 'the understanding of our reality ends up mediated by what schemata designed in other worlds can capture' (Martín-Baró 1987a: 304). 'The problem with the concepts and models when used is not so much in what they see as in how they see, and above all, it is not so much what they make visible as in what they don't capture; that is to say, not in their positivity but in their negativity' (Martín-Baró 1998: 325).

Moreover, those schemata tend to be mediated by the traps of a theoretical *apriorism* that forces reality into predetermined categories, assuming a unidirectional and mechanical causality and a Manichean dualism. All these assumptions were discarded by natural science a long time ago. Liberation psychology considers them to be unnecessary baggage: Martín-Baró (1987a: 315–316n) saw a kind of partial and limited objectivity resulting from an awareness of both the conditions under which knowledge is constructed and the values that guide praxis.

In order go beyond that, liberation psychology establishes as criteria the problematization of the relationships between the interests of ruling classes and the decontextualized use of theories in the name of those interests. As a result it questions the pretension of universality implicit in the uncritical adoption of models, without falling into the trap of 'psychological patriotism' which denies the importance of approaches from other parts of the world for reflection, thereby proclaiming itself as the only truth.

The challenges for liberation psychology, then, lie in the formulation of problems, the definition of theoretical frameworks, and the construction of safeguards for objectivity, all of which require decoding of concepts and methodologies originating from diverse experiences in order to build categories and instruments according to the commitment to understand complex realities and to transform ourselves in the process.

Critique of complicity with power

Considering that 'the greater part of social psychological knowledge has its roots in the perspective of established power' (Martín-Baró 1983: viii), one important way for liberation

psychology to disrupt this complicity with power has been to use committed knowledge, capable of going beyond the false dichotomy between science and commitment, with objectives such as the rethinking of its theoretical models in several directions, the foremost being to transcend its conceptual heritage in order to strengthen support for the interests of the oppressed.

This challenging of power using epistemological inquiry, questioning the normalized criteria of truth that are used to validate knowledge and relations of power, consequently demands conceptually reviewing the contextual boundaries of concepts. Moreover, the criteria of praxis, used with careful consideration of people's voices, means focusing on the achievements of applied scientific knowledge with respect to the most important problems of populations worldwide

All this assumes the importance of the tasks of liberation, which in the case of liberation psychology had been defined within the study of social movements, their forms of conscience and organizational capabilities, as well as the analysis of those movements as instruments and collective subjects both in resistance and in the construction of options for well-being.

Critique of individualizing and victim-blaming ideology

A third way in which liberation psychology is a critique of dominant psychology is in its non-individualistic and pro-victim stances, which go together. One of Martín-Baró's key articles (Martín-Baró 1987b) was a critique of the ideological construction of the 'lazy Latino' that has characterized both external and internal perceptions of the 'essential character' of the 'Latin American'. Martín-Baró analyzes this construction in popular imagination, literature, and social scientific theory, using a variety of research evidence to demonstrate the lack of support for a general characteristic of fatalism, as either essential or as socially constructed but then functionally autonomous character. He shows how fatalism is not characteristic of Latin Americans in general. It does not characterize the elites, nor those involved in social movements or in the changed social conditions of post-revolutionary Cuba; it is characteristic of specific social and historical conditions. Moreover, where attempts to change social conditions have been defeated, fatalism reflects that social reality (cf. Mepham 1972), ideologically offering meaning to the oppressed but cementing domination by the ruling classes. As he points out (1987b: 214):

> A society's structural reality is not a fact of nature, but of history. Its construction and functioning lie in the intersubjectivity of the groups and persons who make it up. . . . What brings about domination is not ideas, but rather power in social relations, acquired through the appropriation of resources most necessary for human life. . . . But such domination is not firmly established until individuals accept it psychologically, until it becomes a conception of life, and indeed *common sense*.

This rejection of mainstream psychology's individualism characterizes the 'really social psychology' of liberation psychology (Burton and Kagan 2009). Society is conflictual and power is omnipresent, rooted in distinct social interests. So power is understood not just on an interpersonal basis but in terms of its organization in society (Martín-Baró 1989b: 91–188). The conception is dialectical, overcoming a dualistic conception of the individual-society relation, replacing it with a transformational understanding of the co-construction of society and persons (Bhaskar 1979) wherein the person is both product and active reproducer-transformer of social relations.

Critical assimilation of psychological concepts

A contrast can be made between the rather eclectic approach of Martín-Baró in particular, and liberation psychology in general, and the kind of purism that can characterize some other currents of critical psychology. This applies both to theory and to method. Yet the approach is not an uncritical 'anything goes' eclecticism. Instead, concepts and methods are used in order to understand the processes of oppression, and to support liberatory action. Martín-Baró, for instance, used rather traditional opinion research techniques to challenge the way the Salvadorean military government presented the views of the population both internally and internationally – this was, as he noted, a means of de-ideologizing social reality. As the various collections of liberation psychology papers attest (Dobles and Baltodano 2010; Dobles et al. 2007; Guzzo and Lacerda 2011; Montero and Sonn 2009; Vázquez 2000), psychologists working with a liberatory approach have utilized methods as diverse as participatory action research, photo-voice, community therapy, drama, and ideology-critique, as well as the more orthodox approaches of literature review, content analysis, and survey methods.

Conceptually, Martín-Baró almost seamlessly integrated the classic (North American and European) literature of general social psychology with theory from sociology, anthropology, and political science, combining empiricist, psychodynamic, gestalt, Marxist, and even emerging post-structuralist ideas. And workers in fields such as critical community psychology (Burton and Kagan 2009; Kagan et al. 2011; Montero and Serrano García 2011; Rocha Brandao and Aurea Cruz Bomfin 1999; Seedat et al. 2001; Ximenes et al. 2008), which is strongly influenced by liberation psychology, have similarly utilized a rich diversity of conceptual and practical resources from within and outside psychology's supposed disciplinary boundary. Liberation psychology practice then can be understood as a kind of critically constructive *bricolage*.

A distinctive kind of critical psychology

Martín-Baró's overall method, then, can be broadly characterized as the critical and committed (re)construction of a psychology to address the most important social problems of the oppressed, taking the perspective and history of the oppressed and the social contexts into account. On the theoretical level, best demonstrated in his two social psychology textbooks (Martín-Baró 1983, 1989b), this involved a creative but rigorous rewriting of social psychology that involved four elements: (1) The selective use of mainstream psychological concepts, which are approached critically. This body of literature accounts for the largest part of the citations in the two books. (2) Their augmentation and amendment from other intellectual traditions (Latin American as in the case of Freire and Fals-Borda, and to some extent from other regions, he cites for example Fanon and Alatas, as well as some European psychologists). (3) The addition of societal-level concepts (e.g. class), largely from sociology and political theory. (4) The integration of these in a cohesive account of social psychology that overcomes the limitations of individualist and reductionist social psychology without falling into the error of 'methodological collectivism' (Bhaskar 1979), nor of merely stating generalities. This approach at the theoretical level is also followed in his work on specific social issues: housing and overcrowding, violence and war, gender relations, and the representation of public opinion.

There is something of a risk here in that concepts with different ontological, epistemological, and pragmatic assumptions are fused into an uneasy coexistence. Yet the risk is worth running so long as it is taken with an understanding, strengthened by the influence of subaltern partners, of those assumptions when re-framing and utilizing the wider theoretical and practical repertoire thereby made available. There is no pure theory or method, but rather a potentially

enormous inventory of imperfect and ideologically constructed tools: hence the importance of de-ideologization.

A socially engaged critical praxis

In the development of liberation psychology since 1989, these themes can be seen at work, above all in the 'analectic' (a multiple dialectic that goes beyond the totality of thesis and antithesis, Dussel 2013) praxis hand in hand with the active subjects of social movements and their members.

Commitment to social problems has led liberation psychologists to examine the relationships among memory, resistance, community, social movements, policy, and ideology critique as part of the action and reflection that characterizes the praxis of liberation psychology.

As with all critical encounters with social realities, understanding is aided by taking a historical perspective on the paths that led to the present context, taking in the frustrated dreams and hopes along the way. Given this, the social processes of the construction of memory are of particular importance as articulating social relations built up through the medium of the processes and practices that define them. In their turn they are bound up with 'regimes of truth' in which there are determinate elaborations erected over memories: as Dobles (2009: 42) suggests in Foucauldian terms, they are intertwined 'through a series of arrangements, institutions, rituals, places, visual and spatial mechanisms . . . that facilitate the elaboration of specific reminiscence of the past, in the context of contemporary power relations'.

These current power relations are reproduced but also contested, since where there is power there is resistance. Liberation psychology maps the 'grammar of change' of this resistance, seeing it as the product of existing social tensions, having porous boundaries, and orientated to a counter-hegemonic ethical horizon of liberation. So liberation psychology, in aspiring to be politically critical, has to assume the political character of power-knowledge relationships and know how to map the alternatives of liberation. This requires the adoption of ideology critique (Jameson 2009) in relation to proposed options and processes.

The dialogue in recent years of liberation psychologists with social movements and community practice has helped to problematize the de-politicization of social conflicts and the need to adopt a clear political agenda to constitute more radically the dreams of liberation. The urgency of this is imposed by the crisis of the capitalist order as it intensifies its strategies to ensure continued accumulation in the wake of shocks and disasters (Klein 2008).

Conclusion: possibilities and challenges

The world has changed since the murder of Martín-Baró in 1989. These changes can be summarized in terms of the global advance of colonizing capitalism, both as system of accumulation-exploitation and as an ideological hegemon, under the cloak of 'advancing' liberal democracy. This in itself poses serious challenges for a transformative and liberating social psychological praxis while also suggesting some priorities for liberation psychology, both as intellectual framework and as social movement.

Yet the neoliberal model has more recently itself approached a crisis state following the crash of financial bubbles in 2008–9, the rise of different models of accumulation, and of left and decolonizing movements both in Latin America and elsewhere. These developments are themselves a result of the contradictions of capitalist expansion and colonization, the most profound of which is the climate and ecological emergency that threatens the very foundation of life on earth. As we have implied elsewhere (Burton 2013b), this new political situation demands a turn to a more action-orientated, less 'academic', critical psychology, an opportunity but also a

challenge for liberation psychologies. The challenge consists in developing a praxis that, building on the legacy of liberation psychology, connects the psychological with the political, economic, ecological, and cultural in a way that truly creates new knowledge and strategies for resisting the domination of people and nature prefiguratively while creating new possible worlds.

As noted above, violence has been a key topic for liberation psychology throughout its history and indeed has acted as a litmus for its claims to social relevance. Yet the phenomena of violence have changed somewhat since 1989. In Mexico and Central America, for example, there has been the growth of violence in relation to drugs from both criminal and State agents and the growth of street gangs ('maras'), themselves a consequence of war, exile, and US policy from the 1980s. Elsewhere there has been both conservative terrorism and State 'humanitarian violence', and more broadly the increased recognition of domestic and sexual violence (Moane 2011), again amplified by social conflicts (Estrada et al. 2007). Liberation psychology does suggest possibilities for theorizing violence in its objective and subjective dimensions in terms of both ideological action and psychosocial mediations, from the social structure into the structure of people's personality and action. Violence is analyzed in terms of the formal structure of violent acts, the 'personal equation', the enabling context, and the framing of all of this by the ideological background. The approach goes beyond the analytic limits of instinctivist, behavioural, and historical approaches, offering instead a nuanced, integrative approach (Blanco and de la Corte 2003; Martín-Baró 2000). As we saw above, it has developed a praxis based on making violence and its perpetrators visible, on re-signification of violent acts with the victims, and through interventions for justice at the national level.

Liberation psychology makes little sense in isolation from liberatory social movements. Recent decades have seen both advances and retreats, including, on the one hand, (1) the development and consolidation of connections and cooperation between them, both globally and locally, underpinned by opposition to neoliberal globalization and the recognition of the interplay among the different kinds of oppression, and (2) new and creative formats of protest and resistance. On the other hand there have been challenges, including (1) criminalization of social movements, (2) difficulties translating demands, strategies, and alternatives between different movements and other non-organized sectors of society, and (3) problems in dialogue with the State because it tends to impose asymmetrical conditions on the process of solving problems. It remains questionable how much liberation psychology has adapted to these openings and limitations.

Martín-Baró used an explicit strategy of making connections with like-minded colleagues in other locations (Harris 1990). However, that was difficult before the advent of the internet. There are now much better connections between psychologists of a liberatory orientation, and improved dissemination of the growing body of work. As a result, workers in locations as diverse as Turkey, Palestine, the Phillipines, New Zealand, Malaysia, and South Africa have seen the relevance of the approach, adapted it to their own social contexts and made contributions to it (Burton 2013a; Montero and Sonn 2009; O'Connor, Tilyard, and Milfont 2011; Seedat et al. 2001). However, language remains an issue, with Spanish not generally understood in Asia and Africa, and only by a minority of English-speaking psychologists. Portuguese is used in parts of Africa, and in newly independent Timor Leste, but despite many of the background concepts having emerged in lusophone Brazil, there has only been limited translation of the Spanish literature into Portuguese (two articles, 'Towards a liberation psychology' and 'Challenges and perspectives for Latin American psychology' appear in Guzzo and Lacerda 2011), although the barrier between the two linguistic communities is not high. Nevertheless, it is worth the effort to construct a variety of networks for sharing theory and practice, as well as to build solidarity links given the risks run by some workers in this field (in addition to Martín-Baró, there have been murders and disappearances of liberatory psychologists in places such as Haiti, Guatemala,

and Mexico, and serious threats in Colombia and elsewhere), while the work of exposing oppression and standing beside the oppressed can and does lead to silencing, of which murder is the most extreme form.

As we have argued elsewhere (Burton 2013c), liberation psychology is too valuable a praxis to be seen as just something that is done in Latin America: to borrow from the strap line of a recent conference in occupied Palestine, we want to construct a psychology that is both 'globally aware and locally appropriate', that increases understanding of the universal mechanisms and dynamics of oppression and how to combat it while being flexible enough to respond to the particularities of oppression and liberation in diverse social and political settings.

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English Language Liberation Psychology Network: http://libpsy.org

The Ignacio Martín-Baró Fund for Mental Health and Human Rights: http://www.martinbarofund.org/

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Indigenous psychologies and critical-emancipatory psychology

Narcisa Paredes-Canilao, Ma. Ana Babaran-Diaz, Ma. Nancy B. Florendo, and Tala Salinas-Ramos with S. Lily Mendoza

Indigenous psychologies emerged in the 1970s to the 1990s, and continued to gain a following in the last two decades, with the shared goal of engendering psychologies compatible with home-grown ways of living, valuing, and knowing. The term 'indigenous' indicates that these psychologies are founded upon oppositions or resistances to the exotic psychologies colonially implanted and/or outsourced from European or American educational centres. This chapter attempts to demonstrate that the different indigenous psychologies have contributed much to the critiques of psychology. More particularly denounced is a psychology bogged down by 'endemic amnesia', having failed to fulfil its professional mandate to the racially and culturally different (Naidoo 1996: 7). By insisting that psychology must become relevant to a people's sociocultural milieu, indigenous psychologists are like-minded with critical psychologists in transforming psychology from a discipline that has 'betrayed its promise to understand and help people' to one that will 'work for social change rather than against it' (Parker 2007:1).

Indigenous psychologies: locations, characterizations, varieties

Starting as pockets of resistance from former colonies of Western empires in the 1960s to the 1980s, indigenous psychologies have spread worldwide. Per Kim, Yang, and Hwang (2006), indigenous psychologies have 'taken root' in the continents of *Africa* (Cameroon, Zambia); *the Americas* (US, Canada, Latin America, Mexico, Venezuela); *Asia* (Hong Kong, India, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan); *Europe* (France, Germany, Scandinavia); *the Middle East*: (Iran, Turkey), and *Oceana* (Fiji, Papua New Guinea). Scholars from former colonies of Western empires, and those from relatively free or economically stable nations, whether Western, or non-Western, particularly East Asian, have joined forces in resisting dominant/dominating Euro-American psychologies and in the corollary work of recovering a wealth of indigenous psychological concepts and practices. There has been, however, a palpable under-representation in the literature, of 'indigenous communities . . . the original inhabitants of the lands in which they dwell' (Nikora et al. in Allwood and Berry 2006: 254). Within the past four decades, psychologists and other scholars have striven to correct this, and to delineate an indigenous peoples' psychology from indigenous and ecological knowledge and practices.

A three-fold typology then is offered as to where indigenous psychologies have emerged: (1) former colonies of Western Empires, (2) the communities of indigenous peoples, and (3) relatively free and economically stable nations. This typology shows a development unprecedented so far in the history of psychology, triggered by the metatheoretical observation of indigenous psychologists that all psychologies are indigenous (Allwood and Berry 2006; Greenfield 2000). Psychologists from different parts of the world, including those from dominant ones, are now engaged in 'indigenous reconstructions', or the reconstructions of local psychologies vis-à-vis 'American psychology's dominance' (Teo 2013). Furthermore, for the specific purposes of the present chapter, this three-fold typology organizes indigenous psychologies around a number of differences, notably, the degree of anger and resentment held against alien psychologies, and how far away, or how different from the alien psychologies, the indigenous psychologies wanted to be.

What indigenous psychologists found objectionable in Western academic-scientific psychology

There is ample evidence in the literature (for instance, the interviews of 15 leading indigenous psychologists by Allwood and Berry 2006, and the articles featured in Kim, Yang, and Hwang 2006), that what occasioned the emergence of indigenous psychologies was the irrelevance of colonially implanted psychologies to local needs. There was a lack of sync between foreign concepts and theories, and the social problems confronted by newly independent or modernizing nations forging a national identity. The context for the emergence of most indigenous psychologies was: postcolonial societies decolonizing education in general, and the social sciences, in particular. Decolonization-indigenization of thought systems was deemed the necessary second phase, and completion, of nationalist struggles for independence (Alatas 2006; Enriquez 1992/2008; Sinha 1993). For example, sinicization of the social sciences and psychology in 1960s China was meant to legitimate a Marxist-Maoist Chinese approach to the social sciences including psychology, but also a Chinese national identity (Alatas 2006; Pickren and Rutherford 2010). But in turn, Taiwanese scholars since the 1980s have preferred 'Taiwanization', or simply, 'indigenization' to 'sinicization' to signal 'recontextualization of their disciplines vis-à-vis Taiwan, and not China' (Alatas 2006: 111).

In the Philippines, among the philosophical inspirations of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* were the nationalist ideals that inspired the revolutions against Spanish, then American, colonizers (Enriquez 1992/2008). Elsewhere, such as in Canada, Japan, Korea, and Europe, penetrated by the global reach of American psychology since WWII, indigenization of psychology became both a matter of national pride, and a more efficacious response to social problems unique to the nation, such as the challenge of multiculturalism in Canada (Adair 1999). The production of indigenous psychology is therefore deemed crucial for national identity with 'national' read as 'independent of', or 'liberated from', not only an alien psychology, but all other forms of domination: economic, cultural, and political.

But indigenous psychologies taking up nationalist aspirations has downsides: first, such a move can lead to the under/mis/non-representation of some sectors, especially in countries characterized by plural regional, ethnic, religious, and ideological groupings. Jordan (2011) notes a contradiction in some national indigenous psychologies being at odds with their indigenous communities, or imposing a national identity that excludes indigenous peoples' culture. It is thus important for him that indigenous psychology be redefined to include the value systems of indigenous peoples. Second, nationalisms can limit indigenous psychologists to research, teaching, and practice aligned with nationalist goals that may have been formulated by dictatorial

regimes, national governments still in the clutches of former colonial regimes, or simply, countries committed to rapid modernization and development at the expense of their indigenous populations' rights, ancestral domains, and cultural integrity. Mendoza (2002/2006) argues that within the anti-colonial/decolonizing phase of indigenization movements, there is often the unavoidable imperative of constituting the nation 'as one' in order to counter a powerful external enemy. She gives, as an illustrative case, the reactive stance of *Pangkami* or 'we-united-against-a-dominating-other' as theorized and critiqued by the Filipino historian, Salazar. But she notes that it is crucial not to be trapped in this reactive mode and to move on to a more autonomous space of collective self-constitution separate from the constant intrusion of the colonial 'Other', as demonstrated in the reconstructive phase of *Pantayong Pananaw* or, roughly, 'we-speaking-among-ourselves, using our own categories and for our own interest'. It is in this latter phase, she argues, that the pluralities (of subjectivities, cultural and ethnic differences, as well as political interests) begin to emerge and demand engagement and contestation.

The problem of irrelevance to national problems is just a symptom of graver ills of Western psychology as exposed by indigenous psychologies. It can be said that for the first and second sites of emergence, Western psychology is an apparatus of neocolonial social science, which promotes mental captivity, academic dependency, or blind imitation, three of the conditions of Asian social sciences analyzed by S.F. Alatas in *Alternative Discourses in Asian Social Science: Responses to Eurocentrism* (2006). These are often worse forms of disempowerment than were experienced under colonization, and that they occur within the context of formal education considered the greatest legacy of colonial regimes makes them more insidious. For example, Indian psychology's 'colonial condition' was shown in its imitation of research problems, concepts, theories, and methods from Euro-American psychology, leading to the 'neglect and avoidance' of Indian intellectual and cultural traditions and practices (Misra, in Gergen et al. 1996). First-level indigenization work involved immediate halting of Indian psychology as a 'pale copy' of Western modern-scientific psychology with all its 'empirical, mechanistic, and materialistic orientations' (Sinha 1993:31).

These orientations identified by Sinha are the underlying philosophical presuppositions of Western psychology, exposed by the astute analyses of other indigenous psychologists as well. It can be summed up, at the risk of oversimplification, thus: *Western psychology holds questionable assumptions or orientations about the nature of the world and human beings (ontology), about what counts as true knowledge and how to pursue it (epistemology), and what has value or disvalue (ethics).* Western psychology is embedded in: (1) an alienating worldview (atomistic-mechanistic), which cuts up the world into discrete parts, and views wholes as reducible to the parts (methodological individualism) or parts as nothing apart from wholes (methodological holism, functionalism); (2) a context-stripping epistemology (objectivist, empiricist-rationalist) that counts only two sources of valid knowledge – algorithmic reason and/or sense experience; and (3) a calculative value system (materialistic-economistic) which is concealed in claims to value–neutrality. In stark contrast are the indigenous dynamic, complex, and relational ways of living, knowing, and valuing that were marginalized or erased under colonization, which are the objects for programmatic recovery by indigenous psychologies.

Pickren and Rutherford (2010) postulate that the mainstreaming of radical behaviourism, and its post-WWII dispersal to the peripheries, could have been due to the practical expediency of this psychology for the demands of a military, economic, and cultural superpower, while managing a multicultural, multi-ethnic society at the home-front. Moreover, the idealization of the individual, the *homo economicus*, as the individual, motivated by self-interest, and the concomitant 'objectification of the human spirit into a calculable matrix' under a commercializing and industrializing society, found its logics of justification in the radical behaviourism,

instrumentalism, and individualism of positivist psychology. This led Pickren to conclude in his article, 'Conditions of (im)possibility: indigenization of psychology in India and the Philippines' (www.indigenouspsych.org), that indigenization of psychology is 'almost impossible because the epistemological and ontological [and it can be added, value] presuppositions of psychology remain to be those held by the self-interested calculable human being'. Pickren has nonetheless noted in the same article that in comparison to Indian psychology, the indigenization of psychology in the Philippines has effected more radical breaks with Western psychology (see also Pickren and Rutherford, 2010).

More value presuppositions were hidden behind the façade of value-neutrality. For the first and second sites of emergence, Western psychology was part of colonialist, racist, and cultural-imperialist projects. The indigenous psychology sought in these instances would be markedly anti-colonial, anti-racist, and anti-cultural imperialist (Enriquez 1994; Naidoo 1996; Nsamenang 2007). At its worst, psychology became the academic-scientific apparatus of empire for classifying natives as genetically, mentally, and behaviourally inferior, through practices that automatically pathologized non-white peoples, such as counselling (Naidoo 1996), and instruments such as I.Q. tests (Durojaiye 1993; Nsamenang 2007). Thus Naidoo describes a contextualized and indigenized psychology for South Africa (Afrocentric psychology) as one primarily aimed at contesting the white, male, and Eurocentric substrate of psychology under its 'benign pretensions to universality' (1996: 2), while for Nsamenang, Africentric psychology in Sub-Saharan Africa is 'a proactive post-colonial wish and search for empowerment through outgrowing the *received* psychology'. As empowerment mechanisms, indigenous psychologies develop psychologies that 'make sense in their own cultures and by which they can gain understanding of their subjectivity, experiences and socio-emotional functioning' (2007:19).

At the same time, there has been a strong articulation that psychology is implicated, alongside history and social anthropology, in the marginalization and systematic colonization of indigenous peoples. Specifically implicated in accounts of indigenous scholars are social psychology in the white assimilationist agenda over the Maoris (Stewart-Harawira 2013), clinical psychology as a form of social control that led to 'mass abnormalization' of the Maori as 'helpless recipients of English-defined labels and treatments' (Lock in Gergen et al. 1996), and the deficit model in psychology as applied to native Hawaiians, projecting them as mentally, behaviourally, and morally deficient (McCubbin and Marsella 2009). Indigenous psychologists are also trying to rectify the homogenization of the rich variety of indigenous peoples in terms such as 'American Indians' or 'Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Islands' or even 'Maoris'. The indigenous psychologies of indigenous peoples are proving to be radically different from Western academic-scientific psychology. There is currently an 'insurrection' of disenfranchised ontologies and epistemologies (Stewart-Hariwara), aiming to reclaim holistic psychologies closely linked with the land, spiritual beliefs, cultural practices, language, and community (McCubbin and Marsella 2009).

Under the third site of emergence, friendlier, or equal relations obtained between the target and the source of Western psychology, thus the search for: a European indigenous psychology, if there is such a thing (P.B. Smith 2009), a German indigenous critical psychology that is more than Wundt's laboratory psychology (Teo 2013), or, a Canadianized psychology (Adair 1999), versus a dominant American psychology. In East Asia, Sinicization, Taiwanization, and Korean and Japanese indigenous psychologies were reactions to various spheres of influence, but mostly to the post-WWII dominance of American psychology. But East Asian indigenous psychologies, together with some of their Western counterparts, have shown great concern that indigenous psychologies are not inimical to the growth of a unified and scientific psychology, and are not reverse ethnocentrisms. Thus their readiness to forge an Asian, or Global psychology, oftentimes read as cross-cultural psychology. The 10 characteristics of indigenous psychology formulated

by Kim, Yang, and Hwang (2006) and Yang's seven don'ts and ten dos for scholars wishing to indigenize their psychological research, Yang (2012), indicate this moderate stance.

Indigenous psychologies and the pursuit of liberated-liberating psychology

Based on the literature, indigenous psychologies were driven less by Western critical approaches than by the critical-liberatory ethos expressed in their desire for a liberated (emancipated) and liberating (emancipating) psychology. Thus Enriquez advocated a liberated psychology (*sikolohiyang malaya*), which resisted a psychology that perpetuated the colonial captivity of the Filipino mind, and, a liberating psychology (*sikolohiyang mapagpalaya*) that would be responsive to social problems, most of which were traceable to 'inequitable distribution of wealth' and what he termed 'the Great Cultural Divide' that has separated the Anglicized, colonially minded Filipino from the masses (1992/2008: xxi, 33). Incidentally, he would often complain that psychological services could only be afforded by the elite.

Arguably, indigenous psychologies resonate well with critical psychology, the core goal of which has been 'to transform psychology into an emancipatory, social justice-seeking, or status-quo-resisting approach that understands psychological phenomena as taking place in specific political-economic or cultural-historical contexts' (Teo 2013: 11–12). The displacement by indigenous psychologies of psychological explanations from the individual, to sociocultural, relational, and contextual terms may indicate de-psychologization, an important project of some forms of critical psychology (Dafermos and Marvakis 2006; Parker 2007).

But more evidently, indigenous psychologies are forms of critical-emancipatory social science advocated by Habermas (1971) and the socialized epistemologies (standpoint epistemologies) inspired by Marx and Engels that were developed for differentially located social groups by Lukács (1967), and Harding (1993, 2010). First, the scholars of indigenization were united by the twin projects of resisting a dominating Western psychology (decolonization) and engendering a locally based and relevant psychology (indigenization). And this is true for all the three sites of emergence, though in varying degrees of intensity. Decolonization-indigenization can very well be the linchpin of indigenous psychologies as 'critiques of psychology', 'psychological critiques', or, 'critical approaches in psychology' (terms employed by Dafermos and Marvakis 2006, in recognition of the many varieties of critical psychology). The exposure of the social and historical determinations of consciousness (ideology-critique) such as class, gender, and other differential axes productive of superior-subordinate relations has been the hallmark of critical philosophy, defined by Lukács (1967: 47) as a dissolution of 'the rigid, unhistorical, natural appearance of social institutions', and thus revealing their 'historical origins', subjecting them to historical development as well as historical decline.

Second, the demystification of knowledge or ideologies masquerading as universal and value-neutral, and locating them back to their social determinations is essentially a Marxist idea entrenched in critical theories of society. Habermas argued in *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1971: 308), that the 'logical-methodological rules of any process of inquiry are specifically connected to knowledge-constitutive human interests'. The empirical-analytic, or positivist sciences incorporate a *technical* cognitive interest (prediction and control), the historical-hermeneutic, or phenomenological sciences a *practical* cognitive one (mutual understanding), and the critically oriented sciences an *emancipatory* cognitive interest (ideology-critique). Indigenous psychologies can be located under critical-emancipatory social science in their powerful critiques of positivism as the reproduction of knowledge that constrains emancipation, that is, the emancipation of

subjects, from knowledge disadvantageous to them because it has been created by those ascendant to them, and whose interests directly clash with theirs.

Third, starting in the 1960s, social scientists and philosophers of science began to lose confidence in the positivist paradigm of the social sciences, leading to the renewed attention to phenomenological and critical paradigms that were marginalized with the mainstreaming of positivism. This paradigmatic crisis was evident in psychology and had implications for the emergence of indigenous psychologies (Hwang 2005; Kim et al. 2006). While most indigenous psychologists turned to emic and interpretative approaches, primarily concerned to elicit meaning-in-contexts, it is evident that some indigenous psychologists, especially those from former colonies and indigenous communities, were not content to understand the world but to change it. Their very first move of tracing the ineptness, irrelevance, and abuses of psychology to its methodological and sociocultural underpinnings was critical-emancipatory.

Again, for more illustrative examples, Enriquez (1992/2008) would not succumb to the idea that fun-loving and festive Filipinos, falling short of the standards of a psychology designed for industrialized societies, nor would Naidoo's Afrocentric psychology (1996) to a counselling theory, nor would Nsamenang's Africentric psychology (2007) to intelligence tests, both practices of which are founded upon white, middle-class, male, and evolutionist values. Indigenous psychologists have boldly talked back at judgmental and self-righteous psychological theories, engaging in metatheoretical critique, so to speak, by calling attention to their logics and sociocultural determinations. For indeed, when under an existing theory 'a group's knowledge, experience, and aspirations are disparaged, marginalized, or excluded, it is not the group, but the theory itself' that must be taken to task (Paredes-Canilao 2006: 9).

Contributions to disciplinary development and transformation of psychology

The wide variety of indigenous psychologies has challenged the discipline of psychology in many ways, proposing possibilities for its renewal and transformation (Allwood and Berry 2006). First, indigenous psychologies brought to the fore that all psychologies are indigenous (Allwood and Berry 2006) or have indigenous elements (Teo 2013). Second, the emergence of indigenous psychologies in countries that used to be referred to as 'Third World' has challenged all psychologists to be 'generative', rather than 'modulative', in order to study and affect the flow of macro-processes as social innovators, and to collaborate with other disciplines towards interdisciplinary responses and solutions to local and national problems, leading to an overall expansion of the discipline (Moghaddam 1990). Third, psychology's status as universal knowledge has been contested by practicing psychologists of all races, saying that the profession ought to review and reassess the theory and practice of psychology and its sub-disciplines (Naidoo 1996). Fourth, the vast storehouse of indigenous philosophies and belief systems have become an invaluable resource for alternative perspectives on the nature of human beings in their 'familial, social, cultural, and ecological contexts' (Kim et al. 2006: 4). By emphasizing 'intellectual diversity', and alternatives to linear models, the focus shifts more appropriately to what is 'relative' but relevant, useful, applicable, and adequate in the understanding of behaviour and mental processes of particular subject populations. Fifth, indigenous psychologies contributed to the dramatic increase in psychological problems and topics as a result of culturally appropriate, culturally sensitive, bottom-up, and emic approaches. Sixth, while for some indigenous psychologies, decontextualized science was simply bad science, and situating problems in context was perceived to remedy the situation, some indigenous psychologists, especially from the first and second sites of emergence, were not content with the recuperation of science-as-usual with its colonialist, racist,

patriarchal, and culturally-blind substrate (Lock and Gulerce, in Gergen et al. 1996; McCubbin and Marsella 2009; Naidoo 1996; Nsamenang 2007; Stewart-Harawira 2013). The strategies of resistance resorted to by Indian aboriginals and the Maoris have been well theorized by Shiva (1988) for the former, and L.T. Smith (1999) for the latter.

Perhaps the most important contribution of indigenous psychologies to psychology's transformation, is a new paradigm, both in the Kuhnian senses of the term, (related to wide-ranging changes brought about by scientific revolutions), and Agamben's innovation upon 'paradigm' (referring to the philosophical element in an idea or event that is productive of infinite possibilities). Specifically Asian in origin, this new paradigm is methodological relationalism, which takes relations, rather than individuals, as the primary datum (Ho et al. 2001). Methodological relationalism is not just a new approach in personality and social psychology; it is challenging psychology as a whole as having been traditionally buttressed upon methodological and ontological individualism. To show how potent methodological relationalism is as a paradigm, it makes intelligible a class of East Asian indigenous concepts which emphasize human relationship, such as the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean word for 'human being', which is literally translated as 'human between' (Kim and Park in Allwood and Berry 2006: 250). It also sheds light on other East Asian relational concepts that have been well-researched by indigenous psychologists, such as the Japanese *amae* (indulgent dependence), the Chinese *yuan* (interpersonal affinity), *guanxi* (human relationships), and *mianzi* (face), and the Korean concept of *chong* (affectionate attachment), (see Hwang 2006; Kim et al. 2006; Yang 2006; Yamaguchi and Ariizumi 2006;). Closer to home, *kapwa*, a Filipino term that simultaneously refers to 'the-other -and-speaker-in-relation', became a core concept around which theories, methodologies, and research methods were developed by Filipino indigenous psychologists (Enriquez 1992/2008; Pe-Pua 2006).

Conclusions

Indigenous psychologies have contributed to the transformations of psychology at least as practised in their own countries. But in terms of opening up psychology to the metatheoretical truth that all psychologies are indigenous, the growing number of indigenous psychologies worldwide should be an indication that the good news has gone beyond the borders of a small number of former colonies of Western empires, and has spilled over into the peripheralized indigenous communities within. As to the main objective of this chapter, it appears in the (admittedly very limited) literature that indigenous psychologies were less motivated by Western critical approaches, than by the critical ethos and fervour. One does not see Marx, critical theorists, or critical psychologists among the authors of works cited by indigenous psychologists, with the exception of Kwang-Kuo Hwang, who has recently used the late Roy Bhaskar's critical realist view of science to support his defense of culture as a foundational concept in indigenous psychologies (see Hwang's on-going debates with Allwood in Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective, the on-line platform of Social Epistemology journal [published by Taylor & Francis]).

In relation to other features of critical psychologies: (1) indigenous psychologies intersect with some forms of critical psychology in terms of depsychologization by relocating the unit of analysis from the individual, and inner processes in the individual, to the relational individual-in-context (familial, social, cultural, ecological); (2) indigenous psychologies pay attention to discourse, but not in its post-structuralist-Foucauldian sense as imbrications of power relations, but more in relation to indigenous discourses as clues to a people's psyche, lifeways, and value systems, and thus the utmost importance of recovering indigenous terms, as well as speaking and writing in local languages; and (3) the idea of the 'psy-complex' may have been

operaive in the wariness of indigenous peoples and the formerly colonized about psychology, as it is historically implicated in the policing and surveillance of natives.

Finally, it was shown in the chapter that indigenous psychologies are critical-emancipatory in their attempts to decolonize-indigenize psychology. They are engaged in ideology-critique, with Western academic-scientific psychology as the ideology, and are able to disclose its questionable philosophical and value presuppositions. For as long as psychology is not rid of them, the practice continues to be perilous. It is worth reiterating that it is not a question of origins (Western) per se, as Enriquez (1992/2008, 1994) has time and again clarified.

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Postcolonial theory

Towards a worlding of critical psychology

Desmond Painter

This chapter considers postcolonial theory as both a vantage point for the critique of psychology and a theoretical resource for the development of critical alternatives to and in psychology. Mainstream academic psychology and currently existing critical psychologies alike arguably remain Western-centric in regard to their problematics and theoretical resources, and the locations, institutions, and principal agents of their reproduction. Moreover, critical historiography in psychology reveals the epistemological assumptions and representational practices by which the discipline had historically become entangled with – informed by but also informing – Western colonialism and racism (Bhatia 2002; Richards 2012). Taken at face value, then, postcolonial theory offers first, a critical perspective on the colonial assumptions, representations and omissions that continue to haunt psychology, even in its critical appearances; and second, a burgeoning, often psychologically disposed vocabulary for interrogating 'postcoloniality' as it is manifested in the cultural formations and transformations of specific postcolonial societies (i.e. former colonies) and a more generally posited postcolonial condition characterized by both symptomatic returns of colonial trauma and the appearance of new (frequently 'hybrid') forms of expression, belonging, and identification within liminal spaces of transnational exchange. Postcolonial theory's strongest claim, directly relevant to critical psychology, is that it has contributed to a situation where, perhaps for the first time in the Western academy, 'postcolonial subjects become subjects rather than objects of knowledge' (Young 2001: 63).

This chapter is descriptive but also evaluative. Postcolonial theory certainly clears significant theoretical terrain for renewed critical engagement with and in psychology, not only in relation to its historical complicity with colonialism and racism, but also its more recent and still insufficiently interrogated 'internationalisation' (Brock 2006). More specifically, it supports the 'worlding' of critical psychology, that is, the ongoing process of revealing and reimaging critical psychology's established cultural, political, and epistemological horizons; of interrogating its terms of engagement with subjects and situations outside its places of origin; of demanding, in the face of psychology's self-serving appeals to both the universal and the indigenous in its quest to be 'international', a constant demand for theoretical dis-location and ex-centricity (Khanna 2004; Roy and Ong 2011). However, postcolonial theory and (critical) psychology often enter into productive alliance exactly at the point where the former's politics are vulnerable to critique. Whilst postcolonial theory often presents itself as the academic inheritor of Third World

decolonization struggles and its principal protagonists and theorists (Young 2001), this relationship is more complicated. According to Lazarus (2011: 21), postcolonial theory sets itself apart through its political assumptions, which include 'a constitutive anti-Marxism', 'an undifferentiated disavowal of all forms of nationalism and a corresponding exaltation of migrancy, liminality, hybridity, and multiculturality', 'an aversion to dialectics', and 'a refusal of an antagonistic or struggle-based model of politics'. Decolonization remains on the agenda, but its meaning in postcolonial theory shifts from concerns with the structural position of the Third World (or more recently, the Global South) within the capitalist world system to increasing preoccupation with its cultural and *psychological* prerequisites.

As a consequence, 'psychology' (or 'psychological' modes of analysis and critique) often appears in postcolonial theory as a substitute for the systematic confrontation of capitalism in its world historical scope. In other words, psychology finds its critical resonance by becoming an integral part of the redefinition of politics within postcolonial theory, a redefinition premised not only on a shift from political-economic to cultural and psychological modes of analysis, but also on the renunciation of 'modernist' diagnostics of colonial oppression and accompanying articulations and mobilizations of liberatory possibilities. This raises the question as to whether postcolonial theory's contribution to exposing and defeating psychology's Western-centrism functions as a true critique, or whether it instead further advances the contemporary tendency to psychologize politics and to thus redeploy psychology (even if this psychology might look radically different from mainstream varieties) within the contemporary cultural logic of capitalist imperialism.

Postcolonial theory: locations, definitions, and contradictions

Two decades ago Jacoby (1995: 30) had already claimed that 'postcolonial' had become 'the latest catchall term to dazzle the academic mind', whilst Dirlik (1994) referred to the existence of a 'postcolonial aura' in the Western academy. What they were referring to at the time was the increasing centrality of a term used not in a descriptive historical sense, to designate societies existing in a time *after* colonialism, but in a theoretical sense to interrogate the wider cultural effects of colonialism (Ashcroft et al. 2007), where these 'effects' comprise both the intransigence and transformation of colonial cultures – including quotidian practices, academic, literary, and popular cultural modes of representation, models of personhood and identities, forms of oppression and strategies for liberation – in former colonies and colonial metropoles alike. In fact, most of what had come to be termed postcolonial theory originates from the writing of academics of Third World origin based at (often elite) Western academic institutions, challenging the 'intellectual sovereignty and dominance of Europe . . . that is, challenging the limits of western ethnocentricity, and the assumption that the white male western point of view is the norm and the true' (Young 2001: 65), whilst at the same time shifting the spatial and political coordinates of the critique of colonialism. As Dirlik (1994: 332) insists, since 'postcoloniality has been released from the fixity of Third World locations, the identity of the postcolonial is no longer structural but discursive'. This means that postcolonial theory has forged its academic identity by focusing primarily on epistemology and the politics of representation, relying largely on textual critique and applications of discourse analysis, and privileging (in fact, romanticizing at times) the perspective of exilic displacement.

Since then the field has entrenched itself as 'a major critical discourse in the humanities' (Gandhi 1998: viii) – first in literature and culture studies departments, 'where it started as a movement to transcend the marginalization of non-Western literatures in the canon' (Chibber 2013: 1), but increasingly finding application in related areas in the humanities and social sciences

as well (Go 2013; Macleod and Bhatia 2008). Today its founding figures and foundational texts have been canonized (Said's *Orientalism*, Spivak's essay 'Can the subaltern speak?', Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*, Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe*); its journals and conferences have been institutionalized (the journals *Interventions* and *Postcolonial Studies*; the Australian based Institute of Postcolonial Studies and the biennial conferences of the Postcolonial Studies Association); and its reproduction has been ensured by degree programs, postdoctoral fellowships, and a slew of publisher-driven handbooks and course readers. Moreover, postcolonial theory has not only managed to align itself and articulate its theoretical and political ambitions – in the words of Bhabha (1994: 252), 'to rename the postmodern from the perspective of the postcolonial' – with the help of in vogue psychoanalytic, postmodernist and poststructuralist writers like Lacan, Derrida, and Foucault (Young 2001), it has also appropriated some of the iconic theorists and activists of the historical decolonization struggles, most notable of which, from the perspective of critical psychology, is Frantz Fanon (Bhabha 1994; Young 2001). This has afforded postcolonial theory with an enormous amount of cultural capital and academic marketability, whilst nevertheless allowing it to present itself, at least rhetorically, as a radical political discourse and set of practices.

However, even though postcolonial theory has managed to extend its influence beyond the specialized study of literary production in European languages emanating from the former colonial dominions to become a major transdisciplinary approach within the humanities as a whole, it remains a difficult field to define without obscuring its internal differences or exaggerating the singularity of its critical orientation. For example, Go (2013: 29) refers to postcolonial theory as a 'loosely coherent body of writing and thought that critiques and aims to transcend the structures supportive of Western colonialism and its legacies'. More significantly, postcolonial theory owes whatever theoretical coherence it has to how it defines and approaches these supportive structures. As Go (2013: 29) asserts, 'one of postcolonial theory's distinct contributions is to emphasize cultural, ideological, epistemic, or even psychological structures'. Another useful definition is offered, ironically, perhaps, by one of the field's harshest recent critics:

> [O]ne of the key elements of postcolonial theory is that it critically discloses *the cultural logics* attendant with empire. In fact, it examines all types of discourses, epistemes, cultural schemas, representations, and ideologies that were part and parcel of Western imperialism – whether embodied in everyday discourses, novels, works of art, scientific tracts, or ethnographies. In this sense, postcolonial theory mounts an assault upon the entire culture of Western global dominance.
>
> *(Chibber 2013: 29–30, emphasis added)*

Postcolonial theory can indeed be characterized, despite its internal diversity, by the manner in which it simultaneously centralizes and relativizes *culture* in its accounts not only of effects of colonialism, but of the nature of contemporary global transformations more generally. This focus on culture is particularly evident in Bhabha's (1994: 245) characterization of the field as bearing 'witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for social and political authority within the modern world order'. For Bhabha, significantly, postcolonial theory does not simply navigate the appearance and transformation of culture *within* the existing temporal, spatial, and political coordinates of Euro-modernist accounts of an international or global world order. Instead, postcolonial theory introduces what is essentially a 'postmodernist' break with: the developmental teleologies of both liberal capitalist and Marxian accounts of world history; the equation of political space and identities with the modernist political framework of nation-state and national (or nationalized) cultural identities; and the

reduction of social antagonism to 'a binary structure of opposition' such as class struggle or Third World versus First World. Instead, postcolonial theory 'forces a recognition of the more complex cultural and political boundaries that exist on the cusp of these often opposed political spheres' (Bhabha 1994: 248).

This means that culture, in both its quotidian and formalized appearances, is reconceptualized in terms that now reflect – beyond the stultifying and violent effects of standardized forms of knowing and modes of representation – its liminal and hybridized transformations and relocations. Culture, that is, as 'an uneven, incomplete production of meaning and value, produced in the act of social survival' (Bhabha 1994: 247). From the perspective of postcolonial theory culture is therefore not reducible to either canonical forms of specialized aesthetic production or romantic narratives of organic popular traditions meant to authenticate ethnic and nationalist claims. Instead, Bhabha foregrounds what he considers to be the transnational and translational dimensions of culture: transnational, 'because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement' (247); translational, 'because such spatial histories of displacement – now accompanied by the territorial ambitions of "global" media technologies – make the question of how culture signifies, or what is signified by *culture*, a rather complex issue' (247, emphasis in the original).

As the above characterizations and definitions make plain, postcolonial theory attends to culture as both source of domination and site and strategy of resistance in the context of Western colonialism and its aftermath. Regarding the former, the focus has fallen mainly on Western forms of knowing and patterns of representation across a large terrain of colonial textual production: scientific accounts, philosophical reflection, ethnographies, literary writing, travel reports, maps, photographs, cinema, etc. (Ahmad 1992; Ashcroft et al. 1989; Blunt and McEwan 2002; Chrisman and Williams 1993; Clark 1999; Foster 1999; Huggan 2000; Said 1978, 1993; Young 1990). In this respect postcolonial theory may be likened to a form of colonial discourse analysis aimed at deconstructing what Said (1978) has termed 'orientalism', Young (1990) 'white mythologies', and Coetzee (1989) 'white writing': texts in which the colonized 'Other' as distorted (dehumanized or exoticized), deprived of agency, and located outside history. Its textual interventions are therefore aimed at 'disfiguring colonialist configurations and displacing the representations colonialism set in place, and [...] writing the colonial world back into the annals of world history' (Parry 1997: 21). Or, in Chibber's (2013: 30–31) apt characterization of this aspect of postcolonial theory's critical vocation:

> As the cultures of imperialism persist, new and different sorts of knowledge must be produced to help decolonize consciousness. Postcolonial theory grapples with colonialism's legacies and seeks alternative representations or knowledge that do not fall prey to colonialist knowledge's misrepresentations and epistemic violence. This is why it is called *post*-colonial theory: it seeks theories (knowledges), ways of representing the world, and histories that critique rather than authorize or sustain imperialistic ways of knowing.

The articulation of alternative representations, knowledges, and politics – of writing history from the vantage point of the 'subaltern classes' (Guha 1997), of 'provincializing' European social thought and renewing it 'from and for the margins' (Chakrabarty 2000: 16), of counteracting the derivative nature of the political futures offered by Third World nationalisms (Chatterjee 1986, 1993; Lazarus 1999), etc. – has been a major source of conceptual, empirical, and political innovation in postcolonial theory. By taking critical distance from Marxist analytics and nationalist politics, in particular, and by forging alliances with various postmodernist and post-structuralist agendas in the humanities (Bhabha 1994; Lazarus 2011), postcolonial theory has become a

vibrant site for producing and retooling concepts aimed at capturing culture and agency in quotidian and often aestheticized practices of resistance and transformation. The field is awash with evocative work on 'alterity', 'ambivalence', 'appropriation', 'creolization', 'diaspora', 'exile', 'frontiers', 'hybridity'/'hybridization', 'liminality', 'mixedness', and 'translation' (Ahmed 2014; Ashcroft et al. 2007; Young 1995) – a veritable metaphysics of in-between-ness, mobility, and becoming that speaks of a social world dislocated from the assumptions of modern political thought and of ex-centric subjectivities that escape the injunctions of both modernist and traditionalist forms of political belonging.

Whilst its critique of colonial reason, along with its development of a large corpus of concepts aimed at bringing traumatized and resistant modes of subjectivization and cultural becoming into analytic focus, underscores the significance of postcolonial theory as a critical discourse, the field has also been the target of vociferous attacks (Dirlik 1994; Lazarus 2011; Parry 2004). Eagleton (1998), for example, claims that postcolonial theory not only homogenizes diverse geopolitical and cultural conditions but, ironically, globalizes a Eurocentric way of seeing. Postcolonial theory becomes, he claims, 'postmodernism's way of taking care of everything south of Palermo' (Eagleton 1998: 24). Kennedy (2003: 17) in turn decries postcolonial theory's 'mind-numbing jargon, its often crude essentialisations of the West and the Other as binary opposites, and, above all, its deeply ingrained suspicion of historical thinking'. Likewise harsh, but from within the ambit of postcolonial theory itself, Loomba (1998: xv) characterizes it as an increasingly faddish, personality-driven enterprise, 'essays by a handful of brand-name critics [who] have become more important than the field itself', which functions 'in increasingly formulaic or reductive terms that are abstracted from concrete situations'. In other words, postcolonial theory risks becoming another (Western) intellectual commodity reflecting and serving established academic interests – of individuals, institutions, fields of study – in times of neoliberal globalization, rather than a theoretical practice which truly disrupts the political economy of knowledge production on a world scale.

Equally serious are critiques of postcolonial theory's politics. As Lazarus (2011: 14) points out, in postcolonial theory 'Marxism has been obliterated as an enabling political horizon'. This distancing from Marxism, especially as an analytic of imperialism and colonialism, has exposed postcolonial theory to serious challenges regarding its relationship to capitalism (Chibber 2013; Lazarus 2011). First, postcolonial theory is criticized for neglecting the role of capitalism in impacting and even shaping the very cultures of colonialism it sets out to study. For Dirlik (1994), by sidestepping the foundational role that capitalism has played as 'motive force' in Western imperialism and colonial cultures, postcolonial theory indeed obscures, in an ideological fashion, that which joins the twenty-first century 'to a long and yet unbroken history, wrongly supposed by postcolonial theory to have come to a close circa 1975 . . . the history of capitalist imperialism' (Lazarus 2011: 15). Second, postcolonial theory is also criticized for neglecting to take its own conditions of production and reproduction into serious consideration, hence obscuring the way even seemingly critical academic discourses become subject to capitalist dynamics (Dirlik 1994; Loomba 1998).

In fact, according to critics, postcolonial theory not only neglects the role of capitalism, but finds itself drawn into its very logic of global reproduction. To be sure, contemporary capitalism invests in exactly those things postcolonial theory tends to celebrate: cultural difference, the aesthetics of everyday life, and mobility; capitalism almost *demands* 'hybridity' and 'liminality' as it seeks 'the creation of classes amenable to incorporation into or alliance with global capital' (Dirlik 1994: 354). This means that postcolonial theory stands accused not simply of mystifying the relationship between culture and power in the contemporary world, but for becoming part of the cultural logic of late capitalism. This upends any celebratory account of the contribution

postcolonial theory can make to critical psychology and vice versa from the outset, for as Parker (2006: 53) alludes to, an alliance with psychology easily redoubles the ways in which postcolonial theory 'recruits and then, through a peculiar act of ventriloquism, speaks for the constituencies that global capitalism is now most keen to work with . . .'

Postcolonial theory and critical psychology

Methodical engagements with postcolonial theory in critical psychology are still relatively rare. Hook (2005: 475) refers to postcolonial theory as a 'theoretical resource' and a 'mode of critique' which, unlike Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis, and post-structuralism, 'remains notably absent' in the self-understanding and development of critical psychology; 'a broad sway of criticism and theory that has yet to find its way into psychological discourse' (479). Macleod and Bhatia (2008: 576) start their overview of postcolonial theory and psychology with a similar disclaimer: 'Postcolonial psychology is not in its infancy, but rather an embryonic stage . . . [T]here are currently few psychology scholars contributing to what is explicitly called postcolonial theory and research'. Finally, Frosh (2013: 141) claims that relationships between psychology and postcolonial theory 'are mediated in a variety of ways, most of them uncomfortable'. Where this relationship has produced critique, it has primarily been directed at psychology; 'the converse, a psychological engagement with postcolonialism, is relatively rare, given the stance of apolitical naivety that academic psychology commonly adopts' (Frosh 2013: 141).

Despite this, there is an obvious kinship between the objectives that drive the field of postcolonial studies and those that give shape to the project of critical psychology. First, postcolonial theory offers a potential vantage point from where critiques of Western psychology as 'a cultural construction with specific historical roots' (Danziger 1997: 181), and more pointedly, of its political effects within the context of imperialism and colonialism might be advanced (Bhatia 2002; Brickman 2003; Burman 2007; Khanna 2004). Second, postcolonial theory presents critical psychology with a rich set of theoretical resources and political strategies, frequently attuned to issues of subjectivity, colonial trauma, and liberation, which might be employed to open up new spaces and develop new modes of enquiry in critical psychology (Hook 2005, 2011; Oliver 2004; Ward 2013). Thirdly, and primarily through engaging with and further elaborating upon existing 'psychological' styles of critique within postcolonial theory (Fanon 1967; Memmi 1965; Nandy 1983), critical psychology might also contribute to the further development of postcolonial theory (Frosh 2013; Hook 2011). According to Frosh (2013: 141–142), then, 'it can perhaps be claimed that psychology and postcolonial theory need each other'.

Postcolonial theory and the critique of psychology

The postcolonial critique of mainstream psychology focuses on how the discipline has 'furthered the cause of European imperialism in colonial and postcolonial contexts' (Bhatia 2002: 377), targeting in particular the discipline's historical contributions to scientific racism (Richards 2012; Teo 2005), its ethnocentric and 'orientalist' depictions of colonial others (Bhatia 2002; Bulhan 1993; Burman 2007; Brickman 2003), its political role in colonial government in countries like South Africa and India (Butchart 1998; Kumar 2006; Louw 2002; Nandy 1983), the Western biases of its epistemologies and methodologies (Ozaki, David, and Abelmann 2008; Smith 1999; Teo 2005), and the uneven, still Western-centred nature of its current 'internationalisation' (Staeuble 2006). Importantly, such critiques extend also to critical psychology, forcing it to interrogate the extent to which it likewise remains locked into the 'eurocentric order of the social sciences' (Staeuble 2006). Macleod and Wilbraham (2006), for example, base their appeal

for an engagement with postcolonial theory on the perceived need to problematize the relationship between local and global in critical psychology. In a critique directed specifically at Parker's (e.g. 2002, 2005) programmatic contributions to the field, they argue that his 'partial mentions and elisions around colonialism and post-colonialism, and his lack of sustained engagement with postcolonial theorists, mean that considerable amounts of analytical labour is required to ground Parker's work in our local problematics' (33).

It is certainly crucial to dislocate critical psychology from its Western-centrism – by extending its gaze to incorporate non-Western or 'subaltern' experiences (e.g. Swartz 2005) and by forcing it to engage the contemporary world from the vantage point of regions that, instead of merely following in the developmental slipstream of the West, have arguably become forerunners of global cultural shifts and changing political futures (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012; Connell 2007). But whilst postcolonial theory offers tools with which to facilitate the dislocation of the unilateral development of even *critical* psychology within the political economy of global social science production and consumption, it also poses important limits in this regard. Postcolonial theory is itself located in (frequently elite) Western universities, from where it is often uncritically exported to non-Western contexts to 'extend the field of academic discourse (in seminars, conferences, journals devoted to the elaboration of a particular esoteric terminology)' (Parker 2006: 52). Of course, postcolonial theory can be 'indigenized' – but the same is true for Marxism, post-structuralism, and feminism. Whilst it may thus indeed stimulate the politics of location and representation and the development of critical alternatives to mainstream, Western approaches in psychology (Macleod and Bhatia 2008), it is certainly no panacea. In the words of Gutiérrez Rodríguez (2010), postcolonial rhetoric itself remains in need of decolonization.

Postcolonial theory as resource for critical psychology

For others, the appeal of postcolonial theory lies less in its capacity to add to the critique of psychology, and more in what it offers critical psychologists in terms of resources for critical analysis (Hook 2005, 2011; Ward 2013). The canonical texts of this tradition are understood to offer theoretical resources for studying identity, subjectivity, oppression and resistance – specifically in the context of the complex psychic and cultural landscapes of postcolonial societies – beyond the existing categories of both mainstream and critical psychology. Hook (2011), for example, relies heavily on the work of Homi Bhabha (1994), Frantz Fanon (1967), Steve Biko (1978), and others to develop a psychoanalytic account of racism which positions itself in critical relation to both experimental and discursive approaches to the phenomenon in social psychology. Whilst this amply demonstrates that resources from postcolonial theory can be used to develop sophisticated theory in critical psychology, there is also a danger inherent in this kind of work: psychology remains in a rather uncritical position vis-à-vis the political and the historical. In Hook's work, for example, racism is clearly rendered a psychological phenomenon; and despite the fact that he presents his work programmatically as a 'critical psychology of the postcolonial' (Hook 2011), both the particular historical dynamics of the postcolonial society he invokes, apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa, and specific aims of the activist-authors like Fanon and Biko he engages with, often serve as little more than warrants for the development of a discourse on racism which becomes universal precisely on account of being translated into *psychological* terms. Rather than contributing to a critique of the psychologization of political discourse and the consolidation of speaking rights for psychological experts on matters of politics, then, 'postcolonial critical psychology' risks serving the agenda of an internationalization of psychology by other means.

Critical psychology as postcolonial critique

Critical psychology might also be mobilized to contribute to the further development of post-colonial theory and its associated critical agendas (Frosh 2013; Hook 2005, 2011; Ward 2013). According to Hook (2005: 475), 'much postcolonial theory is explicitly psychological in both its concerns and its critical resources'; the further contribution of more precisely tailored psychological perspectives to postcolonial theory is therefore warranted. In particular, according to Ward (2013: 171), 'the application of psychology to the study of postcolonialism offers a deeper understanding of the effects on the psyche of [. . .] those who experienced colonial traumas (including slavery and indenture, forced migration, and colonization)'.

For Frosh (2013: 147) the relevance of psychoanalysis in particular to postcolonial theory may be attributed to the insight that colonial power is rooted in the 'capacity of the colonizer to remove the source of subjecthood from the colonizer' – a theme that can indeed be traced back to anticolonial critics and anticolonial and postcolonial theorists like Memmi (1965), Fanon (1967), Biko (1978), Nandy (1983), Spivak (1988), and Bhabha (1994). However, even though writers like Fanon and Biko employed 'psychological' modes of critique to describe the effects of colonialism and racism upon the colonized, their attempts to decolonize consciousness were forged as strategies of resistance within historically specific political movements, not in the interests of codifying a psychology of colonialism for its own sake. Appropriating these traditions of critique in the interest of fostering developments in academic psychology presents significant risks. Whereas it is undoubtedly laudable to think of possibilities of 'developing modalities of psychological praxis directed towards promoting social justice and decolonisation' (Stevens, Duncan, and Sonn 2010: 20), terms like 'trauma' and 'decolonization' might become so thoroughly psychologized they merely operate to further mystify postcolonial theory's relationship to capitalism and to advance psychology's global academic interests.

Conclusion

Postcolonial theory presents critical psychology with a number of prospects and risks. On the prospective side, it challenges Western-centric patterns of production and consumption in critical psychology. On the risky side, it harbours political contradictions which are often abetted by an alliance with psychology, and which therefore makes 'postcolonial critical psychology' vulnerable to charges of psychologization and even psychological imperialism. Academic psychologists therefore need to engage postcolonial theory reflexively, so that it does not merely serve to rebrand as 'critical' the continued production of colonizing psychologies, or to advance an all-too-easy postcolonialization of psychology and psychologization of postcolonial critique.

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Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/riij20
Postcolonial Studies: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cpcs20
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Southern Psychologies blog: http://southernpsychologies.wordpress.com/

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From critical disability studies to critical global disability studies

Shaun Grech

Critical psychologists need to know this: amidst the flurry of (often haphazard) estimates and assuming/monolithic discourse, there remains an urgency, to pay attention to the lives of disabled people living in the global South. In its first World Report on Disability published in 2011 (in conjunction with the World Bank), the WHO suggests that some estimated 15 per cent of the global population is disabled people. It also went on to restate that around 80 per cent of these disabled people are located in the so-called global South. Attention towards disability in the global South, though, is relatively recent in both practice and academia, dating back to the 1990s, when a few linkages started to be created with the industry of international development. Indeed, many have echoed the notion that disability and poverty are caught in a mutually reinforcing relationship, whereby poverty exacerbates and/or intensifies disability (or rather impairment), and impairment leads to or strengthens poverty, the net result being that disabled people and their families are among the poorest of the poor (see Groce et al. 2012).

These concerns resonated to some extent at the level of rhetoric in a development sector (in theory) concerned with poverty and its eradication. This coincided with the ascent of the rights–based approach in development. Others started to create linkages between disability and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to strengthen lobbying efforts at inclusive development (see for example UN 2011). They argued that disability must be included and addressed in the global development agenda because it traverses each and every goal (see Mulligan and Gooding 2009). These same efforts are being replicated and expanded on as various global stakeholders are lobbying hard to get disability onto the post-2015 goals (http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1611)

In response to these pressures, development agencies and international and national organizations have slowly but surely issued some disability policy or statement claiming to start considering and even mainstreaming disability in their practice – to work towards 'inclusive development'. A new field of research and practice, loosely branded 'disability and development' also appeared in the last decade or so to frame this 'newfound' focus on disabled people in the global South – supported by powerful organizations such as Handicap International and CBM (previously Christian Blind Mission). What followed, though, was the ascent of hegemonic paradigms and practices typical of development scenarios when confronted by a 'new' or unfamiliar 'problem'. In the same way that neoliberalism became the development metanarrative and cure

of the century, Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR), devised and strongly promoted by the WHO, became the disability miracle pill packaged and exported with its set of guidelines on how to 'do' anything with disability in the so-called developing world. Many discourses, methods, research, and 'strategies' continue to be fabricated in the global North, premised on Western values, including the language of rights and ethics. But models (e.g. the social model of disability) and methods are consistently shipped off from global North to South – packaged as informed/expert knowledge, discourse, and practice for mass consumption.

Despite the changes in rhetoric, the excitement about the World Report on Disability, and the almost euphoric welcome of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), disability in practice remains marginalized, if not excluded, in much of the development sector at policy and programme levels (Grech 2009). At other times, disability is hardly contemplated and/or considered a charitable concern, a 'problem' to be addressed by non-governmental and religious organizations. Disability in the global South also remains on the margins of development research. Disabled poor people are often not contemplated, not heard, and sometimes drowned in statistics or rendered invisible in the faceless category of the 'vulnerable'– an ontological all-encompassing space, a kind of limbo for all those who do not 'fit' among the productive poor, but are seen as being in need of some 'intervention' or other.

Critical approaches to global disability and 'psychology'

Many of the epistemological developments that have happened in recent years in the new so-called field of disability and development or global disability have indeed not happened from within development, but from within fields such as global health. But, and to emphasize, engagements have been far from interdisciplinary, with few or no linkages with fields such as development, rural development, economics, psychology, and anthropology, to name but a few. And this absence of interdisciplinarity has been far from innocent, with global health struggling hard to maintain its grip on what has become a lucrative field of research and consultancy for some. This dynamic has been permitted by the creation and perpetuation of a discourse and metanarrative of 'global disability' (as it has come to be known) feeding back into demand for more of this same discourse and analysis, and funds to make this possible – sustained by conclusions that there is need for more research, and that much of the research needed is yet again epidemiological and medical.

Much of this research is scarcely theoretical, unfailingly mono-disciplinary, often positivist, devoid of narratives, and the approach much less critical – especially of its own self-righteous discourse and methods. Dominant institutions working in global health, notably universities in the UK, have not been so forthcoming at engaging with spaces outside the dominant narrative, evident in the sparse literature, much of which is limited to organizational (non-peer reviewed) documents or reports written by people from these same institutions or their associates – those speaking and propagating exactly the same views and perspectives, who do not 'rock the boat' epistemically or ontologically. And there remains a dearth of empirical material, especially qualitative research highlighting the perspectives and voices of disabled people, especially those living in contexts of extreme poverty in rural areas (Grech 2009).

Willingness to engage with critical perspectives sensitive to notions and issues of hegemony, post/necoloniality, and the suppression of voices from the global South has been even less forthcoming (see Grech 2011; Meekosha 2011). But global health has hardly any desire to engage, including with disability studies, despite the token inclusion of some representative from disability studies at a conference. Opening up the palette of literature, theoretical engagement, and questioning (including oneself), becomes very dangerous when it shifts and challenges the positions

of discursive comfort, security, and authority, including those by which funds for research and projects are obtained. However, these approaches are not unfamiliar in academia, a clear example being the iron grip until recently held by the materialist social modelists in British universities, and the punitive approaches taken towards those dabbling with issues of the body, discourse, and those challenging the limitations of the social model of disability, including across cultures.

While many have started to speak about 'global disability', to refer to disability in the global South, the general lack of interdisciplinary dialogue continues to mean that there is no such thing as a nuanced 'global disability studies' yet. Contributing to this scenario is perhaps the fact that disability studies as a field continues to bypass the global South in much of its content. Indeed, as I have highlighted elsewhere (see Grech 2011), not only is the global South often ignored, but, importantly, the field remains the arena of global North (read British and US) white, urban, middle-class academics.

Critical disability studies

It is important to note, though, that global sensitivities have started to emerge from within a strand of disability studies called critical disability studies (CDS) – a space for theorizing critical aspects such as the body and ethics of care through disciplines previously banished, including psychology; to challenge 'the dogmatic tendencies of some theories and theorists through reference to eclecticism' to include accounts from 'feminism, queer and post-colonial studies' (Meekosha and Shuttleworth 2009, cited in Goodley 2013: 632). CDS, importantly, has started to provide a space for those theorizing some global aspects, such as geopolitical asymmetries in power and coloniality, among others, a task often taken up by those operating at the disciplinary peripheries (see for example Soldatic and Grech 2014). But, to be clear, despite the hopes instilled by CDS, much of the emerging CDS literature is also produced within global North universities and remains focused on the global North. The 'global' may run the risk (despite all good intentions) of being conveniently adopted simply to globalize CDS tenets, as opposed to having a CDS genuinely prioritizing and even emerging from the global South.

This chapter is written from the fringes – epistemological, ontological, and disciplinary – and will be looking at some of the critical issues that emerge but which are often left out of the analysis (or intentionally ignored) as fields such as global health and disability studies are confronted with the complex condition of disability in the global South. This, I hope, contributes to a new global South-focused, reflexive, and interdisciplinary project, which I have termed *Critical Global Disability Studies* (Grech 2012).

The global North means real 'knowledge'

Before starting to address some of these critical emerging issues, it is critical to take a step back and deal with the issue of what counts as knowledge; how it is produced; from where and by who; and how it should be packaged and disseminated. Indeed, if the pattern is one of transferring ideas, research, and 'knowledge', it is important to first contend with the issue of what Foucault (1979) would call 'disciplinary power', because the approach of shifting ideas and 'knowledge' from the West to the rest is not new, and has long colonial lineages. Reading disability studies and global health texts, one is immediately struck by two patterns. The first is the generation of these texts and research in the global North, framed as 'knowledge', worked out in 'enlightened' global North institutions using refined, rigorous, and reliable methodologies developed in global North universities. These writings and outputs are pitched as the informed (authoritative and authority) material in the respective fields. They rapidly become a global

narrative to be adopted by all, as experts, organizations, and others teach or facilitate dissemination of these tenets and methods to the global South through, for example, international organizations.

The second pattern is little or no engagement with Southern epistemologies, in particular those 'frustrated by the continued use of imported Euro-American ideas and institutions' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: vii), and who resist or contradict the dominant perspectives and logo-centrism. Those written in languages other than English continue to be even more excluded, subjected/inferiorized to the dominant *lingua franca* (of 'knowledge', ethics, the academe, and of practice). Language itself becomes an additional variant in the epistemological devaluation and exclusion, alongside the racialization and geopoliticization of knowledge. Latin American writers (see for example Quijano 2000) have, for example, long resisted the persistent refusal to engage with Latin American writings by disciplines such as postcolonial theory.

Exclusions in dominant disciplines in the global North are also supported by the idea that these writings from the global South employ unfamiliar and dubious literature, discourse, theory, and style of writing. The dominant institution is resistant, and resistance takes the shape (among other things) of devaluation, recreating the notion that First World knowledge is superior as well as universally applicable. In consequence, it maintains the subjugation of Southern knowledge and voices, persistently Third Worldized – simply 'seen as reflections of other, localised worlds' (Cutajar 2008: 32). The result is a disability studies and global health that remains insular, limited in its scope and breadth, and which fails to account for the politics of location. Approaches of 'essentialism and exclusiveness, or with barriers and sides' such as these, as Said (1993: 35) stressed, 'give rise to polarizations that absolve and forgive ignorance and demagogy more than they enable knowledge'. In a recent posting on the Disability Research mailing list (run by the University of Leeds), renowned disabled Indian theorist and activist, Anita Ghai, expressed quite some concern on this public forum:

> What is sad is that when I go through research in west, I often find that though writings by the south Asian scholars is not considered worthy. I do understand the colonial powers. However even people who have reviewed my work for instance, do not bother to include the work. Is it because the work is bad, then there is all the more reason to criticise the writings. Would you really want to create a community of disability scholars, only from USA, UK and Australia?
>
> *(12 October 2009)*

Some Southern institutions and academics, Cutajar argues, as in the case of Malta (my own country), have 'internalised the colonial scope'– 'we write in English, use First World concepts, methodologies and epistemologies and are constantly aware of how our work might be received outside Maltese shores' (35). But this, Cutajar goes on to claim, does not mean that these 'Otherized' scholars are not 'conscious that their dependence on Western enunciative codes and epistemologies is a form of neo-colonialism' (39). It also does not mean that they do not resist. But resistance is often diluted or ignored by the 'knowledge' empire (in particular the US and the UK) – silence becomes violent. And if, as in the case of Malta, knowledge cannot be devalued on the basis of linguistic difference (or rather it being incomprehensible to mono-linguistic contexts such as the UK), it can be rapidly offset by the devaluing or nullification of the institutions, and more broadly the national context (imbued with a historicity of subjugation), from which this knowledge is produced. This is then followed by the 'poverty' of its academics, and the methods used (see below). We have yet to see an Indian or Latin American disability studies emerge and be considered of repute in and an influence on the global North.

It is here that one sees the opportunistic use of the word 'global' by disability theorists to enhance the attraction of disability studies texts to global North publishers, and to sell the idea that the perspectives inside, such as those in an edited book, are relevant to all (global reach = more sizable market). Furthermore, 'those' parts of the world pitched as 'lacking', including in literature, are also accommodated (via an 'inclusive' text), implying that they, too, will become potential customers. But in practice, few of these texts include global South writers. The 'global' sells, but the historical baggage, in particular the colonial that endows the neoliberal globalization of knowledge and practices, replete with inequality and epistemic violence, is hardly interrogated in disability studies and other fields, re-inscribing the post/recolonizing of the Southern space, subject, and knowledge. Burman (2008: 10) probes her own use of 'richer versus poorer', and sometimes '(over)developed versus developing' to draw attention to their relational character (whereby the interiorized or immature status of 'developing' countries arises from the historical and current power wielded by 'developed' or more accurately – in terms of wealth and overconsumption – 'overdeveloped' countries)'. It is these asymmetries that ultimately permit the globalization of knowledge from North to South but very rarely the other way around.

Homogenizing: on difference and erasure

This assumed superiority and universality of global North knowledge is often premised on the homogenizing of the Southern space, subject, and 'knowledge', and an obsession with difference and Othering of these as ignorant, inferior, and uncivilized. These are consequently pitched against hegemonic knowledge from the 'superior', 'enlightened', 'human' global North spaces – *truth*. In global North writings one finds a frequent homogenization of the disability experience and its treatment in the global South, discourse suggesting that disabled people in these dark, distant places are inordinately oppressed, hidden, ill-treated, and even killed. Streamlining the disability experience through dominant frames such as the social model of disability or human rights discourse (focused increasingly on barriers and oppression), strengthens this disability metanarrative that feeds back into the legitimacy and perceived relevance of these Northern frames round the four corners of the globe. The following example is illustrative:

> Disabled men and women in many countries face stigma, prejudice and social isolation, while lacking the education, social support networks, and legal right to appeal injustices at the family, community or national level.
>
> *(Groce et al. 2012)*

Space, temporality, and circumstance are often condensed in the bid to create a 'consistent', but unfailingly demonizing discourse around a native Fanon insists is not only 'declared insensible to ethics' but one which 'represents . . . the absence of values, but also the negation of values' (1963: 32). In sum, 'the misery of the Third World is the result of its own incompetence, its own inanity – in short, of its *subhumanity*' (Badiou 2002: 13, italics in original).

The dynamics of homogenization and 'difference' meet and are sustained by what we may call a dynamic of erasure – a colonizing slash and burn – where little or nothing has been done or written in the Southern space and voice. But perhaps one needs to take a step back and acknowledge that this erasure is supported by an approach where findings are reported and theory generated on occasion, but we learn little about the Southern contexts within which these findings arise. Words such as 'poverty' are thrown around with incredible ease, without even being conceptualized, without understanding and mapping out what they mean to and how they are

defined by those living them every single day. For others, it is sometimes assumed to be the same everywhere. Critically, this Southern space, in its full fluidity, complexity, and heterogeneity not only interacts with, but importantly (re)constructs disability in ways that profoundly challenge Western epistemologies and more basically, 'knowledge', redefining a Southern space imbued with agency and resistance to the 'Eurocentric paradigm' of 'truth', 'order', and 'reality' (Pisani 2013). Returning to the dynamic of erasure, in practice, in rural areas it is often families and communities who through their love and care continue to single-handedly ensure the survival of their disabled members – contexts where the idea of community exists within people's psyche and life worlds, real and imagined. These are the distant rural spaces where the language of rights and policies are often mere empty rhetoric, if known at all. Miles (2004) documents centuries of local and community based forms of rehabilitation emerging on their own accord in African countries.

To be clear, ill-treatment does exist, but it exists *everywhere*. While oppression and even violence against disabled people happen regularly in the global North, no writer would ever contemplate a statement such as 'disabled people in the West are neglected and killed'. When transposed to the global South, this discourse of ill-treatment and cruelty is indeed *expected*.

But what emerges clearly is that flowing through such discourse is the call for outside intervention (knowing/developed/benevolent/civilized) in a global South constructed as a space in need of, perhaps even desiring, correction – even from itself – and the imperative of the global North – perhaps obligation – to intervene and offer *the* knowledge for *their own good* – to use Santos' (2012: 46) words, 'a benevolent but imperialist universalism'. This approach has in the past and continues to sustain a whole development and humanitarian sector premised on intervening in a space that happens to be calling for the same intervention it has to offer.

As global disability research, discourse, and practice meet the complex global South in the context of this disciplinary power, many issues arise, but are seldom talked about or included in disability studies or global health analyses. I devote the rest of the chapter to engaging with some of these.

Disability is historical too: colonizing to recolonizing terrains

As one reads much of the literature on disability in the global South, one immediately encounters a stark disengagement from the colonial encounter and its impacts – a disengagement that is hard to understand when the colonial experience is perhaps the only common experience in the hugely complex and heterogeneous space neatly packed as 'the global South'. Disability studies, focused on the North and dominated by global North theorists as it is, has expressed hardly any interest in the colonial. Indeed, much of the history it documents, whether of disability and its 'treatment', or resistance, is limited to that of the global North. References to the colonial in disability studies have been exclusively as metaphors for the colonization of bodies, through medicalization and institutionalization, but there is no sign of the historical baggage of these terms. This is not different from the adoption of 'disability' and 'disabling' to stand in as metaphors for oppression in postcolonial writings – reflected in and sustained by the serious disengagement from disability per se in the field. Insights from postcolonial theory in disability studies have also been 'borrowed' by global North theorists, but again largely in and focused on the global North (see Sherry 2007). Issues of geopolitical asymmetries, power, and coloniality are instead confined to silence. Much of the research in global health simply reports on findings, but these findings, as well as the global South, the Southern subject, and our practice, are stripped of any historical baggage.

In particular, huge gaps persist with respect to the impacts and implications of the colonial experience and how it provides the ideological, cultural, and ontological foundations for the

continuing domination of the global South. The poverty that remains and has come to characterize much of the global South is also dehistoricized, diluting any understanding and analysis of the factors, processes, and parties that continue to create and perpetuate it.

The colonial encounter, though, is far from abstraction and not simply a metaphor, initiating mechanisms of pillaging, violence, and oppression, and epistemic, gender, spiritual, bodily, and other hierarchies. Importantly, as Quijano (2000) stresses, it introduced racial 'Otherness' as the ideological key to domination. Disabled people, like others, do not exist outside history, were subjugated and confined in the normalizing process, as missionaries and Western medical professionals imported charity and European specialized institutions–dynamics, destroying local forms of care and communities. This is the way disabled people have come to know 'intervention'. These were indeed the informal origins of international development, and how the native has come to see and know 'development' and the regimenting tools of empire.

Few of the current social, political, economic, cultural, religious, and other aspects of the global South can be understood without recourse to history, e.g. wealth and land concentrations, inequitable access to health care, and racism in Latin America. The harsh conditions confronting some disabled people today, such as the liminal position of disabled refugees, owes its roots to notions of nation-states, citizenship, and democracy instituted in colonial domination (Grosfoguel 2007: 12). These are all constitutive of disability experiences.

As researchers and practitioners, this history frames and positions, but importantly, legitimizes us, our epistemologies, our methods, and the universalizing knowledge we produce. It also sustains the structures (e.g. universities and organizations) to maintain this epistemic and material 'superiority' vis-à-vis an underdeveloped Southern space historically (re)constructed ontologically as *perpetually deficient*.

Neocolonizing disability

Research, discourse, and knowledge production on global disability need to perhaps be framed not only within a colonial, but also a neocolonial context because decolonization for many Southern countries did not mean the end of empires: 'a convoluted situation within which the "postcolonial" became paradoxically entangled with the "neocolonial", to the extent that the two cannot be intellectually approached as mutually exclusive states of being' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: xi). Disabled people exist, live, operate in, are constructed in, and are impacted by the neocolonial in its multiple forms – which has serious implications for how epistemologies, research, and practice are framed. Manifestations and dynamics of the neocolonial are various.

Neoliberal global economic policies, ideologies, and unequal trade relationships: Neoliberalism has not only become a hegemonic notion of 'development'– it *is* 'development', strategically imposed through Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) rehashed as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). But in practice, not only is the process rarely participatory, but the measures put in place remain militantly the same: privatization (including of sectors such as education and health); rolling back the state; cuts in public sector expenditure and size; exchange rate devaluation; liberalization. These measures continue to increase poverty and suffering, inequality, disablement, and conflict, while strengthening the power of those imposing them. I am struck and have articulated elsewhere (Grech 2009) by how quickly many (including in the disability movement), are to lobby to include disability in development. But there is rarely any questioning as to the implications of neoliberal globalization and development for disabled people – including the power and other relationships triggering their exclusion and disablement in the first place. The more basic questions are hardly tackled: is 'development' necessarily good for disabled people? Can/does it harm disabled people and those around them? Does inclusive development

mean leaving the existing system unchanged? But this is hardly surprising when, despite all good intentions, alliances between global health and development mean projects and money, and it is neither shrewd nor convenient to question the practices of one's paymaster in this Faustian pact.

In practice, disabled people are harshly impacted by these and other measures constructed as 'developing', whether through the destruction of rural livelihoods from industrial environmental degradation; the fragmentation of much needed communities of support in rural areas through forced migration and displacement (it is often the strongest who migrate); or the privatization of public health care and water, opening a wider space for impairments. Neoliberal globalization, importantly, remains dependent on economic growth as the main development strategy – a development built around, and predicated on normalized able-bodiedness – the functioning, productive, independent and autonomous, *homo oeconomicus*. Disabled people are instead perpetually constructed as those who are not integrated into the market economy – part of the problem who need to be normalized to function and produce in order to reduce the costliness or the burden of their existence on governments. These are the bodies, to use Fanon's (1967: 83) words, that are 'surrounded by an atmosphere of certain uncertainty'. This is indeed a clear paradox in the rhetoric of inclusive development.

And even more questions arise: how can disabled people be genuinely included in development, and how can the UNCRPD be implemented in the midst of growing cost-cutting, economic crises, and rampant inequality? Furthermore, do notions of 'community' and 'social capital' so keenly adopted by the World Bank over the past decade take on a different meaning and simply become opportunistic and cost-effective 'rediscoveries' in a development sector where the idea of community means autonomous people taking care of themselves, unburdening governments?

Research, media, and other representations: movies, images, and discourse in mainstream and social media do much to create and sustain the neocolonial. This includes the way we write out reports. Edward Said (1967) emphasized how the critical variable in the process of domination is not only material violence, but representations and institutionalization of these images. Feminists such as Mohanty have vehemently resisted the production of 'Third World Woman' by global North feminists depicting the 'singular monolithic subject . . . that stable ahistorical something that apparently oppresses most if not all women in these countries' (Mohanty 2002: 333, 335). In the disability sector, too, discourse such as that highlighted above, and disseminated by organizations to generate funds, does much to dehumanize these spaces. These blatant or subliminal messages, though, serve to open the space – ethical justification even – for a civilizing intervention, where 'developing' and rendering the Other *more human* again becomes a moral obligation. The lexicon of buzzwords in development are in fact illustrative: Poverty Eradication; Progress; Building Social Capital; Peace-building; Democratization; Good Governance; Knowledge-management. Despite all good intentions, it is not hard to see that power in practice is often skewed towards one side – one legitimized to *determine* and *do* the 'development – and that not all 'development' can be considered 'developed', in particular the local development.

Conclusions: towards a critical global disability studies

In this chapter I have sought to briefly but critically engage with some of the emerging issues as disability studies and global health are confronted with disability in the global South. These are my own observations, not intended as comprehensive, and simply meant to instigate further debate. While inspired by the critical and questioning stance of critical disability studies, it strives to move on towards an approach that not only includes a global element in the existing CDS, but that indeed emerges from concerns and voices specifically within a global South context.

I have called this project Critical Global Disability Studies (CGDS) – a project that does not aim for a different discipline or split from disability studies, but simply an approach with which to think, question, critique, challenge, and offer alternatives in the disability and global South debate, one that remains haunted by metarratives, epistemic and professional imperialism, and coloniality.

Thinking through a CGDS frame to me is simple; it means an approach that encourages listening and questioning rather than simply transferring discourse, epistemologies, and methods – an approach that emphasizes uncertainty and contingency, that is culturally and contextually sensitive and responsive. It does not simplify and generalize, sustained by the continued recognition that epistemologies and practices are premised on and developed in specific spaces imbued with a historical baggage of geopolitical asymmetries – where colonialism and coloniality never slip out of focus. It is about learning about the contexts, cultures, ideologies, and the knowledge, experiences, and lives of those we talk about – the way *they* interpret and *know* their own world. It is (self)reflexive and open to alternative epistemologies, realities, and ways of knowing, learning, and talking about worlds already *out there*. Indeed, as Santos (2012: 52) puts it: 'We do not need alternatives' we need rather 'an alternative thinking of alternatives'. CGDS is about decolonizing research and practice through an approach that is transdisciplinary and trans-sectoral – willing to follow ideas and arguments, which creates linkages, and, importantly learns, debates, and collaborates.

CGDS, to emphasize, is not a project of theoretical abstraction, but one of reflexive practice that seeks to make a difference to people's lives on their own terms, moving 'from the sphere of academic argument into the methodological process and into the realm of *praxis*' (Goodley and Parker 2000: 4). Importantly, it helps support spaces for resistance while becoming an alternative site of resistance to all forms of colonization. But to do this, power relationships need to be shifted to prioritize global South voices, epistemologies, and knowledge – in particular the way disabled people want to know, learn, and teach about their own lives – and to learn from those voices challenging the fixities of our own positions and practices in 'critical psychology' and beyond.

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Website resources

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Disability and the Global South (DGS): The International Journal: www.dgsjournal.org

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A politically informed immanent spirituality for critical psychology

Kathleen S. G. Skott-Myhre

Psychology is a discipline that has a contested history as it emerges out of the twentieth century and moves into the twenty-first. The discipline has spent nearly a century emphasizing its credentials as a science. In this aspect, it has made considerable progress in developing taxonomies of classification, sophisticated studies of neurobiology, impressive studies of the teleological progression of human development, and nuanced readings of psychopathology both individual and social. In this drive to affiliate itself with the scientific disciplines it has, however, left some valuable aspects of its foundational knowledge behind. In particular, it has left its philosophical, political, and spiritual interests on the margins of its study of the human psyche.

Psychology and spirituality: capitalism and Marx

Whereas the inclusion of various modes of philosophy and political theory into critical psychology have produced a complex and rich, albeit contested, field of study and analysis, spirituality and the transpersonal have remained on the margins of the critical psychological discourse. Certainly, one might suggest a deeply rooted suspicion of the spiritual, premised in Marx's (1978a) denunciations of religion and appeals to the realm of higher spirit as either hopelessly romantic delusional attempts at reform or directly complicit in oppression and the ideological obfuscation of actual economic and material relations. Therefore, if there is to be an inclusion of spirituality and the transpersonal in the critical psychological discourse, a new reading of the thought and practice of the spiritual and transpersonal must be taken up. Such a reading must account for spirituality and the transpersonal as a direct political and cultural challenge to capitalism mounted within the material and historical actualities of the present.

This requires a very specific and careful parsing of the thought and practice of what has been termed spiritual. In a sense, it is necessary to reproduce the work done by Marx (1978b) in philosophy when he turned the dialectic on its feet. Just as Marx took the realm of ideal form and subordinated it to the world of lived struggle and creative production, so the realm of transcendent spirituality must be set on its feet within the realm of living, creative, productive force. To use the religious expression, the spirit must be made flesh. To do this from a Marxist or post-Marxist perspective, there needs to be an accounting of the way that previous modes of the social production of the spiritual have shifted with the emerging world of the current

mode of production. In relation to their argument for a reorientation of Marxist theory, Hardt and Negri (2005: 140) point out 'The key to Marx's theory of historical materialism is that social theory must be molded to the contours of contemporary social reality'. They propose four basic elements of Marx's methodology to assist in coming to contemporary terms with shifts in the mode of production and resultant reconfiguration of the social: historical tendency, real abstraction, antagonism, and the constitution of subjectivity. To apply this to spirituality as a proposed mode of critical psychology, it is useful to begin with the ways that globalization and postcolonial relations have opened new vistas for spirituality within the historical tendency of late stage capitalism.

Spirituality as subjugated knowledge

Stengers and Pignarre (2011) have delineated capitalism itself as a kind of sorcery, referencing one of the most contested arenas of spirituality in the development of modernity and capitalism: the brutal suppression of women who were accused of being witches. Silvia Federici (2004) had argued that the persecution and violent subjugation of witchcraft is fundamentally tied to the way that primitive accumulation is related to capitalist development. Undeniably, the development of the capitalist mode of production was intimately tied to the suppression of all forms of non-Christian spiritual practices and beliefs. Furthermore, Schulte-Sasse (1986) points out that the rise of scientism was dependent, to a large degree, on the marginalization of magic and the imagination. Throughout the colonial period, the appropriation of indigenous spiritual practices into the dominant structures of the Holy Roman Empire and later into the fully commodified forms of late stage capitalism, once again, demonstrates the necessity to assimilate and obscure the force of indigenous and feminine spirituality as an alternate form of value and mode of life. In this regard, it would be remiss to neglect the cultural appropriations of non-European spirituality by transpersonal, humanist, and Jungian psychology.

The historical tendency of the modern and colonial periods to appropriate, assimilate, and reconfigure non-monotheistic spiritual beliefs and practices, and viciously suppress those that could not be assimilated, cannot be separated from the rise of capitalism and the development of the lines of thought and practice that have been complicit within the discipline of psychology. The role of real abstraction lies in removing whatever use value there was in indigenous practices and replacing them with exchange values that allow them to be marketed as cultural metaphor, academic theoretical apparatuses, psychological metaphors, narcissistic individualistic exercises in consciousness expansion, bodily awareness/health or, in the case of the dominant Western religious orthodoxy, to assimilate the symbology, reconstituted to the particular regimes of fear and intimidation necessary to maintain control.

It is with the shift of the mode of production into what might be termed globalized or postmodern capitalism that what Foucault (1980) would call the 'subjugated knowledges' of marginalized or appropriated ways of knowing emerge into open antagonism with both capitalism's subsumption of the social into the money sign and the cultural appropriation of spirituality into the domains of metaphor or myth. This emerging form of spirituality as social antagonism might well begin to inform what Stengers and Pignarre (2011) call upon as alternative magic to the sorcery of capitalism's trance. Such an alternative magic or materialist spirituality may begin to provide an alternative to the money sign as God; to what Marx (1993: 221), when referring to the role of money qua money in latter stage capitalist development, called 'the lord and god of commodities. It represents the divine existence of commodities, while they represent its earthly form'. In truth, we may have an opening for such an alternative reading of God in the immanent philosophy of Spinoza. Casarino (2011) notes in his work on Marx and Spinoza that the

emergence of Spinoza's God, premised in 'ontological connectivity' and deploying reason as a passage to intuitive knowledge:

> was born in relation and as an answer to capital and to its globalizing tendency and total-
> izing imperative. In fact, it was born, as it were, in competition with and as an alternative
> to capital, in the sense that both the logic of capital and the logic of intuitive knowledge
> deal in potentiality.
>
> *(198)*

The opening of ways of knowing that draw on older traditions that precede capitalism as an alternative set of ontological practices premised in immanence or living force offers the possibility of spirituality as a counter–capitalist set of radical practice and thought. This field of what was previously considered, under colonial relations, the irrational and primitive, opens itself as an alternate field of global interconnectivity founded on alternative logic to that of profit and the money form. This alternative set of knowledges and practices resides specifically within forms of knowledge left behind, abandoned, or savagely repressed by capitalism's ontological imperative.

It is in this regard that Foucault's reading of subjugated knowledges as arising among the marginalized and disenfranchised classes – those whose knowledge has been bypassed or suppressed in favour of the existing dominant ideology or discourse – becomes an imperative for a revitalized immanent spirituality. In Deleuze and Guattari (1987), the groups that comprise the connective web of alternative knowledge constitute what they call minoritarian ways of being and knowing. By minority, they refer to those subjects whose capacity for becoming is opposed constitutively to the dominant modes of society. In this case, this would be spiritual practices and ways of knowing that operate antagonistically to the logic of late stage capitalism, a capitalist logic we have already referred to as a kind of trance that calls for an alternative invocation.

Becoming sorceress

This form of an alternative trance invokes the *magical*, but in a very specific way. It suggests an older order of the psychological guild, that of the sorcerer. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe a process they call becoming animal. Becoming animal is premised on an encounter with a radically disparate other. For example, a human may become animal in an encounter with an animal if their own definition of themselves as human has reached an impasse. In the encounter with the other/animal new capacities inherent in the subject but blocked by their definition of themselves as human are elicited and become available. The subject does not literally become an animal, but the encounter with the animal sets loose a nonhuman becoming of unanticipated potentialities. Becoming animal is a particular example of the phenomenon which might actually be comprised of *any* radical otherness such as becoming woman, becoming child, becoming autistic, and so on. The criterion is that the other be a minority. As noted above, this is not describing the minority in the numeric sense, but in the sense of not belonging to the dominant majoritarian logic of a given society.

Deleuze and Guattari describe the figure of the sorceress in these terms. The sorceress is one who has an affinity for the borders of society and who can negotiate the various forms of becoming as a way of living. They conceptualize the sorceress as one who is involved with multiplicities, specifically the packs or bands that operate on the edges of society. These groups are radically 'other' in the sense that they have an intensity of life force that exceeds the capacity of the dominant social to contain or order them. The sorceress does not belong to the group or pack whose becoming she facilitates or negotiates. She is affiliated with them in the space between.

The sorceress is an anomaly. Deleuze and Guattari describe the anomaly as the whole minus one. They theorize life as collective co-poeisis with each singular subject idiosyncratically contributing to the constitution of the whole. In this sense, we are all anomalies. However, the sorceress is one who operates as an anomaly in the borderspace between the pack and the dominant social, a space which exists at the edge of the unknown and unpredictable. The sorceress is one who has 'had the ordeal of access to the plane of composition that diagrams the forces crossing our nature with that of others' (Kuykendall 1988: 29). This is a knowledge specifically recognized by Lacan and Freud and which is attributed to the woman as the space prior to language and binary configurations. The sorceress opens herself to the experience of the borderspace or the anomalous. Kuykendall states that: 'The political question is not how to limit, contain, or govern sorcerers, but how to *activate* the power of sorcery that crosses each of us. We do not yet know, as Spinoza taught, what such an anomaly – at once multiple and singular, individual and universal – might yet be able to do' (29).

Spiritual borderlands

Certainly, it is within the opening of globalization that all types of liminal border spaces emerge. These would include: literal borderlands formed through the geographical constructions of the colonial project, the liminal spaces of subjectivity produced between colliding social categories of race, sexuality, gender, and so on, and the emergent and shifting political alliances and collectivities inadvertently produced by flows of communications and bodies across the global empire of capital.

In the realm of spirituality as antagonism, the work of Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) on the question of border spaces, engages all of the elements delineated by Hardt and Negri (2005) above: historical tendency, real abstraction, antagonism, and the development of subjectivity. Ironically, and tellingly, Anthony Lioi (2008: 73) notes that Anzaldúa's 'spirit work has been effaced because the spiritual is associated, in academia, with the irrational or illogical and because spirit is understood as ahistorical, apolitical, and non-material'. These are specifically the modes by which subjugated knowledge is produced and, ironically, the source of its living force. Lioi (2008: 75), in his reading of Anzaldúa's work, points out the ways that she connects the spiritual and the political. He cites her work as founded in the concept of 'mestizaje or hybridity'. As Anzaldúa (1987) states,

> As a Mestiza I have no country, my homeland cast me out; yet all countries are mine because I am every woman's sister or potential lover. (As a lesbian I have no race, my own people disclaim me; but I am all races because there is the queer of me in all races.) I am cultureless because, as a feminist, I challenge the collective cultural/religious male-derived beliefs of Indo Hispanics and Anglos; yet I am cultured because I am participating in the creation of yet another culture, a new story to explain the world and our participation in it, a new value system with images and symbols that connect us to each other and to the planet. *Soy un amasamiento*, I am an act of kneading, of uniting, and joining that not only has produced both a creature of darkness and a creature of light, but also a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meanings.
>
> *(182)*

Anzaldúa's statement here refuses both the logic of colonial/industrial capitalism and the force of global capitalist development by offering an alternative value system rooted in a blend of indigenous and contemporary subjugated knowledges. Her positioning as a Mestiza opens a

field of connectivity between subject positions that takes advantage of the virtual connectivity of global capital and turning against itself. This process of subjectivication as a blending of idiosyncratic historically produced binaries of identity is reminiscent of what Hardt and Negri (2005) refer to as the constitutive force of the multitude as a political force premised on the assemblage of divergent subjectivities, or, what they call, singularities, working in common purpose for the common good.

AnaLouise Keating (2008:53-54) describes Anzaldúa's work as 'a radically inclusionary politics or what she (Anzaldúa) calls "spiritual activism"'. Keating notes that the two terms spiritual and activist might, at first, appear to be in contradiction. She explains that the term spiritual 'implies an other-worldly, inward-looking perspective that invites escape from and at even denial of social injustices'. On the other hand, she notes that activism 'implies outward directed interaction with the material world'. Anzaldúa resolves this apparent contradiction by expanding the field to say that these apparent binaries 'are parts of a larger whole, joined in a complex, interwoven pattern'. This assertion of a non-dualistic reading of the production of social subjectivity that refuses, at minimum, a clean division between inner and outer worlds opens a strong challenge to dominant productions of the self in psychology. In doing so, it offers a richer vision of the complex interplay between the older traditions of indigenous spirituality and social production than the structural mappings of dominant social psychology.

At another level, however, Anzaldúa proposes a new deployment of spiritual symbology and a reversal of the ways in which the Catholic Church took the symbols of indigenous peoples and transmuted them into forces of dominance and control. Lioi (2008: 75) argues that Anzaldúa's concept of Mestiza is a theological position, that 'the combination of Aztec, Nahua, Catholic and Neo-pagan spiritualities in her work' reflects her status as a '*transfronterista*, a woman with many countries and no countries'. Anzaldúa performs the act of 'stealing the language' which produces what Lioi refers to as, 'a pneumatological frontier, a reconstruction of an indigenous otherworld through the process of fracturing itself'. Deleuze and Guattari (1986) would refer to this as the production of a minor literature wherein the symbols of the dominant discourse are rewritten within a minor vernacular that re-inscribes them with subversive possibility. Lioi (2008: 84) delineates how Anzaldúa's rewriting of the vision of Guadalupe as Coatalopeuh changes Guadalupe from 'the gentle mother as tool for the pacification of women' into 'an incarnation of forceful autonomy'. The full impact of this act of spiritual activism within the realm of the symbolic can't be fully appreciated without understanding the subtle impact on postcolonial subjectivication. As Lioi points out:

> The power of Guadalupe as a mestizo Madonna is revolutionary in a political and cultural sense, insofar as she allows chicanas to defend their ethnic, racial and national identity. 'For Mexican-Americans, Our Lady of Guadalupe is a symbol of both cultural and religious identity. For a people who were stripped of everything, she restores to them their dignity, their humanity, and their place in history.'
>
> *(2008: 84)*

It is important to note that Anzaldúa is doing far more than resurrecting 'authentic' indigenous spiritual traditions. Instead, as Keating (2008) points out, Anzaldúa opens these traditions in order to deploy them within the contemporary politics of our current historical moment. Her work is to remember those knowledges that have been subjugated into the social and cultural unconscious of capitalism and to reconnect with them in their full alterity. To do this, she proposes a reworking of subjectivity through reflection. However, this is not the reflective practice of New Age self-valorization or actualization. This inner work is always designed to reconnect

with living force as a revolutionary tool to challenge what Chomsky and Foucault (2006) called the 'beliefs and habits of one's own age'.

> The struggle is inner: Chicano, indio, American Indian, mojado, mexicano, immigrant Latino, Anglo in power, working class Anglo, Black, Asian – our psyches resemble the bordertowns and are populated by the same people. The struggle has always been inner, and is played out in outer terrains. Awareness of our situation must come before inner changes, which in turn come before changes in society. Nothing happens in the 'real' world unless it first happens in the images in our heads.
>
> *(Anzaldúa 1987: 87)*

This movement between the inner and outer as a productive oscillation leading to social activism challenges dominant paradigms of both the unconscious and the individual self. Implicit in the work proposed above are commonalities of inner production and outer action that we hold in common and that have some possibility to challenge the alienation of the radically individualized commodified self of late stage capitalism.

Creative collectivities

In Anzaldúa's work, the thematics of what Keating (2007) refers to as a non-oppositional pedagogy, which refuses the binary structures of dominant rule in favour of creative collectivities, are echoed in the work of Alice Walker (2012, 2004). Walker calls on a radical communitarian production of self, premised in the exploration of common liberatory interests. She uses the metaphor of a garden to reference the fecundity of human relations freed from domination. The inherent creativity of life as a dynamic force in producing history, as Marx suggested, is reflected in Walker's reading of womanism. In this, she offers us a way of accounting for the rich dynamism of life often flattened or obscured by the discourses of power and control.

Womanism, as conceived by Walker, opens the door to a different analysis of relations between both men and women but also between *women* and their own sense of identity. For Walker, a womanist is someone who is seen as rooted in her community and committed to the development of herself and the entire community. This non-oppositional opening to the intersecting struggles of race and gender allows for the possibility of a non-dualistic spiritual political engagement within the traditions of marginalized communities, such as those recovering from the trauma of slavery and its aftermath in the US. As Renee Martin (2010) commented in her blog on Walker's work:

> Just as feminism speaks to your experiences, Africana Womanism speaks to mine. It allows me to articulate my spirituality, my connection and love of Black men, a genuine sisterhood with other Black women, a connection to family with a special emphasis on motherhood, a self-defined identity, unconventional gender roles, collective outcomes, group achievement, self love, nurturing, and a recognition that all isms effect women.

The profound sense of historical community values and practices that have survived in the alternate sorcery of the margins of the dominant social is also found in the work of Luisah Teish (1988). Teish is an acclaimed Voudou priestess who argues that Voudou cannot be read separately from its production and continuance in the face of racism and sexism. Teish repudiates the way in which the 'pseudo-science' (x) of anthropology subjugated non-Western modes of knowledge to the realm of superstition. She reclaims Voudou within the definitions

and vocabulary of West Africa as 'Life Principle' (x). Voudou, she tells us, is founded within a matristic tradition and as such has a strong political implication for women as a source of spiritual power. It is also a set of practices and beliefs rooted in a powerful relation to the earth in an eco-systemic sense of what nomadic feminists might refer to as productive entanglement (Haraway 2008). Voudou is a practice of what Teisch calls feminist spiritualists and holds a deep relation to cycles of menstruation and the power of menstrual blood. The power of Voudou operates at the level of what she refers to as the collective unconscious, but in a way that 'erases the exorcist tapes' (x) as well as Jungian archetypes and allows spirit back into actual relation as family and friends.

Teish tells us that the goal of Voudou is to counteract 'the savagery of slavery' (x). With its resonances to the production of the collective good, its deep affiliations with an ecological apprehension of being, its overtly political accountability to the legacy of slavery and racism, and its ties to feminism, Voudou, as practiced and theorized by Teisch, holds many of the elements necessary to a political accounting of spirituality that could challenge dominant constructions of rationality and superstition/psychosis within psychology.

Deep relationship

The importance of challenging the abstract global connective force of capitalism as an ecology of dominance that holds a parasitic relation to living things is central to any political project that hopes to establish a new system of values within a field such as psychology. Or, in a broader sense, how psychology can become a vehicle for subjective transformation and political action. In this respect, another source of indigenous spirituality that holds the elements of historical tendency, real abstraction, antagonism, and the development of subjectivity is what has been called deep relationship (Kovach 2009; Wilson 2003). North American Indigenous scholars such as Shawn Wilson (2003) and Margaret Kovach (2009) argue for what might be called in the Western idiom eco-spirituality. Such a mode of spiritual practice and knowledge is premised in what we have encountered in all the examples so far as a profound encounter with life as an interconnected web of relations. In the spirit of non-oppositionality and non-binary terms of relation there can be no separation from living relations. As a result, there are no acts that can be delineated teleologically or delegated to the accountability of the individual subject. All actions impact all relations. Current psychological frameworks of individual accountability and the valorization of humans as separate from and superior to other forms of life are seen as ecologically suicidal and dangerous to all life (Goldtooth 2012).

Of particular interest is the ways that this line of thinking has developed in the emerging field of ecopsychology. The indigenous spiritual understanding of deep interconnectivity is reproduced (generally without attribution) in proposing ideas such as, 'individualized and skin encapsulated notions of the self are replaced with notions of an ecological self, where nature is viewed as an extension of oneself and the cultivation of one's ecological identity becomes a central feature' (Segal 2011: 1).

The field of psychology is far more comfortable attributing this line of thought to science and particularly the tentative theorizing entailed in systems theory (Segal 2011), rather than acknowledging the long-term subjugated knowledge of native peoples in deep ecological understandings and social practices. Examples used in eco-psychology such as the example of a bear being conceptualized as 'only 5% fur, teeth, and claws, and 95% salmon streams, old growth forests, and alpine meadows,' are shockingly derivative of indigenous spiritual iconography (Segal 2011: 1). If the Catholic Church appropriated indigenous symbols to its own use, then current ecopsychological theory is running the same game. As Wilson (2001) points out, indigenous constructions of knowledge are rooted in:

the fundamental belief that knowledge is relational. Knowledge is shared with all creation. It is not just interpersonal relationships . . . it is a relationship with all of creation. It is with the cosmos; it is with the animals, with the plants, with the earth that we share this knowledge. It goes beyond the idea of individual knowledge to the concept of relational knowledge . . . you are answerable to all your relations.

(92)

Immanent spiritualty

In her introduction to Luisah Teish's (1988: xvi) book on Voudou, Starhawk reiterates a proposal she has made in other places (1997, 1990) for an imminent spirituality. In such practices and thought, spirit is seen as imminent both in nature and in human community. She states that 'spirit is embodied and embedded in the material world'. In an immanent spirituality, a human being's relation to nature is not that of 'power over . . . [power] passes through us, is used by us and must be replenished by us'. Such force is carried over in the human community as well, where 'there is no concept of individual salvation (there is nothing to be saved from) nor of an enlightenment that leaves others behind'. Instead, there is the development of extended community of all life including but not limited to humans. The practices and rituals associated with an immanent spirituality aim at transformation of subjectivity such that interconnectivity is enhanced and the creative development of social forms is prioritized. Starhawk states that, 'a religion of immanence celebrates the erotic, the sensual, the passionate. It is rooted in the concerns of everyday life'. She references a path to 'psychological transformation rooted in things that speak to us deeper than the level of words'. Finally, Starhawk proposes that an immanent spirituality challenges the logic of capitalism through refusing the inherent denial of life in the valorization of the money sign. Instead, an imminent spirituality would offer 'a reinspiriting of the world, the respect for nature and diversity of human culture as sacred'.

One can only imagine what a similar psychological project towards a psychology premised in the values of immanence might look like. Certainly, it would need to be reconfigured radically in almost all its key theoretical paradigm and practices. In this regard, spirituality, as delineated here, has transformative possibilities for psychology as a critical endeavour with revolutionary aspirations.

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Web resources

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Part IIIb
Places

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41

Critical psychology in Africa

The impossible task

Ingrid Palmary and Brendon Barnes

In this chapter, we are tasked with documenting 'critical psychology' in Africa. The body of literature that could be called 'critical psychology' in Africa is varied, focusing on issues such as race and racism (see, for example, Duncan 2003; Durrheim and Mokeki 1997; Hook 2012; Stevens 2003), mental illness (Akomolafe 2006), violence (Hamber 2010; Harris 2002), HIV and AIDS (Campbell and Murray 2004; Long 2009), trauma (Eagle 2004; Edwards 2005; Stevens et al. 2012; Summerfield 2000), female sex offenders (Kramer and Bowman 2011), paedophilia (Bowman 2010), teenage pregnancy and adolescence (Macleod 2003), prison practice (Jefferson 2007; Jefferson and Huniche 2009), and anti-privatization movements (Barnes 2009). As is the case elsewhere, the literature has drawn on various theoretical and methodological genres aligned with 'critical psychology' including discursive psychology (Durrheim et al. 2011), Marxist psychology (Hayes 2001), peace psychology (Hamber 2009; Lykes 2006), psychoanalysis (Hook 2004), conversation analysis (Whitehead 2013), critical social psychology (de-Graft Aikins 2004), critical community psychology (Lykes et al. 2003), critical health psychology (Barnes 2007; Campbell and Murray 2004), feminism (Pereira 2002), narrative theory (Bradbury and Miller 2010), indigenous psychology (Mkize 2004), and political psychology (Palmary 2006).

While writings that explicitly draw on or make claims on behalf of 'critical psychology' can be found in many African countries, the overwhelming majority of the literature has emanated from South Africa. We could speculate as to why the discipline of psychology (critical or otherwise) has developed in certain African contexts over others, as has been attempted elsewhere (see Cooper and Nicholas 2012; Louw 2002; Nsamenang 1995 and 2000; Painter et al. 2006; Painter et al. 2013; Pheko et al. 2013), but we wish instead to draw attention to perhaps the more fundamental question of *what is 'African critical psychology'*?

The demand for African critical psychology

There are many reasons to think that an 'African critical psychology' is impossible given complex contestations over what constitutes African, critical, and psychology. We therefore consider each of these constructs below, along with some of the possible consequences of their usage.

Africanizing psychology

There has been a plethora of writing about the relevance of psychology in Africa and this is perhaps the strongest critique of psychology coming from the African continent. Much of it points out that psychology's claims to universal knowledge and resulting hegemonic perspectives and theories is a fabrication that masks its production in and through a particular set of (Western) historical and political contexts.

Akomolafe (2006: 727), for example points to the dangers of making one perspective the most definitive way to understand a problem. Referring to this as perspectival hegemony he argues that this is one way that psychology reproduces a colonial position in its disavowal of systems of thought from outside of the West. He uses an approach that he explicitly names as critical psychology to argue that Western psychological concepts and ideas have become naturalized 'which allows for the operationalization of Western thought "within a hidden and unmarked space, resulting in its re-production and re-affirmation within discourse, social structures and institutional practices"'. He documents how, in his work as a clinical psychologist in Nigeria, the DSM was consistently used in such a way that the clinician could devalue the meanings given by the client and focus only on those parts of the narrative that were congruent with the way mental health was understood in the DSM. In this way, Western psychological knowledge is reproduced as the true focus whilst local knowledge is rendered irrelevant or at most a cultural variation.

Similarly, for Nsamenang and Dawes' (1998: 73) work on children, Africa has received a psychology that is 'alien' and 'imposed'. They go on to claim that Africa needs culturally sensitive psychological research for and about African children. They acknowledge that African societies are hybrid and that there are very different systems of thought in Africa as well as a pressure on Africans to adopt systems of thinking and research that reflect Western norms. However, for them: 'psychology came to Africa as a ready-made intellectual package, rather than as a natural growth from native soil' (75). Similarly, for Ruto-Korir, (2006: 328) psychology has been imported from the West and has been 'consumed whole and reproduced completely'.

This demand from African writers for a psychology based on African concepts and cosmologies is clearly the most common call from within psychology (Adams and Salter 2007). Grills (2006) argues that psychology's claim to a universal framework will only be truly universal when it also accounts for African indigenous psychologies. The discontent that African psychologists feel towards the imposition of Western systems of thought saturates the literature and, in several cases, the rage is palpable. For Nsamenang (2005: 276) there is an inherent incompatibility between Western educational foci and agrarian African life: 'the interventionist skin grafts onto Africa's festering sores have failed to take or are shrivelling off rapidly, due to a refusal to attend to the above-cited source of incompatibility'.

Whilst there seems to be widespread agreement that Western concepts of psychology are not appropriate for African people and that imposing them in contexts outside of their development is an act of colonization, the less frequently recognized problem is that across the different writings it is not clear exactly what an African cosmology might be. Whilst writers have been very quick to claim to know Africa in remarkably confident ways, when we read across different texts this certainty of knowledge becomes less certain. Let us look at some examples. Pheko et al. (2013) note that:

> Indeed Batswana are traditional in their gender role orientation, and are also collectivistic in their cultural orientation; making it important to establish how such orientations influence or relate to a variety of factors. For example, personal, social and cultural factors have

been shown to influence the care-seeking process . . . In the Setswana tradition, when married people experience marital problems, the most common approach is still to call elders from both sides of the families to come and help the couple discuss and find solutions for their problems. This therefore calls for researchers and professional to understand how such indigenous methods and practices may enhance or comprise the help seeking processes.

(398)

For Nsamenang and Dawes (1998), it equates to using the classification system of modern/modernizing over European/African which they feel more adequately reflects African life. Similarly for Nsamenang (2005), the real problem with European concepts is that they fail to capture the agrarian nature of Africans. Afuape (2012) takes a different notion of what is unique about Africa. For her, it is people's connection to nature that makes European concepts inappropriate.

For Grills (2006), African-centred psychology recognizes:

> The Spirit that permeates everything that is; the notion that everything in the universe is interconnected; the value that the collective is the most salient element of existence; and the idea that communal self knowledge is the key to mental health. African psychology is ultimately concerned with understanding the systems of meaning of human Beingness, the features of human functioning, and the restoration of normal/natural order to human development. As such, it is used to resolve personal and social problems and to promote optimal functioning.

(np)

She goes on to claim that: 'African society is other-centered and living is about cooperation not competition' (np).

There are two points that are notable in this literature. The first is how loose the notion of Africanness is. None offered a definition of what they mean by African and all slipped between African, black, indigenous, and so forth. Secondly, they all make a claim to know what Africanness is using very generalized terms. There are occasional nods to the risks of such universal claims, but they are very limited (see for example Dawes 1998). These generalized claims are possible because so many of the authors work from the assumption, as indicated in the opening paragraphs of this section, that Africanness and Europeanness are discrete and self-contained categories. The few moments of recognition in this literature that there may be complexity and disagreement as well as fluidity of Western and African ideas are often glossed over and made more as a disclaimer which then allows a new generalization about Africans to be made. For example, Afuape (2012: 2) says she doesn't want to overgeneralize – but acknowledges only that '[a]s with all generalisations there are exceptions to the rule. Bearing all this in mind, African (and the rest of the Majority world) culture is based on a particular relationship to nature'.

Thus, we can ask, in what ways does this literature operate as a critique of psychology? Clearly it critiques psychology's claims to universality in ways that have been well-documented across the world. It also is critical of the imperial role that psychology plays when it assumes a universal knowledge of the world. This literature clearly functions as a useful challenge to how psychology produces a universal subject. However, in doing so, this literature reproduces the idea of universal truth – even if it is now a universal truth about what constitutes Africanness. In so doing it does not challenge psychology's underlying principle that there are generalizable truths about the nature of human beings. In documenting an Africanness, it does so on the terms set by psychology. It defines African in relation to Europeans, i.e. as what Europeans are not. This may have been a necessary project at a moment when psychology was first being introduced

to the African continent. However, it is one that carries extensive risks for reproducing violent nationalisms and essentialisms (see the work of Mohanty [1993] for related arguments). In its overgeneralized presumptions it too will create all kinds of exclusions which render some African people and ideas not really African (such as gender equality in the quotes above). As a universal truth on the nature of Africans, it too risks undervaluing and rendering meaningless the counter narratives produced by marginal groups of Africans.

A slightly different take on the Africanization of psychology has been found in work that claims that psychology has always existed in Africa, just not in a discourse that is identifiable as such to a Western audience. For example, for Ruto-Koir (2006), African psychology is older than Western psychology. Writing about the Nandi in Kenya she claims that they have a life that is full of psychology, even though there is no documented history of psychology in Kenya. For her, attention to the proverbs of the Nandi give insight into this neglected Kenyan psychology. A similar approach is taken by Nsamenang, who points out how psychology ignores the wisdom in African sources of knowledge such as folklore and proverbs.

This is a useful approach in that it allows for an analysis of African psychology that moves outside of the definitions of psychology that stem from its Anglo-US history. However, there are politics and power dynamics in this literature that are seldom accounted for.

For example, rather than expertise resting with the professional status and institutional arrangements of psychology, in this literature a new expert, namely the elders, emerges. Whilst this may be a critical move in academia, where elders lack power, it is not in contexts of applied psychology where elders are frequently gatekeepers and producers of knowledge. This literature also relies on generalizations that are rooted in ethnic and national identities that reproduce these as natural categories (and which are the basis of much violence and conflict on the continent), mapping national and ethnic identities onto psychological traits in much the same way as the colonial project mapped psychology and morality onto race. Also, in this literature there is a tendency to treat the precolonial era as prehistory. The precolonial African society is seen to be timeless, natural, and traditional. This is reflected in how proverbs are seen to be unchanging due to sociopolitical context and are assumed to have always remained the same and thus offering a window into true Africanness. Also, one has to wonder why it is necessary to name this knowledge as psychology. What status does it achieve in being recognized as psychology that it cannot if it remains in the domain of proverb? Who would give this recognition? In this way, this writing still operates, perhaps inevitably, in the shadow of colonial domination.

So whilst there is not much agreement, and some worrying generalizations about what might make psychology (a bit more) African, there is at least a minimum acceptance among critical psychologists that attention to social context is necessary in order to make psychology relevant to Africa (Bandawe 2005; Kakkad 2005; Macleod 2004; Macleod and Howell 2013; de la Rey and Ipser 2004). A second key project, then, has been to rewrite psychology with a more sociopolitical focus. Some forms of community psychology have attempted this but it is perhaps most striking in the literature on health psychology. For example, in a special issue of health psychology in Africa, Campbell and Murray (2004) note that community psychology insists on the community being the level of analysis. They recognize that the poorest people have the poorest health and emphasize the importance of social change and justice for well-being. This is work that has tended to be more applied in focus and mobilizing for change. Thus, for Campbell and Murray, any individual change needs to be accompanied by meaningful social change.

However, the issue of what kind of social change is necessary and which aspects of context need to be attended to remains a debate. Seedat and Lazarus (2011) remind us that a community level analysis is not enough when they show how, in South Africa, community psychology arose largely to respond to the problem of poor whites and the perceived problems of racial mixing.

There is no doubt that it was a discipline dedicated to attending to sociopolitical context, but in ways that reproduced racial hierarchies.

Critical what? Do we need psychology to be critical?

The reflections on the relative absence of psychology and in particular 'critical psychology' in Africa can lead us to argue that we need more critical psychology. Indeed, this is a position that many authors have taken. Few writers question whether we need institutionalized psychology in order to be critical at all. For example, in reviewing the development of psychology in Botswana, and in lamenting its slow uptake, Pheko et al. (2013) suggest the need for expanding psychology departments and in particular laboratories, taking on board the belief that experimental design represents the gold standard in research. Somewhat differently, Akin-Ogundeji (1987), in spite of his critical reflections on the relevance of psychology in Nigeria, also ends with a call for more psychological research, and makes some suggestions regarding methods and focus. Yet another example is the work of Mpofu (2002) who, in spite of being critical of the practices of psychology, recommends greater integration and institutionalization of psychology in Africa in a way that assumes that if a professional body was African, it would not function for the same imperialist ends as one that is not.

However, too quick a celebration of the need for psychology, even if it is critical, would, we argue, be a mistake. Indeed, given the colonial connections outlined above, it is somewhat surprising that more people aren't rather pleased with the absence of psychology on the African continent and instead advocating for its dissolution in contexts where it has a strong institutional presence, such as South Africa. In particular, we should ask whether we need critical psychology or whether we simply need social critique. When we shift the boundaries of the question in this way we see a lively, powerful, and vibrant body of critical work happening on the African continent. This work is relevant to psychology and can be as powerful as any critique that names itself a psychological one. The trouble is, psychology is not paying attention.

This critique varies from those who have a background in psychology but work in an interdisciplinary way and publish in more varied sources to those who have and claim no connection to psychology but nevertheless offer critiques that could undermine some of the imperialism that is an inevitable part of the production of psychological knowledge.

A useful example of the former is the work of Ratele (2008), who has studied masculinity in South Africa. His work is addressed to an interdisciplinary audience and attempts an analysis that is at once psychosocial and political, using sources that are international (in that they also include extensive African work). Ratele (2008: 518) argues for the importance of a psycho–political analysis, by which he means an 'analysis of individual experience in overtly socio-political terms and of sociopolitical developments with the vocabulary of psychology'. Rather than accounting for 'African masculinity', he shows the contradictory and complex masculinities at work among his participants. Whilst ideas from postcolonial theory (there are traces of Fanon in the previous quote), discourse analysis, and critical psychology are present throughout the article, the article is not 'about' psychology at all and is not published in a psychology journal. Whilst he also struggles to name his focus (slipping between black males, African males, and males in Africa – potentially very different groups) this work has the potential to take psychology further by pushing its disciplinary blind spots.

Similarly, the work of Hamber (2009, 2010) has also moved in and out of psychology, addressing interdisciplinary audiences and drawing on a wide range of intellectual resources. As such, it too tackles a social phenomenon – violence – from a more interdisciplinary approach. This

allows attention to social context to evolve in ways that psychological theories cannot easily offer given their history of individualism and universality.

The authors' work follows similar patterns. The second author's work has focused on environmental concerns (including water privatization and energy inequality) and shows the possibilities and limitations of psychology in relation to environmental issues, but also highlights the dangers of over-psychologizing environmental concerns at the expense of structural interventions. A typical response from students and colleagues is 'what has psychology got to do with water?' The point being made is that the perceived lack of 'psychology' in these examples or the fact that work does not necessarily appear in psychology journals (mainstream or critical) does not mean that there is no critique.

Indeed, Macleod has shown that in South Africa, where psychology as a formal discipline and professional practice is relatively well-entrenched, most psychological knowledge is produced about wealthy urban South Africans and, in particular, university students. Psychological knowledge is often produced in the historically white universities. Given this history, there is very valuable work being done by those who have moved out of psychology because it has failed to offer the knowledge base that helps in understanding our contexts, those who move in and out of psychological knowledge more loosely in order to address the problems of psychology's lack of relevance, and those who have never been in psychology but who write critically about it.

One clear example of how a look outside of the discipline might push African critical psychology further is the rather surprising lack of attention given by most critical psychology writers on the continent to the structural mechanisms and constraints on knowledge production. In Africa, much research and intervention is driven not by universities but by the development industry. Many academics work predominantly as consultants for donors in order to make a living. The lack of attention to this phenomenon and what it means for what psychology may reflect the reality that most critical psychology is produced in South Africa, which has the highest-paid academics relative to other African countries. However, there are major gaps in the focus of psychology which may reflect its dominance in South Africa. Psychology is practiced through humanitarian interventions (see I'Anson and Pfeifer 2013; Pupavac 2001;) and a range of programmes for the disadvantaged and are largely funded by external agencies and, in the context of the global economic recession, increasingly by private foundations rather than bilateral donors. The tools for engaging with the meaning of this phenomenon do not exist within psychology and are an aspect of the African context that psychologists have poorly understood.

Looking outside of psychology, Mamdani states:

> Today, the market-driven model is dominant in African universities. The consultancy culture it has nurtured has had negative consequences for postgraduate education and research. Consultants presume that research is all about finding answers to problems defined by a client. They think of research as finding answers, not as formulating a problem. . . . Today, intellectual life in universities has been reduced to bare-bones classroom activity. Extra-curricular seminars and workshops have migrated to hotels. Workshop attendance goes with transport allowances and per diem. All this is part of a larger process, the NGO-ization of the university. Academic papers have turned into corporate-style power point presentations. Academics read less and less. A chorus of buzz words have taken the place of lively debates.
> *(2011)*

Whilst we can and probably should lament the ways that external funding constrains psychological knowledge, we should also use it as a point to reflect on what constraints exist within

academia which is not consultancy-driven. In other words, rather than imagine there can be research and theory that exists without constraint we need to begin a more careful debate about the structural constraints on the production of critical psychology in Africa.

The way forward

Whilst recognizing the impossibility of defining an African critical psychology, we have attempted to document the critical engagements with the discipline by writers from the African continent. Within these there are important themes that need debate and further complication. The first is Africanness and how one might identify as an African psychologist or as an African subject of psychology. The second is what constitutes critical work. Whilst much work stems from a critique of Western psychology, we would argue this need not make it critical, and some critical ideas are limited to particular historical moments outside of which they lose their radical edge. Finally we have questioned, given the relatively weak state of psychology on much of the continent, whether we need psychology at all. We would argue that we do. Not as an academic and institutional practice, but rather because psychological ideas permeate social life from humanitarian interventions, to increasing managerialism in universities, to the popularity of self-help television shows and magazines. In these ways psychological ideas are commonplace and, dangerously, associated with the urban, the modern, and the developed in ways that, to date, critical psychology has been unable to adequately grapple with. Critical psychology should move beyond analyses of research and university practice to understanding how psychology infuses everyday life in Africa.

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Website resources

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Critical psychology and the American continent
From colonization and domination to liberation and emancipation

Raquel S. L. Guzzo

A reflection on Psychology on the American continent brings out important elements through which we can uncover the conditions for critical psychology in this part of the world. At the same time, it points to the future that this profession may have in its engagement with everyday life and social issues historically constituted and difficult to solve. The history of the American continent, including the different economic and political positions from north to south, and the tensions, conflicts, and consequences that exist to the present day, forged psychology and left its marks, especially in professional practice. The aim of this chapter, to reflect on the critical psychology in the 'American' countries, will not be complete. The choice made here represents a particular position from which we can understand what the Americas are and how psychology developed in this part of the world.

The purpose of the chapter follows a five-part structure in which I target the development of psychology and the contradictions arising within it, which then point to important elements in critical psychology. It sets the basis for a more detailed study which would take into account some of the key elements that have contributed to the liberation movement, which is becoming a stronger force for organizing critical psychology and social movements here.

The first part provides a brief characterization of the Americas, particularly in relation to economic and social indicators. The second highlights the diversity and contradictions responsible for the tensions present in everyday life in this geographical area. The third focuses on aspects of the development of psychology and their different directions and commitments. The fourth considers the early development of critical psychology generated on the mainland of the Americas, and different possibilities in the critical movement in psychology. Finally, in the fifth part, are conclusions to be drawn from the development of critical psychology in the Americas and directions for future work.

The American continent: many stories, few revelations

It is impossible to make reference to the American continent without mentioning the book written by Eduardo Galeano, *Open Veins of Latin America*, published in 1976 during a period of political turmoil and imperialist domination. The purpose of that book was to disclose certain facts that the official stories, the ones told by the powerful which conceal or distort with lies in

attempts to deceive or seduce, to dominate and exploit, that is, stories with no real revelation, omitted. The book, which was banned by the military dictatorships imposed on the dominated countries, draws attention to the deliberately engineered communication difficulties in media that should disseminate information about reality, and it considers both the knowledge relayed by the privileged elites and the 'militant' literature which consists of revolutionary rhetoric which parrots a language which is always for the same ears, prefabricated phrases which are distant from any conviction necessary to effective social change.

For much of the world, and for the 'North American' people, of course, 'America' is only the United States. This can already be interpreted as the exercise of political and economic power by 'North America' on Central and South America, exercise of the power of empire (Harnecker and Uribe 1980; Hobsbawm 1987; Lenin 1917; Luxemburg 1985; Sader 2000). The other American countries are, according to Galeano, treated as a second class of America with an obscure identification and the identity of a people divided.

The Americas are the second largest continent in the world occupying a large part of the Western world and concentrating approximately 12 per cent of the world's human population with distinct and ancient cultures and divided into three geographic blocs : North America (five countries), Central America (20 countries) and South America (12 countries). Culturally and politically, however, the region is considered as two blocks, Anglo-Saxon America and Latin America, that have different histories of colonization and therefore development.

It is worth drawing attention to inequality in countries in every part of the continent, in which the structure of domination runs from the north, with a smaller number of countries, to the south which houses the majority. The American continent is a place of many contradictions, one of which is expressed in the ratio between the number of countries in each block and the value of their Gross Domestic Product (32.1 per cent of world GDP, according to data from SEPLAN 2011), and from which we see the huge social inequalities among the 37 American countries. The block with the largest number of countries, South America, has the lowest GDP. If the indicator of a country's development in the current capitalist system is measured by Gross Domestic Product, it is clear that what matters in this system is to produce wealth and goods to be consumed, not to consider social development and quality of life. The collective production of wealth has not consistently changed the lives of most people on this continent. The history of the American continent has been a continuous experience of mutilation and disintegration disguised by this kind of 'development' (Galeano 2000).

Despite this challenge, the Human Development Report presented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines the goal of the development process as being to extend human freedoms and to expand the choices people have to live full and creative lives (Malik 2013); this is assumed to be a process that should benefit all individuals in an equitable manner based on the participation of each of them. But this is a very distant discourse that does not correspond to the everyday life of the majority of people who live on this continent.

Some indicators are evidence of the distance between the real world and a discourse concerned with 'expanding human freedoms' for making possible the full and creative development of people. We need to examine what is meant by human progress in such documents. According to this document (Malik 2013), economic growth by itself does not reflect progress in human development. If we assume that an increase in the Human Development Index (HDI) reveals a positive movement in relation to social equity and quality of life, we can see that in 2013 several countries changed their level of quality of life, particularly those in the more unequal southern hemisphere. However, we need to bear in mind that this indicator is a composite measure of data from three dimensions (life expectancy, educational attainment, and control over resources needed for a decent life, such as housing and sanitation). Small changes in the HDI do not

concretely represent a change in the objective conditions of life. The American continent still remains unequal, with immense and intense contradictions perceived only by those who, somehow, are willing to engage in a critical analysis of reality.

Diversity and inequality: tension and conflict in search of utopian horizons

The most important characteristics of the continent that impact on people in their daily life are those arising from social inequity and the objective and subjective consequences of the process of colonization. While necessary conditions for developing the best quality of life are celebrated in official discourse, what really occurs is the reproduction of a power relationship between those who are completely economically unequal. Although all segments of the Americas have been colonized by European countries (especially by England, Portugal, and Spain), the different trends of that uneven and combined development are evident today in countries with different positions in the globalized world, polarized by exploitation and domination. With a native population characterized mainly by indigenous people, large tracts of land and aquatic areas, minerals and other natural resources, the three blocks of the American continent were easy prey for a devastating domination that eventually established another kind of colonization, a form of economic domination and slavery which are themselves the conditions of contemporary 'social development'.

Boron (2010) discusses the vicissitudes of capitalism in Latin America, demonstrating that, even after having been open to the dominant mode of production in the major economies of Americas for almost a century and a half, and even with some periods of high economic growth rates, the Latin American countries did not really escape from a state of underdevelopment. These countries are still mired in serious social problems marked by poverty, social exclusion, low education, an extreme concentration of wealth and income, violence and social inequality, and a more fictitious than real 'democracy' with serious violations of the most basic rights of the citizen.

What Marxists (Marx and Engels 2004; Marx, Engels, and Lenin 1977) refer to as the subhuman condition of development is nothing more than a way of life forged in capitalism in this part of the world. For Marx, the conditions of human development are not determined by the subjective aspirations or desires of this or that person, but by the real social relations that are determined by the mode of production and reproduction of capital, and finally by the social class conditions. Marx proposes a humanitarian liberation theory and indicates the route to its concrete realization; for him, human development is the creation of the material prerequisites of a new society full of spirit and practical meaning for everyone. A society guided by possession of resources, alienated labour, and the transformation of basic rights in goods, is not compatible with an autonomous and emancipated human development condition. Colonialism was the anteroom of capitalism in the Americas, denying human rights to those subjugated, dominating them by violence, keeping them, even by force, in a state of misery and ignorance (Memmi 2013).

Capitalism shows, in this case, that it is not the path to the development of countries in the economic periphery. Rather, it is a sure road towards the perpetuation of the condition of dependency, exploitation, repression, violence, and bloodshed, even when some indicators show an improvement in the quality of life of its population expressed in the so-called significant gains marked by the Human Development Index in the southern hemisphere. In 1990, 33 countries had an HDI below the 25th percentile, while in 2012, 15 countries were in this position. Likewise, the number of countries with an HDI above the 75th percentile increased from 33 to 59 between 1990/2000 and 2000/2012 (Malik 2013). This indicated a change, if considered in

isolation from other indicators. For Boron (2010) the advance of globalization makes the cap-italist world deepen dependency and perpetuate underdevelopment in most of the continent, despite changes indicated by the HDI.

Between the suffering body and stricken soul: psychology as science and profession

In capitalism of the late nineteenth and twentieth century, psychology appears and develops differently in the Americas. According to Parker (2007), a critical reading of the emergence and development of the science and profession of psychology demonstrates the deep connection between this discipline and the development of capitalist society. Thus, North America, where capitalism was configured with extensive and deep roots, sees the most intense and consist-ent development of psychology associated with the expansion of training programs, scientific associations, and regulatory professional practice, impacting the culture of the other American countries and development of the profession.

In addition to that development, and due to the period of the 'Iron Curtain' which sealed off a significant part of the world and the decades of dictatorships supported by the United States, nothing produced in the former Soviet Union came to Central and South America that was not understood through US American lenses. One exception was the work of Cuban psychologists, and their work during the periods of dictatorship in the rest of the south of the continent was forbidden. There was thus a dominance of knowledge and training of profession-als for maintaining the *status quo*. The psychology that was permitted was one that served as a tool for the maintenance of an extractive colonization, as cradle of domination and capitalist exploitation which fuelled an ideology of personal success, images of mental illness among those who failed, and a focus on the possibilities and impossibilities or individual limits and achievements.

In this scenario, psychology developed, particularly in Latin America, the ideas brought by trained researchers in the developed world in the early nineteenth century and, only later, as a regulated activity in different fields of the profession. Once regulated, numerous undergraduate and postgraduate courses were created to sustain the growing demand for psychology among the liberal professions, those 'spaces of reason' inhabited by physicians and psychiatrists who aimed to treat 'mental illness' in segments of the population (Antunes 2004; Guedes 1987; Jacó-Vilela et al. 2005; Massimi 2004; Massimi and Guedes 2004).

In the last decade of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century, international organizations defined the paths to development of Latin American countries with a neoliberal agenda that maintained different levels of education in Central and South American countries, encouraging the presence of private initiatives and objectives in higher education qualifications. The focus on technical education has set in place a number of different careers designed to meet market demand. Educational reforms interfered directly and actively in youth education pro-jects, particularly in psychology, guiding its professional profile towards individual psychological assessment and therapeutic treatment (Martín-Baró 1996, 1998).

Psychology, in this scenario, turned its interests to the 'stricken soul' without regard to the 'suffering body'; the objective questions posed by the everyday life of most people were not the object of attention. The primacy of private practice and the formation of liberal professional psychology sustained the discipline as a powerful ideological tool to maintain the structure of the prevailing economic system.

Fanon (1965, 1971, 2004, 2008) draws attention to how the experience of colonization leaves deep marks on the lives of people. It is through oppression and exploitation, and then

through the revolutionary processes, that the colonized subjects are organized to reflect upon and reject this condition and transform, radically, their way of life. Independence, for Fanon, produces objective and subjective conditions for human liberation, renewal of the family and social structures, which impose, with the rigor of the law, the emergence and growth of its sovereignty. Drawing on the experience of French domination in Algeria and the revolutionary process of liberation, Fanon reflects how a new form of humanity follows this process and makes clear the direction psychology and psychiatry may take when they are committed to liberation and against oppression. The same condition is expressed in the Latin American countries with dictatorships funded to protect and project North American domination.

In tension with this role of the profession, from the 1960s on human life was sketched in other ways, in which psychology was not involved. Social exclusion by ethnicity, gender, and disability, as well as oppression and exploitation in everyday and institutional spaces such as schools and places of work, and at the same time poverty and economic accumulation in the world system, were causing concerns among professionals who recognized the power of ideology in determining the conditions of life.

A specific theory and practice of liberation begin to influence psychology and its possibilities for the transformation of society by creating a broad movement, from which other disciplines have also benefited. From the social movements to the organization of professional scientific societies and different university programs of basic training, the hegemony of psychology in the northern hemisphere began to be confronted. For example, Angelini (2012) looks at the role the Interamerican Society of Psychology, founded in 1951 in Mexico, had in the development of psychology in the 'Americas', especially in Latin America, with the aim of promoting communication between psychologists in the Americas and advancing research in the area. The first congress took place in December 1953 in the Dominican Republic, at Santo Domingo University, the oldest in the Americas, with the theme of 'Culture and Values in Psychology' (Angelini 2012). It was a small conference, with the fifty psychologists in attendance. However, during a time of dictatorships in Latin American countries in the 1960s and 1970s, the space of the congress saw massive participation by students of psychology, as well as by professionals, even without clear and straightforward discussion of the relation of psychology to the social events of the time. In these events, Ignacio Martín-Baró offered the perspective of the 'Psychology of Liberation', an ethical-political project for Latin America and, even if it was in no way representative of the majority of psychologists, a critique of the hegemonic forces began to appear in the discipline. Since then, this event is held every two years in different countries of the American continent, always containing space for debate on the relationship between the North American and South American psychology, as well as self-organization of Latinos compared to Americans.

In a classic article on psychology in Latin America, Ardila (1982) discusses the cultural traditions and the origin of psychology in Central and South America, and the place of its pioneers in the formation and organization of psychological professionals in these countries through scientific associations, journals and conferences, and research projects. Ardila shows how the growth of the area has had an impact on the development of the discipline internationally. He also points to problems for the profession posed by the uneven and divergent development in different countries, the stage of ideological conflicts and philosophies that influence the area. Without going into the political positions that are sources of tension in the production of knowledge, vocational training, for example, indicates the difficulties arising from the struggle for hegemony in the field and from North American and European domination of Latin American knowledge production, especially regarding the production and dissemination of scientific research. Latin American research has difficulties obtaining financing and being evaluated as relevant internationally.

After November 1989, in response to the assassination of the Salvadoran Jesuits (including Martín-Baró), Latin American psychology began to strengthen a movement of psychologists committed to building a more egalitarian and fair society and including the excluded (the poor, homosexuals, women, children). Thus began a movement celebrated on the days of the 13, 14, and 15 of November, the dates of the massacre at the Central American University José Simeon Cañas in El Salvador, which brings together psychologists, social scientists, and activists as an event concerned with the psychology of liberation. This movement aims to continue the path of Ignacio Martín-Baró, to build a psychology for Latin America through awareness of the process of liberation of the oppressed; this has been the theme of the congresses held so far in Central America and South America, in Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Brazil, Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Colombia (Osorio 2009).

Perspectives for the organization and liberation of the oppressed

The relationship between critical psychology and liberation movements in Latin America has built an important process of becoming aware of the current reality of our part of the world, as activists and advocates of social issues and different movements struggling for fundamental rights and a complete break with the capitalist system. The process of questioning reality, of the 'conscientization' proposed by Paulo Freire, has been constituted as an important psychosocial goal to be achieved by the professionals who are critically positioned and who nurture hope for a less unjust and unequal world (Guzzo 2014; Montero 2013). These processes require the participation of psychologists from other theoretical traditions and practices who are not a part of mainstream psychology; who provide a way of understanding psychological phenomena such as the aspirations and expectations of people individually and in groups and their way of life, with class analysis; and who make the labels given to problems and disorders function differently. From psychological distress and illness to development and strengthening processes, the coping tasks of critical psychologists in Latin America require special training with other ethical and political commitments. We therefore prepare the professional for community practice and other critical intervention, which requires a curriculum that immerses students in the culture and history of Latin American peoples.

There is no denying the role of universities in developing a professional identity, but they should also be viewed with a critical eye. Gonzalez Rey (2009) notes that one of the worst effects of the dependence of psychology on US American models and on the local regimes complicit with imperialism, was the institutionalization of education and the hegemony of the dominant thinking in the area, as well as the perpetuation of conservative positions in professional practice. This situation led to the difficulty of access for and retention of those university teachers with different ways of understanding the world.

Apart from the conservative training of professional psychologists by Latin American universities, the competition within institutional spaces and the growth of regulation and monitoring of professional work also reveals the tension between the dominant psychology and alternatives for the construction of a critical psychology.

In Brazil, for example, psychologists are in public service in the sectors of health care and education. This professional entry of psychologists into the system has called into question the basic training received in the five years of graduate psychology, setting a new agenda that necessarily problematizes a hegemonic view of reality and builds upon the aspirations of the working class, in favour of the construction of a theoretical framework that responds to social and political emancipation (Guzzo et al. 2013). In its own cautious and limited way, then, critical psychology confronts what is established and becomes an ethical and political position within the Latin world.

The critical movement in Latin American psychology has had a major presence in the 'counter-knowledge' and 'counter-practices' which contest the historical spread of psychology as a science and profession and, in a dialectical perspective, establish other relationships between social and individual situations. It thus gives new insight into psychosocial processes, revealing qualitative methodologies that denote another path and new knowledge that is now possible in this reality. We must remember that in the 1960s and 1970s, struggles on the American continent shook the structures of psychology and, as a result, educational institutions have responded by becoming spaces of greater conservatism in the training of future professionals. We must therefore remember our history and rebuild a movement that is able to provide a political alternative as part of the project of making psychology a powerful tool for social change inside and outside of the specific work of our discipline.

Brown (1973, 1974) shows clearly and unquestionably how psychology and psychiatry are on the side of the capitalists, arguing that there are no significant differences between these different sectors. Capitalists and mental health professionals, even though by different methods, serve the same purpose of modern capitalism. Brown also demonstrates how the capitalist system is organized around a limited form of human existence, incorporating economic oppression, social organization, culture, ethics, and interpersonal relationships. It is a system that alienates men and women from their humanity. Therefore, he points out, human liberation presupposes a revolution, a process that must include the theoretical and practical construction of a quite different Marxist psychology as one aspect of a new worldview derived from a Marxist analysis of reality. This worldview requires theory and practice to support it, and revolutionary change which seeks another form of sociability in the world, and must rebuild traditional practices and theories covering all dimensions of human life, the education and development of children, youth and preparation for work, housing, food, art, and sexuality, to name but a few of the things that are important to us.

The prospects for the development and maturation of critical psychology necessarily involve the engagement and involvement of professionals in different sectors of human life, from professional training to the organization of mass participation in social movements and human rights struggles. Critical psychology can offer a distinctive view of the integral relationship between subjective and objective reality and the material world, and in this respect, it can demonstrate how one side of the equation – subjective or objective – is a constituent of the other.

The 'psychosocial' field was constituted as a critical current on the American continent in the 1970s and 1980s, and had the main task of elaborating psychology's own proposals concerning the production of knowledge, but in such a way as to transform the reality of professional practice beyond dominant culture. The social context, with its own distinct characteristics and ways of life in different cultures, becomes the object of study and demonstrates the relationship between social life, social problems, and psychological theories. In Latin America, the movement for the liberation of the oppressed is organized from the social sciences, philosophy, and theology (Dussel 1984), in a dialogue between the different parties that constitutes those forms of knowledge. Subjective, reciprocal, and plural dimensions attend to 'singularity' while, at the same time, providing a collective reading of reality.

These ontological foundations define another perspective for psychology. Freitas (2007) points to some elements that were formed from this new critical perspective for psychology: the incorporation of themes and social issues within programmes and academic courses in psychology and related fields; an emphasis on institutional participation in public policies and in community projects; and the entrance of professionals into the field of social practices in public office. These perspectives are still being formulated as the utopian horizon of those that really want to change reality.

Conclusions

Critical psychology in the American continent, albeit in a tortuous and challenging way, has thus been constituted as a movement for social change which aims to end the oppression which has an impact on the poorest, most excluded, and most exploited people, and aims at the empowerment of individuals and groups, and increased social and political participation in community spaces. In this way, critical psychosocial practices have approached the kinds of psychology used in neighbouring professions concerned with the dynamics of communities and other social situations.

However, major difficulties are still faced by those who wish to construct another project for psychology that accounts for the resistance to hegemonic 'science' and professional practice, especially among those involved in training new professionals and ensuring that workspaces reproduce the conservative mode of mainstream colonial psychology.

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Critical psychology in the Arab world

Insights from critical community psychology in the Palestinian colonial context

Ibrahim Makkawi

The main argument of this chapter is informed by the realization that, despite its significance as a critical alternative to colonial psychology, out of all branches of academic Western mainstream psychology taught in Arab and Palestinian universities, community psychology as a sub-discipline is noticeably marginalized and under-recognized. Community psychology has a formative quality and the potential to make contributions to the emancipation and liberation of marginalized communities, as opposed to many problematic forms of historical and contemporary enactments of mainstream colonial psychology in the Arab World (Makkawi 2009; Soueif and Ahmed 2001). Following a historical trend in postcolonial situations, universities in the Arab World continue to import and uncritically apply Western constructions of knowledge, including psychology, and the intellectual legacy of European colonialism continues to dominate these academic institutions (Abouchedid 2006). This intellectual hegemony of colonial knowledge in Arab universities renders the enactment of critical psychology in general and community psychology in particular – both in academe and in community settings – a challenging undertaking. In this chapter, I draw upon an emerging program of critical community psychology at Birzeit University in Palestine, arguing that envisioning critical psychology in the Arab World in general is better conceived through critical community psychology as an emerging alternative to colonial psychology.

There is no formally recorded history of the inception of community psychology in Palestine. However, early manifestations of community psychology in the Palestinian colonial context can be traced back to various phases of community grassroots organizing and action during the anti-colonial struggle for self-determination. The vision and praxis of the newly established master's program in community psychology at Birzeit University evolved from and were inspired by earlier forms of community grassroots action during the first Palestinian *Intifada* in the occupied West Bank and Gaza (WBG) in 1987. While this chapter highlights the recently developed master's program in community psychology as an exemplar of critical psychology in the Arab World, I focus on the roots of community psychology in the Palestinian community long before its formal academic inception.

I start by describing the colonial condition in Palestine with particular attention to the occupied WBG, where this specific case of community psychology enactment is being implemented. The focus is placed on academic psychology and the legacy of colonial knowledge inherited

and applied by Arab and Palestinian universities and the formal educational system as a whole. The following section describes the earlier roots of community psychology enactments which were manifested in community organizing and grassroots activism before and during the first Palestinian *Intifada*. Subsequently, the chapter addresses the problematic shift in this 'bottom-up' form of community grassroots action and the setback it sustained following the signing of the Oslo agreement in 1993. This setback is manifested in the work of an expanding network of Western-funded Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the parallel trend of reductionist research on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among Palestinian victims of military violence. Both the work of the NGOs and the PTSD research accumulation are problematic and pose serious challenges to community psychology enactment that is committed to people's liberation and social justice. The concluding section of the paper describes the emerging master's program in community psychology at Birzeit University, highlighting its roots in earlier phases of community psychology enactments during the first *Intifada*, and raising the possibility for critical psychology in the Arab World in general.

The colonial condition and colonial knowledge

Following a systematic settler-colonial process by the Zionist Movement, the state of Israel was formally established in 1948, and soon began an ethnic cleansing campaign leading to the mass expulsion of more than two thirds of the indigenous Palestinian people, leaving a fragile minority behind (Morris 1989). Furthermore, in 1967 the remaining territories of historical Palestine, namely the WBG, were occupied by the invading Israeli army in another wave of colonialist expansion. Two fragmented Palestinian communities remained in historic Palestine, but have been divided by the virtual 'green line' and live under two contradictory sociopolitical conditions, and more than half of the Palestinian people were dispersed as refugees in exile.

Highlighting the persistence of the colonial condition in historic Palestine is pertinent to our discussion of the challenges facing the enactment of critical and decolonizing community psychology in such a context. The colonial condition in historic Palestine is illustrated in Rouhana's (2011: 1) statement that, political justifications aside, describing 'Zionism [as] a settler colonial movement therefore is, at the very minimum, a description of the process in which Palestine was taken over'. This colonial condition continues to characterize the life and struggle of the various Palestinian communities, which were fragmented and divided as a result of the prolonged colonial practices enacted by the Israeli regime after 1948. Colonialism as a process and materialistic manifestation has always been described as a violent action perpetuated by the colonizers against the native people (see Bulhan 1985; Fanon 1963; Freire 1970). Reasserting Fanon's (1963) description of the colonial condition as violent contact between the colonizer and colonized, Jinadu (1976: 604) writes:

> The contact occurs in such a way that the numerically inferior alien race is actually the sociologically (*i.e.* politically and economically) superior race. This is so because of its access to, and monopolistic control of, socio-economic and political sources of power. This control is made possible and facilitated by the sheer weight of military superiority and material wealth of the alien race.

For decades, Israeli colonial practices in the occupied WBG included labour exploitation, fragmentation of Palestinian lands, settlement activities, control of the Palestinians' education, restricting people's movement, consistent political harassment, and military intervention, all rendering life conditions for the native population unbearable. The colonizer-colonized power

relation penetrated all spheres of life for the native Palestinians. It is within this context of settler colonialism that critical community psychology is called upon to address community mental health problems stemming directly from repressive colonial hegemony (Makkawi 2009). Since universities as centres for the production of knowledge expected to lead the development and enactment of community psychology in such context, it is imperative to examine the historical development of academic psychology in Arab and Palestinian universities in general.

Modern universities in the Arab World were established during the era of European colonialism, or shortly after some of the Arab states gained their artificial independence (Abouchedid 2006). Colonial education and Western epistemologies have dominated the earlier stages of Arab academic institutions despite Arab nationalists' efforts to create 'counter-colonial model of education capable of healing the masses from their woes resulting from colonial subjugation' (Abouchedid 2006: 5). Psychology was introduced to the Arab World through Egypt by colonial powers of the time and since then Arab universities have been uncritically importing, reproducing, and teaching Western mainstream psychology.

More than half a century ago, Western scholars based in the American University of Beirut plainly stated that 'Psychology in the Arab Near East sprang from and is nourished by Western Psychology. British, French and American influences can be seen – and distinguished – in the work of psychologist through the area' (Prothro and Melikian 1955: 304). While this statement came just as a number of Arab countries were gaining their independence, 'colonial psychology' continues to be persistently hegemonic as the intellectual inherited legacy of colonialism in academe throughout the Arab World (Abouchedid 2006; Nasser and Abouchedid 2007). Melikian (1984: 65) identifies the challenges facing the 'transmission of psychological knowledge in five oil-producing Arab States' as hinging on 'Arab concept of mind and behavior and Arab perception of psychology'. To locate the obstacles facing the transmission of psychological knowledge in the culture and collective mentality of the native community, rather than the discipline of psychology itself, illustrates the prominence of intellectual colonial hegemony years after the termination of formal colonialism. Palestinian universities under Israeli colonial rule in the WBG, modelled after Arab universities, are no exception to this colonial legacy.

Arab scholars infatuated with Western epistemology of mainstream psychology which they teach and research often state uncritically that 'Egypt was the main gateway through which modern psychology was introduced and practiced in the Arab countries' (Soueif and Ahmed 2001: 216). But this 'modern' mainstream psychology, when found in other similar colonial circumstances, was contested as colonial psychology (Bulhan 1985; Fanon 1963; Martín-Baró 1994). Continuing uncritically to import, practice, teach, and research Western psychology throughout academic institutions in the Arab World is problematic and hinders attempts to develop alternative, critical, and decolonizing forms of psychology. Based on his concise review of Ahmed and Gielen's (1998) edited volume *Psychology in the Arab Countries*, Farraj (2001: 281) writes that 'Arab psychologists rarely conduct studies on topics they have identified as being of special importance to people living in the Arab world. Instead of that, they are more likely to design studies around already existing instruments for examining certain constructs'.

Social psychology is the most researched area in the Arab psychological scholarship (Soueif and Ahmed 2001). The issues and problems investigated in social psychology lend themselves quite easily to critical examination and application to real-life problems of the oppressed majorities (Martín-Baró 1994). This intellectual space opens the possibility of developing native and relevant contributions to psychology (Hwang 2005). For comparison, Latin American social psychologists' discontent with the US model of social psychology evolved into what is widely known as the paradigm of liberation psychology (Martín-Baró 1994). Nonetheless, Arab social

psychologists continue to apply Western mainstream theories and concepts to their areas of research with little critical theorizing based on local real-world social problems.

Arab psychologists tend to claim that the theoretical roots of contemporary psychology in the Arab World reach back to pre-disciplinary intellectual legacies of great Arab-Islamic philosophers (Soueif and Ahmed 2001). However, there is no evidence of current developments or transformations of these classic ideas, especially in the discipline of psychology. Recognizing that 'it is in the nature of human nature to change' (Parker 2007: 1), mainstream psychology is constantly challenged to re-examine its basic premises in light of the changing human condition. There is a sense of absurdity in attributing contemporary psychology in the Arab World to classical writings of Arab-Islamic philosophers such as *Al-Farabi, Ibn-Sina, Ibn-Roshd, Ibn-Al-Heitham*, and *Ibn-Kaldoun*, to mention but a few of the often-cited 'pre-disciplinary' great Arab-Islamic thinkers, as the founding fathers of Arab psychology (Soueif and Ahmed 2001), especially when their ideas are seldom developed further by contemporary Arab psychologists.

The dichotomy between mere yearning to the ancient roots of Arab-Islamic philosophy with lack of contemporary development in psychology on one hand, and simply importing Western mainstream psychology with no contribution to knowledge construction on the other, obscures the development of critical psychology in the Arab World. Psychology that does not evolve from examining real life issues under colonial repression is part of the problem rather than part of the solution. The tendency to overlook intellectual contributions of anti-colonial psychologists working within similar contexts, such as colonial Algiers (Fanon 1963) and Latin America (Martín-Baró 1994; Freire 1970), or that draw upon contemporary paradigms of liberation and decolonizing psychology (Montero 2008; Seedat and Lazarus 2011) is peculiar to contemporary Arab psychological research and teaching. It is within this conflicting intellectual milieu that the enactment of critical community psychology, especially in the Palestinian colonial context, becomes appealing and challenging at the same time.

Palestinian universities in the WBG are not only considered centres for learning but also symbols of survival and resistance to the Israeli occupation. Despite their anti-colonial inception and constant targeting by the Israeli military occupation (Bruhn 2006), Palestinian universities resemble many of their sister institutions throughout the Arab World in their 'failure to emancipate education from its colonial past' (Abouchedid 2006: 1). In most social sciences, but especially in psychology, Palestinian universities continue to teach mainstream, Western individualistic knowledge. They have been criticized for lacking the academic culture of scientific inquiry, suffering from the absence of epistemological consciousness, implementing traditional ways of assessment and examinations, encouraging the brain-drain of qualified faculty members, relying on traditional teaching methods mostly using 'banking education' (Freire 1970), lacking theoretical vision for Palestinian higher education, and failing to place the development of higher education within its historical context (Shaheen 2004).

Early manifestations of community psychology in Palestine

During the first two decades of resisting Israeli occupation (1967–1987), Palestinian people in the WBG established an extraordinary network of grassroots organizations, including student unions, women's and workers' groups, and a wide variety of professional and community organizations. These community organizations obtained significant momentum through the public spirit of collective responsibility and volunteerism for the public good. This 'bottom-up' community organizing was initiated and maintained by community members who had no assistance from academic psychologists. During the first *Intifada* in 1987, the network of grassroots

organizations and community groups provided needed social and psychological support to victims of political and military violence (Hiltermann 1991).

The role of grassroots organizations in popular education during the first Palestinian *Intifada* embodied a particular enactment of community psychology in the context of prolonged periods of closure of schools and universities by the Israeli military authorities. Palestinian teachers and students in the WBG 'constituted an assisting force in the organization of un-institutionalized (and militarily declared illegal) educational activities, in conditions of widespread popular resistance' (Mazawi 1994: 507). Although declared illegal by the Israeli army, neighbourhood committees of *Intifada* activists organized and conducted popular education activities in *ad hoc* classrooms. In these educational activities, both community teachers and students were involved in an authentic and interactive teaching and learning process that integrated local community needs with the national struggle for self-determination (Hussein 2005). Palestinian universities, which were also closed by military order, struggled to meet the needs of their students, but noticeably failed to understand and transform grassroots manifestations of community psychology at that time (Makkawi 2009).

The signing of the Oslo agreement between the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the government of Israel in 1993 embodied a constraining turning point in the development of Palestinian national movement and grassroots organizing. Subsequently, overseas development aid from Western capitalist countries introduced funding and development requirements that supported the emergence and proliferation of a wide network of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Grassroots voluntary organizations simply disappeared from the landscape in that the space to develop their own social and economic infrastructures was diminished due to the new funded NGOs which mushroomed throughout the community (Bakeer 2012). Many of the leaders of the old grassroots voluntary organizations became paid administrators in the new NGOs network.

When the second *Intifada* erupted in 2000, the Palestinian community in the WBG was less prepared to sustain the collective struggle and provide the social and psychological support it had done before. Compared with mass demonstrations, community building, alternative economics, popular education, and strong psychological sense of community, which were prevalent during the first *Intifada* (1987), the second *Intifada* (2000) was less grassroots based and highly militarized, with many casualties and victims of military violence. It is within this social milieu of a demoralized, depoliticized, and pacified community that mental health NGOs were wrongly expected to provide mental health services and to attend to problems stemming from the brutal repression and military violence perpetrated by the Israeli occupation.

Problematic manifestations

In contrast to indigenous grassroots community organizations, NGOs constitute a network of Western funded projects misleadingly referred to as civil society. In the Arab World, the number of such Western funded NGOs increased from 20,000 in the mid-1960s to 70,000 in the late 1980s. In the WBG alone the number jumped from 272 on the eve of first *Intifada* in 1987 to about 444 after the Oslo agreement of 1993 (Qassoum 2002). In 2004, a total of 57 NGOs were providing psychosocial and mental health care services to a variety of groups in the WBG including women, children, people with disabilities, and victims of military violence (Giacaman 2004).

Many of these organizations provide overlapping services, sometimes to the same population, all depending on the availability of external funding, which is typically conditional upon the political situation in the occupied territories. The staff and administrators of these mental health NGOs are acting in a vicious circle that goes like this: writing proposals for project funding,

receiving the funds, implementing a funded project, writing a report to the funder, and moving on to writing the next proposal. These projects are sporadic, overlapping, poorly defined, never properly evaluated, and are anything but strategic movement to enhance community mental health among the oppressed Palestinian communities. Despite the fact that many of these mental health NGOs operate centres within the community, their frameworks for intervention are awkward and mostly apply individualistic approaches to counselling and psychotherapy.

While grassroots organizations were established from the bottom up with a broad base of supporters, typically linked to political parties and inspired by self-sufficiency logic, NGOs are established by a few individuals with links to Western funding organizations and with no popular base (Samara 2001). Western-funded NGOs are conceived within the wider strategy of co-option and entrapment of the Arab and Palestinian intelligentsia, seeking to depoliticize, distract, and distance radical and organic intellectuals from involvement with the struggle for justice and self-determination (Qassoum 2002).

Parallel to the expanding network of mental health NGOs, there has been a growing body of reductionist research on the exposure of Palestinian children and young people to political violence and trauma due to Israeli military violence. Both types of activities are individualistic, non-participatory, and acritical, and represent power knowledge embedded in the current phase of global capitalism. War-related mental health problems and psychological distress among the Palestinian people have been prevalent in their collective experience since their first uprooting by Israeli colonization in 1948. This collective trauma has been passed down from one generation of Palestinians to another. However, it is only recently, namely since the first *Intifada* in 1987, but with new momentum during the second *Intifada* in 2000, that research on mental health and war-related psychological distress among the Palestinian people has proliferated. Due to its obsessive focus on the consequences for the individual of exposure to military violence and trauma, this research has little relevance to the community-level work conducted by indigenous mental health practitioners providing services to Palestinian victims of military violence.

According to Haj-Yahia (2007), this accumulating empirical research suffers from a number of methodological flaws. First, these studies use traditional quantitative research methods. Second, the majority of the research has been conducted in the Gaza Strip, where political violence and life hardship is greater than in the West Bank. Third, there is a lack of comparison groups with young people who have not been exposed to the same level of military violence. Fourth, military violence and traumatic events are measured on dichotomous scales of measurement using yes/no response categories. Finally, the scales used in these studies were initially developed in English, mainly in the USA and Western Europe and were merely translated into Arabic with no cultural relevance.

This research focuses on the measurement of psychological constructs and coping mechanisms at the *individual* level of abstraction, whereas trauma caused by the Israeli military violence is conceived at the *collective* level of abstraction. Previous research with Palestinian students attending Israeli universities has indicated that collective-national identity enhances their psychological adjustment within a hostile and discriminating political environment (Makkawi 2004). The literature indicates a positive correlation between higher stages of ethnic identity development and personal self-esteem (Phinney 1995). Ethnic identity serves as a protecting factor for mental health in the context of ethnic-racial discrimination and prevents negative stereotypes from affecting self-concept (Mossakowski 2003). Current research on the Palestinian people in the WBG must examine the relationship between collective-national identity and coping with the psychological consequences of military violence.

Research conducted with colonized communities such as the Palestinian people ought to be decolonizing praxis, indigenously informed, and transformative, and utilize methodological flexibility including qualitative methods (Smith 1999). The disentanglement between the

accumulation of reductionist quantitative research and the mere implementation of funded training projects is best illustrated in a series of empirical quantitative research studies published by researchers affiliated with Gaza Community Mental Health Program (GCMHP). In describing community mental health as practiced by the GCMHP, Qouta and El-Sarraj (2002: 333) assert with reference to their research program that 'research activities improve knowledge of health and human rights issues facing the Gaza community; the publication of research documents is a valuable tool in raising the profile both of GCMHP's work, and of the current situation in Gaza'. However vague this statement might be in its depiction of the role of research in the work of one of the largest community mental health NGOs in Palestine, the dialectical interconnection between scholarships and practice as the simplest form of praxis, is strangely missing. What is really in question is the disconnection between the various interventions and 'human rights activities' (however individualistically the concept of human rights is defined) and research produced by the staff and visiting researchers in the GCMHP. Empirical research and community mental health interventions, in this case, are glaringly disconnected and hardly inform one another.

Critical community psychology at Birzeit University

The community mental health system in the WBG emerged recently as a section within the emerging general health system run by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). The PNA assumed responsibility for education and general health within which the mental health system had emerged as an 'embryonic system' attending to a vast number of risk factors impacting the community mental health at large (Giacaman 2004). The stagnation within this emerging system, when added to the expansion of the funded NGO network, especially in mental health, constitutes a challenge facing the team working on the development of critical community psychology at Birzeit University envisioned to be consistent with the grassroots community action from the first *Intifada*.

The few available documentations of the emerging mental health system focus on existing structures: two psychiatric hospitals, a total of 15 outpatient governmental community centres/clinics, and more than 20 clinics managed by NGOs and the private sector (WHO 2006). Due to prolonged Israeli occupation, along with the limited resources of the PNA to monitor the various psychological and mental health services provided by the network of NGOs in the occupied WBG, there has been an entrenched phenomenon of overlapping and border-crossing practices among the various mental health professions.

Realizing that community psychology is context dependent (Fryer and Laing 2008) requires indigenous contributions to knowledge construction (Smith 1999) and examination of relevant community problems within their local contexts. With this recognition, the community psychology program at Birzeit University was established under the assumption that opting for a paradigm of critical community psychology with an interdisciplinary outlook and contextualized decolonizing praxis should improve this acute situation of community mental health. But the interdisciplinary nature of community psychology the program espoused, especially when, internationally, the whole field of community psychology is still evolving, has repeatedly exposed it to issues of boundary definition with neighbouring disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, and education. Similar claims for doing community psychology are also made by many NGOs by merely affixing the word 'community' to the title of whatever training project they are conducting.

As an emerging sub-field within psychology, it is quite a challenge to have a fixed definition of what community psychology is and many would argue that we have several 'community psychologies' (Fryer and Laing 2008). As it is context dependent, community psychology that works well in one context may not be suitable for another context and indigenous scholarship is

expected to facilitate the development of what community psychology works for what context. Proposing the development of a context specific sub-discipline that requires local production of knowledge, in an academic environment that is 'alienated from indigenous epistemology' (Abouchedid 2006: 1) and continues to import and uncritically apply 'colonial knowledge', is not only challenging but also risks the possibility of strengthening the already existing confusion in mental health practices mentioned above.

The program is inspired by the assumption that the individual's psychological well-being in this colonial context is to a large extent an outcome of the ongoing Zionist colonization, oppression, repression, and exploitation. It is essential to examine how the ongoing occupation, military violence, the creation of the colonialist separation wall, checkpoints, economic embargo, the rise of poverty, imprisonment and torture, assassination and killing, school closures, and the systematic destruction of the Palestinian community's infrastructure all play a significant role in the severity of people's mental ill-health and the increase in risk factors. Consequences of these factors include but are not limited to disempowerment, poor community prevention, delinquency, child labour, high-risk behaviours, aggression, domestic violence, school violence, substance abuse, and many other harmful mental health problems. The key premise is that while working with groups and communities within this oppressive context, we emphasize that ultimately the process of community critical *conscientization* (Freire 1970) is by and in itself a process of psychological liberation and mental health promotion.

Community psychology enactment at Birzeit University is envisioned as praxis focusing on community participatory action research about context-specific issues within the Palestinian colonial context. Realizing that empirical research about colonial policies, military violence, oppression, and community mental health in the WBG has been dominated by positivistic, reductionist, mainstream quantitative research methodologies with pre-determined categories and hypothesis testing (Haj-Yahia 2007), earlier research projects in the Birzeit program opted for a critical shift in their methodology and research questions. We took the challenge of shifting our general approach to research and knowledge construction to be more consistent with indigenous methodologies (Smith 1999) conducted by our students as indigenous researchers with already 'built-in' sensitivity to the local community's culture and aspirations. We framed our emerging research efforts in the broader theoretical, epistemological, and methodological tools of the Grounded Theory tradition (Glaser and Strauss 1967) due to its flexibility and relevance to inductive exploration of newly researched areas. Furthermore, the question of collective-national identity, which has been traditionally neglected in the trauma research in Palestine, was placed in the foreground of a number of student research projects. This allowed for the emergence of context-specific knowledge that may illuminate our understanding of the local social problems, rather than mere implementations of mainstream models which were developed in foreign contexts.

Conclusion

In illuminating the existence of Marxian currents in Latin American community psychology in comparison to US community psychology, Gokani (2011: 113) emphasizes that in Latin America 'community psychology emerged from the efforts of community organizers, activists, and community members pushing to be heard . . . and the need for academics to respond to social justice issues affecting the community'. By analogy, the Palestinian grassroots movement in the WBG, prior to and during the first *Intifada* in 1987 remarkably resembles community level action and organizing in Latin America that led to the academic development of community psychology during the 1970s and 1980s (Martín-Baró 1994 ; Montero 2008). Regrettably, Palestinian academic psychology at that time failed to respond to community grassroots action and

enactment of community psychology. Instead, the Oslo agreement and the subsequent expansion of the NGOs network in the WBG thwarted the development of academic community psychology in Palestine. Despite this historical shift, which renders the phenomenon of grassroots community action something from the past, the vision and roots of the emerging program of community psychology at Birzeit University can be located in community level organizing and collective action from the era of the first *Intifada*

Responding to the social and psychological ramifications of an entrenched settler–colonial condition, Palestinian universities in the WBG have been consistently called upon to develop and implement academic programs that would not only train younger generation of Palestinian students for future job opportunities, but also and more importantly develop programs that would contribute to community survival and resilience, and play leading roles in the process of nation building and self-determination. It is our realization that colonialism and colonial practices constitute the most oppressive and direct cause of community mental health problems that led to the establishment of the community psychology program at Birzeit University. An expanded account of the argument presented in this chapter, together with examples of critical community interventions in Palestine, can be found in Makkawi (2015).

Far from being conceived as distinct and set apart from the rest of the Arab World, the emerging paradigm of critical community psychology within the Palestinian colonial context will hopefully challenge academic psychologists throughout the Arab World to begin problematizing taken-for-granted mainstream colonial epistemologies of psychology we import and acritically implement in our research, teaching, and practice.

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Website resources

Arab Psychological Network: http://www.arabpsynet.com
Birzeit University for link to Community Psychology: http://www.birzeit.edu

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'Critical psychology in Asia'
Four fundamental concepts

Anup Dhar

Marx writes in the section on 'The Method of Political Economy' in the *Grundrisse*: 'even the most abstract categories, despite their validity – precisely because of their abstractness – for all epochs, are nevertheless, in the specific character of this abstraction, themselves likewise a product of historic relations, and possess their full validity only for and within these relations' (1993: 105). Marx had in mind the category of labour. Mind, psyche, reason, madness, health, and also Asia are, however, no exceptions. They are the product of historical relations and possess their full validity only for and within these relations. Medicine, psychiatry, psychology, and the clinic also need to be seen within the 'historical constitution of [their] own practices' and the 'political-economic conditions in which [they] became possible' (Parker 2011:1), and also the discourse within which they grew roots (Foucault 2006). The 'invention of the mind' by Descartes as 'mirror of nature' (Rorty 1979: 357) and the 'Cartesian progression of doubt' as the condition of the 'great exorcism of madness' (Foucault 2006: 244) would therefore serve as philosophical signposts and historical roadmaps in our foray into critical psychology in Asia.

Critical psychology *in* the rest of the world

This chapter is faced with a dual problem – the problem of 'critical psychology' and the problem of 'Asia'. One may ask: why are these two seen as a problem? Primarily because I do not wish to take them as a priori or as *given*; and I believe the dialectical relation between the two shall give me a sense of what I could call *critical psychology in Asia*. I wish to ask: what *is* critical psychology, ask it yet again in the context of Asia and again in light of the 'Four theses and seven misconceptions' (Parker and Burman 2008). I also wish to ask, what *is* Asia, again, in a somewhat interminable manner. Where is the *idea* of Asia coming from? What are its antecedents? What is the genealogy of Asia (see 'Imagining Asia: A Genealogical Analysis' by Wang Hui)? What happens to critical psychology when it comes to Asia? What is the kind of critical psychology that is born in Asia? How many face(t)s of critical psychology are there then in Asia? Between absorbed versions and in-born versions? Between Japan on the one hand, and Turkey on the other, where Turkey could be seen as a promontory of Asia only? Between Buddhist Sri Lanka and communist China? Between a violent Sri Lanka and an equally violent China? Between a westward-facing Japan and Turkey – the first turned towards the USA and the second towards

Europe? Where is India in all this, given two hundred years of British colonialism? And where are the Philippines, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, and Iran? Further, what are the '(four) fundamental concepts' (see Lacan 1977/1998) of critical psychology – between New Zealand, on the one hand and Turkey, on the other?

Critical psychology *of* the world of the rest

This section of the chapter sets up the 'camera angle' from which I shall explore and perhaps interrogate the question of critical psychology *in* and *of* Asia. I would like to make a distinction between 'in' and 'of' Asia: 'in' is indicative of *location* – hence the question, is there critical psychology in Asia?; 'of' is indicative of *character* – does critical psychology *in* Asia have a character distinctive *of* Asia? What would it mean to have a character distinctive of Asia or to have an Asian character; given that Asia is *not* One?

To make sense of these two questions, I take off from Derrida's assertion in *Geopsychoanalysis: '. . . and the rest of the world'*: 'there is practically no psychoanalysis in Asia, or in the South Seas' (could Derrida have made a similar assertion with respect to critical psychology in Asia?). One would like to ask: why would he say this? Is it because he is unaware of the presence of psychoanalysis in Asia? Or is it because he actually thinks 'psychoanalysis has never set foot' on Asian soil (this being the question of *location*)? Or is it because *here* psychoanalysis 'has never taken off its European shoes' (this being the question of *character*)? Is it because as Derrida says 'De facto and de jure African [or Asian] psychoanalysis was European, structurally defined in the profoundest way by the colonial state apparatus'? Is it because much of Asian or African psychoanalysis were 'merely emanations of what we used (how accurately!) to call 'metropolitan organizations'? (1998: 69).

Derrida also raises the question of *naming* in institutionalized psychoanalysis (*naming* a part, a fragment, of the global work of critical psychology as *Asian* is a crucial aspect of this chapter). He marks the relative absence of the 'rest of the world' in psychoanalysis's global cartography (this chapter, however, is an attempt to make space for not just the 'rest of the world' but the 'world of the rest', and the worldview(s) of the rest in the larger map of critical psychology). Derrida begins the piece with the International Psychoanalytic Association's proposed Constitution of 1977 (ratified by the Thirtieth Congress in Jerusalem), which contains a 'parenthetical sentence' which attempts to 'map the divisions of the psychoanalytic world'. The map is as follows: 'The Association's main geographical areas are defined at this time as America north of the United States-Mexican border; all America south of that border; and the *rest of the world*' (italics mine).

It is the 'rest of the world' that animates Derrida; it is the 'world of the rest' that animates me. He asks: why does the rest of the world remain unnamed in the Constitution? Or more particularly, why does 'Latin America' remain unnamed? This, according to Derrida, is a 'psychoanalytic colonization of a non-American rest-of-the-world, the conquest of a virginity parenthetically married to Europe'. This leads to first what Derrida calls in *Negotiations* a 'homo-hegemonization' of the rest of the world (to me it is the hegemonization of the world of the rest). It also means attention to (cultural) particularity is seriously compromised; even in his naming of 'Latin America' Derrida falters; it appears there is no psychoanalysis in the rest of the world; the world of the rest remain barren in terms of the production of 'theories of mental life'. It appears all of psychoanalysis, even if present, is European, or a *derivative* of the European, which is why perhaps naming is never enough; one has to work through given names, inherited names, look for unknown names, and at times re-name. Otherwise the work and world of the rest would look like a slightly modified or displaced version of the European/American Original. One needs to ask: how have the 'rest' received psychoanalysis (or critical psychology) in the

rest of the world? What has it done to the world of the rest? What has the world of the rest done to psychoanalysis (or critical psychology)?

How do I make sense of the above discussion – a discussion premised on (the absence and presence of) psychoanalysis in Asia (and Africa)? How do I bring to bear the above discussion on the question of critical psychology in Asia? How do I map the difficult work of critical psychology in Asia? Taking off from the above, two sets of questions take shape: first, is there critical psychology in Asia? Has critical psychology 'set foot' on Asian soil? This is, of course, not to see the question of critical psychology in Asia from an *expansionist standpoint*. Second, has it 'taken off its European shoes', leading in turn to two further questions: (a) has it taken off mainstream psychology's European shoes? It appears it has. (b) Has it also taken off critical psychology's European shoes? Has it become critical psychology *of* Asia? Has it produced something different from what Derrida calls 'metropolitan organizations'? Perhaps it would be meaningful to look at critical psychology in Asia from the standpoint of marking *difference* with respect to the usual preoccupations of both mainstream psychology and critical psychology in the metropolis, *deferring* not just what was psychology, but perhaps what one meant by critical psychology as well. In that sense, would 'critical psychology in Asia' be critical *of* western European critical psychology as well?

One needs to ask in this context, what makes the knowledge and practice of psychology 'critical'? Does the *qualitative turn* make it critical? Does the *political turn* make it critical? Which kind of political philosophy makes it critical? Post-Marxism? Post-structuralist feminism? How should the imagination of psychology 'beyond the limits of bourgeois society be achieved' (Dafermos and Marvakis 2006)? Does the *cultural turn* make it critical? Does a turn to the *local* or the *indigenous* make it critical? Or does a reflection on the history, philosophy, and sociology of psychology make it critical?

Teo (1999: 121) delineates four forms of critical psychology: '(a) critical theoretical psychology, (b) critical theoretical psychology with a practical emancipatory intention, (c) critical empirical psychology, and (d) critical applied psychology'. Which form did Asian critical psychology take? Which form designates critical psychology in Asia?

One therefore needs to ask, what gives character to what I have designated critical psychology *of* Asia or *Asian* critical psychology? Location? Or character? Critique of (feudal) traditions? Turn to the indigenous, and 'indigenous renaissance'; a revitalizing of critical biculturalism? Or a *dual critique* – critique of both the Occident and the Orientalist reconstruction of the Orient – critique of both the hegemonic Occident and the Occident's hegemonic description of the Orient – critique of both the West's hegemonic principles and principles (emanating from either the West or from the East) that hegemonize the East? The somewhat aggressive turn to the indigenous has its own problems, as demonstrated by Wai (2013) in the Chinese and Hong Kong context ('Indian psychology' shall have much to learn from this kind of critical relation with the turn to indigenous culture):

> psychologists in academia were aware of the hegemony of American Psychology and started the indigenous psychology movement in 1970s. This Nationalism-fueled movement was critical at first, yet it was later found that the simulacrum of 'Chinese-ness' (signified by the Confucianism-Taoism-Buddhism triad) led 'indigenous psychology' to fall into the trap of positivism and essentialism. 'Indigenous Psychology' became everything that involved non-'Western' participants, any research topics that involved 'non-Western' themes, and at times referred to any research articles that included vast citations of ancient texts (e.g. *Confucian Dialect*). This illustrates the worst possibility of what 'critical psychology' could be, confining itself to the reformist 'neopsychology' dogma. Here the author calls for an

anti-psychology underground. With a slightly disturbing anti-APA formatting writing style, the author refuses any essentializing attempt. The deliberate choice of a forgotten 'Chinese' philosophical root (*Gongsun Longzi*) represent a humble salute to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *schizoanalysis*.

(Wai 2013: 279)

Wai calls for an anti-psychology *Grundrisse*: 'critical psychology is not psychology – and the proposition is not proposed negatively' (2013: 278). This attitude – and Wai calls it the 'critical' attitude – could also form the perspective from which one examines tradition, indigenism, nativism, and Asian religions like Buddhism. Which is why it is not enough to envisage critical psychology from a Buddhist perspective (Vithanapathirana 2013: 870–885) in the Asian context, but to reimagine Buddhism from a critical perspective, reconceptualize why Buddhism 'focused on the problem of *dukkha* and its cessation (*nirodha*)' and the theory of 'dependent origination' comes to stand for peace in Tibet and statism-violence-repression in Sri Lanka and Burma. Which is why it is never enough to say that 'in Sri Lanka there is no academic discipline called critical psychology; . . . Buddhism offers a *complete* psychological package' (Vithanapathirana 2013: 873). One perhaps needs to judge *the limits of knowledge* which are produced by various psychologies, including Buddhist psychology, Chinese psychology, and Indian psychology in the Asian context. The task of critical psychology is to work on what Marx or Freud would call 'the secret thereof' and disclose 'the blanks, silences and absences' in knowledge by reading its *symptoms* (Wang 2013: 265). *Asian* critical psychology thus bears the double burden-bind of recovering, recuperating, and foregrounding the 'Asian' while at the same time putting under erasure 'Asia' or rendering deconstructive 'Asian' metaphysics.

Further, to 'what extent are [Asian] psychological knowledge and practice culturally and historically constructed, and how may alternative [Asian] approaches confirm or resist the ideological assumptions in mainstream [western] models' (Parker 2007)? It is here that the problematic of *imported* psychology can be invoked; for example, modern psychology in China, or for that matter, India 'did not grow out of an indigenous socio-cultural root, but was instead *imported* from Western countries approximately during 1876 to 1922, when China was being colonized and reformed'. Critical psychology in Asia hence bears the added burden of '*decolonising* research' (Smith 1999) and making space for indigenous *ways of knowing*, though a critique of Eurocentrism: for example, in New Zealand, the critique of the dominance of Pākehā epistemological assumptions and cultural practices (Robertson 2004). The need for negotiated spaces that enable diverse and collaborative relationships between indigenous Māori and colonial Pākehā ways of knowing is the agenda for *decolonizing* knowledge practices, and the possibility of negotiating spaces for Pacific peoples (Mila-Schaaf and Hudson 2009). Discourse analysis, on the one hand, of the 'contemporary language of racism' (Tuffin 2013: 57), characterized not by 'blunt negativity', but by sinuous speech, ambivalence and contradiction (this is important because 'race talk', as Tuffin (2013: 57) shows, now resides 'in the language of apparent racelessness') and work on 'locality of psychological epistemologies' (Huygens 2009; Larner 2003) emerges as a critical psychology agenda (in New Zealand and why not in Asia as well) as against the 'politically neutral, asocial version of psychology' (Tuffin 2005).

Wai (2013: 278), on the other hand, sees critical psychology as an 'anti-positivist stand' and an 'anti-hegemonic attitude'; it is *not* an essentialized outfit; furthermore, for Wai (2013: 278), if critical psychology is a '*movement* instead of [being] an establishment, then public involvement is *surely* sine qua non'. Critical psychology in Asia is thus, at a more abstract level, an impossible dialogue between post-positivist epistemologies, turn to discourse subjectivity-phenomenology, politicization, praxis, and the question of (white and brown) Orientalism (Chaudhury 1994),

the historical contours of which can be teased out with some difficulty as Bo Wang (2013: 257) suggests. Wang is of the opinion that there is 'no such thing as critical psychology (even if in its plural form) in China which aims to react against mainstream psy-sciences'. Now why does Wang say this? Is it because there is no complete, closed, or coherent corpus, a corpus that could be easily delineated, and that could be designated 'critical psychology in/of Asia'? Is it because, as Wang feels, 'the development of Chinese psychology shares *overlapping issues* with critical psychology'? Fozooni (2006) shares with Wang a similar concern:

> Oh, boy! This is gonna be a tough one! All things considered I would rather be writing the fifth volume of Marx's *Das Kapital* or the genealogy of lesbianism in the Khomeini clan than a critique of the Iranian *psy-complex*. And since the nemesis of this psy-complex (i.e., Iranian Critical Psychology) does not yet exist as a coherent body of thought and action, I have no choice but to conjure it up as we go along.

This is also the method – the method of *conjuring* – Dhar and Siddiqui (2013: 506–547) have followed so as to work at the uncertain *edge(s)* of mainstream psychology to see where psychology turns critical; one could also call it, as Wang suggests, 'working at the borders'. *Working at the borders* could be a way of going about understanding critical psychology (or critical psychologies) in Asia. Critical psychology could be motivated by a philosophical ethos of 'limit attitude', which also means being at the borders. It brings to mind what Michel Foucault (1997) suggests in 'What is Enlightenment?': 'Criticism indeed consists of analyzing and reflecting upon *limits*'. In this chapter, as we ask, '*What is critical psychology in/of Asia?*' limit-thinking – thinking the limits of the mainstream determinants of psychology, including perhaps those of critical psychology – has been a methodology without guarantee.

Also, in modern capitalist Western societies, critical psychology is often understood as related to questions of *social justice* (Fox and Prilleltensky 1997; Hook, Kiguwa, and Mkhize 2004; Prilleltensky 2001). Critical psychology is to transform psychology into an emancipatory, radical, social-justice-seeking, or status-quo-resisting approach that understands psychological issues as taking place in specific political-economic or cultural-historical contexts. However, in the Asian context, critical psychology is often marked by a tripartite critique: (1) critique of the capital-modernism axis, (2) 'refuting the feudal ideology' and coordinates of tradition, and (3) critique of the 'neglect of indigenization' in psychology and an examination of the encounter and exchange of Western psychological episteme in Asian cultural ecology, and as perhaps a doubled up fourth, critique of, on the one hand, neoliberalism and on the other, pop versions of religion and spirituality. I, however, remain torn, as I try to set up a map, a contour of critical psychology in Asia, between what Painter (2013) has succinctly designated as impulses of *provincializing* and *worlding*, as globalizing impulses and indigenist impulses, and what Nandy (2004: 324–338) calls 'uncritical cultural relativism' and universalism.

Critical psychology (in Asia) is *not* psychology!

> APA formatting is not only an editorial style. It's a limit, it's a curse, it's a way of thinking, and it's a worldview. The linear flow of introduction → literature review → methodology → major arguments → evidence → discussions → conclusions allure critical psychologists to fall into the trap of hypothetical-deductive positivistic hegemonic psychology.
>
> *(Wai, 2013)*

Let us recapitulate and make one last move to a post-methodological impulse-impasse. The possible positions with respect to critical psychology in Asia that emerge from the above are: (1) There is critical psychology *in* Asia, (2) There is not just critical psychology in Asia; there is critical psychology *of* Asia; there is an *Asian* version of critical psychology, (3) There is *no such thing as* critical psychology in Asia because (a) Critical psychology in Asia has not yet taken off its European shoes; hence there is no critical psychology *of* Asia, (b) There is no separate corpus called critical psychology; critical psychology is glimpsed at only the borders, the margins and edges of mainstream psychology, and (c) There is critical psychology in Asia; but much of it is about anti-capitalism, anti-colonialism, feminism, homosexual rights, minority rights, etc.

Critical psychology in Asia 'often fails to inspire faith in a post-methodology spirit' (Wai 2013: 280). It adopts history, discourse analysis, and qualitative research methods as 'neo-methodologies'. But does it fail to move *beyond* what could be called 'methodological thinking'? Does it fail to become *post*-methodological? This is important because critical psychology is also a call for 'heterogeneous psychologies'; critical psychology is an antithesis to 'hegemonic psychology'. Wai asks: does the retention of methodology – even in its newer forms – retain the hegemony of hegemonic psychology – i.e. retain the hegemony of One even in the many? To what extent should critical psychology tolerate the One in the many? To what extend should critical psychologies tolerate psychology itself? Further, if critical psychology cannot reconceptualize the priest-like status of a sexologist, or the doctor-like status of the healer, or the clinical nature of care it may fail to make a difference. Therefore 'critical psychologists' can't be 'psychologists', by definition or by general practices. Psychology refers to the scope of an academic discipline, and 'critical' is an attitude (Wai 2013: 280). The search for critical psychology (in Asia or elsewhere) is thus a paradoxical search, a search that is bound to frustrate the researcher.

Critical psychology in Asia in neoliberal times

Marvakis (2012) points out that neoliberalization is not (only) about 'cutting off' some social welfare and/or getting less money for one's work. Neoliberalization constitutes a completely different conceptualization of (organized) society and, along with that, new forms of subjectivity, grounded on what he calls a 'new – a neo-liberal – anthropology'. He asks: 'we are witnessing a Great Experiment in the making of a new neoliberal humanity through the crisis. Will the neoliberal model of what it is to be a human being become definitive for the next fifty years?' If so, how would critical psychology in Asia respond to this change, this transition to the neoliberal anthropology? This is a question for the future to come.

The new mantra in neoliberal times is: *psychologize*. Psychologize all kinds of behaviour and mental states that are not in tune with the requirements of a corporate culture; psychologize all kinds of non-standard deviations; psychologize anything out of sync with the neoliberal ethos; psychologize all kinds of existences that lack 'killer instinct'; psychologize lack of competitiveness, or efficiency; psychologize any kind of attention-deficit in the child; and when the child or the adult wilts under an incessant pressure to perform, when one fails to deliver or live up to the efficiency index, and to expectations, psychologize even the breakdown; call it 'stress' and therapeutize in turn the breakdown, the vulnerability. The trope of one's own 'patienthood' deployed by post-Freudians acquires new meaning and power under 'banalised versions of programmes of mental and moral improvement designed to get people back to work and ensure that they are docile' (Parker 2011: 7).

In other words, the history of unreason is no more the *mere* history of either absence-*ing*, or stigmatization-pathologization. It is no more a simple history of the ghettoization of unreason. It is no more a history of the 'putting outside' or the putting aside of unreason. It is no more

the history of putting into the asylum or prison or reformatory any trace of unreason in the social order. Modern European man had reduced unreason to first the '*lacking other* of reason' and then to florid madness; the history of unreason was thus largely the history of madness. The late modern man, the globalized man, treats unreason at home, at school, at the workplace, and only at times in the clinic; he treats unreason even over the telephone. He treats unreason not as madness. He does not relegate unreason to the asylum or the ghetto. He does not forget unreason. He *remembers* unreason every moment, at every site: home, family, school, college, and workplace. He, in actuality, never lets the leash off unreason.

Counsel: counsel the single for their singlehood, counsel the couple for their coupledom, counsel the married, counsel the unmarried, counsel the sexual for being sexual, counsel the asexual for being asexual, counsel the rearing mother, counsel the rear-unhappy mother, counsel the child reared in school, counsel the teenager for being erratic, counsel the student for absenteeism and low grades, counsel the worker for being discontent, counsel the old for being old. Enter the bedroom, the inner world of every expression or irruption of unreason. Enter its bedrock; its bed. Don't drag it out. Don't throw it out of the social. Enter instead its private world. Do not exclude it. Include it instead. Exclusion is a thing of the past. Inclusion is the new avatar of hegemony. Not inclusion per se, but exclusion by inclusion. It is through incessant remembering, and an incitement to discourse around unreason, that neoliberal psychology forgets the experience of unreason. How will critical psychology in Asia respond to this new challenge: the neoliberal discourse of psychology?

Conclusion: the four, five, or six fundamental concepts

What are then the fundamentals, in the broad sense of the term, of critical psychology in Asia? 'Which amounts to saying – what grounds it as praxis' (Lacan 1998: 6)? Lacan asks in Seminar XI: 'what conceptual status must we give to four of the terms introduced by Freud as fundamental concepts, namely, the unconscious, repetition, the transference and the drive' (1998: 12). What could then be the four fundamental concepts of critical psychology in Asia? Based on the above discussion the possible four could be: (1) decolonizing, indigenizing, and defamiliarizing (Kumar and Mills 2013: 549–576) psychology in Asia, which also entails a provincializing of Anglo-American psychology; where 'decolonization is to be sought side-by-side with the constructive work of proposing indigenous psychology as alternative to Western Psychology' (Paredes-Canilao and Babaran-Diaz 2013: 774); (2) Limit thinking, where limit thinking is both about the thinking of limits and the limits of thinking, somewhat like the limits of love (or transference) and the limits of knowledge (or Consciousness) in Seminar XX (Lacan 1998); (3) Dual Critique (critique of both modernism and tradition); and (4) Post-methodological perspectives.

I would however like to add a fifth: *ab*Originalization. The abOriginalizing impulse has in it two related moves – one is to *ab*-Originalize, i.e. put 'under erasure' the origin, or render 'genealogical'/'archaeological' that which *presences* itself as the origin(al); in other words, it is a post-structuralizing impulse; and the other is to aboriginal-*ize*. One can ask, isn't ab-Originalizing a kind of aboriginalizing too?: yes and no. Isn't aboriginalizing a kind of ab-Originalizing?: yes and no. Yes and no, because one is the necessary condition of the other, but not the sufficient condition. Post-structuralizing is a kind of possible culturalizing, and culturalizing could be a kind of post-structuralizing. However, there is no guarantee that one would lead to the other. One hence needs to keep the work of culturalizing alive in post-structuralism and the work of post-structuralizing alive in the cultural turn. The somewhat limited review of the rather complex field and work of critical psychology in Asia – albeit never One kind of work – albeit intensely disaggregated and decentred in their work-character – albeit immensely variegated – seems to

be torn, productively torn, nevertheless, between a culturalizing of the post-structuralist turn in psychology, inclusive of a turn to 'political psychology' (including critical-emancipatory social science) and a post-structuralizing of the cultural turn in Asian psychology.

The above problematic of ab-Originalization and aboriginalization can perhaps be better represented in the language of '*liberated* and *liberating* psychology', expressed in the Filipino terms *malaya* (liberated) and *mapagpalaya* (liberating), in Paredes-Canilao and Babaran-Diaz (2013: 765–783), that according to them would not just resist the hegemony of western paradigms (or Freudian psychoanalysis) but also desist the 'homogenization of critical psychology'. Using the broad outlines of critical-emancipatory social science, Paredes-Canilao and Babaran-Diaz (2013) argue that *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* 'was meant and has proven to be a liberated and liberating psychology (literally *malaya at mapagpalayang sikolohiya*), and may therefore be a unique type of critical psychology in the Philippine setting'.

With respect to method, Paredes-Canilao and Babaran-Diaz first examine the academic and cultural circumstances that led to the movement of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, then describe its aims, methodologies, advocacies, and theoretical contributions and how these resulted in the establishment of professional organizations, research programs, and curricular offerings. They show how

> the movement from the traditional academic psychology as taught in the universities was brought about by dissatisfaction with too much emphasis on Western theories particularly on the tendency to emulate the scientific method to examine human phenomena. The end of the colonization period in the Philippines brought with it the beginning of a post-colonial psychology that focused on indigenous knowledge, practices, and methods.
>
> *(765)*

Liberated psychology is made possible by its decolonization component, while its being *liberating* is made possible through its indigenization component. Does the dialectic, or perhaps the Moebius, of the liberated and the liberating represent much of the nature and character, and also the predicament of critical psychology in/of Asia?

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Website resources

Critical Psychology (online version): http://www.academia.edu/1984125/Critical_psychology_online_version_

CUSP: Critical Cultures and Cultural Critiques in Psychology: http://www.cuspthejournal.com/

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European critical psychological trends

An open road to psychological recidivism

Ángel J. Gordo López and Roberto Rodríguez López

In a recent study on traffic policies we learned about Ichihara Prison for Traffic Offenders, a groundbreaking initiative established in Japan in 1969 as a governmental response to a significant growth in traffic accidents (Johnson 1991). Under the supervision of Haruo Sato, the first traffic warden who was also a psychologist, the authorities sought to make the prison's environment as similar as possible to life in the free community. As stated in *The White Paper on Transportation Safety in Japan '85*, traffic offenders are 'allowed to enjoy a freedom of atmosphere' and 'they are given special corrective education for the purpose of cultivating the spirit of law observation, sense of responsibility, respect for human life, and other moral considerations through daily activities' (cited in Johnson 1991: 65). The main orientation of the moral re-education programs adopted in Ichihara is to be found in Nakian therapy ('inner self observation'), and was to move inmates toward more positive social behaviours. This therapeutic approach is applied as follows:

> For two weeks some half-dozen residents, who have volunteered for the therapy, go to a solitary cell in the receiving cell block on weekdays from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., on Saturdays afternoons, and all day on Sundays. Staff members go from cell to cell, asking what the individuals are thinking and advising them on how to think about themselves, but offering no specific advice. It is expected that the traffic incident will dominate the inmate's inner observation.
>
> *(Johnson 1997: 147)*

In this way responsibility was shifted from the structural level of our culture of mobility (of transport communication based on cars), and the way it reflects and reproduces social differences, to the traffic authorities and juridical-political system and finally to focus on drivers' attitudes and self-observation through therapeutic practices.

Psychological intervention in this open prison, it could be argued, is limited to monitoring and challenging inmates' attitudes in the context of apparently free but self-normalizing observations/confessions. However, it could also be argued that another main contribution of psychology relies on the prefigurative power of this open prison. Taking the former account, psychology would be depicted as a body of expert knowledge and work (as 'psychological discipline') implemented across ruling institutions and professional practices (the 'psy-complex'),

while the latter would focus on the way psychology actively engages in the making of and regulation of everyday social practices and relations ('material psychological culture'). In the case of Ichihara this perspective would also entail consideration of the arrangements and influence of, for instance, the prison surroundings, the reception centre, the dormitory building, and the distribution of the individual sleeping units, and the apparently free practices and relations that they incite or afford. The major question that we would like to raise here would be to what extent European critical psychological issues and trends have been actively implicated in eclipsing and displacing their own material conditions of possibility and everyday mediations.

Taking Ichihara Open Prison as a starting point for what follows, we offer a review of the way critical psychology has taken root and evolved in different European countries from the early 1970s to the present, with particular emphasis on its material and historical conditions of possibility. In the first part of the text we review the current standing of the main European critical traditions. We specifically discuss the centrality of post-revolutionary Soviet psychology to German critical psychology (as an example of formerly critical epicentres in an ongoing process of revival of work important to us) and the multidimensional dynamics of critical psychology in Britain (as the epicentre of critical psychology in Europe during the last four decades). In the second part of the text we argue that these hegemonies have informed and shaped the evolution and positions of the rest of European critical psychology. We end the text with some remarks about the importance of recovering more materialist approaches in critical thinking in the age of the ongoing great financial crisis.

Resourceful geopolitical epicentres

Developments in Russian psychology, such as activity theory and cultural-historical theory, were the main resources for early European critical psychology. Despite the lack of consensus on appropriate subject matter for psychological research and appropriate methodologies for studying psychology as a science, the first Soviet psychologists departed from the commonly held and important consideration that the analysis of human action as a unit of psychological analysis (Rubinstein) takes place within social, cultural, and material contexts (Vygotsky, Leontiev, Engeström) (Yasnitsky 2011). These psychological concerns based on Marxist philosophy, whose roots can be traced back to soon after the Russian Revolution of 1917, inspired the formation of early critical psychological theory in different countries and regions in Europe (Tolman and Maiers 1991).

German critical psychology developed on the basis of Marxism and activity theory but, as in the psychology of the former Soviet Union, there was no common agreement about which aspects should be incorporated into the theories (Teo 1998). Critical thinking in German psychology appeared in the context of post-Second World War West Germany and was connected to the critique of fascism, authoritarianism, and capitalism developed by the student movements in the late 1960s and the early 1970s (Maiers 2001; Mattes 1985; Tolman 1989).

Held (2006) characterizes contemporary critical psychologies in Germany and Austria in terms of their opposition to quantitative-experimental psychology and their affinity with qualitative and subject-oriented methods. According to Held (2006), these opposing trends to mainstream positivist psychology include the Critical Psychology of Berlin's Freie Universität by Holzkamp (1992, 1972) and others (e.g. Maiers 1991) (in German 'Kritische Psychologie' with capital K), and also in various branches of critical thinking in psychology influenced by the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, Freudo-Marxism, social constructionism, postmodernism, feminist and postcolonial theory, post-structuralist thinking, and similar approaches (in German 'kritische Psychologie' with a small k). For his part, Teo (1998: 239) notes that the former

current runs close to a constructivist perspective in the 'socialist' countries which pursue an improvement of psychology and scientific epistemology as well as a science of the subject. Paradoxically, the later approach, less identified with the former Eastern European regimes, was more oriented towards challenging mainstream psychology or abolishing psychology in that form. According to Brunner et al. (2013: 419), some of these other forms of critical psychology in Germany, known as psychoanalytic social psychology, also called 'analytic social psychology' (Fromm), 'political psychology' (Brückner, Horn), or 'critical theory of the subject' (Lorenzer), shared an interest in integrating psychoanalysis into critical social theory, and were established 'at several German speaking universities during the 1960s in the wake of a socio-critical upheaval'. Their major topics of research included authoritarianism, processes of inclusion and exclusion, National Socialism and its consequences, and, more recently, questions regarding the constitution of gendered subjects.

In the 1970s, German *Kritische Psychologie* reached its peak. In the 1980s, with the final collapse of Soviet bloc regimes, mainstream psychology flourished and with it came ongoing institutional attacks on *Kritische Psychologie*. Foremost in this period of institutional change was the way that critical discourse in psychology, from the 1980s, shifted away from Marxism towards diverse variants of postmodernism, picking up from debates in France and finding its way into the arguments of feminism and multiculturalism in North America. As Teo (1998: 245) puts it '[F]or many critical communities postmodern relativism seemed more attractive than the search for a unified, reality-representing system of categories'.

Way beyond the image of a 'Golden Era' for critical work and narratives of decline (Maiers 1991; Mattes 1985; Teo 1998), methodologically oriented typologies (Held 2006) or 'renewed politicization and a rekindling of psychoanalytically oriented critical thought' (Brunner et al. 2013: 420), Lux (2013) identifies a new push for academic critical psychology in Germany. This was a revival mainly due to the students' reactions against the so called 'Bologna process' which was initiated by the European Union to make academic standards and degrees more compatible throughout Europe while promoting free mobility of students and professionals combined with accelerated institutionalization and spread of experimental neuroscience into psychology departments (contemporary 'neurohype').

The progressive neoliberalization of the European High Education Space since the late 1990s and ever more competition for scarce public resources reinforced the affiliation of German psychology with the natural sciences and, as Lux (2013) states, neuro-cognitive psychology become a new sub-discipline of psychology in Germany. This new biological and behaviouristic turn which German psychology has experienced under the aegis of the Bologna reforms has brought other unintended outcomes. In Lux's (2013: 472) own words, such a reinforcement of positivist logics 'has become an important unifying factor which makes new collaborations between different approaches of critical psychology possible. Even those who were hopelessly divided in the past started to communicate again'. In addition, a new generation of critical psychologists has emerged, despite having to find academic jobs in other disciplines such as sociology, public health, educational sciences, political sciences, or cultural studies with only very loose connections to psychology and carrying the risk of a fragmentation of critical psychology as such.

With Mattes's (1985) assessment of past events and the context for the first wave of German Critical Psychology, Lux also considers that the current revival of critical thinking and alliances generally follows the trend of continuously growing social protests and the sharpening of social conflicts in Europe, related to the widening of social gaps. All this constitutes the broader picture or constellation of factors which underlines the atmosphere of change in German critical psychology, triggered by neoliberal politics in higher education. To quote directly from Lux (2013: 478):

While discussing alternatives to the neoliberal program, a significant fraction of the current generation of students turned to Marxism, Critical Theory (Frankfurt School), postcolonial theory, queer and feminist theory, and other versions of critical social theory. The growing interest in critical approaches in psychology which combine social critical theory and the critique of the societal role of psychology results, in part, from this constellation. The development is explicitly strengthening feminist, postcolonial and Marxist psychologies, but also – in the tradition of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory – psychoanalysis as well as the works, for example, of Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan.

The lesson we learn from the history of German critical psychology is that its early evolution, self-effacement, and recent revival did not rely on epistemological or methodological concerns, nor even on theoretical resources, but on wider geopolitical transformations and the way they punctuate institutional policies. We also learn about the impossibility of abstracting critical psychology from social upheaval and protests. As noted earlier, when the students' movement declined in the late 1970s, critical psychology in Germany immediately faced a series of attempts to shut down and undermine its institutional basis.

While German critical psychology has been profoundly punctuated by major sociopolitical turmoil and social mobilizations, the sociopolitical conditions of possibility of critical psychology in Britain are often ignored or approached in a rather elusive way. Such a present absence becomes more shocking when considering that during the last four decades, under the banner of neoliberalism, British critical psychology has become the theoretical epicentre in Europe (and beyond). Recent reviews of critical psychology in Britain timidly reflect upon some of these issues and national tensions (Cromby and Willis 2013). For his part Parker (in press) states that despite the fact that Britain is a 'disunited kingdom', it has not given rise to different distinctive forms of critical psychology.

Such a narrative of a unified critical psychology and its inner and outer effects can be better understood by identifying some of its main structural dimensions. In our view a comprehensive picture of the history, dynamics, and current state of contemporary critical psychology in Britain can be painted through the following five dimensions: (1) a concern with 'real qualitative methodology' which includes various degrees of methodological solipsism, characterized by pride and critical sensibility, as well as a false political consciousness wrapped up in its own methodological rigors; (2) 'subjectivity deflated' characterized by overdoses of codified and transcribed micro-realism, ethnomethodological hallucinations or discourses and epistemologies influenced by technoscience. Lately some work in this area has nevertheless been engaged in reflexive ethnographies developed in organizational settings; (3) 'subjectivity in excess' grounded in psychoanalytic and humanistic theory, which lead the process of psychologizing various aspects of critical psychology under the pretext of finding the 'true subject', self-understanding, self-criticism, and political decadence, all packaged in a false and harmful reconceptualization of its own 'subject matter'; (4) 'feminist psychology and gender relations' often characterized by contradictory disciplinary tendencies, being either overly preoccupied by the acceptance of its own particular disciplinary territories or impelled to search out new disciplinary basis for analyzing gender relations and 'developments' beyond psychology; and (5) 'action oriented and participatory research' initiated as a transformative approach with many good intentions in the late 1990s, but which has turned out to absorb and neutralize radical mental health policies, whether from the established field of community psychology or the more recently accommodated critical disability studies.

Under the banner of incipient neoliberal logics developed since the mid–1980s, the current hegemony of British critical psychology relies at least partly on the level of flexibility

and interchanging nature of these five dimensions. In much the same way as the labels which inspired them, 'subjectivity in excess' or 'subjectivity deflated', these dimensions ought to be considered as interwoven 'ideal types' whose nature as signifiers and self-perpetuating power also relies upon their mutual antagonism. The terms 'subjectivity deflated' and 'subjectivity in excess' are inspired by Robert Castel's (1995, 2009) works on the end of the salaried condition in Europe since the 1970s, which coincides with the first major crisis of welfare states, and with it, the suppression of major forms of social protection. Paraphrasing Mary Douglas' (1996) theory of styles of thought, we argue that these central dimensions of British critical psychology rest upon incompatible organizational principles. Peaceful coexistence is difficult and the different strands of British critical psychology cannot exist beyond their mutual antagonism. This hostility between competing dimensions is precisely, in part, what keeps British critical psychology going.

It would not be politically correct or fair to allocate specific colleagues and research groups to any single dimensions insofar as none exist as individuals exclusively in one or the other, but rather in mutual, though antagonistic, dependence. However, under the influence of a current concern with 'reflexivity' in critical psychology, understood here as an exercise in self-disciplinary deconstruction and objectification, we shall comment on those dimensions which we feel most closely associated and identified with.

The primary resources which inspired British 'discursive psychology' (Burman 1991; Burman and Parker 1993; Parker 1999) were cultural-historical psychology and activity theory, which emerged in the context of Soviet psychology, and French post-structuralism, especially Foucault's work on knowledge and power relations along with feminist developments and psychoanalytic theory shaped later on by political, action, and discursive psychology. Discursive work in psychology bought into the sort of methodological trap which can occur when equating qualitative work with critical work and erroneously considering that in doing so the political dimension of discursive psychology was warranted. In this light, it is not surprising therefore that in recent years discourse analysis has been rehabilitated as part of psychology (Parker 2012).

Discursive psychology in Britain has fallen into a debate on methodology which shares some obscured dynamics with mainstream psychological concerns. In this way 'real qualitative methodology', and discursive psychology as part of it, rendered itself open to dangerous liaisons with liberal versions of social constructionist agendas, and with it, a stronger concern with liberal methodological realism. The political liberalism which haunted such a realist approach runs parallel to the psychologization of studies of subjectivity ('subjectivity in excess') (Gordo López 2000), and with it, a new conceptual space for mystical 'new age' concerns. Former concerns with 'subjectification processes', and their institutional and historical material bases, were to be displaced by a renewed interest in 'subjectivity resources' and soon after experienced a strong influence from US liberal oriented communication and cultural studies. This as opposed to, for example, the first generations of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham and its influential updating of Marxist theory and Soviet material concerns for the study of popular culture and consumption as the main resource for resistance to hegemonic socioeconomic trends. Considering this, it is telling that the *International Journal of Critical Psychology* was re-launched in 2008 under the name of *Subjectivities*.

A reinforcement of methodological concerns can also be detected among critical psychologists whose approaches were mainly constituted betwixt and between the 'real qualitative methodology' and 'subjectivity deflated'. What prevails now in British critical psychology, mainly with regard to the work formerly identified with the 'real qualitative methodology', 'subjective deflated', and even 'feminist psychological and gender relations' is a progressive fragmentation and with it a dissolving of processes into neighbouring disciplines and concerns, shifting from critical margins to central disciplinary productions (media studies, sociology, management

studies, and the like). The various dimensions which inform critical psychology in Britain and the antagonistic drive inherent to their own logics of critical thinking styles combine to have a rejuvenating effect while regulating the combinatory logics of its own nature as a signifier. Taking these multidimensional dynamics into consideration, liminal positions are also evident.

Alongside Deleuzian agendas, as well as studies of techno-scientific epistemology and reflexivity, there is an increasing interest in taking on the study of the material and social nature of affects, emotions, and even neurobiological bases in critical psychological agendas. On the contrary to the integral socio-biological approaches of the former Soviet Union, current critical research into ostensibly materialist neurobiological approaches is conducted under the hegemony of a new evolutionary theory which can hardly be abstracted from the thriving refloating of capitalism and the geopolitical surveillance and 'transparency' which new social media (Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, and so forth) bring about in the current era of 'Big Data'.

Other European critical psychologies

So far we have outlined Soviet and German critical psychology as representatives of former Marxist and materialist traditions (from the time of the post-Soviet States to the 1970s) and British critical psychology, as the most influential current from the 1980s until the present day. We have sought evidence regarding not only the way these trends have evolved but also their connections with wider socioeconomic contexts and transformations. However, other satellite positions have also spread out all over Europe. While not easily categorized, there are common connections to German and, mainly, British critical psychology. Contrary to the German and British epicentres, they have never institutionalized their works as a reachable frontier, regardless of their various positions and socioeconomic contexts. For the sake of clarity, while being aware of the danger of oversimplification, we present the following as a guide to some of the major European critical psychology trends, outside of Germany and Britain: (1) resonances of Marxist and activity theory (in Austria, Denmark, Finland, Poland, and Slovenia); (2) independent and self-organized strands highly fragmented and often absorbed by other disciplines (in the Czech Republic, Cyprus, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, and Spain); (3) remote satellites where critical psychology has been, till recently, mainly absent or meaningless (in Belgium, Iceland, Holland, Norway, Sweden, and Turkey)

Like the two epicentres, these other strands reinforce the idea that the discipline of psychology has been unable to respond to important social needs and problems. They also show the way that the critical margins, which they represent to various degrees, are equally caught up in an irreversible political unresponsiveness or in a relationship of compliance with hegemonic structures (Nissinen 2006; Blakar and Nafstad 2006). Such a lack of responsiveness is more symptomatic in the case of South European countries such as Spain, Italy, and Portugal which, paradoxically, with the arrival of the recent and now ongoing financial crisis and the entrenchment of Neo-Con agendas and policies, seem to have experienced a further fragmentation and dissolution into neighbouring disciplines. In forms of resistance to the refloating of capitalism and the intensive attack on the social (welfare) state, some Marxist and materialist approaches remain in Central Europe (mainly Denmark) and have sprung up more recently in Greece, mainly from colleagues educated in the tradition of German critical psychology. To a lesser degree this incipient process is also reaching remote satellites (Norway and Sweden, for instance) where before the onset of the financial crisis, and the then inexorable crisis of the welfare states, critical psychological methodological concerns were incorporated into their psychology syllabus in the mid-1990s or were just considered to be just one more English eccentricity (as they are viewed in Belgium and Holland).

It is not be possible here to go into a detailed and updated review of critical psychology in each of these countries, but according to the latest accounts (Dafermos 2013; Dafermos and Marvakis 2006; Dafermos et al. 2006; Walkerdine 2002, 2001) the most promising outpost of 'real politik' in critical psychology might be found amongst the latest unintended revival of German critical psychology and its influence in satellite countries (of Greece, Denmark, Finland, and Poland). It is worth noting the work developed during the last decade by Greek colleagues and more recently in British critical psychology research groups. The syncretism developed out of the materialist German concerns is conscious of the reluctance of critical psychology in Britain to materialize its works on wider socioeconomic developments, but also aware of the multidimensional pragmatism which informs British critical psychology. Taken together, this leads us to propose that Greek critical psychology, along with the recent German critical psychology revival, are the main critical enclaves. Indeed, even more so if the current disciplinary contexts keep them away from the temptation of institutionalization. It is not a coincidence that Germany was effectively a first laboratory for the implementation of extreme neoliberal reforms at the dawn of the present Western financial collapse, nor is it a coincidence that Greece has been economically 'rescued' and punished twice already and is continuously under the threat of being kicked out of the European Union.

Final remarks

We began this chapter with the Ichihara open prison for repeat traffic offenders to illustrate the way that the discipline of psychology has acted as a highly successful apparatus that confines and dissolves structural antagonism into the realm of individual normalization. Such a process of 'psychologization' has been assisted by institutional settings and networks of regulations in the 'psy-complex' (Ingleby 1985; Rose 1985, 1996). These regulative networks, as with the Ichihara open prison, purport to transcend traditional psychological confinement by means of only apparently free everyday practices (in a 'psychological culture', Parker 2007). As Papadopoulos (2004: 7) warns us, even if the prison does not look like a traditional prison, it nevertheless 'transforms, mutates, and creeps into the every-day life' of inmates.

Disciplinary psychological practices and knowledge hinges upon an ongoing re-colonization of everyday psychology (McLaughlin 2011). In this respect, the colonization of everyday life by means of an ever-expanding psychological culture 'operates as twins, two sides of an ideological and material effective process' (Parker in press). However, the current epicentre of critical psychology in Europe seems to have taken the opposite course. It has moved on from analyzing the material and political conditions to enjoying self-reflexivity as the main path to psychological recidivism and imprisonment, primarily by focusing on methodological issues and subjective resources. In this sense, British critical psychology has not paid attention to the way that psychology prefigures and masters everyday material practices and mediations. As we argued previously, without a commitment to everyday materiality it will be difficult to counter the highly efficient neoliberal discourses that strategically address everyday material issues (such as personal security and personal finances) and, at the same time, link them with wider structural phenomena (immigration, delinquency, terrorism, or family values) (Gordo López and Pujol Tarrés 2004: 156).

In contrast to its German counterpart, British critical psychology has never responded explicitly to any particular social movement, nor has it been ascribed or thought of itself as part of wider geopolitical transformations. If we keep in mind that developments in psychology mainly respond to economic and international political investments (Burman 2008), such a lack of social and economic responsiveness turns out to be highly suspicious, given the current hegemony of British critical psychology.

More worrying is the way British critical psychology has promoted, during the last decade, inventories of other critical psychologies in Europe and throughout the world. Besides the need to attend to both the local and social circumstances which have shaped the different trends and issues pursued by critical margins (Dafermos 2013; Dafermos et al. 2006), early historical materialist resources have also taught us that the role of critical psychology is the result of different processes of institutionalization which assist production and government. Despite their sociocultural specificity, psychology and its critical margins are major resources for practices and discourses within a worldwide space which 'goes beyond national borders and has a high degree of transnational intelligibility' (Papadopoulous 2002), even more so now under the banner of global neoliberalization processes and the re-energizing of capitalism in response to the financial crisis.

Psychology has become an intrinsically productive force. It could be considered, alongside scientific knowledge, as a form of successful 'globalised localism' (Santos 2003: 348–249) or even as the vernacular language of capitalism (Parker 2007). From this angle, psychological disciplines and sub-disciplines, including critical psychology, constitute extensions of global spaces and socioeconomic dynamics, as well as of functioning subjective spaces (Gordo López and Pujol Tarrés 2004). We should seriously consider global tendencies of resistance as much as sociocultural specificities (Marvakis 2013). The relations between 'epicentres' and 'satellites', their relations and shifts of emphasis, turn out to be highly revealing if we take them to be indicating comparative geopolitical operations while bearing in mind that critical specificities are also congruous with robust and material normalizing outcomes. If we do not engage in such an analysis, we merely satisfy the illusion of countering the geopolitical and postcolonial responsibility of psychological epicentres and their wider conditions of possibility.

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South Pacific

Tensions of space in our place

Leigh Coombes and Mandy Morgan

This chapter partially addresses the emergence of critical psychology in Aotearoa/Australia, and interrogates the risky possibilities of critical psy-discourse in the South Pacific. It is partial since it is a specific account that constitutes critical psychology within the tension between globalization and locality that specifies 'our' place for critical psychology in a global context. Before moving to specific tensions, there are questions about the conceptual apparatus of 'place', 'space', 'locality', and 'region' that trouble borders marking the South Pacific as a site from which to view the emergence of critical psychology and reflect on the tensions of globalization and local perspectives.

One reading of 'place' considers it as a geopolitical region that functions as a locality with specific histories of nationhood, cultural hegemony, and social power relations. There is also an emerging conceptualization of 'space' as a term marking the relationships between people and institutions within which the movement of or access to language enacts social power relations that hierarchically/structurally organize subjects. Space is where social relations are produced and reproduced as texts, where the signs and symbols, stories, and meanings of connectedness and exclusion become sites of contestation (Dudgeon and Fielder 2006; Fredericks 2013). Place and space crucially signify social power relations that interconnect issues of territorialization, dominance, and oppression (Moreton-Robinson 2007).

Another reading of 'place' considers an ontological relationship to land that cannot be reduced to land ownership or national boundaries. In this sense, place signifies specific histories of territorialization and relationships to home and land that exceed geographic designations of north and south, east and west, since they are also implicated in the cultural hegemony that characterizes contemporary globalization. In Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand, the ontological relationship between land as place and indigenous understandings of land as home includes 'our ancestral spirits [as] the place of our belonging' (Morgan 2008: 263), where home as a place of spiritual belonging and continuity is dependent on genealogical connections to ancestral and living communities (Nikora et al. 2013). As a location from which to address the emergence of critical psychology, one of the central concerns of this chapter is the Eurocentrism that identifies our geopolitical region through Westernized understandings of land, and the relationships between people and institutions.

Globalization

For the purposes of this chapter, globalization is considered as a process and movement of transformation characterized by new hegemonies, governmentality, and resistance. Globalization foregrounds questions that have been crucial to the emergence of critical psychology: how do social power relations, ideologies, and discourses produce technologies of knowledge production, and conceptualizations of the subject within historical, cultural, and social relationships, and how are psychology and critical psychology implicated in these productions? We are particularly concerned with some of the intimate relations of globalization: neoliberalism, postcolonialism, Western hegemony, and everyday practices of normalization.

Neoliberalism can be regarded as a contemporary capitalist ideology widely practiced by many Western governments through policies that construe citizens as participants in a marketplace where they're free to choose, consume, and innovate while taking personal responsibility for their self-care, self-determination, and efficiency and remaining autonomous, adaptive, and flexible. It is characterized by a kind of embeddedness that is specific to spaces (social relations between people and institutions) and places (specific histories of territorialization and relationships to home and land). Emerging anew from modernity through novel technologies of governmentality, neoliberalism extends individualism and intensifies liberalism. From our location, we notice a particular repetition in this expansionist mode of global capital, not quite uniform but dominant and hegemonic, in that the neoliberal citizen is an individualized subject characteristic of a Eurocentric gaze on a particular social body. Thus neoliberalism and globalization, multiple and fragmented in their processes, reproduce a hegemonic Western mode of subjectification to the social power relations of individualist culture. In our geopolitical location, the significance of Eurocentrism in techniques of subjectification to dominant Western ideologies of individualism, repeated through neoliberal forms of governmentality, is intimately connected to our specific places in postcolonialism.

The postcolonial has been variously engaged to articulate the concerns of a so-called Third World in the political imagination of the West. Like neoliberalism and globalization, the term is multiple, and has been used to engage in conversations on the ongoing legacy of colonialism's subjugations of indigenous peoples, as well as critical reflection on whiteness (e.g. Huygens 2006; Nairn and McCreanor 1990; Riggs and Augoustinos 2004). In our geopolitical region, indigenous writers recognize a difference from 'other postcolonial contexts where independence has been gained' (Dudgeon and Fielder 2006: 403). Moreton-Robinson (2003) argues that nations where white settlers are not dominant in government, such as Malaysia, are differently postcolonial from Australia, where colonial settlement is firmly established, and entrenched, in government. Aotearoa/New Zealand, likewise, is governed and dominated by white settler peoples, despite Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi, which established a historical agreement that promised partnership in the development of our nation (McCreanor 1993; Morgan, Coombes, and Campbell 2006). In this sense, colonization continues, and the postcolonial marks a relationship that is governed by, and normalizes, whiteness.

Here, the specific histories of territorialization are bounded by ongoing colonization and marked by differences in relationships to land among indigenous and settler peoples. Indigenous writers (e.g. Smith 1999; Tamanui 2012; Teddy et al. 2008) characterizes the relationship of settlers and land through dispossession and migration, while indigenous peoples' relationship to land is ontological: land is a life-force, a condition of being, the simultaneousness of past and present. Land as an inalienable constitutive of indigeneity, 'marks a radical, indeed incommensurable, difference' (Moreton-Robinson 2003: 31) between indigenous and settler peoples.

In highlighting this incommensurable difference, we also need to trouble a binary categorization that reproduces a simple boundary between indigenous/white, indigenous/settler. In our region, colonization has also dispossessed and dislocated settler peoples, including peoples of the Pacific Islands who constitute marginalized diaspora within the national boundaries of Australia and New Zealand (e.g. Alefaio 2009; Seiuli 2012). There are complex histories in relation to Pacific Island settlers in both nations. For instance, the Torres Strait Islands are not independent nations, as are some other Pacific Islands. Torres Strait Island people are positioned as indigenous Australians, although many live away from their islands, on the mainland (Dudgeon et al. 2010). Among the settler peoples there are plentiful examples of non-indigenous peoples who are marginalized by the dominance of white colonial governance and Eurocentric normalization.

The legacy of multiple dispossessions and differences across the South Pacific constitutes our place as both a condition and a critique of postcolonial discourse, fracturing any assumption that there could be a unified relationship between histories of territorialization and the postcolonial. Within these fractured conditions there are specificities marking the relationship between peoples and institutions of our geopolitical region. The spaces produced and reproduced through the dominance of Eurocentric representation function as sites of exclusion, contestation, and epistemological violences, including the denigration of the social texts marked as 'indigenous knowledges' within the University.

Critical attention to whiteness and its normalization opens space for counter-hegemonic resistances to Eurocentric domination, including the authorization of non-dominant epistemologies and marginalized social texts. However, this opening is tenuous, dependent on cultural practices of knowledge production that are materially conditioned through social power relations of dominance. For example, although academic institutions are arguably characterized by commitments to freedom of thought, indigenous academics struggle against distinctively European discourse that produces 'intellectual fringe dwellers' (Dudgeon and Fielder 2006: 397), more likely seen as political activists than legitimate contributors to authorized knowledge production. These experiences testify to the ongoing privilege of Western ways of knowing, and the iteration of Eurocentric representations that risk perpetually reproducing the subjugations of colonialism.

Normalization of Western discourse, as a technique of subjectification, intersects with the neoliberalism and globalization that hold us to our place in postcolonialism. Our specific risks for critical psychology are concerned with ongoing colonization through re-inscribing white authority over the non-West. Postcolonial theory opens the space to reflexively critique psy-discourse in relation to the social power relations through which normalization constitutes 'others' and iterates Eurocentric dominance. The risk of *not engaging* with postcolonial theory is the risk of constituting differences among peoples through knowledge production processes that have dehumanized indigenous peoples (Dudgeon and Fielder 2006; Smith 1999). The risk of *engaging* postcolonial theory is a risk of writing back to colonial centres and reproducing relations of centre and margin that function to normalize Eurocentric discourse. The critical, too, risks overwriting our differences with sameness derived from reifying a partial position within the discursive, material, and cultural constituents for articulating interrelationships of mutuality.

The emergence of critical psychology into the discipline in the late 1980s drew attention to the relevance of psychology in its sociopolitical context. The turn to language – discourse/ knowledge/power – began to recognize sexism, racism, and oppression and their effects for those who were constituted as 'other' in our research and practice. It manifested as a movement of resistance within the discipline that intersected with global social movements for human, women's, and indigenous rights.

Writing back

Resistance to the centrality of Eurocentric masculinity emerged with critical psychology in the work of feminist psychologists addressing the gendered social power relations of Western normative heterosexism from the late 1980s on. Early feminist engagement with post-structuralist theory also generated critical discursive research agendas that resist the dominance of post-positivist knowledge production. Nicola Gavey's (1989, 1992, 2005, 2012) arguments for post-structuralist feminism and discourse analysis not only questioned the narrow focus of feminist empiricism on issues of prevalence and sex differences in perpetuating interpersonal violence, but also turned attention towards the gendered power relations that supported violence against women. Problematizing normative heterosexism, Gavey and her colleagues have challenged cultural narratives of sexuality and sexual violence (e.g. Gavey and Senn 2014), egalitarian governance of gendered power relations (e.g. Tolmie et al. 2010), and the workings of neoliberalism and postfeminism in supporting pornography (http://www.sexualpoliticsnow.org.nz/).

Alongside critical engagements with heteronormativity, Gavey interrogates the theoretical terms that enable critical feminist engagements to write back to the masculine privileges of European cultural values. Sex and the body are particular concerns that shape arguments resisting the naturalistic assumptions of research that conflates biology and embodiment while normalizing heterosex. Gavey (2005) engages Foucauldian theory to theorize sex and the body as socially and discursively constituted while simultaneously materially effective; constitutive of bodies, sexualities, and subjectivities. Writing back to Eurocentric masculinism, Morgan (2005) interrogates critical psychological engagements with theorizing bodies to question how the discourse of embodying domination informs transformations of gendered social power relations. Challenging the sadomasochistic positioning of women in intimate violent relationships, she draws on psychoanalysis to resist Anglo-American traditions of analyzing masculinist privilege in the representation of women (Morgan 2011). Morgan's interests intersect with concerns about gendered violence that she and her colleagues have questioned in relation to the morality of dominant narratives authorizing gendered subject positions (Coombes and Morgan 2004), and the governance of justice interventions into intimate partner violence (Pond and Morgan 2008).

While feminism has never settled into a mainstream position within the discipline of psychology, feminist critical work heightens tensions with the discipline's dominant post-positivist commitments. Accommodating feminism within mainstream methodologies poses little challenge to psy-discourse in an era of neoliberal postfeminism, yet critical feminism interrogates complicity with neoliberalism, particularly notions of empowerment, agency, and choice. Ngaire Donaghue has critiqued an 'agency fetish' (Gill and Donaghue 2013) in postfeminist discourse that evades the complexities of desire, intimacy, and sexuality, and raises issues with re-embracing femininity as an agentic choice (e.g. Stuart and Donaghue 2010). Gavey (2012) also troubles postfeminist emphasis on women's empowerment and choice, drawing attention to the punishing effects of sanctions for breaching hetero-norms. This work intersects with critical feminist concerns with norms of gendered health and sexuality that also characterize writing back to Eurocentrism in our geopolitical place (e.g. Braun 2010; Jackson and Westrupp 2010; Jackson and Weatherall 2010; Lyons 2009; Ussher 2011).

The disciplinary space in which gendered social power relations accommodate feminist research that does not challenge postpositivist commitments also normalizes racial, ethnic, and class differences through notions of deficit. Although feminist critical writing frequently acknowledges the material effects of Eurocentric domination in the constitution of racial, ethnic, and class differences, there remains a gap that marks a significant disjuncture between predominantly white, Western, middle-class critiques of heteronormativity and indigenous

women's concerns. Critical feminist work writing back to Eurocentric discourses of sexual difference is not exempt from reproducing the 'underlying code of imperialism and colonialism' (Smith 1999: 7). As Moeke-Maxwell (2005) argues, in Aotearoa/New Zealand, feminism has not engaged critical discursive approaches to theorize the complex positioning and subjectivities of Māori women. Dominant narratives of colonized identities continue to perpetuate forms of racial discrimination that represent indigenous women through the imposition of a racialized hierarchy of difference. Racism and racist discourse saturate Eurocentric representations of difference through constituting disease, mental disorder, violence, and poverty, and positioning indigenous peoples as lacking (Groot et al. 2011). The risks of these representations are realized in institutional practices. Critical psychology takes up the project of resisting institutionalized biomedical models of addressing health risks, and interrogating their practices, while simultaneously advocating for the inclusion of social context in considering 'health and well-being' (e.g. Hodgetts et al. 2014; Hodgetts et al. 2011; Moran and Lee 2011, 2013; Stephens 2014; Stephenson 2011). In discursive projects focused on the material and social practices of everyday life and the meanings of medication and food, Chamberlain and colleagues (e.g. Dew et al. 2014; Hodgetts and Chamberlain 2006) site methodically innovative studies in homes, communities, and public media to consider the material and bodily effects of the intersection of institutionalized knowledge with social context. Insistence on the social enables attention to specific effects of dominant Eurocentric biomedicine on Māori whānau (Hodgetts et al. 2011) and the inclusion of healers' resistances to, and collaborations with, dominant practices of healing (Mark and Chamberlain 2012).

In our geopolitical region, critical health psychologists problematize the racism of discursive practices that are linked to colonial practices of governance, such as the Tohunga Suppression Act (1907) that restricted the use of indigenous healing systems (Mark and Chamberlain 2012). Control over cultural knowledge and indigenous languages was central to colonial governments' targeting and managing indigenous subjects. Groot et al. (2012) argue that language dominance was complicit with the productive differentiation of indigenous subject populations and the internalization of white imagination to ensure the effective functioning of colonial systems of rule. In the wake of these explicitly colonial strategies, the turn to language in critical social psychology has focused on writing back to discursive practices of everyday racism (e.g. Augustinos and Every 2007; Riggs 2013; Tuffin 2013). This work traces a shift from blatant white supremacy to neoliberal egalitarianism and individualism that operates as more subtle racism. Acceptable forms of defining, stereotyping, and criticizing non-white others are analyzed as practices of ongoing colonization (e.g. Liu and Mills 2006; Loto et al. 2006; Nairn et al. 2006).

The success of critical social psychology is evident in the diversity of approaches to discourse analysis that have propagated since critical psychology emerged (Augustinos 2013). In our geopolitical region, discourse analysis is debated, defined, and characterized within the context of methodological resistances to dominant post-positivism, as it is elsewhere. Yet, methodological debates risk establishing hierarchies of criticality even on the margins of psychology. In this context, critiques of hegemonic whiteness, racialized embodiment, and symbolic racism that centre on writing back to racist discourse simultaneously challenge research that has constructed indigenous others as inferior while participating in research that marginalizes indigenous ways of knowing.

In the wake of globalization, the construction of deficits is contextualized by spaces where risks are characterized as dangerous, and proliferating. Within Eurocentrism, the discourses that constitute racial and cultural others as lacking in health, morality, or self-discipline are also complicit with promoting modes of surveillance for the sake of safety. Wraith and Stephenson (2009: 227) connect heightened risk with forms of state governmentality that engage expert

knowledge production to enact a neoliberal commitment to individualizing responsibility for anticipating risks (to health, property, financial security) while proliferating state interventions into 'the finest fissures of society'.

Opening spaces

Critical psychology in our region does not only engage in writing back to Eurocentrism. There is also work that focuses on opening up spaces for new forms of transformation. For instance, in an ethnographic study, Nathan et al. (2014: 26) analyzed the practices and actions of community representatives governed by health services and their own communities. They identified innovative and subversive responses to diverse forms of domination and created productive 'trajectories of action' to transform everyday lives. The intersections of contemporary postcolonial and neoliberal governmentality are concerns of emerging critical community psychology. Focusing on social transformation of injustices where gender, race, or class are produced multiply and structurally, this work is committed to disrupting racialized dominance and developing processes for decolonization (e.g. Cruz and Sonn 2011). Early contributions to the work of transforming racialized social power relations in Aotearoa/New Zealand focused on critical analyses of whiteness and re-constituting Eurocentric subjectivities through advocating for a cultural identity as Pākehā. Becoming Pākehā enables European settler peoples to recognize the dominant assumptions of white privilege usually constituting their taken-for-granted normality in relation to Māori (e.g. McCreanor 1993). In Australia, too, the work of recognizing whiteness (e.g. Gridley and Dudgeon 2009; Sonn and Green 2006) has opened up space for decolonizing processes and disrupting the modes through which everyday lives are diversely textured by local, social, cultural, and political conditions.

Ethnographic research strategies engaged in critical community psychology have been successful in enabling relationships between researchers and communities in resistance to dominant methodological approaches that remain institutionally moulded by post-positivism. In ethnographic style, critical community psychology brings academic expertise and theory together with community expertise and research participants' embodied knowing in conversations aiming to address structural violence and exclusion (see http://www.waikato.ac.nz/research/units/mpru.shtml). For instance, in the Family 100 Project, an alliance between researchers and the Auckland City Mission enables places of praxis where 'documenting actual experiences of lives in poverty while working to theorise these situations' (Hodgetts et al. 2014: 100) has involved researchers in reciprocal support of direct action, service development, and advocacy. Hodgetts, Chamberlain, Groot, and Tankel (2014) analyze how the poverty of significantly increasing social stratification affects family relations with statutory welfare agencies. Using multiple data collection techniques, the research actively engages in texturing participants' accounts with their everyday expertise on the spaces they inhabit in local social power relations. Analysis of structural violence produced new insights into the abusive relations that were institutionalized through welfare practices. Conversations with government bodies and journalists also enabled the researchers to broaden public discussions about poverty.

The Family 100 project emerged from an earlier, ethnographic study of homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand, also in partnership with the Auckland City Mission (http://www.aucklandcitymission.org.nz/information.php?info_id=115andmID=109). Homelessness became understood as a movement that disrupted and destabilized various discursive centres organizing the normalization of identities, communities, and homes. Research processes that privileged the voices, significant meanings, and everyday movements of homeless people produced accounts of the ways that places textured homeless lives, and enabled place-based identities that question

assumptions about the meanings of home and place. Among the studies from the homelessness project, Groot et al. (2011) present a case study of Ariā that exemplifies the ways critical community psychology has opened up space for decolonizing processes in our region. Situating Ariā's textured accounts of her everyday street life within the context of Māori overrepresentation among the homeless, the study connected poverty, structural, and interpersonal violence with the specific histories of colonial territorialization. While acknowledging and honouring the pain of these abuses, the case study challenges deficit constitutions of cultural or racial difference by attending to Ariā's engagement with cultural practices that sustain and connect her to the community of street people as well as her whānau. Questions of the differences in Eurocentric and indigenous relationships to home and land, tribal homelands, and tūrangawaewae (places of strength and identity) are foregrounded, so that the histories of territorialization before and since colonial rule are intimately connected with diverse contemporary experiences of place and space.

In critical community psychology, authoethnography has proved useful to indigenous scholars as a set of research strategies and values that legitimates indigenous inquiry. Indigenous autoethnography centralizes indigenous ways of knowing to enable diverse resistances to Eurocentric colonial dominance and new modes of re-collecting textured, culturally specific lives and relationships (e.g. Dudgeon 2008; Moeke-Maxwell et al. 2010; Tamanui 2012).

Indigenous scholars engaged in decolonizing research methodologies have written from strategically essentialized positions constituted through colonial discourse, to fracture essences as normalizing homogeneities and reterritorialize knowledge production as indigenous (e.g. Dudgeon and Fielder 2006; Tamanui 2012). From localized spaces where the specificities of tribe, iwi, whānau, aiga are central, white imagination of indigenous identities has been questioned, destabilized, and re-constituted (Dudgeon and Fielder 2006). In the process, the binary coordinates of Eurocentric identities (urban/rural; authentic/fake; self/other) are reconfigured in a reflexive dialogue on 'between spaces' and culturally specific 'third spaces' that connect land, spiritual belonging, and home (e.g. Fredericks 2013; Tamanui 2012).

In our geopolitical region, the work of critical psychology that textures experiences of structural violence and opens spaces for decolonizing research is distinctive, and exceeds resistance to the centrality and privilege of Eurocentric normalization. Critical psychological research that writes back to the privileged intersections of gender, race, and class through engaging transdisciplinary theories of subjectivity and discourse remains crucial to critiques of postcolonial and neoliberal discourse in the South Pacific. Yet the conditions of postcolonialism that centre on white imagination are often reproduced, even in resistance. Engagements with communities that involve partnerships and dialogues interrogating the textures of everyday lives within specific postcolonial locations both write back and diversify difference through multiple relationships of land, spirit, and subjectivities.

Contradictions and diversity

In our geopolitical location, as elsewhere, the turn to language has enabled diverse disruptions to the dominance of post-positivism. These disruptions produce multiple approaches to research praxis, as well as debates and characterizations that border on reproducing hierarchies of legitimation and exclusion. Where indigenous scholars are already resisting colonial positioning that delegitimates their contributions to the discipline, the construction of borders that exclude or marginalize indigenous modes of critique and knowledge production normalizes Eurocentric authority even within critical psychology. Where indigenous scholars have questioned, destabilized, and re-constituted the territory of critical knowledge production in psychology, the

turn to language has both enabled decolonizing research and problematized the dominance of monolingualism in the conditions and critiques of Eurocentric postcolonialism. Where postcolonialism privileges Eurocentric theories of discourse, the suppression of indigenous languages is reproduced in critical psychological texts.

The contradictions between opening possibilities for diverse methodologies and critiques of Eurocentric dominance, and reproducing hierarchies of dominance, marginalization, and exclusion in the process, take specific forms in our region and simultaneously position our resistances and challenges to Eurocentrism within the context of broader movements in globalization. The textures and matters of concern to those who have been constituted as 'others' through the territorializations of white, masculinist imperialism are increasing the sites of discursive challenges and interruptions to social power relations and knowledge production. How we reflexively attend to the ways in which difference is always already textured through embodied (gendered/racialized) processes of subjectification remains vital to our critical reflexive engagement with social transformations.

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Website resources

National Indigenous Research and Knowledges Network (NIRAKN): http://www.nirakn.edu.au/
Tangihanga: The ultimate form of Māori cultural expression – overview of a research programme: http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/handle/10289/7968

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